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## **Expert Roundtable**

**"Crisis Preparedness in the age of climate change:  
prediction, prevention, policy response and relief"**

**Thursday, 23rd February 2012**

**10.00 h to 16.00 h**

Conference venue  
**NH Hotel du Grand Sablon  
Rue Bodenbroek 2/4  
B-1000 Brussels**

*(Conference language: English)*

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***Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung – "Multinational Dialogue on Development Policy"***

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The expert roundtable will focus on the **protection of populations from natural catastrophes** caused by climate change. Despite numerous international actors on the multilateral and national level and existing early warning mechanisms climate induced humanitarian crisis still occur. The ongoing famine at the Horn of Africa is only one example of the reactive approach which is still prevailing in the context of humanitarian aid. The Expert-Roundtable shall confront this challenge, identify weaknesses and recommend possible political actions.

Although climatic hazards, such as droughts and floods, would occur regardless of human activity, man-made climate change is expected to increasingly modify these types of hazards and the impact is expected to be highest in areas where human resilience against them is very low, due to poverty, underdevelopment or a high frequency of exposure. The largest and most important regions concerned are located in Africa, particularly the Sahel, Horn of Africa and Central Africa; in Central and South Asia, the Caspian region and lastly in Southeast Asia. The East African Region is one of the so-called hotspots threatened by both, droughts and floods.

Since July 2011, 10 Million people are affected by the **drought** in East Africa. 400.000 people alone live in the refugee camp Dadaab, which has become the third biggest city of Kenya. The drought which is ongoing since three years, the high food prices and the conflict in Somalia are the main reasons for this famine. One of the problems for relief agencies is fact that humanitarian organisations have only received insufficient access to the people in Somalia which was prevented by the rebel organisation Al Shabab. Besides these obstructions to humanitarian aid one of the important conditions to prevent the re-occurrence of a similar situation in the future is the improvement of access of Somalis to water. According to forecasts conditions of drought may remain until well into 2012.

Climate change is very likely to intensify the water cycle thereby increasing the risk of **floods and tropical cyclones**. Research suggests that both at high latitudes and over most land areas increases in average river runoff and rising sea surface temperature will occur. Also here, the East African Region is one of the hotspots where the risk of flash floods is on a very high level.

With view to this humanitarian crisis potential the question has to be asked whether enough has been done in order to improve crisis preparedness in the region. Only long-term action by development agencies and national governments can deliver effective and sustainable results. This can be done by investing in local coordination, better resource management, animal health and planning for contingency measures. Possible measures also include stockpiling cereal and grains, buying up animals before they get too weak and repairing water boreholes. Through such long-term measures the adaptation to climate change can be integrated into development strategies.

The European Union as an important provider of humanitarian aid has recognized that an emergency response is vital but not sufficient and that droughts are intensified by climate change. There is an urgent need to focus more on preparedness, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development.

With respect to the Horn of Africa the European Commission has been actively involved in disaster risk reduction through its Regional Drought Decision. This initiative focused on drought preparedness and aimed to make local communities more resilient while building their capacity to cope with the impact of recurrent drought. The immediate objective is to reduce the need for emergency response to future droughts.

In how far have these extensive measures had a positive effect on the current crisis and where lies scope for improvements? What is the role of Early Warning Mechanisms and how well are they integrated into management of such catastrophes?

The expert roundtable will try to give answers to these questions and brings together experts from various international institutions in order to give an account of the current crisis, to discuss the consequences and to define how preventive action should be designed in the future in order to further improve resilience of populations to climate induced catastrophes in the Horn of Africa.

## Programme

10:00 Welcome remarks by **Andrea Ostheimer**, Programme Director Multinational Dialogue on Development Policy, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

10:15 Panel I

### **Does preventive action work? Lessons learned from the implementation of preventive measures and the famine in the Horn of Africa**

**Cees Wittebrood**, Head of Unit B3, East, West and Southern Africa, Indian Ocean, DG ECHO

**Andreas Needham**, Public Information Office, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Somalia

**Martin Krottmayer**, Senior Advisor, EU & International Development, Red Cross EU Office

Moderated by **Andrea Ostheimer**, Programme Director Multinational Dialogue on Development Policy, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

10:45 Discussion

11:15 Coffee Break

11:30 Panel II

### **Cooperation between Early Warning Mechanisms and relief agencies in the management of natural catastrophes**

**Irene Dankelman**, Lecturer for Sustainable Development, Radboud University, Nijmegen (NI), consultant at IRDANA advice

**Madeleen Helmer**, Policy and Communications Director, Climate Centre, Red Cross

Moderated by **Michael Hansmann**, Brot für die Welt, Brussels office

12:30 Discussion

13:00 Lunch

14:00 Panel III

### **How do disaster control agencies, governments and companies adapt their strategic planning to the increased occurrence of climate change induced extreme weather events**

**Dr. Thorsten Klose**, Senior Advisor Disaster Risk Reduction & Climate Change Adaptation, Team International Cooperation, German Red Cross

**Dr. Bonifácio António**, Director, Cabinet of Coordination, Instituto Nacional de Gestão de Calamidades (INGC), Mozambique

**Crispin Scott**, Director, Chadshunt, Ltd.

Moderated by **Michael Hansmann**, Brot für die Welt, Brussels office

15:15 Discussion

16:00 Closing remarks by **Andrea Ostheimer**, Programme Director Multinational Dialogue on Development Policy, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung