



Amsterdam Dialogue



Amsterdam Dialogue 2023

*High-level conference
on peace & justice*

22 & 23 MAY 2023



Dialogue
Advisory
Group



A person wearing a black long-sleeved shirt is shown from the chest up, with their hands raised in a gesture of surprise or excitement. The background is a solid, vibrant orange color. The person's face is partially visible at the bottom left, wearing glasses. The text 'Conference Report' is overlaid in a large, white, serif font, centered vertically and horizontally.

Conference Report

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Claudio Nardi, Jayanthi Kuru-Utumpala



Overview

The Amsterdam Dialogue 2023 brought together a diverse group of high-level participants from government, international organisations, and peace and justice communities. Together, they delved into the complexities of specific conflicts while exploring potential approaches and unique challenges facing peace and justice today.

The event kicked off with a lively discussion among the lead organisers unpacking the connections between political stability, and peace and justice. Comfort Ero, CEO and President of International Crisis Group (Crisis Group), Sari Bashi, Human Rights Watch's (HRW) Chief Programme Manager, and Ram Manikkalingam, Director of the Dialogue Advisory Group (DAG) shared views on how their different approaches could help or hinder one another.

This was followed by a compelling session on Ethiopia with Redwan Hussien, Minister & National Security Advisor of the Prime Minister of Ethiopia and Getachew Reda, President of the Tigray Interim Regional Administration, moderated by Payton Knopf, consultant at DAG. Discussions revolved around the Cessation of Hostilities that marked a rare success story for peace. The panel highlighted the importance of finding common ground among conflicting parties and the role of discreet communication in building trust and progressing towards formal negotiations.

The concluding panel of the first day of the Amsterdam Dialogue 2023 explored challenges in the global multilateral system with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of the Netherlands, Sigrid Kaag, moderated by Jeffrey Feltman, Member of DAG's Board of Advisors. Discussions highlighted global inequality and the rise of alternative political structures. Urgent action, adaptive frameworks, justice, and accountability were underscored as essential for global stability and positive change.

Afghanistan took centre stage during the second day's opening panel, where Mahbouba Seraj, Executive Director of the Afghan Women Skills Development Center, Ayesha Wolasmal, Senior Humanitarian Consultant at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and moderator Graeme Smith, International Crisis Group's Senior Consultant on Afghanistan, discussed the challenges of navigating the complex realities of the country. The panel illuminated the dire humanitarian consequences of the Taliban's consolidation of power after the U.S. withdrawal. Engaging the Taliban was explored, emphasizing the need for balancing addressing the humanitarian crisis while protecting human rights.

One year into Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Nadia Volkova, Founder & Director of Ukrainian Legal Advisory Group, Ludmila Nemiriya, Journalist & General Producer at UKRLife.TV, and moderator Olga Oliker, International Crisis Group's Program Director for Europe and Central Asia, examined the implications of a protracted conflict in Ukraine. The complexities of international mediation and the impact of sanctions were discussed, along with the challenges of restoring societal cohesion and democracy in a conflict-affected nation.

Panellists Pierre Esperance, Executive Director of the National Network for the Defense of Human Rights (RNDDH) and Jean-Martin Bauer, Country Director Haiti for the United Nations World Food Programme spoke on Haiti, while Ida Sawyer HRW's Director for Crisis and Conflict Division moderated. They discussed the convergence of gang violence, political instability, and a dire humanitarian crisis leading to a multifaceted crisis. The focus was on the urgent need to rebuild institutions, foster the rule of law, and the potential role of international intervention.

Panellists Hanna Serwaa Tetteh, Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, United Nations, Monica Juma, National Security Advisor, Republic of Kenya, and moderator Barney Afako, Senior Mediation Advisor, United Nations spoke on "African Solutions to Global Challenges". The panel

delved into the concept of 'African solutions to African problems', reflecting on the need for local ownership as well as challenges faced by regional and international institutions in responding to conflicts on the African continent. Participants explored the successes and limitations of subregional and regional organizations and emphasized the need for comprehensive reform, including stronger institution-building efforts, greater involvement of civil society, and addressing economic disparities.

