

EU EARLY WARNING AND EARLY RESPONSE CAPACITY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION IN THE POST-LISBON ERA

Terri Beswick

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The CRU was founded in 1996 as a long-term research project for the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, focusing on the causes and consequences of violent conflict in developing countries and countries in transition. Its activities include stability assessments of specific countries/regions; governance assessments; security sector reform (SSR)-related assessments; and assessing and analysing the interventions of international actors in conflict and post-conflict situations and fragile states. The CRU has developed (analytical) instruments for conducting such assessments and supporting policymakers in developing new policy concepts and in promoting joined-up approaches of developmental, foreign affairs, defence and other actors in dealing with the complexities of fragile and post-conflict states. To learn more, visit <http://www.clingendael.nl/cru/>.

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AUTHOR PROFILE

Terri Beswick is currently working with the Clingendael Conflict Research Unit (CRU) on projects related to European Union (EU) institutional capacities for conflict prevention and crisis management. Her research interests include institutional design, post-conflict governance, and international democracy assistance strategy, with a particular focus on political parties.

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1. BACKGROUND

The debate surrounding early warning (EW) and early response (ER) on conflict prevention is understood differently by different people, at different points in time. However, at its core, EW-ER is a mechanism for the prevention, or reduction of the impact, of conflicts. Too often EW has been treated in isolation from ER, which has contributed to confusion about what early warning exactly is, and what it is for. Timely and effective conflict prevention is the goal, and this research cluster aims to 'better link early warning to effective and timely response to prevent conflict'¹ by identifying constraints and opportunities within the European Union's EW-ER architecture.

This report follows in the wake of renewed activity on EW-ER across European Union (EU) institutions, encompassing the political commitments of the June 2011 Council Conclusions,² as well as the work being carried out by the new division dedicated to Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding, and Mediation within the EU External Action Service (EEAS).³ An evaluation of the European Commission's support to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, published in November 2011, has also flagged up some areas of work for early warning and response capabilities.⁴ All in all, it appears that early warning and early response to conflict prevention are slowly moving up the EU external action agenda.

The post-Lisbon architecture of EU external action on conflict prevention is by no means established and any number of institutional, organisational and even staffing decisions have yet to be made. Against this backdrop, this mapping of the EU's institutional capacity for early warning and conflict prevention represents a tentative overview of where we are at the end of the EEAS's first year, and the general direction that the EU's early warning-early response architecture is heading towards.

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- 1 Initiative for Peacebuilding (IfP-EW) (2011). 'Cluster description: Improving Institutional Capacity for Early Warning', accessed 2nd September 2011. Available at: <http://www.ifp-ew.eu/capacity.php>
 - 2 Council of the EU (2011). *Council Conclusions on Conflict Prevention. 3101st FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council meeting (20th June)*. Luxembourg.
 - 3 See ANNEX I: EEAS (2011). 'Organigramme', accessed 4th October 2011. Available at http://www.eeas.europa.eu/background/docs/organisation_en.pdf
 - 4 Aide à la Décision Economique (ADE) (2011). *Thematic Evaluation of the European Commission Support to Conflict Prevention and Peace Building*. Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium.

2. POST-LISBON UPDATE

Since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009, the external action of the EU has undergone a momentous overhaul. The new EEAS became operational only in January 2011 and is still in the process of consolidation. Consequently, the EW and ER actors, tools and response instruments available for conflict prevention within the EEAS are by no means fixed. It is, nonetheless, possible to present the changes to the institutional framework that have occurred as of December 2011.

This paper is an updated mapping, building on the work of two previous Initiative for Peacebuilding – Early Warning (IfP-EW) mapping reports on the Council of the EU and the European Commission.⁵ As such, the focus of this report is to present and discuss what has changed so far in the post-Lisbon era. Furthermore, as a product of the IfP-EW project, the mapping of these bodies and instruments has been conducted from the perspective of their significance for EW and early preventive responses, omitting descriptions of other functions or roles that these bodies or instruments may perform.

Finally, in order to establish a framework to understand how these bodies and instruments interact with EW-ER, the sections represent various stages in the EW-ER process, from the information and analysis stage, to those of decision making and early response, and finally a short overview of the bodies that play a coordinating role. For an analysis of the functions of the EU's EW-ER architecture in practice, please refer to the accompanying IfP-EW Synthesis Report for the research cluster: Improving Institutional Capacity for Early Warning.⁶

5 J. Hemmer and R. Smits (2010). *The Early Warning and Conflict Prevention Capability of the Council of the European Union*. IfP-EW: Brussels; S. Babaud and N. Mirimanova (2011). *The European Commission Early Warning Architecture and Crisis Response Capacity*. IfP-EW: Brussels.

6 T. Beswick (2012). *Improving Institutional Capacity for Early Warning: Synthesis Report*. IfP-EW: Brussels.

3. EARLY WARNING INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS

RELEVANT ACTORS

EU MILITARY STAFF (EUMS)

EUMS has moved into the new EEAS structure from its previous home within the Council of the EU. EUMS and the Joint Situation Centre (SitCen) share the task of coordinating intelligence inputs shared by EU Member States, with EUMS acting as the coordinating platform for Member States' military intelligence, whilst SitCen handles Member States' civilian intelligence. However, most intelligence is entered and stored in a jointly accessible database. Aside from its strategic pre-decision planning role for Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions, EUMS is also tasked with an early warning function. As part of this function, EUMS conducts analysis together with SitCen and develops a biannual global overview of crises, impending crises and long-term conflict trends.⁷ Pre-Lisbon, this process was largely informed by a security narrative, where analyses of conflicts and crises were assessed from the perspective of their impact on EU security interests. However, with a strengthened and distinct post-Lisbon conflict prevention mandate,⁸ the traditional "customers" of EUMS have expanded from mainly Member States to now include EEAS directorates, the EEAS Corporate Board, and the High-Representative of Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission (HR/VP). To that end, EUMS is also in the process of adapting its products to meet a preventive, as well as a crisis response, function, and is engaging with the Conflict Prevention Group (CPG) initiative (see entry in *Overarching Coordination of Early Warning – Early Response* section).

JOINT SITUATION CENTRE (SITCEN)

SitCen became operational in 2003 and, like EUMS, has also made the move from the Council of the EU into EEAS. It handles civilian intelligence provided by EU Member States⁹, as well as open source information. However, as contributions are voluntary, the comprehensiveness of the information supplied by Member States cannot be guaranteed. The Director of SitCen himself commented that 'despite its role as an EU intelligence-sharing hub, the Lisbon Treaty has not explicitly mandated that member state agencies must share information with the SitCen'.¹⁰ With the establishment of the EU Situation Room in July 2011 (see *Situation Room* entry), the tasks and responsibilities of SitCen have changed slightly, and it is no longer responsible for the "worldwide watch". Instead, it now focuses on an analysis function that it shares with EUMS. SitCen has retained responsibility for monitoring and providing input into the Watchlist (see *Watchlist* entry) and, whilst in theory SitCen focuses its resources on Watchlist countries, in practice it is able to provide analysis on countries or regions of interest beyond that list, making it significant for the EU's early warning architecture. Post-Lisbon, SitCen reports directly to the HR/VP, but despite its significance for EW intelligence and analysis inputs, there is no formal institutional relationship between SitCen and the thematic Directorate on Conflict Prevention and Security Policy.¹¹

7 This six-monthly overview informs the drafting of the Watchlist (see entry).

8 Article 21.2.C of the Lisbon Treaty states that 'The Union shall define and pursue common policies and actions, and shall work for a high degree of cooperation in all fields of international relations, in order to [...] preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security'. European Union (2007). 'The Treaty of Lisbon, amending the Treaty Establishing the European Union and the Treaty Establishing the European Community', *Official Journal of the European Union 2007/C 306/01*. Lisbon.

9 J. Hemmer and R. Smits (2010). *Op. cit.*

10 Security and Defence Agenda (2011). 'The need to know: European information-sharing. SDA roundtable report 22 September 2011', accessed 31st October 2011. Available at http://www.securitydefenceagenda.org/Portals/14/Documents/Publications/2011/Info_sharing_Report.pdf

11 See ANNEX I.

INTELLIGENCE STEERING BOARD (ISB) AND INTELLIGENCE WORKING GROUP

ISB is an informal initiative and represents an organisational reaction to support greater integration within the new external action hub. It is one of the newest bodies within EEAS, having been convened only at the end of 2011. Two of the tasks of this new Steering Board are to assess the implications of the post-Lisbon institutional changes and the strengthened conflict-prevention mandate for the EU intelligence architecture. ISB will task a working group of intelligence experts from within EEAS, which will be known as the Intelligence Working Group. This will be jointly headed by the Intelligence Director of EUMS and the Head of SitCen, and it will be formally chaired by the HR/VP (although this will likely be delegated to the Executive Secretary-General).

SITUATION ROOM

Established in July 2011, the Situation Room reports directly to the Managing Director (MD) for Crisis Response and Operational Coordination and brings together the duties of the former EU Commission Crisis Room and the Watchkeeping Capability (see *next entry*). The formal duties of the Situation Room are to provide worldwide monitoring and situation awareness, to serve the EU Delegations (EUDs) and CSDP Missions, to provide support to Crisis Management Platforms,¹² and to engage with relevant Member States' crisis coordination centres.¹³ The Situation Room is also responsible for early alerts,¹⁴ making it an important part of EU architecture for early warning on conflict prevention. The "clients" of the Situation Room are much broader than the pre-Lisbon Joint Situation Centre, encompassing not only the HR/VP and the EEAS Corporate Board, but also the various directorates and divisions within EEAS and the Council.

WATCHKEEPING CAPABILITY (WKC)

Located within the Situation Room, the WKC is a 24-hour desk serving missions, EUDs, and EU in-country staff more generally. It allows immediate access to Brussels headquarters (HQ) outside traditional office hours, and is a direct line for emergency reporting to the HR/VP. The emergency reporting line to the HR/VP could make the WKC significant for early warning as it allows for the circumvention of normal channels of reporting through the hierarchy of the geographic directorates in emergency or time-sensitive situations.

