

# IFP CAPACITY-BUILDING AND TRAINING CLUSTER COUNTRY CASE STUDY: SLOVENIA

## SLOVENIA AND PEACEBUILDING

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report examines perceptions and understandings regarding peacebuilding amongst actors that are directly or indirectly related to development assistance in Slovenia. It is quite clear that all stakeholders understand peacebuilding very differently. The Slovenian government and governmental institutions regard peacebuilding as a broad concept – as an international development cooperation concept akin to Official Development Assistance (ODA). This concept enables Slovenian government, governmental and non-governmental institutions to exercise different actions to identify, establish and support structures for strengthening and consolidating peace that can be accepted as peacebuilding efforts of Slovenia. However, the concept and funds provided by ODA are not part of ministerial expenditures or actions, and can be perceived as “superministerial”, coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). A great deal of this assistance is available to different NGOs. How it works, and what the strategic priorities of Slovenia are, is discussed in the first section of this paper.

Second, and quite important is the assistance focused on the same efforts but within ministries. Many of them have different specialised programmes for development assistance. This may be described as ministerial cooperation; in many cases based on bilateral agreements signed by the governments. Since not all Slovenian government ministries are equally involved in peacebuilding, this paper focuses on those that are taking the lead. Exceptions to that are the Ministry of Interior (MI) and Ministry of Defence (MoD). Both are committed to different actions that might be perceived as peacekeeping and peacebuilding. To distinguish between them, and for the needs of this paper, we drew a line between uniformed missions of the Slovenian armed forces (SAF) and police, and the efforts exercised by civil experts and advisors from different ministries which are concentrated on state-building actions. These activities are deployed through the well established systems of both the MI and MoD.

When speaking about peacebuilding with the Slovenian public, confusion regarding the concept is much more apparent. Public opinion polls cannot directly measure the support for peacebuilding activities in Slovenia, because for Slovenians “peacebuilding” is associated or confused with “peacekeeping”, and peacebuilding activities are regarded as part of the mandate of mandate of SAF. This may partly explain the clear reluctance, or even lack of support, for peacebuilding actions amongst the Slovenian public. The report finds that, while the Slovenian government has committed itself to supporting peacebuilding in theory, implementation of peacebuilding activities is limited by a lack of public support, confusion regarding “peacebuilding” and “peacekeeping” amongst the public and even decision-makers, and lack of coordination between the government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

We examined the main decision-makers in Slovenia and those ministries that implement ODA. The main government actor is the MFA, since it represents the central government institution in Slovenia that addresses foreign and security policy, and enjoys the principal organisational responsibility for Slovenian activities abroad. In addition, it coordinates secondment of personnel abroad through the Interministerial Commission of the Secondment of Personnel to International Civil Missions. Unfortunately, there are many obstacles to implementing ODA in the field. Many activities that are carried out are not well coordinated and are perceived as the sole responsibility of one ministry. Regarding the deployment of different experts, the MI and MoD are increasingly taking the lead. Both have extensive experience in different missions and are increasingly active in coordinating activities that can and are defined as peacebuilding in Slovenia. Among them are: advising on the development of national security systems, restructuring local infrastructure etc.<sup>1</sup> However, the engagement

<sup>1</sup> For more detailed information on these activities, see ‘Slovenska vojska: Mednarodne misije’ (Slovenia Armed Forces: International Mission), Ministry of Defence, Slovenia, at <http://slovenskavojska.si/poklicna/misije/index.htm>.

of both the MI and MoD consequently blurs the line between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, which further confuses the Slovenian public and to some extent even decision-makers themselves. Other governmental institutions, such as the Ministry of Education and Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP), are committed to some peacebuilding efforts, but these tend to be projects of limited duration.

This report also looks at the role of Slovenian NGOs in peacebuilding. Slovenian NGOs can be categorised according to three legal structures: associations, private institutes and charitable institutions (such as the International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance).<sup>2</sup> On average, the state co-finances one-tenth of NGOs and one-half of the Slovenian public is engaged in voluntary activities with NGOs. The majority of NGOs are Slovenia-oriented. Moreover, since public support for peacebuilding actions is quite low, NGOs are not ready to invest their funds, personnel and energy to engage in cross-border or foreign assistance. In addition, the majority of them do not have developed networks in other countries; the Red Cross and Slovene Caritas are exceptions to this rule. However, even these organisations are oriented to geographical areas that Slovenians consider as within their “neighbourhood”, such as the Western Balkans. This is in line with the priorities of the Slovenian public, which support NGOs through donations. Lastly, there is poor coordination and cooperation between the Slovenian government and NGOs, with the exception of the Centre for European Perspective (CEP), which organises workshops and education seminars on different topics: to provide governmental institutions and their officials with essential knowledge for better state management, necessary for strengthening and consolidating peace. This report suggests that closer cooperation and the development of a common strategy between NGOs with regard to peacebuilding actions could help to address such obstacles.

Lastly, this report looks at public opinion polls, which reveal decreasing support for Slovenian international deployment and possible reasons for this decrease, such as the confusion between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. An additional problem is the lack of coverage by the Slovenian media. In many cases, they have reported on extreme situations and Slovenian involvement in them, rather than on the success stories of Slovenian peacebuilding assistance. It is clear that this issue should be better handled by the Slovenian authorities with the clear support of international organisations, especially the EU, which still enjoys high public support in Slovenia.

During the period of its independence, Slovenia has transformed from a beneficiary of democracy-building assistance to a donor country. Since this transformation was achieved in a very short period of time, there are many deficiencies in the process of international assistance. The clear and official definition of peacebuilding should be accepted and then presented to all potential stakeholders. Poorly coordinated efforts have to be better managed and more energy should be invested into promotion of the peacebuilding process.

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2 There is no definition of an NGO in the Slovenian legal system. However, there are three equivalents to the classical perception of NGO. Common to all is non-governmental involvement in their work.

## ACRONYMS

<b>CEID</b>	Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy
<b>CEP</b>	Center for European Perspective
<b>CIMIC</b>	Civil Military Cooperation
<b>DAC</b>	Development Assistance Committee
<b>DDR</b>	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
<b>ENP</b>	European Neighbourhood Policy
<b>ESDP</b>	European Security and Defence Policy
<b>EULEX</b>	European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>GNI</b>	Gross National Income
<b>LDCs</b>	Least Developed Countries
<b>MESP</b>	Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning
<b>MFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>MoD</b>	Ministry of Defence
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organisation
<b>PRT</b>	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
<b>RS</b>	Republic of Slovenia
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Assistance
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>OSCE</b>	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
<b>REC</b>	Regional Environmental Centre
<b>SAA</b>	Stabilisation and Association Agreement
<b>SAF</b>	Slovenian Armed Forces
<b>SAP</b>	Stabilisation and Association Process
<b>SSR</b>	Security Sector Reform
<b>UNMIK</b>	United Nations Mission in Kosovo

## INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, the areas with which the peacebuilding process is more and more associated already go considerably beyond what states are capable of supporting. Many peacebuilding efforts, therefore, are limited by tight timeframes and resources. Numerous conflicts are extremely complex and linked to different forms of frictions, caused by unequal access to important resources, ethnic strife, unequal position of minorities and longlasting suppression of democracy. In many cases, these conflicts were not properly perceived by the international community and can be a consequence of enforced or “negative” peace. It is thus necessary for the implementation of peacebuilding in a specific area not only to focus on demilitarisation, demobilisation and reintegration of former soldiers into the civil society, but also to address the primary reasons that led to the outbreak of armed violence. This paper will give in-depth view of peacebuilding in Slovenia: how it is understood by the government, NGOs and the general public. Slovenian understanding of peacebuilding is as a specific form of international cooperation focusing mainly on the provision of peace and security, which is theoretically, practically and legally placed within a framework of peacekeeping. However, this paper will underline some discrepancies between theoretical concepts and their actual implementation in Slovenia.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper is predominantly based on the analysis of primary sources (national legislation, internal acts, legal documents of NGOs etc.), interviews, informal discussions with relevant officials and actors in different sectors, and analysis of statistical surveys.

Research for this paper was conducted in summer 2008. However, it was quite difficult to approach the most relevant and responsible persons in Slovenian government, since the parliamentary elections took place in September 2008. Nevertheless, analysed documents relating to humanitarian assistance clearly showed that Slovenia did not completely establish an independent peacebuilding process as defined by International Alert and Partners for Democratic Change International (PDCI). Moreover, Slovenian efforts in the area of peacebuilding are divided between many governmental institutions and NGOs without strategic coordination. This was a clear disadvantage for the research group, because we were forced to use a bottom-up approach in order to collect relevant actions, missions and efforts organised by Slovenia that can be accepted as peacebuilding processes. The research team therefore used both the deduction and induction approach to collect relevant findings for this purpose.

Analysis was strongly supported by interviews carried out in different governmental institutions, as well as with the relevant representatives of the Slovenian NGOs. Interviews were structured and prepared by the Initiative for Peacebuilding (IfP) Capacity-Building and Training Cluster team-leaders. This helped and enabled direct mutual cooperation between different ministries and their representatives. We talked to the representatives of the most relevant ministries: MFA, MoD, MI, Ministry of Education and Sports, and MESP. In addition, the representatives of the most relevant NGOs in the peacebuilding process were also interviewed. Among them were the Slovenian Red Cross, Caritas Slovenia and Amnesty International Slovenia.

In order to observe possible changes in public opinion regarding the international activities of Slovenia – mostly various types of peace operations – we analysed public opinion surveys conducted over the past 14 years. The first Slovenian public opinion survey on security issues was made in 1994 and then, from 1999, on average every two years. This survey has been made with a face-to-face approach on a group of approximately 1,000 inhabitants. In June 2008, we added a few questions about peacebuilding to a monthly survey measuring public opinion on politics and other current issues, conducted with a group of approximately 800 Slovenians.

The structure of the paper will capture all the processes in the field of peacebuilding in Slovenia and emphasise some typical characteristics. It should be mentioned that research in the field of peacebuilding is rare and this paper represents quite a pioneering piece of work in Slovenia.

## SLOVENIA'S OBJECTIVES IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Since there are certain difficulties in drawing a clear distinction between peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts in Slovenia, for the purpose of this paper we will focus on the Slovenian international development and cooperation as accepted by the Government. This can be understood as the internationally accepted concept of ODA. Based on its economic development level and its membership in the EU, Slovenia has become a donor country for development assistance, thus assuming some responsibility for the development of less developed parts of the world. Slovenia is aware of the importance and the need to fight against poverty, and of the efforts to reduce differences in a world facing the challenges of globalisation. Slovenian responsibilities in development cooperation are clearly defined in the framework of EU membership.<sup>3</sup> The EU helps developing countries in their fight against poverty, strives to develop democracy, to enforce and protect human rights, and to achieve economic and social progress. As an EU Member State, Slovenia has accepted many commitments in the field of international development cooperation. As a rapidly growing economy, it made a commitment to increase resources for development cooperation to 0.17 percent of its Gross National Income (GNI) by 2010 and to 0.33 percent of its GNI by 2015, to direct development assistance particularly to the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) by respecting the principles of complementarity, coordination and coherence of policies, and by respecting agreements on division of labour among Member States and on enhanced efficiency of development cooperation. Slovenia has set objectives of international development cooperation on the basis of the following grounds:

- Coherence with the values and development policies of the Slovenian society and economy;
- Coherence with the objectives of the international community in the field of development, especially the objectives of the EU and UN; and
- Coherence with the objectives of foreign policy, the integral part of which is international development cooperation.

Slovenia has clearly identified its objectives on the basis of the adopted International Development Cooperation of Republic of Slovenia Act.<sup>4</sup> With this, it seeks to reduce poverty by promoting economic and social development, provide peace and security through a methodical fight against HIV and AIDS and other diseases that pose a threat to less developed countries, enable education for all, sustainable development and good governance, and to strengthen multilateral cooperation with priority countries.

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3 See Council of the European Union (November 2005). *Joint Statement by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States Meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission: 'The European Consensus on Development'*, at [http://ec.europa.eu/development/policies/consensus\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/development/policies/consensus_en.cfm).

4 Accepted on 6th July 2006. See 'Decree: Promulgating the International Development Cooperation, the Republic of Slovenia', Official Gazette, No. 70/2006, at <http://www.uradni-list.si/1/objava.jsp?urlid=200670&stevilka=2999>.

On this basis, Slovenia set priority geographical areas of international development cooperation according to the following criteria:

- Social and economic development level in the potential recipient country – less developed countries having priority;
- Achieved level of institutional development in the potential recipient country, enabling efficient use of development assistance – countries currently starting to adopt their legislation have priority;
- Achieved level of political, diplomatic and economic relations between Slovenia and the potential recipient countries;
- Historical, cultural and economic ties between Slovenia and potential recipient country; and
- Level of presence of other donors, and level of coherence of mutual cooperation and activity among them in the potential recipient country; and,
- Bilateral agreements on development cooperation, with countries from Southeast and East Europe having priority.

Taking these criteria into account, the Republic of Slovenia has defined the priority order of the following mezzoregions for its medium-term period of international development cooperation (until 2015):

- Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia);
- Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (Moldova and Ukraine); and,
- Developing countries, especially focusing on the African continent (planned cooperation in projects with priority status in other EU Member States).

Slovenia has paid special attention to the following categories of international development assistance:

- Humanitarian and post-conflict assistance mainly focuses on famine and poverty reduction, counterterrorism operations and help for children in post-conflict situations.
- Social services focus on provision of social infrastructure, enabling quality development of the country with specific emphasis on social policy, education policy on all levels, public finance reform, modernisation of public administration and local government, and training of administration in view of EU integration. This category includes activities associated with science and technology, as well as research activity cooperation, support for education and culture, assistance in training of experts from target countries, enabling scholarships for various forms of education and assistance in organising and implementing education programmes for selected groups of population in target countries.
- Economic services and infrastructure focus mainly on the interconnection of Slovenian companies in the target countries when planning, implementing and finally applying common projects. In particular infrastructure projects and projects promoting development of small- and medium-sized companies and their internationalisation, have priority.
- Multi-sectoral and horizontal forms of assistance concern implementation of programmes for adaptation to climate change, greenhouse gas reduction, efficient energy use, increased use of renewable resources and renewable resources management, attainment of food independence, access to suitable drinking water, strengthening the rule of law and respect for human rights, providing equal opportunities and implementing projects of civil-military cooperation with a view to calming situations in crisis areas.

When planning use of resources, Slovenia allocated 80 percent of funds to strategic and thus geographically proximate areas, including the Western Balkans region. Around 10 percent of all funds are allocated to the humanitarian and direct post-conflict activities of Slovenia. The international development assistance is managed by the Slovenian Government, which executes the national budget and thus also the resources.

During its presidency of the EU (1st January 2008 to 30th June 2008), Slovenia did not change its priorities in the area of international development assistance, but rather increased its attention on the Western Balkans, which is a direct security challenge for Slovenia and of great importance to the stability of Europe. Two key achievements were made in this area: the conclusion of a series of stabilisation and association agreements with all countries in the region except Kosovo, and the opening of dialogue on visa liberalisation for all the countries in the region. During Slovenia's presidency, strengthening of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was also an important priority in the field of provision of security, development and foreign affairs, where a step forward was made in civil-military capabilities development. Cooperation between EU and other defence and security organisations improved, especially in the case of NATO and the UN. At the Slovenian initiative, the defence ministers paid special attention to provision of stability and security in the Western Balkans. International development cooperation during the Slovenian presidency focused on the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), confirmed by the European Council. The presidency also paid special attention to the implementation of the rights of children and the position of women in armed conflicts.<sup>5</sup>

## CURRENT CHALLENGES REGARDING ODA AND PEACEBUILDING

As stated before, funds provided by the International Development Cooperation of Republic of Slovenia Act enable financial support of Slovenian NGOs and governmental institutions in actions to support efforts for strengthening and consolidating peace and consequently security, promoting democracy and economic development. Basically these funds can be perceived as direct peacebuilding resources of the Slovenian Government. Since an anticipated increase of resources (100 percent increase from 2010 to 2015) is expected, a comprehensive system for resource planning is needed. Hence, Slovenia established an interministerial working body to plan, coordinate, monitor and evaluate implementation of international development cooperation, with the objective of achieving the maximum effect of international development assistance. By 15th January 2009, this body will create a special working group to prepare proposals for organisational structure for further planning and organisation of implementation of interministerial development cooperation after 2010. A report should be drawn up by the end of May 2009.

Slovenia currently faces some deficiencies, mainly concerning transparency in using resources, which is why it intends to upgrade the current system of collecting data on the scope and structure of ODA, thus enabling it to harmonise it with the OECD methodology and obtain data of Slovenian activities in comparison to other countries.

Especially for the next medium-term period, it is necessary to strengthen the organisational structure within the MFA and ensure a suitable level of autonomy. It should be adapted to all specific features of ODA management and prepared for an increased scope of this assistance in the future. The MFA will continue to play a leading role in the medium-term planning, as well as in implementing work, which will be performed, where appropriate, on the basis of coordination with other ministries. The MFA will be in charge of controlling fund distribution and state priority settings, and of comprehensive and centralised reporting on achieved goals of Slovenia's development cooperation.

In the future, more funds will be allocated to education for development and raising public awareness, since a certain lack of connection between local and global reality can be seen. Peace and security cannot be perceived as a separate national issue, and in many cases the Slovenian public might need additional clarification on that issue. Without these measures, it is difficult to plan this type of assistance and especially to apply for development assistance funding.

<sup>5</sup> 'Achievements of the Slovenian Presidency of the EU Council', Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008, 30th June 2008, at [http://www.eu2008.si/en/News\\_and\\_Documents/Press\\_Releases/June/0630SVEZdosezki.html](http://www.eu2008.si/en/News_and_Documents/Press_Releases/June/0630SVEZdosezki.html).

To directly use these resources, the Government of Slovenia and the MFA have established or co-founded special institutions (e.g. International Trust Fund, CEP, Foundation TOGETHER), the aim of which are to actively participate in individual content or thematic areas in the field of international development cooperation. Slovenia allocates funds to these institutions for their basic operation, provided they draw up and carry out a suitable work programme. These institutions normally draw up projects, from which they apply for funds of development assistance.

A wider participation of local communities will have to be enabled in planning and implementation of international development cooperation projects. This will be possible in the future with direct (co-)financing of the representative associations of local and regional authorities capable of implementing these kinds of projects.

Finally, civil society will have to be included in the planning and implementation process of international development cooperation on a larger scale. NGOs should be able to access funds the state allocates to special forms of international development cooperation, with attention to the development of small and institutionally weak development NGOs. Slovenia will use calls for applications, adapted to characteristics of these groups of factors, to financially support their international development cooperation programmes/projects, as well as their institutional strengthening.

# GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS AND THEIR ROLE IN PEACEBUILDING

The following sections identify and outline the roles and responsibilities of the major institutional actors in international development cooperation and peacebuilding in Slovenia. Where appropriate, their engagement in planning and/or implementing peacebuilding activities as part of international development cooperation is highlighted.

## MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The MFA is the central government institution in Slovenia that ensures foreign security policy and has the principal organisational responsibility for Slovenian activities abroad. This function is defined by the Secondment of Personnel to International Civilian Missions and International Organisations Act, which governs the selection and secondment procedure of personnel – citizens of Slovenia – to international civilian missions and international organisations, where they are seconded by the state or other authority for a given time on the basis of invitation or call for applications of an international organisation. The act also governs the labour law status of these personnel. The act defines the international civilian mission (hereinafter 'mission') as an activity organised by the international community to provide assistance to target countries or territories under the protectorate of the international community, in providing stability and establishing democratic institutions by taking into account international standards, and as an activity providing international assistance to the civilian population at risk.

The second important act is the International Development Cooperation of the Republic of Slovenia Act, which defines the objectives and method of long-term planning, financing and implementation of international development cooperation of Slovenia. According to this act, international development cooperation is the ODA of Slovenia to developing countries, and includes all public finance expenses allocated for socio-economic development and welfare of developing countries, beneficiaries of ODA in accordance with the criteria of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The MFA acts as national coordinator for international development cooperation; on the proposal of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Slovenia nominates the Interministerial Working Body under the authority of the representative of the MFA for planning, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of implementation of international development cooperation.

Although the Slovenian activities abroad, as far as the civilian aspect of crisis management is concerned, are well planned, things do not work very well in practice. Notwithstanding Slovenian deployment of military facilities abroad and its involvement in civil military cooperation (CIMIC) activities, the Slovenian cooperation in civil operations of crisis management is in a big crisis. It is true there is a lot of good will and the Secondment of Personnel to International Civilian Missions and International Organisations Act is a good basis, but problems appear in actual implementation. The first obstacle is without a doubt a very inflexible system of state administration, which quite extensively hinders a quick response to crisis situations abroad (the last example was Georgia, where Slovenia could not react in such a short time and take part in the EU mission). There are issues in the form of financial problems, or limitations and unwillingness to let NGOs participate, and last but not least, public opinion is not very supportive of cooperation. So it can be said that Slovenia is far from the Scandinavian situation, where the state has managed to establish a (semi-)government organisation for implementation of (civilian) crisis management abroad and cooperation of interested NGOs accompanied by high public support. It can be said that a strategic

(security) culture has been formed, where fulfilment of national security objectives is principally considered as carrying out activities to support peace and democracy in various crisis centres abroad. However, activities of the Slovenian Ministry of Interior – the police, which has a well organised system of secondment abroad – are an exception. The activities of the Slovenian MI are an exception, however - the police have a well organised system of secondment abroad.

A big obstacle to a more flexible Slovenian approach is the functioning of state administration and lack of understanding for secondment abroad. Often the management does not want to lose its most capable personnel. In fact, secondment abroad is even considered a way of solving the issue of problematic personnel. Of course, this is true in the case of personnel already employed in civil services. Even bigger problems appear when the seconded personnel come from outside the civil services system. The biggest problem is not only money. On the one hand, the state does not know how to quickly identify suitable staff and regulate their statutory legal status. On the other hand, the academic circles and NGOs are not really prepared to participate in these kinds of activities, regardless of the fact that their personnel are more flexible and ready for challenges in comparison to state administration personnel (one possible solution to stimulate civil servants to participate in missions abroad could be to award special points for promotion or make it obligatory to occupy specific posts). It should be noted that, as far as experiences of the MFA are concerned, there are different experiences in individual areas, also as regards the cooperation with NGOs. In the area of human rights this cooperation is good, but the area of rule of law is distinctly underdeveloped. A clear example is the unwillingness of the Ministry of Justice to second Slovenian legal experts to Kosovo.

In addition, it is necessary to underline the importance of education and preparation for the missions of civilian crisis management. A problem for the state administration is that there is no uniform approach to civilian crisis management abroad, as well as no uniform approach to candidate training. At least it is not available in Slovenia and Slovenian officials are usually not sent to the EU Group on Training (EGT)<sup>6</sup> seminars abroad. In a review of the planned activities of the Centre for European Perspective of the CEP,<sup>7</sup> it can in fact be established that they want to rectify this and offer such educational seminars for the lead representatives of civil services. Apart from training, the finance issue is also decentralised (or uncoordinated). Since there is no single budget for peacebuilding, the budget is planned in each ministry autonomously.

Slovenian participation in the international environment or peacebuilding activities of a civil-military nature should without a doubt be addressed in a more systematic and serious way, not only at the political level. It will be necessary to change the social climate, which is quite unfavourable to Slovenian involvement abroad as regards civil servants, NGOs, the academic sphere and financial, as well as humanitarian assistance. Slovenian public opinion does not see such involvement as an added value to regional peace and security, and this hinders the decision-makers in different organisations from getting more seriously and deeply involved in peacebuilding activities. Here it can be seen that Slovenia has still not recognised these instruments as important factors of (foreign) security policy, not even in the region of Southeastern Europe, although participation in this region is the least controversial for the Slovenian politics and public. One possible solution is definitely a better defined and applied governmental policy to ensure a uniform approach within public administration. A good basis is a coordinating body, but this is obviously not enough; it would also be necessary to interest civil servants in secondments abroad. In cooperation with media and NGOs, it is naturally necessary to change the public opinion, which would have to accept these efforts and view them in a positive way. Finally, the portfolio or dispersion of Slovenian interests within international peacebuilding has to be built up. It should be very clear where Slovenian priorities are and what kind of instruments the country is able to offer. To respond quickly to increasingly unstable international environments, a possible solution could be the creation of a register of potential candidates within specific ministries to be held on stand-by and who could be seconded abroad very quickly.

## CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

The CEP is an independent, non-profit organisation established by the Government of Slovenia in 2004 in order to transfer experiences of EU integration to candidate countries or countries sharing the European perspective.

<sup>6</sup> For more information on the EGT, see <http://www.eutrainninggroup.net/roach/rootpage.do?pageld=1>.

The institution concentrates on candidate countries for membership in the EU, as well as potential candidates and countries that are part of the new European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The main activity of CEP is to provide training and professional assistance to various institutions, to coordinate project activities and provide financial assistance. CEP offers professional and technical assistance to governmental and non-governmental institutions in project implementation; performs an advisory function and prepares various training seminars, workshops, roundtables, lectures and conferences; and responds to current international issues. CEP activity is complemented by the activities of other state institutions, in particular the activities of the MFA and the Office of the Government of Slovenia for European Affairs. CEP has since carried out 33 projects in the areas of security, good governance, enlargement, training, institution development and socio-economic development. Among all projects, the following should be highlighted: four conferences addressed the Kosovo issue, three training seminars of several days were prepared for employees of Kosovo public services, five trainings for the employees of the Montenegrin public services, two training cycles to FYROM parliamentarians and one training on the subject of school reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Of great importance are also regional projects run by the Centre, namely training in the area of ESDP for the countries of Southeastern Europe and training in the field of energy, which was already held in seven modules. Apart from this, CEP organised an international conference in the thematic area of children affected by armed conflict, an international conference on EU capacity building in the area of civilian aspects of crisis management and an international conference of development assistance operators from the new EU Member States. It also actively participated in the organisation and implementation of a seminar on the police reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and one on arms export control in countries that signed the EU stabilisation and association agreements.

A working group for inter-cultural dialogue was also established in the framework of CEP. This group consists of high-ranking representatives of religious communities and experts for inter-cultural dialogue, and was established in order to create efficient and enhanced dialogue among Islamic communities and other political and religious entities in Europe. In the light of peacebuilding, a conference entitled 'Inter-ethnic and Inter-religious Relations in Kosovo: Building Bridges and Understanding and Cooperation', which took place in 2007, should be highlighted. Leaders of ethnic and religious communities, members of Kosovo's interim government, Slovenian Government and representatives of the international and Slovenian community participated in the conference, and discussed the ways to increase capacities for an active inter-cultural dialogue and cooperation in Kosovo. The aim of the conference was to compile different views and visions, in the hope of contributing to the improvement of inter-cultural cooperation and greater coexistence of all ethnic groups in Kosovo. At the conclusion of the conference, CEP issued a special report on inter-cultural dialogue, where expert articles and speeches of the conference participants were published.

One of the most important activities is the training of Slovenian officials for peacebuilding activities. Here, two trainings should be mentioned: the first one is the pilot training of Slovenian public administration officials for their deployment on EU civilian missions. This training was prepared for public administration employees. The basic training thematically covers topics of conflict prevention, crisis management, field activities, democratisation of good governance and civil administration, rule of law, human rights etc. Based on the participants of an individual seminar, the contents will be suitably adapted and will presumably include a wide range of capabilities the experts on EU missions must have: consulting on the basis of observation of local situations, promoting local ownership, project management, cooperation with other international organisations etc.

Another important activity was the training and education CEP organised in cooperation with the MoD of FYROM on the subject of ESDP for the countries participating in the stabilisation and association process. This is a three-year project organised in cooperation with EU countries Austria, Germany, Hungary and Slovenia, and Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) countries. Four modules of lectures are planned for each year. Training participants in the second module were acquainted with civilian and military capabilities, EU crisis management, and civil-military coordination and cooperation, as well as security sector reform (SSR) and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) issues.

The training of FYROM parliamentarians in the field of parliamentary control, organised by CEP in cooperation with the Parliament of FYROM and the Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy (CEID) from FYROM, is being held in three training cycles; each training cycle is intended for a specific committee of the Parliament of FYROM. The aim of the whole training is to strengthen the position and the role of the Parliament in FYROM

political system on its way to Euro-Atlantic integration. The project pays special attention to a more active role of the Parliament in creating defence and security concepts. In the framework of the first training cycle, FYROM experts presented an analysis of the situation in the field of defence and national security. The first training cycle was organised for members of the parliamentary Committee for Defence and Security, to whom the Slovenian lecturers presented the work and the role of the Slovenian Committee for Defence, and shared Slovenian experience and good practice in the field of democratic parliamentary control over armed forces. In the second training cycle, the Slovenian lecturers presented the Slovenian intelligence services and their work, and the role of parliamentary control over the security and intelligence services to FYROM parliamentarians and members of the Committee for Supervising the Work of the Security and Counter-Intelligence Directorate. Training participants discussed the role of parliamentary control in crisis management; they were also acquainted with the challenges and experiences of the national crisis management system in Slovenia.

CEP also organised training in the field of proper protocol services for the officials of Montenegro's Secretariat for European Integration. The signed Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) between Podgorica and Brussels in October 2007 will speed up the process of Montenegro's integration into the EU and at the same time also increase the scope of work where the protocol has an important role. The training programme in the area of protocol is a continuation of one part of the pilot project for Montenegro's diplomats implemented in October 2006 by CEP.<sup>7</sup>

## MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Activities of the Slovenian MoD in peacebuilding abroad are numerous and complex. The work of the MoD currently focuses on the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), as the first example of Slovenian participation with a larger contingent.<sup>8</sup> Before this, the efforts of the MoD were mainly concentrated on cooperation with NATO. From the organisational point of view, the Defence Policy Directorate is the holder of activity within the Ministry, especially as regards Southeastern Europe, which is obviously still one of the priorities of Slovenian peacebuilding activities abroad. There are some experts in charge of assistance to specific countries; the MoD mainly offers these countries assistance in defence system-building and shares the Slovenian experience on the way to Euro-Atlantic integration. This kind of cooperation can be performed in various ways, on a half-year basis or otherwise (depending on the country to which help is being offered). As far as civilian structures are concerned, the MoD gave priority to NATO operations in the 2004–2008 period; in accordance with the Medium-term Defence Programme, an EU mission is planned for the future, but this will be a mission on a smaller scale. The reason for this is that the donor country finances seconded posts, which means these kinds of missions are directly charged to the Slovenian budget. In addition, the MoD cooperates with the NATO operation KFOR in the civil-military advisory ministry team. The two top Slovenian experts mainly advise on the establishment of the defence sector and Kosovo security forces.

The development vision of the MoD is to cooperate in the framework of various international initiatives and organisations, with a maximum of 15 people simultaneously in all EU, NATO and UN missions. This of course only takes into account the civilian structures of the MoD, however. adding the military structures or SAF, the situation is completely different. The Slovenian Armed Forces do not only participate in teams for armed forces building (four members of SAF – two commissioned and two non-commissioned officers were thus sent to

<sup>7</sup> See: [www.cep.si](http://www.cep.si), interview with Ivana Boštjančič, CEP Jablje, 12th August 2008.

<sup>8</sup> 'On 16th February 2008 the EU Council decided to launch - "EULEX Kosovo" - a European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo. The EULEX mission is the largest civilian mission ever launched under the European Security and Defence Policy. The central aim is to assist and support the Kosovo authorities in the rule of law area, specifically in the police, judiciary and customs. The mission is not in Kosovo to govern or rule. It is a technical mission which will mentor, monitor and advise whilst retaining a number of limited executive powers. It will work in the framework of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1244.

EULEX Kosovo will only become fully operational after a foreseen transition period during which the EULEX mission is being built up to be ready to support the Kosovo authorities in their efforts to build a sustainable and functional Rule of Law system. Meanwhile the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) will continue to exercise its executive authority. The philosophy of the EULEX Kosovo mission is that it will not replace UNMIK but rather support, mentor, monitor and advise the local authorities.

During the build-up period to full operational capability the EULEX mission will partly be developed and deployed under the umbrella of EU Planning Team (EUPT). This planning team was established on 10 April 2006 to prepare for a possible future EU crisis management operation in the field of rule of law in Kosovo'. 'European Union rule of law mission in Kosovo (EULEX KOSOVO)', Council of the European Union, at [http://consilium.europa.eu/cms3\\_fo/showpage.asp?id=1458&lang=en](http://consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showpage.asp?id=1458&lang=en).

Iraq, and technical help was sent to Afghanistan), but Slovenia also actively participates in the civilian part of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan. These activities have proved to be one of the key forms of assistance in peacebuilding, since they are mainly based on non-violent approaches, where experience, tradition and expectations of the domestic/local population are taken into account. Thus, the MoD plans to have up to five experts abroad for authority support in the medium-term period. These experts in Afghanistan currently focus on development of civil service and social entrepreneurship; in the area of health services, an institute for rehabilitation of disabled people will be established. In short, this is another example proving that action in practically all social spheres and sub-systems is necessary to successfully carry out the peacebuilding concept.

As regards the experience with peacebuilding, Bojan Pipenbaher of the MoD is of the opinion that, particularly within the EU, it is possible to feel an effort to fulfil national interests via transnational organisations.<sup>9</sup> Bojan Pipenbaher of the MoD says that it is possible for governments to consider peacebuilding efforts of transnational organisations as an opportunity to satisfy national interests. Since world crises mainly occur in the former colonial areas, the former colonial countries are still the ones with the most interest in these areas. Thus it is impossible for anyone but France to lead a mission in Chad, for example. It is impossible for a new EU Member State (e.g. Poland) to lead missions in Africa and countries in the EU are obviously aware of this fact. As far as Slovenia is concerned, its interest is clearly in the Balkans, not only because of its vicinity, but also due to the historical, national and cultural ties. According to Pipenbaher, both the EU and NATO are aware of this fact, and they invited Slovenia at the time of its entry into these two organisations to take a more active role in the Balkans. A concrete solution of the Slovenian Government was the foundation of the CEP in order to provide the countries of Southeastern Europe with specific help in building or reforming their states.

Regarding deployment, Pipenbaher was quite critical, although he admits that things are changing for the better in Slovenia. The country is trying to build a similar system to Denmark's, with its established system of coordinated participation in peacebuilding operations, where ministries, NGOs and private companies are included. Hence there is cooperation among ministries on a regular basis in an effort to formalise the system of cooperation. At the same time, the truth is that it is not completely clear who the provider of the Slovenian foreign and security policy is (whether it is the MFA or MoD). Regardless of this, international operations in the field of defence are the link between the ministry, NGOs and experts within and outside state authority. For example, today in Kosovo alone there are around 1,000 NGOs or actors present, without which peacebuilding operations cannot even be imagined anymore. The country should think outside its institutional framework, which was demonstrated in the case where Slovenia sent an anthropologist employed in the scientific research sphere to Afghanistan. An example of international organisational activity is also the activity of the Red Cross in Kosovo, consisting of cooperation among MoD, Slovenian Red Cross, Kosovo Red Cross/Crescent and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). But in the end, it is necessary to stress there has to be a mutual interest for collective cooperation; unfortunately this is often the exception and not the rule. According to Pipenbaher, most humanitarian organisations do not have a strong interest in cooperation with the army, police or state institutions.

When assessing the success of these activities, it is necessary to say that we were not able to develop objective criteria. Every single mission in this context is treated primarily by political means and there are therefore not many objectively prepared analyses. Financial resources are both government- and donor-based, and it should be stressed that the MoD, for example, cannot receive donations directly from the private sector and can only be an intermediary representing local needs, providing a link between the recipients and donors. In the case of material aid, the MoD can also arrange for transport and register the donation if the donor so wishes (as was the case in registering a medicine donation of a Slovenian company to Kosovo).<sup>10</sup>

## MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

Members of the Slovenian police started to perform activities in international operations in support of peace in 1997, namely in the UN's Multinational Advisory Police Element (MAPE) operation in Albania. So far, they

9 Interview with Bojan Pipenbaher, Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, 12th August 2008.

10 Interview with Bojan Pipenbaher, Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, 11th August 2008.

have participated in nine missions with 236 members; there are currently 21 police officers abroad. According to the MI's Security Planning and Peacekeeping Missions Section, the typical peacebuilding in which Slovenia took part included operations in Albania, East Timor and the current mission in Kosovo; a classic example is the mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The police Security Planning and Peacekeeping Missions Section<sup>11</sup> also participates in preparations of legal framework and strategic directions for Slovenian participation in international peacebuilding, with proposals on the basis of their experiences. The main difference was made by a new Rule,<sup>12</sup> where 8 years of working experience is no longer a requirement, which enables a wider range of accessibility. The main difference made by a new Rule is that candidates no longer require eight years of experience, enabling a wider range of staff. This mainly concerns female employees, who started to join the police around 1998 and until recently have not complied with all formal requirements,<sup>13</sup> resulting in poor representation of women in international peace operations. In the space of 13 years – since the first mission of the Slovenian police – only three female members have successfully accomplished their tasks abroad; at the moment, a fourth female member has made preparations to leave for Kosovo. A coordinator for equal opportunities in the police is responsible for ensuring equality among female and male members, by encouraging the representation of both genders, not only at home, but also in posts abroad. The second change involves the extension of powers of the Rules from police members to all MI employees. According to a Security Planning and Peacekeeping Missions Section representative, an interministerial cooperation takes place in training prepared in three<sup>14</sup> levels with an exchange of experience between SAF and police in particular, since many of their tasks are similar. Segments of civil society, government and NGOs, experts from different faculties, representatives of religious communities and others are also included in the training. A further bilateral association of the Slovenian police with members of other countries also takes place.<sup>15</sup>

In the past few years, the level of inter-connection between the Civil Defence Division of the MoD and Security Planning and Peacekeeping Missions Division of the MI, namely in the MoD project of civil operational experts, increased. Unfortunately cooperation stopped at the level of trainings in Slovenia, and cooperation between the CIMIC group and Slovenian police members never occurred in the region of the mission in Kosovo. Around the same time, the CIMIC group members of SAF in KFOR, as well as Slovenian police officers and members of UNMIK, carried out assistance projects for the local population by reconstructing schools, apartments, playgrounds, roads etc. However, mutual cooperation between representatives of the MI and other governmental representatives of Slovenia was poor. Consequently projects with similar objectives remained fragmented and potential for collaboration and working on a larger scale was lost. This was a rare opportunity for Slovenia, since it cannot afford more extensive projects in the framework of development assistance, due to its limited financial resources. Both SAF and the police managed to include the Slovenian economy in the activities of assistance to the local population. Some interested Slovenian companies with representatives in Kosovo thus donated material and financial resources, which are also collected in charity activities. The Security Planning and Peacekeeping Missions Division is convinced that, within civil services, a memorandum on interministerial cooperation should be adopted, with a view to coordinating activities of different ministries in the framework of development assistance.

It can be concluded that in the phase of preparations and training, interministerial and bilateral cooperation takes place among different institutions, organisations and individuals, sharing their experience and knowledge with the colleagues seconded to international missions. On the other hand, there is great motivation for a more coordinated and systematically organised cooperation of different actors in the region of the mission, where duplication of activities on all levels occurs due to unsystematic project implementation. It can further be noted that Slovenian police members occupy all posts from traffic control (e.g. UNMIK) to advisory functions in the

11 The participation of members of the Slovenian police and MI employees in international peace operations is governed by the Secondment of Personnel to International Civilian Missions and International Organisations Act adopted in 2006, International Development Cooperation of the Republic of Slovenia Act adopted in 2006, Resolution on International Development Cooperation of the Republic of Slovenia for the period until 2015 adopted in 2008, and by the Rules on secondment of civil servants of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Slovenia and of bodies under the responsibility of the ministry to international civilian missions and international organisations adopted in 2008. The last one replaced the Rules on police liaison officers adopted in 2004, and the Rules on cooperation in police and other non-military tasks abroad adopted in 2003.

12 Rules on secondment of civil servants of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Slovenia.

13 They did not comply with the requirement of eight years of working experience in the Slovenian police.

14 A basic three-week and pre-secondment one-week training is carried out before secondment to an international mission, and one-week reintegration upon arrival.

15 In the area of training, the Slovenian police officers cooperate with Croatia, Germany, Hungary etc.

system-building itself (e.g. EULEX). The Security Planning and Peacekeeping Missions Division namely aims to gain reputation on the grounds of quality of its members and not quantity. Thus, they tend to occupy posts with as high level of required education as possible. This should be the task for the interministerial working body of the MI, the work of which would still need to improve according to the Division.

## MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORT

The Ministry of Education and Sport gives attention to the area of human rights education and training. Slovenia fulfils its international obligations on human rights education by promoting the ratified international instruments concerning the right to education; providing information on human rights education in national reports to the relevant international monitoring mechanisms and cooperating with NGOs, other sectors of civil society and human rights education specialists. Slovenia takes part in many projects and initiatives of international and intergovernmental institutions (EU, UNESCO, UNICEF, Council of Europe, OSCE, UNECE etc.) dealing with human rights education and prepares conferences on human rights. From 22nd–24th November 2007, the Slovenian Ministry of Education and Sport, together with the Council of Europe, organised a regional meeting Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights (EDC/HRE) of experts from South Eastern Europe.<sup>16</sup> The main objectives of the conference were to identify key issues in the field of EDC, curriculum development and exchanging good practices, further extension of knowledge and understanding of the EDC curriculum, and examination of new opportunities.

For more than a decade now, Slovenia has been taking part in many international research studies paying particular attention to the area of human rights education, including the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) and the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). At the moment, Slovenia is actively involved in the CIVICS research and some Slovenian schools are involved in international projects on human rights in the framework of the EU. This involvement of Slovenian schools is possible with the help and support of NGOs that carry out training activities regarding human rights. They organise different seminars, prepare open discussions and conferences, develop new didactical tools etc. The highly active NGOs in the field of human rights are Amnesty International, EIP Slovenia–School for Peace, and Slovenian Global Action (SLOGA). Consequently, several seminars were organised by the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Educational Research Institute and National School for Leadership in Education. On 20th October 2006, the Slovenian History Teachers' Association organised a roundtable on the modern history teaching and human rights in history. Around 130 participants, including those from South Eastern Europe, took part in discussions and exchanged their experiences. Lecturers focused especially on human rights and their inclusion in the school curriculum.

During the Slovenian Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) presidency, a Pilot Project on Human Rights Education (OUR RIGHTS) was initiated in 2005, a pilot project on human rights education entitled 'OUR RIGHTS' was initiated and conducted by the OSCE. 'OUR RIGHTS' is based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child that was prepared and implemented in OSCE participating countries between January and December 2005. Approximately 10,810 children and 276 teachers participated and represented the following states: Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYROM, Germany, Ireland, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Turkey and Ukraine. The overall aim of the evaluation has been to assess the OSCE pilot project's performance in terms of relevance, effectiveness, utility and the sustainability of results. In accordance with its intended outcomes, the pilot project has therefore contributed equally to the needs of participating countries and to the basic objectives and commitments of the OSCE in the area of human and children's rights education. With the implementation of 'OUR RIGHTS', the Slovenian Chairmanship of the OSCE fulfilled one of the tasks deriving from the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21st century, and signalled that human and children's rights education should remain a high priority for the OSCE.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Associated Schools is another opportunity to offer youth more than just accumulation of knowledge and creates an opportunity to understand life, to learn how to master it and influence its changes. The programme is organised under the UNESCO

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<sup>16</sup> Experts came from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Kosovo and FYROM.

School Network (176 nations and about 7,900 schools); the Slovenian UNESCO network has 89 members, 37 of which have international status. The Slovenian version of the international programme gave special emphasis to the development of different approaches to learning, which have become a permanent part of Slovenian school curricula. It relied on the most important primary sources of learning, sought out 'critical' current issues, and started to research and plan changes together with citizens and experts. The first such model, called 'Interweeks', was created by a school that was the first member of UNESCO in Slovenia. This school is building the aforementioned model in the first project of interschool learning; the first ASP International Camp took place in Piran in 1994. This programme was extended and transformed into 'Roots and Wings'. Common to all projects until now is the selection of themes from the current UNESCO goals, which are afterwards applied to local environments and on the basis of which the schools carry out long distance cooperation and meet once a year. Schools from other countries also take part in Slovenian UNESCO projects. Besides promotion in brochures, the Slovenian network has also trained sister networks through seminars, which were held in Namibia for seven countries of southern Africa, and in Pančevo for Serbia and Montenegro.

## MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SPATIAL PLANNING

The MESP implements most of its development assistance through contributions to international organisations and international agreements in the field of the environment. Most of this assistance is earmarked for project implementation in eligible countries. This is the case for all countries of Southeastern Europe, particularly countries of the Western Balkans. The level of development assistance funded by the MESP has increased on the basis of Slovenian progress on the development scale; under the OECD-DAC standards it has increased from around €252,000 in 2005 to over €360,000 in 2008. From this amount, it is necessary to highlight a contribution of €128,990 in the years of 2007 and 2008 (the amount per year), earmarked for the work of the International Sava River Basin Commission. The foundation of this commission was possible on the basis of the agreement of the same name under the auspices of the stability pact providing for strategic cooperation of the countries by the Sava River and environment management encompassing 97,713 km<sup>2</sup> – or the territories of four countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia. This river connects three capitals of the above-mentioned countries: Zagreb, Croatia; Belgrade, Serbia; and Ljubljana, Slovenia. The essential objectives of the international commission are:

- Establishment of the international navigation regime;
- Establishment of sustainable water management; and,
- Undertaking measures for prevention or restriction of danger, as well as elimination of the hazardous impacts of floods, ice, draught and accidents.

The Commission began work in 2004 when the above-mentioned countries ratified this agreement and from then on countries have managed to fulfil many of the set objectives, most importantly the close cooperation of formerly at-war countries. Numerous development programmes have been drawn up, common development plans were harmonised and executed, and additional protocols were created. For the countries of the Western Balkans, it is of great importance to be able to harmonise their national regulations with EU regulations, enabling this region to faster obtain full EU membership.

Apart from this, Slovenia and its MESP have also carried out some other forms of bilateral assistance. In 2005, the Ministry organised and financed an expert meeting in the field of nature protection in Skopje, FYROM, where the FYROM party was acquainted with various possibilities and experience in creation of legal frameworks for nature protection, and with advantages and disadvantages of managing the most important natural resources. In cooperation with the Surveying and Mapping Authority of the Republic of Slovenia in Ljubljana an expert seminar was organised and financed in 2006. Its basic aim was to offer technical assistance and professional education in the field of geodesy for experts from the Southeast Europe.

When addressing environmental issues of Southeastern Europe, MESP also relies on the help of NGOs, with the Regional Environmental Centre (REC) for Central and Eastern Europe being the most important partner.

Together they have managed to realise different environmental projects concerning current issues in the region and the country. Thus, they could create the Adriatic Sea Partnership, which was able to organise a sub-regional conference (June 2006) and adopted the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Adriatic. This document has inter-connected six countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Montenegro and Slovenia) and bound them to environmentally friendly management of the Adriatic Sea. Partnership between MESP and REC also makes it possible to organise different seminars to train experts in the field of environment issues. Thus a seminar was organised in Portorož (October 2007) on the subject of 'How to Get the EU Funding for Adriatic Sea Partnership Projects', attended by the countries of the Western Balkans.

## NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS IN SLOVENIA AND PEACEBUILDING

The share of paid employees working in NGOs is around 0.74 percent of all the labour active population, while there are around 900,000 citizens participating in NGOs on a voluntary basis, representing half of the Slovenian population. The organisations in question are therefore based on voluntary work and this ensures, according to them, the highest possible level of devotion and quality of work arising from it. A higher participation of women in the voluntary system can be noted, while the management posts in most organisations are taken by men. In a certain way, the integration of Slovenia into the EU initiated quicker changes and promoted the development of cooperation between the governmental and non-governmental sectors. The strengthening of NGOs was highlighted among conditions for EU membership as the condition for their equal integration into the decision-making processes. Thus, the Slovenian Government adopted the 'Cooperation Strategy with Non-governmental Organisations' in 2003, where it defined the widest framework of long-term cooperation and the basic points, objectives and priorities in government cooperation with NGOs. To ensure sustainable civilian dialogue, the government appointed a 'Standing Intraministerial Working Body for Harmonisation of Open Questions' in the field of cooperation between the government and NGOs in 2005.

The 'Resolution on International Development Cooperation of the Republic of Slovenia' for the period until 2015, *inter alia*, identifies an interest for civil society integration in the system of planning and implementation of international development assistance.<sup>17</sup> With this resolution, Slovenia undertakes to make an intensive effort to completely integrate civil society into the system of planning, implementation and evaluation of international development cooperation. Legal foundations established in the last few years enable NGOs as part of civil society to access funds the state earmarks for support to individual civil actors for development of international development assistance and cooperation. The state should use calls for applications to financially support their programmes and projects of international development and humanitarian assistance, as well as their institution building.

The largest, most visible and influential NGOs in Slovenia are the ones that are an integral part of international organisations, and actively deal with programmes and projects of humanitarian and development assistance as part of the post-conflict reconstruction or assistance in the event of natural and other disasters. The content and scope of international activity are of course subject to the strategy and objectives of the organisation, also defining the scope and share of funds earmarked within national and international activities. The latter usually receive a smaller share due to the management policy of some organisations that are convinced that the so-called domestic problems deserve priority treatment. Especially senior staff obstruct the direction of resources and capacities to international activities, since according to some NGOs, they are mostly satisfied with the current work and guidelines of the organisation; they are only partly open to novelties in the sense of opening beyond borders, which is also due to their lack of knowledge of foreign languages and functioning of NGOs in other countries, with which they would potentially have to cooperate at the international level. In several cases, it was noted that younger staff had a favourable opinion on international development assistance. The differences among larger NGOs with a wider scope of activity beyond national borders are indeed in the programme objectives of the organisation. Thus, some mainly work in the area of raising awareness of human rights violations and lobbying in cases of violation by state authorities at the national

<sup>17</sup> The MoD adopted it based on paragraph 4 of Article 4 of the 'International Development Cooperation of the Republic of Slovenia Act' (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No. 70/06) and Article 109 of the 'Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia' (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No. 35/02, 60/04 and 64/07) in the session of 11th July 2008.

as well as international levels, often contributing to post-conflict system-building. Others mainly deal with short-term humanitarian and long-term development assistance.

Despite seemingly similar activity, there are some basic philosophical and fully practical and systematic differences among NGOs, as a result of which, wider cooperation does not usually take place. Likewise, activity guidance of individual NGOs depends on media visibility of specific conflicts, and related financial and material transactions directed to this area. Many NGOs deliberately refuse to act in specific media-exposed conflict areas, since inflow of resources in these areas is usually above average and therefore they find their assistance unnecessary and direct their efforts elsewhere. Certainly the aim an organisation wants to achieve with a concrete form of assistance also influences the selection of areas to which development and other assistance is directed. A strong reason for low levels of cooperation is also bureaucratic considerations, since organisations implement projects more easily on their own with the help of their international network, than in cooperation with similar national NGOs. When cooperation does take place, there are problems of coordination, objectives, channelling funds etc. NGOs actually admit they find it difficult to comply with authority not coming from their own organisation, the reasons for this being the philosophical, material and financial origins of the organisation.

NGOs cooperate with state institutions in the event of natural and other disasters, when MFA representatives – prior to taking decisions on methods of Slovenian assistance – consult NGOs that are acquainted with the circumstances of their network or units in the affected area. Representatives of some ministries specify that there is also cooperation in the area of education and training. NGOs namely contribute their field experience and thus prepare members of SAF, the police, civil functional specialists (CFS) and others for work in culturally and religiously specific environments which demand consideration of local culture, habits and also needs. These are also sensible subjects on which the representatives of larger NGOs have the most quality information, due to their network of units all around the world and thereby contribute to better rationalisation of resource use. The biggest problem stressed by organisations is that they lack sufficient resources and support where humanitarian or development assistance is being implemented. Assistance, therefore, does not always yield the desired results.

There is practically no cooperation among organisations or between state institutions and NGOs in the area of peace operation.<sup>18</sup> In 2007, the Civil Defence Division of the MoD invited a group of the largest Slovenian NGOs to a consultation on the needs in Kosovo, where the first Slovenian battalion was about to be deployed with a larger CIMIC group, comprising of three civil functional specialists. In a period of six months of CIMIC group activity, some NGOs obtained information on current needs in the region and donated desired material resources.<sup>19</sup> A similar process was also in progress between the MoD and representatives of the Slovenian economy,<sup>20</sup> who, via the CIMIC group, allocated special material resources to the local population. Unfortunately, this cooperation came to an end by the first phase; interaction and linking local needs to capacities of post-conflict development assistance of different actors in Slovenia were not further developed. Apart from the above-mentioned factors, the primary attachment of national NGOs to regional or local units of organisation is also the reason for individualisation of activities in the area of post-conflict reconstruction. The line of activity of some larger organisations is actually horizontally linked to national units of the organisation in other countries, also in the area of post-conflict reconstruction, and vertically linked to the international seat of the organisation. Slovenian NGOs' priority is to meet the needs of the local population, as expressed by community representatives, and not to the needs of the nation state where their seat is – in this case Slovenia. Cooperation is therefore only allowed in the event of potential interests and objectives of state and NGOs overlapping.

<sup>18</sup> According to information given by the most internationally active Slovenian NGOs, like Slovenian Red Cross, Caritas or Slovenian Amnesty International.

<sup>19</sup> Packages of hygiene and food products were donated.

<sup>20</sup> Via the CIMIC group, mobile phones and cards were donated. The same company also provided signals with the Slovenian rate for members of SAF.

The NGOs interviewed by the authors agree on some key positive aspects of international cooperation, which are the following:<sup>21</sup>

- Access to real and useful information to enable successful post-conflict development and humanitarian assistance;
- Global establishment of contacts;
- Specialisation of NGO members for specific areas, needed in the event of post-conflict reconstruction;
- Extension of networks on a global scale and better global visibility of the organisation to enhance its reputation and credibility, and enable it to easier access to some resources; and,
- Strengthening solidarity among people by stressing the importance of humanitarian and development assistance beyond national borders.

These NGOs mostly face the following problems:

- Slovenian policy-makers have several mechanisms that enable them to support evolution of NGOs, but unfortunately governmental policy regarding NGOs often does not comply with strategic guidelines<sup>22</sup> and the development potential of some NGOs;
- Inadequate financial mechanisms of the state for strengthening the NGO sector;
- Absence of measures to increase employment in the non-governmental sector; and,
- Uncoordinated legal environment of the system and low level of public awareness about the role and meaning of NGOs.

21 According to information given by the most internationally active Slovenian NGOs, like Slovenian Red Cross, Caritas or Slovenian Amnesty International.

22 An example of an NGO that would receive European funds provided Slovenia also financed a smaller share of the project, but Slovenia refused to do so. On the other hand, the same organisation received funds for a development project from the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## (UN)SUPPORTIVE PUBLIC OPINION OF PEACEBUILDING IN SLOVENIA

Since the end of the Cold War, there has been a lower degree of conflict risk among developed countries, but the number of intrastate conflicts has increased, resulting in a more visible role for the international community in solving crises with direct or indirect effect on the wider region.<sup>23</sup> Hence, the tasks of national security systems of developed countries and the role of non-governmental, humanitarian and other organisations were redefined. SAF are still the national force that fulfils international commitment in participation in international peace operations. Therefore, it is important to present the past and present role of SAF and others to understand changes in public opinion.

Since 1997, the SAF has participated in different types of operations with the largest number of its members, at first only in its own region, and then more broadly. Since 1997, members of the SAF have been seconded to 16 peace operations. The highest number of members abroad was noted in March 2007, namely 747, representing over 10 percent of all permanent forces. In 1997, the Slovenian police also started to participate in international MoD missions, although with a smaller number of its members. From 1997 to 2008 the police force has participated in nine missions; currently there are 21 police officers in three missions. In 2005, fire-fighters left for Afghanistan with the third contingent of SAF. In 2007, three civil functional specialists went to Kosovo with members of the battle group and performed tasks in the framework of CIMIC. So far their activity has mainly concerned post-conflict reconstruction of the local environment, namely implementing projects of assistance to the local population (e.g. building sports fields for primary schools, reconstructing buildings where primary school education is being held, consulting farmers, veterinary assistance etc). Their role in the future will be strategic consultancy and help in social system-building, where experts for different areas will participate according to the needs of the region.

Slovenian public opinion on security issues has been measured since 1994. Yet, public opinion was measured in terms of peace operations in general, not peacekeeping, peacemaking, peace enforcement, peacebuilding etc. individually. Therefore the analysis of the yearly results cannot be interpreted as if only applying to peacebuilding. However, we can use it to observe public opinion on the role of different actors in various types of peace operations.

The international activity of Slovenia, both of SAF and other actors, has become an increasingly important issue in many public debates in the last decade, repeatedly leading to the issue of social acceptability of international activities. One of the ways to assess the legitimacy of political activity beyond national borders is to monitor public opinion. In a survey on national security and international relations in 1994, the issue of citizen opinion on Slovenian participation in international peace operations arose for the first time. In the context of the perceptions on the changing security environment and risk factors, it would be expected for a great percentage of public opinion to approve of Slovenian international activities. Yet, Slovenian public opinion surveys have for a few years now shown falling public support. In 1999, strong public support for participation of SAF in peace operations was still noted (78.2 percent), falling about 12 percent by 2007, but this is still higher than support for participation of the Republic of Slovenia in international peace operations. In 1994, when the question of general participation of Slovenia<sup>24</sup> in different types of peace operations was asked for the first time, the support amounted to only

<sup>23</sup> For more information on trends in conflict development, escalations and settlements, see the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research's (HIK) annual 'Conflict Barometer', at <http://www.hiik.de/en/konfliktbarometer/index.html>.

<sup>24</sup> Meaning not only SAF and the police, but also NGOs, governmental organisations, economy etc.

45 percent, rising to 68.6 percent until 2001, with a fall in 2005. The highest public support was recorded in 2003, due to previously undeclared citizens, who took a clear stance at that time. A more decisive opinion among citizens is due to a combination of extensive media coverage of Slovenian integration in Euro-Atlantic structures, public discussion and clearly expressed views of politicians, expert public and various action groups, leading to a better knowledge of security and defence policy. The next survey (autumn 2007) brought the level of citizens' support back to the level of 1994, when support for peace operations was the lowest, with only 45.8 percent. Furthermore, the last survey shows the highest percentage of opponents in independent Slovenia, namely 40.7 percent. This means that support fell due to the rise of negative public opinion and not to undeclared voices, which have not substantially changed since 2005.

A possible reason for this decline is the belief that Slovenia does not gain major economic benefit or international reputation from participation and only fulfils the expectations of the international community. On the other hand, the reasons for public opposition to peace operations can be attributed to a lack of public knowledge about the different types of peace operations, possibly caused by lack of interest in Slovenian international activity or lack of readily available information to average citizens.<sup>25</sup> One of the acceptability factors of a specific mission in the eyes of the public is certainly security, since 68 percent of the public believe Slovenian missions should withdraw from regions in the event of casualties, with women more in favour of withdrawal. What is also causing concern is that citizens are poorly informed about various types of international peace operations.

Based on the data obtained in June 2008, it can be established that today 31 percent of respondents are reasonably well informed about Slovenian participation in international peacebuilding operations, 50 percent not well informed and 15 percent not informed at all; 47 percent of respondents (40 percent of women and 57 percent of men) support Slovenian participation in international peacebuilding operations with different actors taking part. On the other hand, there is only a slightly lower share (43 percent) of those opposing any participation, with a larger share of women than men.

## LEVEL OF ACCEPTABILITY BASED ON THE TYPE OF OPERATION

The mandate for a certain type of operation is given on the basis of numerous factors, such as the intensity and duration of conflict, whether armistice is reached or not, peace negotiations, post-conflict reconstruction etc. Intra-annual comparison of Slovenian public opinion surveys has shown the largest public support of SAF participation to be in humanitarian operations where no weapons are used. Support rose from 2001 and peaked in 2007. With 86.7 percent it is still convincing, although a slight increase of the number of opponents should be taken into account. Similar public opinion is seen as regards peace operations with the use of weapons for self-defence. In this case, the support level is slightly lower (74.6 percent) than for humanitarian operations with a higher share of opponents (21.2 percent) and undeclared opinions. Traditionally, the lowest support can be found for participation in peace enforcement tasks of combat forces with slightly falling support in all years, but a small increase to 37.8 percent in 2007. The share of opponents rose (55.5 percent), but the share of undeclared fell. A similar situation occurred in 2003, when the public took a firmer stand as regards the international activities of Slovenia with regard to missions. Public opinion on various types of missions is demonstrated by the acceptability of Slovenian participation in different regions. Knowing what kind of international involvement is or is not acceptable by the Slovenian population is a good indicator for future planning. Based on analysis of the data for the past 14 years, we can conclude that humanitarian and development assistance is well accepted among the population, so we can expect that peacebuilding should be as well. In the future, more effort should be put into peacebuilding than to other types of more aggressive peace operations.

Both the survey in 2005 (39.7 percent) and survey in 2007 (35 percent) show the strongest support to participation in the area of the former Yugoslavia, with a slight fall of support in the last survey. On the other hand, significantly lower public support can be seen for Slovenian activity in conflicts in the Middle East (6.8 percent), Iraq (7 percent), Afghanistan (8.7 percent) and Africa (10.4 percent). Public preferences as regards

<sup>25</sup> However, there is no history of consistent consideration of public opinion in Slovenia, most visible in secondment of SAF members to Iraq (NTM – I), when citizens had a clear stand, with the majority of the public (65 percent) and part of the opposition strongly against the cooperation of Slovenia in the NATO mission of Iraqi security forces training, causing a heated discussion in Slovenia on the justifiability of SAF members' deployment.

areas of active Slovenian involvement in conflict-resolution and post-conflict reconstruction clearly show the wish for Slovenia to actively participate only in resolving conflicts which have an immediate effect on the country, and which would adversely affect the Slovenian population in the event of destabilisation. Public opinion is considerably less favourable to peace operations in the outermost regions, where it is more difficult to identify the aim of participation and the country's objectives. According to Vegič, in such a situation it is easier to convince the public that participation in the operation is reasonable in the event of a humanitarian crisis, numerous casualties among a civilian population, lack of food and medicine, torture, or of the less dangerous mission of post-conflict reconstruction.<sup>26</sup> The public is especially favourable to tasks including provision of humanitarian aid, escort and protection of refugees, medical aid and other tasks consisting of direct help to civilian populations or help in system-building. We think higher public support for specific types of operations is partly associated with social self-image. Humanitarian activity is welcome in society, so individuals will probably decide to support humanitarian operations. Citizens can, to a certain extent, identify with humanitarian tasks performed by military and non-military actors, on the basis of which they can form a good opinion of themselves. This is a case of a false feeling of fulfilling social expectations without personal involvement. In public support, the citizens' knowledge of different types of missions should be taken into account and, according to studies, this knowledge is quite limited. In this context it would be necessary to develop social dialogue to better inform the public about the types of Slovenian international participation. At the same time, the public should also be informed about the actors that take part in various types of international peace operations. On the basis of media monitoring, it can be established that the media mainly cover activities of SAF and potentially the Slovenian police, while other actors remain unnoticed.

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26 V, Vegič (2005). 'Izguba življenja vse manj sprejemljiva', *Obramba*, 37(5), p.23.

## GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND PEACEBUILDING

The concept of gender equality in Slovenia is legally defined in the Constitution of Slovenia and the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment Act and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act. The legislation in question, strategies, action plans and so on, are based on guidelines provided for in UN<sup>27</sup> and EU<sup>28</sup> directives. With the Treaty of Amsterdam, the EU has undertaken to promote equality of women and men in all its policies and activities, and to endeavour to eliminate all gender inequality. Besides enforcing the integration of the gender equality principle, the treaty also provides a basis to adopt special measures to fight sexual discrimination and discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation.<sup>29</sup> Respect for guidelines and recommendations, based on the national legislation and international documents, was until 2001 advocated by the Office for Women's Policy, now transformed into the Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Equal opportunities.

A Commission for Petitions, Human Rights and Equal Opportunities functions in the framework of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia. In accordance with the specified guidelines and recommendations of international and other organisations, the National Assembly of Slovenia adopted a Resolution on the 2005-2013 National Programme for equal opportunities of women and men on 27th October 2005, defining fundamental gender equality policies in Slovenia for the specified period. A periodic plan is also prepared for two-year periods defining priorities in implementing this national programme. On the basis of the above-mentioned legal requirements and orientations of the EU, UN etc., the Government developed a system solution for implementing the principle on gender equality integration at the national and local level, which is an institution of coordinator for gender equality in each ministry. In this context civil society initiatives appear both on the subject of integration of women into all social spheres in Slovenia and on the subject of respect of gender equality in Slovenian cooperation in international peace operations. Furthermore, in the framework of the UN principle of gender equality integration, the Slovenian Government identified some guidelines for balanced gender representation in international peace operations through United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. During its presidency of the EU, Slovenia has, in the spirit of promotion of gender equality principle integration, also drawn up a report entitled 'Enhancing the EU Response to Women and Armed Conflict' with a special emphasis on development policy. The report originates in UNSC Resolution 1325 and common research findings and it defines key areas of post-conflict reconstruction or system-building, assesses current weaknesses in strategic planning

27 The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and Reports of the Republic of Slovenia on implementation of provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

28 Directive 75/117/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the application of the principle of equal pay for men and women, Directive 76/207/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions, Directive 2002/73/EC amending Council Directive 76/207/EEC, Directive 79/7/EEC on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security, Directive 86/378/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in occupational social security schemes, Directive 86/613/EEC on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity, including agriculture, in a self-employed capacity, and on the protection of self-employed women during pregnancy and motherhood, Directive 92/85/EEC on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding, Directive 96/34/EC on the framework agreement on parental leave concluded by UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC, Directive 97/80/EC on the burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex, Directive 2004/113/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services and Directive 2006/54/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation.

29 Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Equal opportunities, 8th October 2008

and activity of the international community and offers system solutions, whereby individual countries would actively cooperate with their material and financial resources, knowledge and personnel with an emphasis on the importance and role of women in the current majority male participation. Here it is not about female members in international missions, but also about involving women from the local environment. It is important to highlight that local women are those who stay at home in times of conflict or war and face problems of the community, so in the post-conflict reconstruction phase they best know the problems the local environment is facing. They also know about the circumstances of events in the period of conflict and should therefore be an indispensable part of negotiations, post-conflict stabilisation, reconstruction and rehabilitation of society. In the case of the Althea mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Valenius has noted that in post-conflict system-building mainly multiculturalism and multinationality are stressed, and equal gender representation is left out.<sup>30</sup> She noted a similar situation in Kosovo, where female activists of some local NGOs who deal with women's issues were not invited by UNMIK to participate in post-conflict system-building.

It can be established that enhanced mobility in higher education also has positive effects on cooperation between NGOs and faculties. Currently one of the major NGOs cooperates with the Faculty of Social Work of the University of Ljubljana, managing a project of student exchange with Sri Lanka. In the exchange period, Slovenian students help NGOs to implement the development project in Sri Lanka, recently a project to build a school with around 700 children in a very ethnically diverse environment in Colombo. Some other NGOs function in a similar way, namely with work of voluntary groups that go to post-conflict areas for different time periods and take part in reconstruction there. Most examples are in Africa (e.g. Botswana, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malawi, Rwanda, Zambia etc.), and in areas of the former Yugoslavia (e.g. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia etc). The above-mentioned NGOs deal with concrete humanitarian assistance (such as school reconstruction, purchase of specific life-saving equipment, provision of food, hygiene products etc.) and with long-term development assistance (mainly knowledge dissemination in the field of agriculture, medicine, education, human rights etc). The reputation and global visibility of some NGOs also helps them to influence the political leadership in a specific country to make system improvements. Due to their size, Slovenian NGOs usually work at a local level.

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30 J. Valenius (2007). Gender mainstreaming in ESDP missions. Chaillot Paper No. 101. Paris: Institute for Security Studies. p.49. Available at <http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/cp101.pdf>.

## CONCLUSION

The analysis of Slovenian peacebuilding activities confirms our expectations regarding some issues, as well as capabilities and good practice. As the first part of the paper shows, there is no doubt Slovenian peacebuilding is perceived as predominantly concerning military and civil military cooperation activities, especially when the finance, human resources and public attention are taken into account. But on the other hand, we saw different attempts of the MFA to develop peacebuilding capabilities in line with international standards. One of the most important measures in this direction is the foundation of the CEP, which aims to connect different actors (academia, NGOs, European experts, Slovenian public administration experts etc.) and make them more flexible and prepared for peacebuilding activities abroad. Nevertheless, it seems such kinds of efforts are not supported in an appropriate way. There is no strategic political will (of course, descriptive analysis of current parliamentary parties' programmes, practically and formally shows a totally different story, because all important political parties – with one exception – support an active Slovenian role in international peacebuilding), nor support within civil society and NGOs. Therefore, it is no surprise that the Slovenian public has tremendous problems in supporting Slovenian peacebuilding activities. In this sense, it doesn't matter whether we are talking about peace interventions and operations, or ensuring a different kind of help. A very rigid public administration system, inability of NGOs to give greater attention towards peacebuilding, the lack of interest shown by academia and the lack of strategic culture of understanding security in a comprehensive and cooperative sense, are the real challenges that have to be overcome. On the other hand, we must not forget that the Slovenian contribution to peacekeeping is absolutely above the average. When we succeed – with the financial and professional help of the EU, of course – to enlarge our peacebuilding capacities in the fields of education, social network, law (enforcement) and other important state and national building elements, then our contribution would be comparable with the most developed countries. With Slovenia's knowledge and experience of the Balkan and Southeastern European regions, which are unfortunately very far away from peace and stability, a comprehensive Slovenian role has to be developed. Not forgetting other parts of the world, Slovenia has to show responsibility for global peace and security. Within the space of 17 years, Slovenia developed into a stable state with foreign help, support and advice. This should be a sufficient argument for the Slovenian public to devote both greater attention to unstable regions in the world and greater efforts toward their reconsolidation.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**1. Increase the involvement of the EU and its structures in highlighting the benefits of the peacebuilding process to Slovenian decision-makers and to the Slovenian public.** The most important objective is to contribute to a shift in the “strategic culture”, in order to increase awareness of peacebuilding in state structures and society. Such a shift must include representatives of the highest political and social sectors, including decision-makers. It is not sufficient that peacebuilding be addressed by one particular ministry or even through inter-ministry coordination, alone. It must be incorporated and institutionalised within the highest strategic bodies and documents in the country, including the Development Strategy of Slovenia.

**2. Identify the origin of negative perceptions of peacebuilding amongst the population.** Analyses of public opinion measured in recent years indicate a constant decrease in support for Slovenia's international assistance activities, including peacebuilding operations. Until now, no analyses have been undertaken to establish the reasons for such a decline. Such an analysis should point out whether the decline in support is aimed at international participation in peacebuilding in general, or if the problem concerns Slovenia's contributions as a donor country. The Slovenian government should invest – with the help of the EU - in more efforts in public awareness and education about what peacebuilding actually is, and how important it is for regional peace and security. In addition, the media should be part of the above-mentioned process of informing the population. They should be acquainted with peacebuilding efforts, which could enable them to improve the quality and, consequently, the quantity of their reports covering peacebuilding.

**3. Encourage the participation of all political and public opinion leaders in peacebuilding and ODA discussions, as was the case with Slovenian entrance into Euro-Atlantic organisations.<sup>31</sup>** During that time, Slovenia reached consensus regarding its role from practically all important political parties, influential civil society institutions, as well as religious bodies; the topic was also well covered by the media. Such a holistic consultation process should also be launched in regard to Slovenia's role as a donor and how engagement in peacebuilding activities fits within this role.

**4. Incorporate peacebuilding into educational curricula.** The UN, for example, is conducting a call for the best research paper examining the role of the UN in the contemporary world at high schools and university faculties. Slovenia could institute a similar initiative, focusing on the importance of peacebuilding. In this sense, we see the role of the EU not just as resource provider, but also as facilitator, by financing student exchange programmes to transmit good practices and benefits from peacebuilding among the Slovenian population. In Slovenia, this would engage the Ministry of Education and Sports, as well as the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, encouraging greater inter-ministerial cooperation, as discussed in the next recommendation.

**5. Enhance cooperation between ministries involved in peacebuilding activities, especially as regards public administration.** Currently, there is a lack of communication and cooperation between ministries, which decreases the effectiveness of the entire foreign assistance system. There is no central public service in place in Slovenia to facilitate the identification and selection of personnel for foreign peacebuilding activities. As it stands, the Ministry of Justice, for example, does not respond to requests from the MFA for legal experts and is unwilling to use its own information or communication resources for this purpose. This state of affairs is not helped by the fact that secondment to foreign peacebuilding operations/activities is perceived as an institutional

<sup>31</sup> When Slovenia entered NATO and the EU in 2003, a referendum was organised on the issue, even though this was not the practice in other countries. The huge public debate that preceded the referenda discussed Slovenian participation in regional security matters and the different possibilities of how to take part.

punishment, rather than an opportunity to obtain experience that could lead to eventual promotion.

**6. Clarify the meaning of peacebuilding through government-sponsored awareness campaigns.** In Slovenia, peacebuilding is predominantly understood as concerning defence issues, or even the military. Slovenia participates in a number of peacekeeping missions, which occupy the bulk of media attention. More attention needs to be shifted towards what peacebuilding means and how Slovenia contributes to peacebuilding in its ODA activities.

**7. Support capacity-building of NGOs and academia, in order to develop a cadre of professional peacebuilders to support Slovenia's engagement in peacebuilding activities.** The Slovenian government has not taken advantage of NGO capacities and willingness to engage in promoting peacebuilding. NGOs are thus a very under-utilised resource. However, many NGOs are themselves unaware of what peacebuilding means, which decreases the potential for effective cooperation between the government and NGOs. The Centre for European Perspective. The CEP is an exception in this case and should be used as a model to follow in developing civil society's peacebuilding capacity. This is an area where EU technical and financial support would be very useful. More emphasis should be put on cooperation and coordination amongst NGOs in the pre-operational and operational phases of peacebuilding. This would lead to a higher level of transparency regarding the actions taken in certain areas, including financial expenditure. This report also points out the inadequate cooperation between NGOs, national armed forces (where and if involved in peacebuilding activities) and police, based on supposedly incompatible mandates and goals of subjects. Since some NGOs have a well-developed "information net" (with their local partners in the field),<sup>32</sup> merging it with the information capabilities of other subjects would mean added value for all involved parties, allowing for sharing of best practices and lessons learned. Based on distrust mostly amongst NGOs and SAF, we suggest intensive work on developing awareness about each other's priorities, aims and methods of work. The positive impact of a comprehensive approach should be stressed.

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<sup>32</sup> Slovene Caritas has partners in all former Yugoslav states from before the conflicts broke out. Many experiences and much knowledge could have been transferred to the members of peacekeeping missions, but was not.

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