The impact of sanctions as a policy tool in conflict settings was dissected in a panel dedicated to exploring How Sanctions Help and Hinder Peace, featuring the Norwegian Centre for Conflict Resolution (NOREF)'s Director Dag Nylander, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue's Deputy Director for Mediation Support and Policy David Lanz, and International Crisis Group's Senior Analyst for the U.S. Program Delaney Simon as moderator. This discussion underscored the dual nature of sanctions, acknowledging their positive impact on peace processes while addressing the negative consequences, such as the risk of escalating violence and limited effectiveness in instigating political change.

Concluding the event was a panel focused on the pursuit of lasting peace in light of recent developments in Sudan. The panel featured panellists Kholood Khair, Founder & Director of Confluence Advisory, Montasir al-Tayeb Ibrahim, Professor of Microbiology at the University of Khartoum, El-Shafie Khidr, Sudanese Politician and Writer, and Luvy Rocha Rappaccioli Chief Programme Manager at DAG, who moderated the discussion. The panel addressed efforts to stop the violence, ensure humanitarian access, and move towards a sustainable peace. Discussions centred on the importance of civilian inclusivity, the role of international pressure, and the pursuit of accountability as essential elements in building a foundation for lasting peace and democracy.



The Organisers



The Dialogue Advisory Group is an independent organisation that facilitates political dialogue to reduce violence. DAG creates or advances political dialogues between armed groups, governments and international organisations in conflict situations.



Human Rights Watch defends the rights of people worldwide. It scrupulously investigates abuses, exposes the facts widely, and pressures those with power to respect rights and secure justice.



Crisis Group provides independent analysis and advice on how to prevent, resolve or better manage deadly conflict. Crisis Group combines expert field research, analysis and engagement with policymakers across the world in order to effect change in crisis situations.

Amsterdam Dialogue 2023

high-level conference
on justice and jobs



Nicky Westerkamp, Fleur Ravensbergen, Lucas Bredal, Rianty Putri



1. Rim Turkmani
2. Sigrid Kaag, Álvaro de Soto
3. João Pereira



4



4. Monica Juma, Hesham Youssef

5. Mahboub Seraj, Sultan Barakat

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Ethiopia

Panellists:

- Redwan Hussien, Minister & National Security Advisor, Office of the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- Getachew Reda, President, Tigray Interim Regional Administration

Moderator:

- Payton Knopf, Consultant, Dialogue Advisory Group

The Cessation of Hostilities signed by the Ethiopian federal government and the Tigrayan authorities in South Africa in November 2022 offers a rare success story for peace. In a remarkably frank discussion, participants sought to unpack the key factors that had created the conditions to reach such a negotiated agreement after two years of intense fighting. In this regard, the presence of the two lead negotiators in Pretoria and later in Nairobi provided a valuable opportunity to benefit from their first-hand experience and identify lessons learned for other contexts.

The discussion started with a reflection on the importance of finding individuals in each camp of a conflict that saw the value in reaching a negotiated agreement and were willing to give the peace process a chance. The impact of the war in Ethiopia had been devastating, with over half a million casualties and a de facto siege of Tigray. While hardliners were present on both sides, there was an increasing sense that the aspirations of the people would not be achieved through the barrel of the gun. Given this understanding, participants noted that discreet and informal communication between various actors had been an important tool to build the trust needed to engage in formal negotiations and later to troubleshoot issues in the process. Despite personal security risks for those involved in these interactions, especially in the early stages, this allowed them to develop a working formula towards peace rather than haggling over formulations in the eventual text agreement.



Getachew Reda, Payton Knopf, Redwan Hussien

Participants also reflected on the benefits and limitations of international and regional mediation efforts, including the principle of African solutions to African problems. While international actors can provide valuable contributions, participants stressed the need to involve regional players – who are often directly affected by neighbouring conflicts – and allow them to have ownership over the process. They noted however that this should not become a pretext for the international community to abdicate responsibility, which some acknowledged had been a tendency in the past, but rather as a push towards better international coordination and support mechanisms. In this regard, some participants also emphasized the human element of mediation, and the value of having a mediator who can speak truth to power, as well as having a deep understanding of the local context, language, and nuances in communication.

Significant challenges remain, including how to address accountability concerns, the urgent need to rebuild the regions devastated by war and potential spillover effects of various regional conflicts. In addition, concerns were raised about the lack of involvement of women in the current peace process, despite them being disparately affected in the war. Regardless of these many interrelated issues, the discussion ended by noting the important progress that had been made to date, the positive commitment by both parties to the peace process, and the potential for this experience to help resolve other conflicts within Ethiopia and in the broader region.

Afghanistan

Panellists:

- Mahbouba Seraj, Executive Director, Afghan Women Skills Development Center and 2023 Nobel Peace Prize Nominee
- Ayesha Wolasma, Senior Humanitarian Consultant, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Moderator:

- Graeme Smith, Senior Consultant Afghanistan, International Crisis Group

Two years after the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Taliban has consolidated its power, while international interest and support has noticeably declined. This has led to dire humanitarian consequences for the Afghan population, especially for women who face a ban on all education and most employment. The panel discussed the current situation on the ground, the fragmented international response, the importance of measured activism, and potential strategies for engaging with the Taliban.

The discussion highlighted the impact of limited international influence and the lack of coherence in the international community's approach towards the Taliban on the Afghan population. Participants noted the divergent views among different countries, ranging from advocating for continued conflict to pragmatic humanitarianism and business-oriented relationships. These contrasting perspectives were also evident in a recent Special Envoys' meeting in Doha in which participants emphasised the need for a unified stance to effectively engage with the Taliban to potentially improve the humanitarian situation.

In terms of strategies for engaging with the Taliban, a recurring theme in the discussion was the necessity for pragmatism in the current humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, prioritising practical approaches over principled ones. Recognizing the Taliban's effective control and the unlikelihood of this changing in the foreseeable future, direct engagement with the regime was advocated



Mahbouba Seraj, Graeme Smith, Ayesha Wolasma

over attempts to create parallel structures, which could undermine aid effectiveness and worsen relations with the regime. Participants also noted that the Taliban managed a relatively peaceful transition of power, implemented an effective demobilisation and disarmament process, and continue to regard the Doha agreement as a guiding principle. This indicated to some participants the need for negotiation, dialogue and a potential willingness to engage that should not be overlooked. The panel noted these practical approaches might provide indirect benefits to the Taliban which may be an unavoidable compromise to assist the Afghan population.

The discussion also reiterated the importance of pragmatism in another area: the discourse on human rights violations. The panel explored local variations in the implementation of the Taliban's restrictive policies, emphasising the need for a nuanced understanding of the broader narrative. Some participants cautioned against unchecked public criticism, particularly on social media platforms like Twitter, as it could hinder ongoing dialogue and humanitarian efforts. They advocated for a well-timed and measured public discourse that could support sensitive negotiations and humanitarian work within Afghanistan. Similarly, the panel recognised the significant role of targeted activism. They cited examples of efforts by NGOs that resulted in exemptions from sanctions and a significant increase in humanitarian aid. Participants highlighted the effectiveness of this quieter and less visible activism in such circumstances.

In conclusion, the panel stressed the need for a comprehensive understanding of the human rights situation in Afghanistan and a cohesive international strategy towards the Taliban. Responsible public discourse and the willingness to recognise and engage with potential signs of cooperation from the Taliban were highlighted as crucial factors to improve the situation for Afghans.



Mahbouba Seraj



Ukraine: One Year In

Nadia Volkova

Panellist:

- Nadia Volkova, Founder and Director, Ukrainian Legal Advisory Group
- Ludmila Nemiriya, Journalist & General Producer, UKRLife.TV

Moderator:

- Olga Oliker, Program Director for Europe and Central Asia, International Crisis Group

One year into Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the war has had a devastating impact within Ukraine as well as far-reaching consequences globally. With both sides seeming to be gearing up towards a prolonged conflict, participants centered the discussion on what the impact would be of a protracted conflict and what meaningful steps could be taken to move towards a sustainable peace in Ukraine.

Given the interconnectivity between the war in Ukraine and the global security architecture, the discussion started with the challenges the international community is facing in addressing the war. Russia's permanent seat on the UN Security Council as well as its nuclear capabilities has complicated international mediation efforts in Ukraine. The attempted diplomatic efforts, including with Turkey and China, have had limited success. They recognised that while direct engagement between Presidents Zelensky and Putin, supported by credible international guarantors, would be needed to reach a negotiated solution this seemed a long way off at the moment due to a noted lack of trust between both parties and the seeming unwillingness on both sides to make concessions.

In view of these circumstances, participants reflected on the benefits and costs of sanctions, the risk of fatigue hitting the 'western world' and on whether international judiciary bodies, such as the ICC, could play a meaningful role, despite an ongoing war. Some questioned the efficacy of a trial against Putin and the perception that this could generate that the international judicial system was skewed in favor of the 'western world'. Participants also reflected on the potential for different judiciary mechanisms more broadly, including hybrid courts and international tribunals. Some saw these as important mechanisms to address, amongst others, the crime of aggression if complemented with domestic processes to prevent an impunity gap. Participants also called for including Ukrainian voices, a broader vision to link different tracks regarding modalities of reparations, such as redistribution assets of sanctioned individuals, and a needs-based approach of the international community towards justice in Ukraine.

At a national level, participants discussed the impact the war was having on society as well as on democratic and judiciary institutions. Given Ukraine's multinational and multilingual make-up, there are concerns that the longer the conflict lasts, the more challenging it will be to rebuild cohesion between different communities and to maintain a functioning democracy. In relation to justice issues, participants noted the gaps in the current domestic capability of the judicial system. While recently much attention, both nationally and internationally, has been focused on ensuring accountability for crimes committed in Ukraine, this has not translated into an effective and coordinated framework on the ground. Participants therefore stressed that there needed to be a stronger acknowledgement and commitment within Ukraine itself to address these gaps through legislative change as well as a push from the international community to encourage the same. Despite the many challenges, participants hoped that the lessons learnt and attention for Ukraine could be translated to other conflicts as well.



Ludmilla Nemiriya, Olga Oliker, Nadia Volkova





Pierre Esperance

Haiti

Panellists:

- Pierre Esperance, Executive Director, National Network for the Defense of Human Rights (RNDDH)
- Jean-Martin Bauer, Country Director Haiti, United Nations World Food Programme

Moderator:

- Ida Sawyer, Director Crisis and Conflict Division, Human Rights Watch

First comment:

- Antonia Urrejola, Former Foreign Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Chile



Haiti, one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere, is facing a surge in gang violence, political instability, and a severe humanitarian crisis with food scarcity. Against a backdrop of escalating violence and growing desperation, the conversation emphasised the urgent need to address deep-rooted issues of impunity, explore possibilities for constructive international intervention, and improve the dire humanitarian conditions affecting the Haitian population.

The discussion emphasized the need to address the escalating crisis by rebuilding trust in key institutions and establishing a functioning rule of law. These crucial elements are currently lacking due to ineffective governance as well as the impaired state of the national police, understaffed and infiltrated by gang members. Participants highlighted that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has put forth recommendations to strengthen Haiti's rule of law and judicial system. These proposals include providing support to investigators, prosecutors, and judges to enhance their capacity to enforce the law and combat impunity.