EU SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVES (EUSRS)

A more integrated working relationship across institutions has meant closer coordination between EUSRs and EEAS,¹⁵ and has also meant that the pre-Lisbon competitive element between EUSRs as a Council instrument and the Commission's DG for External Relations (RELEX) has largely dissipated.¹⁶ Alongside the Heads of EU Delegation, EUSRs have taken on a coordinating role for EU in-country actors, including Member States' embassies, though its official engagement with Member States is maintained through the Political and Security Committee (PSC) and through Council working parties. The direct reporting line between EUSRs, the PSC and the HR/VP, as well as Council working parties, is seen as a strength for early warning, with some perceiving EUSRs as closest to an effective EW instrument that the EU currently has at its disposal.¹⁷ Due to the flexibility in the scope of their mandate compared with country-bound EUDs or other country-specific EU actors, EUSRs can play an important role in addressing the transnational or regional character of conflicts.

12 Also referred to as Crisis Platforms, the informal and temporary Crisis Management Platforms, convened by the MD for Crisis Response and Operational Coordination within EEAS, bring together the various bodies working on the different elements of the EU's crisis management and response capacity within the new EEAS structure. These are temporary platforms that are convened for the duration of a crisis to enhance coordination, and many can be operational simultaneously.

13 EU (2011). 'High Representative Catherine Ashton visits the new EU Situation Room (18 July 2011 A 286/11)', accessed 11th November 2011. Available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/123911.pdf

14 In contrast with SitCen's longer-term analysis of conflicts, the Situation Room handles short-term early alerts.

15 This coordination is featured in EUSR mandates, for example see Official Journal of the European Union (2011). *Mandate of the EUSR for the Southern Mediterranean region: Council Decision 2011/424/CFSP of 18 July 2011*. Brussels.

16 Interview with EEAS official, Brussels, November 2011; Interview with Member State representative, Brussels, November 2011.

17 Interview with Member State representative, Brussels, November 2011.

EU DELEGATIONS (EUDS)

The post-Lisbon changes to the former European Commission delegations is one of the most significant changes to the EU's international engagement. The mandate of the new EUDs has expanded significantly, evolving into embassy-type missions that coordinate with Member State embassies and represent the EU on all competencies. Political sections of EUDs are being strengthened in light of this expanded mandate, including plans to boost EUD capacity for conflict analysis, mediation and diplomacy. As the main EU actors "on the ground", EUDs can form a key component in EU EW through their reporting to geographic desks within EEAS, which can include information on impending conflicts. At present, it is also foreseen for the EUD reports to be shared systematically with thematic directorates and relevant divisions within EEAS, including the Conflict Prevention, Peace-building and Mediation Division (see entry in *Overarching Coordination of Early Warning – Early Response section*).¹⁸ However, it was observed by one interviewee that the institutional link between PSC and EEAS could be further strengthened by PSC inclusion in the reporting line for EUD reports.¹⁹

REGIONAL CRISIS RESPONSE PLANNING OFFICERS (RCRPOS)

There are eight RCRPOs which constitute the 'outposts for the Instrument for Stability (IfS)'²⁰ (see entry in *Early Responses to Conflict Warnings section*). They are responsible for collecting and analysing information on regional crises that will inform IfS funding priorities and opportunities.²¹ Thus, their role in EW-ER spans both the initial phase of conflict analysis and the end-response phases, where IfS constitutes the EU's conflict-prevention response (see *Instrument for Stability entry*). Despite the fact that RCRPOs do have an EW role to play, in practice, the broad geographical scope of the Officers makes performing an EW function impractical.²² However, as part of the EU delegations, RCRPOs can play a supporting role in EUD conflict analysis duties and reinforce conflict analysis capacity for EUDs under particular strain, at their request.²³

RELEVANT SOURCES

EU DELEGATION REPORTS

With the expanded mandate, EUD reports will have to become far more comprehensive in terms of their policy and thematic scope. It has already been noted that EUD reporting to the geographic desks within EEAS would include information on conflicts as part of the mainstreaming of conflict prevention. However, this remains an outstanding issue, as many delegations do not yet have the staffing capacity or training to produce formalised conflict analysis that could be used in an EW system. Moreover, while it is also foreseen for the EUD reports to be shared with CPPMD (see entry in *Overarching Coordination of Early Warning – Early Response section*), it is not clear who has the authority to communicate a formal "warning" and whether it would be a function of EUD reports.

EU SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE REPORTING

Since Lisbon, the reporting line for EUSRs includes the HR/VP as well as the PSC. EUSR reporting requirements are set out in Article 11 of the EUSR mandates, which stipulates:

'The EUSR shall regularly provide the PSC and the HR with oral and written reports. The EUSR shall also report to Council working parties as necessary. Regular written reports shall be circulated through the COREU network'.²⁴

However, in practice, the approach to reporting and the frequency of reporting can vary greatly depending on the individual EUSR. Some EUSRs have excellent access to national political actors, as well as non-governmental sources, enabling them to gather relevant country-level information to feed back to the PSC and the HR/VP. EUSR reporting also conveys updates based on meetings with relevant conflict players and the latest developments on political and security situations. Nevertheless, whilst conflict analysis is produced by EUSR teams, it does not adhere to any formal structure or methodology.

