



EXPERT ROUNDTABLE

“A comprehensive versus a principled approach – opportunities and risks for EU humanitarian assistance”

PROGRAMME

**Tuesday 15 October 2013
12.00 – 17.00 h**

**in the European Office of
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
Av. De l'Yser 11
1040 Brussels, Belgium**

hosted by

CARE
&
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

Context

The discussion will take place under Chatham House Rules.

“EU humanitarian aid shall be conducted in compliance with the principles of international law and with the principles of impartiality, neutrality and non-discrimination”
(Lisbon Treaty, art. 214)

The Lisbon Treaty and the consequent establishment of a European External Action Service (EEAS) provided the basis to strengthen European Union (EU) Foreign Policy. At the same time, the Lisbon Treaty (article 214) as well as the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (2008) keep humanitarian assistance separate from foreign policy, ensuring its independence and the consequent possibility for it to be needs-based and deliverable according to humanitarian principles, particularly in complex emergencies. Indeed, as stated in the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, EU humanitarian aid is not a crisis management tool.

Over the last years the EU has started to develop a *“comprehensive approach”* (CA) in order to integrate the different strands of foreign engagement into one approach overseen by the EEAS.

There is a dual understanding of the Comprehensive Approach by policy makers and civil society organizations (CSOs). In a broader sense, the CA represents an integrated approach, where the EU has a set of objectives developed by and agreed to by all relevant EU institutions and implemented through EU policies, tools and activities. A narrower understanding of the CA limits it to a crisis management tool implemented through civil-military cooperation.

Limiting the CA to crisis management and response would restrict its scope to the short-term. In fact, crisis response is just one of the EU external actions and it is one of the most exposed to the complexity of the EU decision-making process. Despite the controversial ongoing discussion among policy makers and humanitarian actors regarding the potential integration of humanitarian action within the CA, it is undeniable that the EU's added value in responding to complex emergencies is its ability to engage in different sectors and with a long-term approach. Therefore, limiting the CA to short term activities like crisis management or response could lead the EU to lose its comparative advantage.

In the context of the deteriorating Syrian situation, on June 24 2013, the HR/VP Lady Ashton issued the Joint Communication *“Towards a comprehensive EU approach to the Syrian crisis”* that represents the first concrete step toward the implementation of the EU Comprehensive Approach. Since the beginning of the Syrian crisis, the EU has intervened in a comprehensive manner tackling political, security, development and humanitarian constraints. As stated by President Barroso, the first priority is to promote a political settlement – aimed at ending the violence and the human rights abuses – while in parallel the EU is mobilizing its financial instruments in order to alleviate human suffering.

Although the Joint Communication has been welcomed as it represents an understanding of the EU as a comprehensive actor, and while there is value in ensuring a certain amount of coordination of EU-level efforts in complex crises, not all actors are convinced by the limited approach being taken or the role of humanitarian assistance in a Comprehensive Approach.



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Should the EU maintain a “principled approach” towards humanitarian action, avoiding the potential risks resulting from the perceived link between humanitarian, political and security objectives within a comprehensive approach? Or do the complex crises of today, the one’s we face at the Horn of Africa, the Sahel and in Syria, to name just a few, demand such a comprehensive approach?

In view of these challenges for European humanitarian, foreign and security policy, CARE and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung organize an expert roundtable in order to address the following questions:

- How can we ensure more coherence in EU external actions while maintaining a clear separation between humanitarian aid and the EEAS agenda?
- What are the risks and what are the opportunities of a Comprehensive Approach?
- How can we best address complex topics like human rights? Should we go for comprehensive or principled approaches?
- What is our vision of the future of EU humanitarian assistance?

The expert meeting will bring together key players from the European Commission, the European External Action Service, Members of European Parliament, Representatives of United Nations agencies, International NGOs and representatives of NGO Networks.



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Programme

15 October 2013

12:00 Registration and light lunch

13:00 * Welcome by

Andrea E. Ostheimer, Programme Director, Multinational Development Policy Dialogue, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Brussels

Céline Mias, EU Representative, CARE International

- Introduction of participants

13:30 **Panel I: Consequences of a comprehensive approach to humanitarian assistance**

Moderator:

Karl-Otto Zentel, National Director (CEO), CARE Deutschland-Luxemburg

Panelists:

Jean-Louis De Brouwer, Director Humanitarian Operations, DG ECHO

Dr. Agostino Miozzo, Managing Director, Crisis Response and Operational Coordination, EEAS

Antoine Gerard, Head of OCHA Liaison Office, Brussels

Evert Somer, Civil Emergency Planning and Outreach Section of the Planning Division, NATO HQ Operations Division

Olivier Jenard, Deputy Director, Red Cross EU Office, Brussels

Respondents:

Denisa Elena Ionete, Head of Unit, Fragility and Crisis, DG DEVCO

Christopher Stokes, Director General, MSF, Belgium

Kathrin Schick, Director, VOICE, Brussels

15:00 Coffee-Break

15:15 **Panel II: The comprehensive and human rights-based approach – a step into the right direction?**

Moderator:

Catherine Wollard, Executive Director, European Peace Building Liaison Office (EPLO)



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Panelists:

Veronique Arnault, *Director of Human Rights and Democracy*, European External Action Service (tbc)

Henrike Trautmann, *Head of Unit A/4, Specific Thematic Policies*, DG ECHO

Brian Tisdall, *Head of Division for Multilateral organizations, policy and humanitarian action*, ICRC

Colin Rogers, *Head of Emergencies*, CARE International UK

Respondents:

Alexandra Makaroff, *Head of Office, Plan EU Office*, Brussels (tbc)

Sarah Tesorieri, *Norwegian Refugee Council*, Europe

16:45 Summary and Concluding remarks
Heribert Scharrenbroich, *President*, CARE Deutschland-Luxemburg

17:00 **End of expert roundtable**

Coordination and Organisation

Andrea Ostheimer, *Programme Director*
Dr. Susanne Conrad, *Research Associate*

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