Participants highlighted that the gangs, or armed groups, possess powerful weapons and control significant territories, blurring the lines between criminality and conflict. The extensive reach of these gangs, which intertwine with political networks and reportedly receive support from elements within the government, further complicates the restoration of stability and the rule of law. This underscores the necessity of adopting a comprehensive approach that addresses



both the immediate symptom of violence and the underlying causes, including the political and institutional vacuum.

Even with these challenges, aid has been successfully delivered to areas affected by food scarcity where gang have allowed aid distribution. Despite this, in reaction to the security and institutional situation, there has been a widely supported call from the ground for an international military intervention. The panel emphasised however that a military intervention would not necessarily address the root causes of the crisis and that foreign intervention in Haiti has a terrible historical track record which must be taken into consideration when heeding any such call. Another potential effort discussed was that international partners could limit their weapons exports to Haiti, in particular through Florida, this reducing the flow of arms to gangs. Any intervention should be accompanied by efforts to strengthen Haiti's institutions and ensure meaningful participation of the Haitian population in the political process.

In summary, Haiti's crisis is multifaceted, encompassing issues of weak institutions, insecurity, impunity, and a severe food scarcity. Addressing this crisis requires a comprehensive, multi-dimensional approach. As highlighted by the panel, a sustainable solution required strengthening vital state institutions such as the police, establishing a credible rule of law, and genuinely placing ownership of the process with the Haitian people.



Hanna Serwaa Tetteh, Barney Afako, Monica Juma

Perspectives from the African Continent

Panellists:

- Hanna Serwaa Tetteh, Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, United Nations
- Monica Juma, National Security Advisor, Republic of Kenya

Moderator:

- Barney Afako, Senior Mediation Advisor, United Nations

The idea of “African solutions to African Problems” was introduced by Ghanaian political economist George Ayittey as a way to challenge the imposition of Western approaches in addressing crises on the continent and to encourage African leaders to take action. The session provided an opportunity for participants to examine different understandings of this concept and discuss potential reforms in regional and international frameworks for responding to violent conflicts in Africa, with the aim of enhancing effectiveness.

The panel discussed conflict prevention and resolution experiences in West Africa and the Horn of Africa, examining the effectiveness and limitations of subregional and regional institutions such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU). While these institutions prioritise conflict prevention and lack provisions for addressing violent conflict, they had some successes in the early 2000s. However, multilateral efforts at conflict prevention in the region have also faced challenges, with UN missions struggling to fulfil their mandates.

Participants highlighted reasons behind the struggles in the region, including the complex nature of conflicts, which go beyond security concerns and involve deep political dimensions. Some participants pointed out that principles like sovereignty are selectively applied, reinforcing power structures that hinder peace efforts. Limited state capacity and inconsistent coordination with the international community further hinder the effective implementation of peace agreements. Other participants emphasized the structural fragility facing the African continent, which is exacerbated by an unfair international economic system. The current development paradigm presents challenges for African states and fails to promote normative democratic values. This has become more evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has worsened the debt crisis in the region.

Additionally, the discussion addressed the matter of funding for African interventions and the reliance on external sources. Some questioned the effectiveness of seeking solutions with predominantly foreign funding, suggesting that African countries should increase their own funding and resources to address stability and security risks. Other participants drew attention to the limited acknowledgment of financial contributions made by African countries to address crises in neighbouring countries. Additionally, concerns were raised about the inconsistency in African states access to UN funding compared to other UN member states.

During the debate on the need for comprehensive reform of the African peace and security architecture, participants widely agreed that enhancing the effectiveness of the existing framework is important. Suggestions included improving coordination and collaboration among regional and international organizations and actors involved in peace and security efforts, creating structures for citizen engagement in public discussions, and promoting economic development. They also called for a more equitable international economic system to support sustainable development and democratic aspirations of African nations. It was noted that the effectiveness of these efforts hinges on the determination of African leaders to drive change, support stronger institutions, and advocate internationally for the necessary tools to address development and peace & security issues on the continent.