¹⁸ Interviews with EEAS officials, Brussels, October and November 2011.

¹⁹ Interview with Member State representative, Brussels, November 2011.

²⁰ Telephone interview with CSO expert on EU early warning and early response structures, November 2011.

²¹ S. Babaud and N. Mirmanova (2011). *Op. cit.*

²² Interview with EEAS official, Brussels, October 2011.

²³ Telephone interview with European Commission official, November 2011.

²⁴ For more details and EUSR mandates, see Council of the EU (2011). *EU Special Representatives*. Brussels. Available at <http://consilium.europa.eu/policies/foreign-policy/eu-special-representatives?lang=en>

MEMBER STATES

The intelligence institutions of EU Member States share civilian and military intelligence with SitCen and EUMS, making them a significant intelligence source for the EU's foreign and security apparatus. However, the provision of intelligence is voluntary; therefore, it is difficult to assess how complete this intelligence is. In the current set up, when the PSC is presented with analysis produced by SitCen and EUMS, that may be based on such intelligence, PSC Ambassadors have to compare the analysis against their own national sources of intelligence and analysis for verification. This indicates that, despite some sharing, Member State actors are still the only actors that have access to a comprehensive picture of intelligence. This patchwork approach to intelligence sharing may need to be reviewed in the post-Lisbon era to support more accurate and comprehensive EU analysis for decisions under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society actors in country, or with extended networks of local actors in a country, are an important information resource for early warning. Whilst some information or analysis from civil society organisations (CSOs) would be collected as a matter of course by open-source information tools (see *ODIN and Tariqa 3 entries*), other more topical or up-to-date information may only be accessible through direct contact with CSOs in the country or through the information channels of Europe-based CSOs with large in-country networks. CSOs can also act as facilitators of communication between different EU institutional actors and local non-governmental information sources, and therefore represent a valuable resource for EU EW. The Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) does provide a forum for civil society organisations active on conflict prevention and peacebuilding issues to engage with EU policy makers on early warning aspects. However, there is potential for this engagement to become more systematised for the purposes of early warning specifically.

RELEVANT TOOLS

ODIN

ODIN is an open source software information tool developed for the pre-Lisbon Situation Centre, now utilised by the Situation Room. ODIN is intended to support monitoring and early warning and was conceived as a tool for shortening decision-making time and enhancing crisis preparedness. This tool enables searches to be filtered according to keywords and according to user needs. ODIN also encompasses a website monitoring function. Its relevance for post-Lisbon EW-ER is not clear as the EEAS information architecture is under review and, whilst there are many potential tools, it is not clear which ones will be used going forward. The review process has been undertaken in light of a lack of harmonisation of use, individual preferences for information sources, and the dispersal of different tools across institutions.²⁵

TARIQA 3

Tariqa 3 was designed to compile and provide first-hand resources on a particular conflict, theme or issue.²⁶ It is still used as EW tool within the new Situation Room. However, it is considered to be just one of many sources or tools for information gathering, as others, such as ODIN, can offer more sophisticated functions, for example more precise filtering and information extraction. One of the main advantages of Tariqa 3 is its ability to collect audio-visual data. As is the case for ODIN, with a review of the EEAS information architecture underway, the exact future and role of Tariqa 3 for EW-ER is not clear.

WATCHLIST

The Watchlist is a biannually-reviewed list of approximately 40 countries that the EU should monitor closely. As discussed in the EUMS and SitCen entries, the Watchlist is based on the biannual global overview, which is the main driver of the work programme of EUMS and SitCen. The list is accompanied by short analytical supplements.²⁷ The Watchlist is a confidential internal EU document that requires the endorsement of the PSC before it can be finalised. The endorsement process has, in the past, been criticised as a highly political process.²⁸ However post-Lisbon, the Watchlist exercise appears to be more focused on the global six-monthly review process rather than the final Watchlist product.²⁹

25 Interview with EEAS official, Brussels, November 2011.

26 S. Babaud and N. Mirimanova (2011). *Op. cit.*

27 J. Hemmer and R. Smits (2010). *Op. cit.*

28 L. Montanaro and J. Schünemann (2011). *Walk the Talk: the EU needs an effective early warning system to match its ambitions to prevent conflict and promote peace*. IfP-EW: Brussels. See also ADE (2011). *Op. cit.*

29 Interview with EEAS official, Brussels, November 2011.

4. DECISION MAKING ON EARLY RESPONSES

HIGH-REPRESENTATIVE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND SECURITY POLICY AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION (HR/VP)

The HR/VP represents an important part of the EU EW-ER architecture, because he/she is the highest decision-making authority on responses within EEAS and is the “gatekeeper” between EEAS bodies and Member States within the Council of the EU on responses that require Member State authorisation. Aside from this, the HR/VP also has the ability to execute responses, which is discussed further in the section on *Early Responses to Conflict Warnings*.