How Sanctions Help and Hinder Peace

Panellists:

- Dag Nylander, Director, Norwegian Centre for Conflict Resolution (NOREF)
- David Lanz, Deputy Director at Mediation Support and Policy, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue

Moderator:

- Delaney Simon, Senior Analyst for the U.S. Program, International Crisis Group

First comment:

- Dr. Rim Turkmani, Director of the London School of Economics Syria Conflict Research Programme

Sanctions have become an increasingly popular policy tool in conflict settings, used by policymakers to respond to challenges as different as instability in Afghanistan, violence in Haiti, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Governments often use sanctions to try to change the behaviour of belligerent state and non-state actors. In this context, the panel discussed the pros and cons of sanctions, recent developments in their application, and ways to make them more effective.

During the panel, several concerns regarding sanctions were raised. The introduction of targeted "smart" sanctions followed an increased awareness of the unintended consequences of sanctions, exemplified by their effect on the humanitarian situation in Iraq during the 1990s. Despite efforts to reform sanctions further, participants emphasised that their problematic collateral effects persist as is evident in Syria and Venezuela, where the population suffers from the impact of sanctions. Participants also highlighted that broad sanctions rarely deliver significant political change. The cases of North Korea and Iran, both heavily sanctioned countries, serve as examples of how sweeping sanctions failed to meaningfully alter the behaviour of sanctions targets.

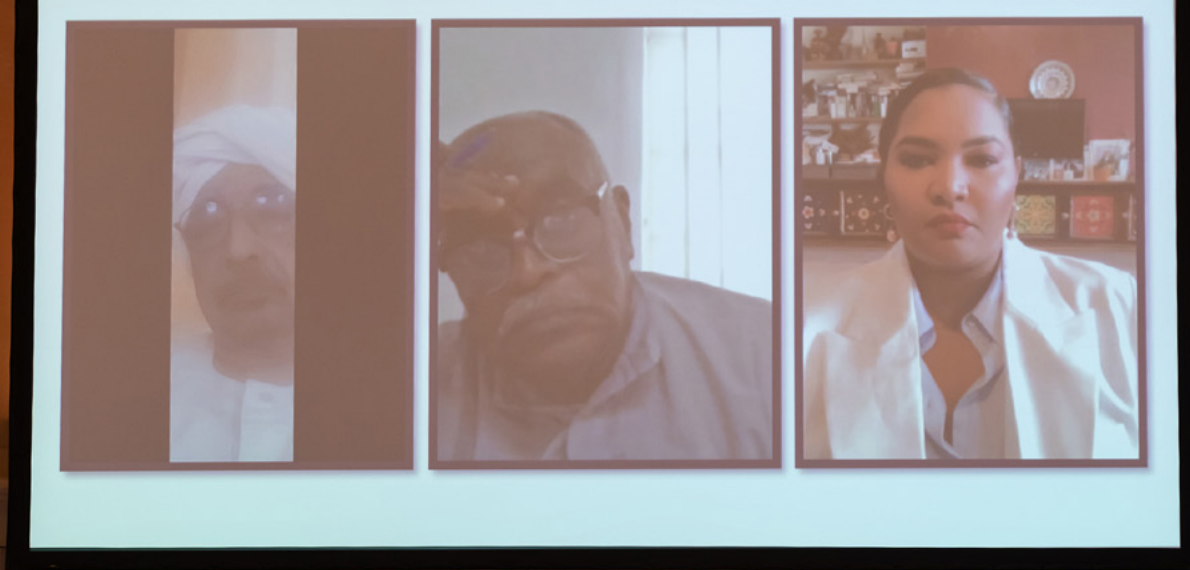
The audience also examined how sanctions can reshape the economic structure of conflict-affected countries, as observed in Syria. There, sanctions have led to the contraction of the formal economy and reduced licit trade – to the benefit of criminal actors and sometimes sanctioned actors themselves. During the discussion participants raised concerns about an escalation of a militarised response in conflicts as a potential consequence of sanctions. They cautioned that sanctioned actors may face increased stigmatisation and exclusion from political processes, creating significant barriers to meaningful political dialogue. This, as demonstrated in the case of Libya, could also embolden non-sanctioned actors who perceive themselves as having greater international legitimacy to seek a military approach.