POLITICAL AND SECURITY COMMITTEE (PSC)

Post-Lisbon, the PSC is now chaired by a representative of the HR/VP, and as part of EEAS, the chair is responsible for ensuring coherence between the work of the Council and EEAS.³⁰ Nonetheless, the mandate of the PSC has not changed.³¹ The PSC remains tasked with monitoring the international situation with reference to the CFSP. It is still the key Council body for conflict and crisis issues, with the responsibility to deal with crisis situations and present EU response options to the Foreign Affairs Council. Furthermore, it exercises political control over the strategic direction of CSDP missions and also ‘maintain[s] a privileged link with...the special representatives’ (see *EUSR entry*). This link is central to decision making on EW-ER where warnings originate from an EUSR. Its advisory role on responses and input into CSDP missions is also a significant function for responses to early warnings.³²

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Conflict Management Board is an informal body made up of EEAS Managing Directors, heads of the bodies within crisis management structures, and relevant thematic and geographic Directors according to the agenda. As the Conflict Prevention Group (see *entry in Overarching Coordination of Early Warning – Early Response section*) reports to the Board, it has some decision-making capacity on EU conflict prevention, making it relevant in the EU’s emerging EW and ER post-Lisbon architecture. It is mostly chaired by the Executive Secretary General of the EEAS Corporate Board, but also occasionally by the HR/VP or the MD for Crisis Response and Operational Coordination.

EEAS REGIONAL COORDINATORS

Within EEAS geographic directorates there are now Regional Coordinators assigned where necessary to provide a “regional” or cross-border monitoring capacity, for example for the Sahel and the Great Lakes.³³ With closer institutional ties to the EEAS structure than EUSRs, and reporting lines that run directly to the Managing Directors of the geographic directorates, the Regional Coordinator has the potential to address the transnational and -regional elements of a conflict and, therefore, inform EW-ER decision making on warnings that originate from in-country EU actors.

30 European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (2011). ‘Power Analysis: The EU and Peacebuilding after Lisbon’, accessed 10th November 2011. Available at http://www.eplo.org/assets/files/2.%20Activities/Working%20Groups/EEAS/EPLO_PeacebuildingafterLisbon_FINAL.pdf

31 Ibid.

32 However, the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) could also be potentially significant for early warning conflict prevention by providing a “first contact” link between EEAS analysis and Member States at an earlier stage in the EW-ER decision-making process than PSC.

33 Interview with EEAS official, Brussels November 2011.

5. EARLY RESPONSES TO CONFLICT WARNINGS

RELEVANT ACTORS

HIGH-REPRESENTATIVE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND SECURITY POLICY AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

As mentioned previously, the HR/VP has the ability to execute some preventive responses, such as political statements or recommendations to the Council on the appointment of EUSRs. The post therefore has an additional role to play at the end stage of the EW-ER process.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING DIRECTORATE (CMPD)

CMPD was established in April 2010 from the merger of Directorates E VIII and E IX in the Council, dealing with defence and civilian crisis management respectively.³⁴ CMPD represents the EU's integrated planning capacity for CSDP missions, and it is responsible for drafting options documents and crisis-management concepts following an indication of interest to undertake EU action on a particular crisis. Therefore, CMPD's position within the EW-ER chain comes at the response end, once a decision to act has already been taken. Given that more planning is required to deploy CSDP missions, which has to be carried out by the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability and EUMS, there are still further stages of planning after CMPD input to achieve full deployment. This has implications for the validity of CSDP missions as an *early* response instrument.

FOREIGN POLICY INSTRUMENTS SERVICE (FPI)

The Foreign Policy Instruments Service administers IfS, which is the EU's "rapid intervention" instrument for crises (*see Instrument for Stability entry*). As such, the management role of FPI is relevant in relation to the EU's early response capacity. Although it is formally situated within the European Commission, FPI reports directly to HR/VP Catherine Ashton in her dual role as Vice President of the Commission. Nonetheless, FPI is represented in the EEAS organigramme.³⁵

EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATIONS (EUDS)

As noted in the discussion on EUDs in the section on EW information and analysis, the enhancement of the delegations will have implications for how they can engage in the EW-ER process (*see EUD entry in Section 3*). This change includes improving the capacity for mediation and diplomacy, which constitute preventive responses. However, the change in status from Commission to EU delegation, and their integration into the new EEAS structure may also have consequences for their degree of autonomy. One interviewee indicated that this change may signify less flexibility for autonomous responses or response programming than before.³⁶

³⁴ ADE (2011). *Op. cit.*

³⁵ See ANNEX I for EEAS Organigramme.

³⁶ Interview with EEAS official, Brussels, November 2011.

RELEVANT INSTRUMENTS

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY (CSDP) MISSIONS

CSDP missions are the most robust response that the EU can make, and therefore entail a more involved process of decision making and a higher level of authority to be initiated.³⁷ As a result of the long timeline between concept and action, the potential for CSDP missions to be viable as an early response may be limited.³⁸ However, the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty opens up the possibility of CSDP missions with an overt early prevention objective. Interviewees were not able to confirm whether there had been discussions about the specific procedural implications of planning early prevention rather than long-term, structural, conflict-prevention CSDP missions.³⁹ However, with the strengthened mandate for conflict prevention, the viability of early response missions would need to be considered.⁴⁰

INSTRUMENT FOR STABILITY (IFS)

IfS projects come in many forms, for instance 'support to mediation, confidence building, interim administrations, strengthening rule of law, transitional justice or the role of natural resources in conflict',⁴¹ and are intended to deal with various types of crisis or emerging crises. In practice, the largest portion of IfS resources is directed towards responses to crises that have already emerged or towards long-term, structural conflict prevention. However, as the proclaimed "rapid intervention" instrument, there is an opportunity for IfS to fulfil a truly "rapid" and early response function if the average timeline of two to four months from proposal to delivery of funds can be further reduced.⁴²

MEDIATION

At present, the mediation capacity of the EU is restricted to certain actors, namely the HR/VP and EUSRs, depending on their mandate. However, the EU's involvement in mediation as an EW response is also visible through EU funding of third party actors such as United Nations (UN) agencies, regional intergovernmental organisations and civil society actors.⁴³ Currently there are ongoing efforts to build the EEAS's own mediation support capacity under a European Parliament pilot action. As part of the strengthening of EUDs, better capacity for the Heads of EUDs to engage in mediation, for example Track III dialogues, is also foreseen, making early intervention at country level more feasible.

POLITICAL DIALOGUE

Political dialogue has a natural affinity with conflict prevention, particularly EW, as it is a low-resource and relatively easily implemented early intervention. Though referenced as a EU conflict-prevention response in many of the interviews, there are few detailed examples of how and when political dialogue has been employed explicitly in response to a warning.⁴⁴ At present, the ability for EUDs to engage in political dialogue is not defined, but is instead understood in terms of a continuum, with Heads of EUDs evaluating the limits of their mandate based on their knowledge of EU Member State preferences.⁴⁵ However, the EU's capacity to increase political dialogue at the country level will be tied to the strengthening of the political, diplomatic, and conflict-related skills in the EUDs.

37 CSDP missions are mandated by the Council, and their launch requires a unanimous Council decision. See M. Derks and S. More (2009). *The European Union and Internal Challenges for Effectively Supporting Security Sector Reform*. Clingendael Institute.

38 Despite the fact that Georgia is cited as a success story in terms of swift CSDP decision making, taking only six weeks to reach a decision, the possibility of a mission in South Sudan has been under discussion for over two years without a conclusion being reached. Based on Interview with CSO expert on EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding, Brussels, November 2011.

39 Of the 13 active missions as of October 2011, 11 are civilian and two military, with the majority of the civilian missions focused on security sector reform. See ISIS Europe (2011). *European Security Review Briefing 9 – Chart and table of CSDP and EU missions*. International Security Information Service (ISIS) Europe. Brussels.

40 Interview with CSO expert on EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding, Brussels, November 2011.

41 EU External Action (2011). 'Instrument for Stability (IfS) – EU in action', accessed 1st November 2011. Available at http://eeas.europa.eu/ifs/index_en.htm

42 ADE (2011). *Op. cit.*

43 For example, Thabo Mbeki's role as chief mediator as part of the African Union's High Level Implementation Panel for Sudan. See J. van der Zwan (2011). *Evaluating the EU's role and challenges in Sudan and South Sudan*. Sudan and South Sudan Case Study. IfP:Brussels.

44 Given the sensitivity of dialogues, *démarches* and diplomacy in general, these response capabilities are more difficult to assess from outside EU structures as they are less likely to be discussed publicly.

45 Interview with Member State representative, Brussels, November 2011.

DEMARCHES

The impact and value of *démarches* as a conflict-prevention response depends on perceptions of the EU as a global actor within the country concerned, and the extent to which external recognition can be an influencing factor in the policies or practices of those governments.⁴⁶ Furthermore, *démarches* are, to some extent, linked to the strengthening of diplomatic capacity for EU in-country actors, as discussed previously. As with the case of political dialogue, *démarches* were often noted as an EU conflict-prevention response in interviews, yet very little information was available either from interviewees or in the public domain of examples of *démarches* in response to an early warning.⁴⁷

POLITICAL STATEMENTS

The EU can issue a variety of political statements, each requiring different levels of decision-making authority to act, ranging from joint EU-HR/VP statements and HR/VP spokespersons to statements from the Head of an EUD.⁴⁸ However, from the interviews conducted for this mapping exercise, it appears that there is very little systematic guidance on when each of the range of statements should be used.

RESTRICTIVE MEASURES / SANCTIONS

EU restrictive measures or sanctions can be applied to preserve peace and therefore constitute a conflict-prevention response.⁴⁹ Sanctions are frequently used in concert with other responses, such as political statements or *démarches*. Restrictive measures can take various forms, for example diplomatic sanctions, flight bans and/or boycotts of sporting or cultural events. However, as restrictive measures require unanimity from Member States, the authority threshold for this type of conflict-prevention response is one of the highest. As a rule, those responses requiring high-level decision-making authority are the most difficult to predict and therefore systemise, due to political divergence amongst EU Member States. Despite this, the threat of sanctions can be effective in itself.⁵⁰

46 Interview with CSO expert on EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding, Brussels, November 2011.

47 See footnote 46.

48 Interview with EEAS official, Brussels, November 2011.

49 European Commission (2008). 'Sanctions or restrictive measures', accessed 24th November 2011. Available at http://eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/sanctions/docs/index_en.pdf#1

50 However, without the certainty of follow-through by Member States, it is not clear whether such a threat could be used as an early response.