Despite these concerns, participants acknowledged the positive role that sanctions can play in peace processes. They highlighted instances where the threat of sanctions, along with the promise of sanctions relief – which holds both material and symbolic value – has advanced peace processes, as it did in Yemen in 2013. Some audience members also shared examples where the threat of sanctions convinced high-ranking officials to facilitate vital humanitarian operations, such as the provisional establishment of food corridors in conflict-stricken areas.

In conclusion, the panel agreed that sanctions represent a complex tool with both positive and negative outcomes. However, participants emphasised that while imposing sanctions may be relatively straightforward, their aftermath is more complicated and reversing their effects can be challenging. To address this issue, they recommended clearer communication regarding the reasons behind imposing sanctions, the conditions for their removal, and – in cases when they are lifted – the rationale for doing so. Some participants advocated for a more comprehensive sanctions appeal process and urged consideration of the potential benefits of partially or temporarily lifting sanctions. Additionally, they cautioned against overstating the impact of sanctions, highlighting that they are just one of several factors influencing intricate conflict contexts.



Dag Nylander, Delaney Simon, David Lanz



El-Shafie Khidr, Montasir al-Tayeb, Kholood Khair, Mohamed Chambas, Luvy Rocha Rappaccioli

Sudan

Panellists:

- Kholood Khair, Founder & Director, Confluence Advisory
- Montasir al-Tayeb Ibrahim, Professor of Microbiology, University of Khartoum in Sudan
- El-Shafie Khidr, Sudanese Politician and Writer

Moderator:

- Luvy Rocha Rappaccioli, Chief Programme Manager, Dialogue Advisory Group

First comment:

- Mohamed Ibn Chambas, High Representative for Silencing the Guns, African Union

Since the outbreak of fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Sudan on 15 April, national and international efforts have focused on stopping the violence and ensuring access for the much-needed distribution of humanitarian relief. Talks facilitated by the US and Saudi Arabia in Jeddah resulted in a seven-day truce between the warring parties which came into effect on 22 May and encompassed an ad-hoc monitoring mechanism with an international component. While the intensity of clashes significantly reduced, reports of ceasefire violations by both parties emerged from the outset, signalling the fragility of the agreement. In addition to the pressing need to end the war, there are important concerns regarding the lack of inclusivity of civilians in ceasefire negotiations, and the challenge of devising a comprehensive political process capable of bringing peace and democracy, while simultaneously addressing demands for accountability.

The panel provided an opportunity to reflect on the lessons learned throughout three years of democratisation efforts in Sudan and identify priorities for a path forward. Participants argued that the failure to recognize civilian voices has emboldened and strengthened the influence of those holding the guns and warned that mediation involving only the two warring parties will not lead to a sustainable solution to the crisis. Therefore, the international community must continue to exert pressure on both belligerents to hold their fire while fostering civilian inclusivity, which should extend beyond Khartoum elites to encompass voices from the Sudanese peripheries. Locally brokered ceasefires have proven successful in stopping -or at least reducing- the violence in areas like Darfur and North Kordofan. Panellists encouraged peace negotiators to build upon these experiences and leverage the existence of robust civilian political structures to develop ceasefire proposals with local depth and support.