6. OVERARCHING COORDINATION OF EARLY WARNING – EARLY RESPONSE

CONFLICT PREVENTION, PEACE-BUILDING AND MEDIATION DIVISION (CPPMD)⁵¹

Established following the Lisbon Treaty under the thematic Directorate for Conflict Prevention and Security Policy within EEAS, CPPMD has taken the lead in convening an informal coordination task force, the Conflict Prevention Group (see next entry). The CPPMD has also taken on the responsibility for the monitoring of the implementation of the 2001 Göteborg Programme.⁵² With 15 posts, the CPPMD has a considerable task in taking on the EU's conflict prevention, peacebuilding and mediation portfolio. Though some have questioned its capacity to fulfil its function given the size of the Division,⁵³ this may be due to a lack of clarity among EU actors about the role of this relatively new unit. Whilst some perceive it as a provider of conflict analysis within EEAS, others interpret its role as mainly conceptual, providing horizontal guidance for EEAS bodies on developments in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and mediation arising from other fora.⁵⁴ In fact, the Division is focusing on providing operational support to country teams to help bridge the gap between early warning and early action, which has so far been received positively by the EUDs concerned. On early warning specifically, the intention is to approach EW-ER as an anticipatory mechanism focused on identifying and managing risks and taking mitigating action, as opposed to a rigid predictive mechanism.⁵⁵

CONFLICT PREVENTION GROUP (CPG)⁵⁶

CPG is an informal platform conceived in autumn 2011 to bring together the various bodies working on elements of conflict prevention within the new EEAS structure. CPG will be convened by CPPMD of EEAS (see previous entry). The Group aims to take the lead in supporting cohesive implementation of a “whole of EU” approach to conflict prevention and will be actively engaged with the topic of early warning and early response. Despite its ambitious aims, as an informal body the CPG will be reliant on the voluntary engagement of various EEAS, Council, and Commission bodies working on EW or response in order to be effective. Moreover, due to the fact that its convening body is less senior in the EEAS hierarchy than the MD for Crisis Response and Operational Coordination (who convened the Crisis Management Platforms),⁵⁷ it will have to work hard to build up a strong institutional profile. Nevertheless, as CPG is in a nascent state it is too early to assess its impact on EU coordination of EW-ER to conflict prevention, and in its aim to promote a “whole of EU” approach to EW-ER, it could well prove to be a significant actor in the EU conflict-prevention architecture.

51 Though the EEAS organigramme refers to this division as the Peacebuilding, Conflict Prevention and Mediation Division (PCPMD), a number of interviewees stated that the correct title is the Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Mediation Division.

52 The 2001 EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts (Göteborg Programme) is considered to be the EU's core policy document for conflict prevention (CP), outlining four key CP priorities for the Union: set clear political priorities for preventive actions; improve its early warning, action and policy coherence; enhance its instruments for long- and short-term prevention; build effective partnerships for prevention.

53 Interview with EEAS official, Brussels, November 2011.

54 Interview with Member State representative, Brussels, November 2011.

55 Interview with EEAS officials, Brussels, November 2011.

56 Interviews with EEAS officials, Brussels, October and November 2011.

57 Crisis Management Platforms have been established for longer than their conflict-prevention counterpart, CPG, and the working relationship and access of the MD for Crisis Response and Operational Coordination to the HR/VP is seen as one of its strengths. Its other advantage over CPG arises from the institutional perception of crisis management as having greater institutional significance and responsibility. For more details, see T. Beswick (2012). *Op. cit.*

7. INTERIM OBSERVATIONS ON POST-LISBON EU EARLY WARNING & EARLY RESPONSES

As the number of formal and informal bodies that may be involved in EW or ER has grown, there is an even greater need for defined decision-making lines tailored to the response in order to overcome the problem of lack of awareness or inconsistent engagement with early-warning and response mechanisms.⁵⁸

The current architecture has not yet resolved the lack of political leadership and direction that characterised pre-Lisbon early warning and early responses; therefore, there is still a danger that the capacity being developed within the EU may still be unable to implement integrated and effective early preventive action on emerging conflicts.

Prior to Lisbon and the establishment of EEAS, there had been some momentum on conflict prevention, largely emanating from DG RELEX. However, **the transition process has shifted the focus from policy initiatives to institutional processes.**⁵⁹

Whilst some available EU conflict responses can easily take on new applications related to the strengthened conflict-prevention mandate, others may need adaptation. **Not every response must fit an early response function,** but where such a role is foreseen, procedural changes will need to be made to ensure that the relevant actors, decision-making processes and levels of authority for deployment are coherent with an early response objective.

58 ADE (2011). *Op. cit.*

59 Telephone interview with CSO expert on EU early warning and early response structures, November 2011.

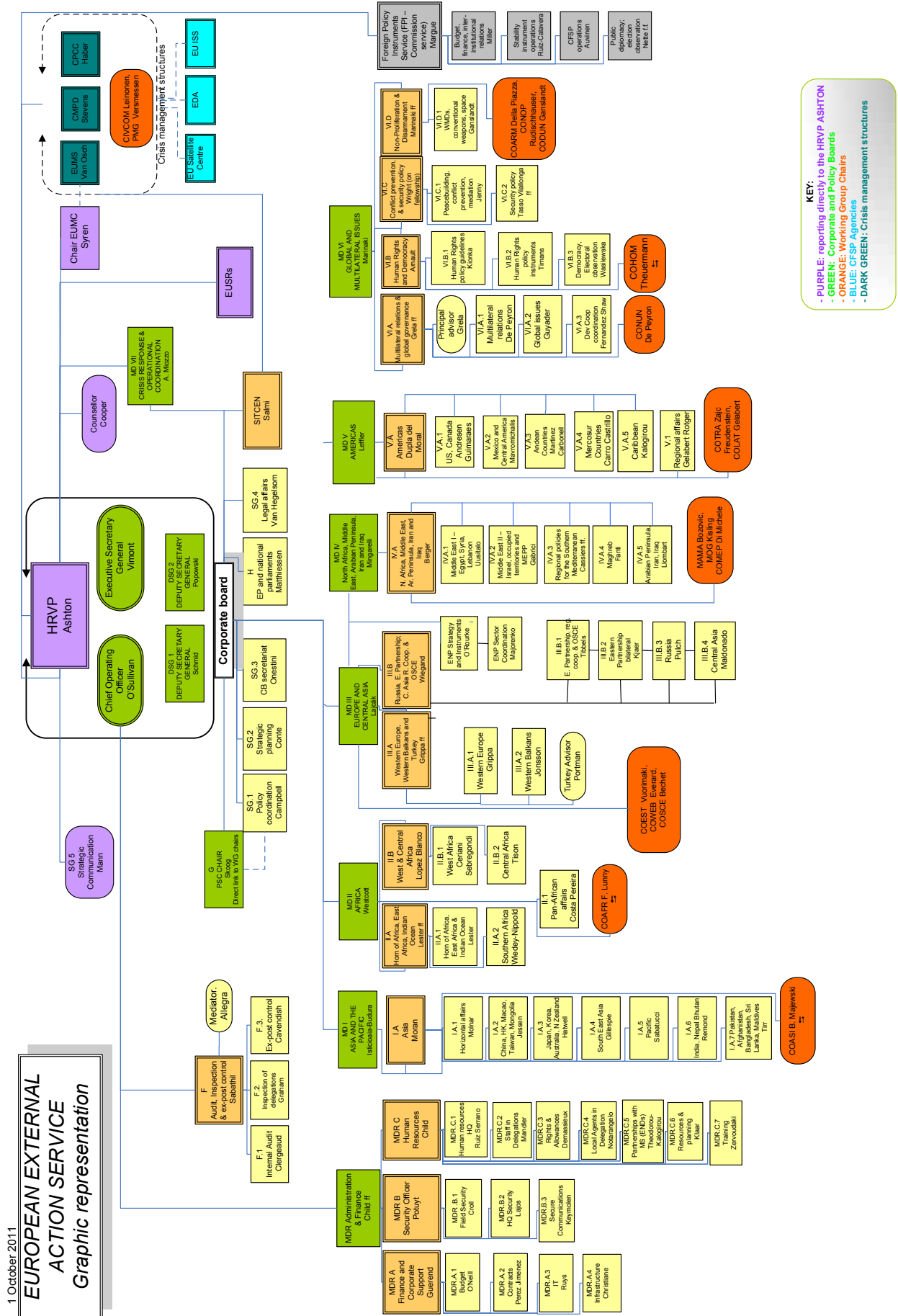
8. CONCLUDING REMARKS

For an actor with so many resources at its disposal, many would argue that the EU is well placed to be a global leader in EW and ER. However, the EEAS transition period is not yet complete. At this stage, it appears to many that the institutional transition into a cohesive EU External Action Service has taken precedence over the development and implementation of policies governing content, making it difficult to carry out a fair assessment of EU engagement on EW and ER at this moment in time.

Given that the transition is in progress, there are still opportunities to address some of the persisting pre-Lisbon challenges on EW-ER, such as the lack of common EU-wide understanding of EW for conflict prevention, new challenges exposed by the change in institutional structure, recently renewed political commitments on conflict prevention and a “whole of EU” approach to external action.⁶⁰ The task for Member States, the HR/VP and those stepping into EEAS is to transform the EU’s theoretical commitments on EW and ER to emerging conflicts into timely and effective “in-practice” actions that will prevent and reduce the impact of violent conflicts.

60 For analysis and recommendations on the EU EW-ER architecture, see T. Beswick (2012). *Op. cit.*

ANNEX I EEAS ORGANIGRAMME (OCTOBER 2011)



INITIATIVE FOR  PEACEBUILDING
EARLY WARNING

c/o International Alert
205 Rue Belliard, B-1040 Brussels Tel: +32 (0) 2 234 5792 Fax: +32 (0) 2 234 5799
ifp-ew@international-alert.org www.ifp-ew.eu



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