Looking ahead, participants agreed that returning to past political processes would be futile and stressed the need for a new comprehensive pact that can set the stage to work towards a long-lasting peace and common vision for Sudan's future. A proposal was made to promote coherence between the numerous Sudanese civilian initiatives that have emerged and bring them together in a coordinated committee. Once formed, this body would promptly appoint a caretaker government capable of handling the complex aftermath of the war and steering the country back towards the path of democratic transition. There was broader consensus that, for any initiative to succeed, international and regional mediation efforts must also be coordinated in a manner that allows for a multiplicity of international actors to exert concerted pressure and compel the warring generals into an inclusive, Sudanese-led political process. Some participants also noted the importance of facilitators accommodating the plurality of civilian voices and promoting coalition-building instead of homogeneous thinking.

The issue of accountability emerged as a crucial aspect that cannot be overlooked in the pursuit of a sustainable solution for Sudan's crisis. Participants highlighted that, while it is often argued that accountability should be deferred for the sake of silencing the guns, it is the absence of accountability that has contributed to the outbreak of violent conflict in Sudan. Holding accountable those responsible for past and present violations was deemed to be essential when building a foundation of trust, fostering reconciliation, and paving the way for a peaceful, democratic future in Sudan.



1. Angela Kane
2. Juan Garrigues
3. Asif Khan, Antonia Urrejola, Vlad Corbu
4. David Lanz, Babatunde Afolabi



- 5. Sigrid Kaag, Jeffrey Feltman
- 6. Barney Afako, Solomon Derrso
- 7. Fleur Ravensbergen

Photo Expo



Ukraine

About 5.3 million people remain displaced inside Ukraine, in addition to the refugees who have fled across borders. Today, the overall humanitarian situation along the frontlines and for internally displaced people remains tense, but springtime temperatures and the stabilisation of Ukraine's energy system indicate the country has dodged a full-fledged humanitarian winter crisis. Still, more action is needed, not just to meet the basic needs of internally displaced Ukrainians, but also to develop a long-term humanitarian assistance strategy.

During the first months of the invasion, communities and civil society were quick to supply the uprooted people with food, shelter, and other basic necessities, often filling gaps in the state's response. Their charity and volunteer labour was crucial in coping with the immediate emergency.

Brazil Forest Guardians

Three-quarters of the original rainforest in the northeastern Brazilian state of Maranhao is gone, replaced mostly by cattle ranches. One of the few remaining pristine patches lies within the Arariboia indigenous territory, an area larger than the U.S. state of Rhode Island that is the home to more than 10,000 Tenetehara and about 80 isolated Awa indigenous people.

The Tenetehara had formed patrols that they call Wazayzar "keepers of the culture", also known as "forest guardians". The guardians are community members who patrol the land in groups of as many as 15, some equipped with GPS devices so they can identify sites of illegal deforestation.

They created the patrols because of the failure of the authorities to protect the forest. But that has put them at risk of attacks by those involved in illegal logging.

The Brazilian government needs to take urgent measures to dismantle the criminal networks that endanger the rainforest and the people who defend it. As long as the violence continues unchecked, so too will the destruction of the Amazon - the preservation of which is crucial to the world's efforts to mitigate climate change.

We took great pride in showcasing two captivating photo expos, 'Ukraine' and 'Brazil Forest Guardians,' as part of a collaborative effort with Human Rights Watch (HRW) and the International Crisis Group (ICG) at the Amsterdam Dialogue 2023.

The 'Ukraine' exhibition sheds light on the resilience amid displacement, capturing the human spirit's strength in challenging times. Through powerful visuals, it emphasizes the significance of ongoing humanitarian efforts and long-term strategies.

'Brazil Forest Guardians' transports viewers to the heart of the Amazon, where indigenous communities stand as defenders of nature against illegal deforestation. The exhibition underscores the critical need for immediate action to safeguard both the environment and those who protect it.

These exhibitions, born from the partnership between the conference and HRW/ICG, serve as a poignant call to explore vital conversations surrounding displacement, environmental conservation, and collective action.

