



REFRAMING OF THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DEBATE IN THE CAUCASUS REGION

Discussing Cross-Country Initiatives

Barceló Eresin Topkapi Hotel

Millet Caddesi 186. 34104

Istanbul, Turkey
27-28 June, 2009

Rationale

In the framework of the project "Reframing the Political and Social Debate in the Caucasus Region", the Toledo International Centre for Peace (CITpax) has organised the conference "Discussing Cross-Country Initiatives", to bring together representative actors from the Caucasus region to discuss –with a regional scope- on topics of common interest that are pertinent to promote cross-border security and conflict resolution as a final goal.

With the financial support of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the meeting is proposed as an exploratory facilitation exercise to promote dialogue on transversal issues among participants from the Caucasus Region at large. Ideally the conclusions and ideas drawn from this exercise will constitute a basis for future possible projects for the region.

Participants would be representative personalities either from the Civil Society level or officials acting as private individuals under the Chatham House Rule coming from the areas represented in the conference (i.e. Georgia, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Armenia, Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan).

The discussion would seek to stress the view that there is room for inter-community cooperation in the Caucasus even in the shadow of unresolved political disputes. The idea behind such exercise is that reframing of the Caucasus politics does not imply denial of the conflicting interests and views. The discussion would take place in the course of one day and a half, in which the same panel of participants would first present their experiences working in the framework of cross-community (regional) projects, and subsequently they would exchange views on three different –although interrelated- subjects, namely:

- Democratisation
- Human Security
- The role of Civil Society therein

It is envisaged that, after a brief presentation of the discussion topic by the moderator, participants subsequently describe the situation in their own countries looking through the prism of the proposed subjects. Ideally these presentations will be followed by a debate among participants on how the issues of good governance, cross-border security and Civil Society activism relate to each other -as well as to conflict resolution at large.

The proposed exercise seeks to shed light on the implications that the recent political developments (such as, for instance, the current state of the Armenian-Turkish relations or the events of August 2008 in South Ossetia) may have for the future strategies of Civil Society actors in the region, without presenting, on the other hand, any pre-conceived interpretations as to the shape that these strategies should have.

Saturday, 27 June

Place of the meeting: *Mallorca/Sevilla room, Eresin Hotel*

Moderator: Oliver Wolleh, Berghof Foundation for Peace Support

09:00-09:10

Welcoming remarks and introduction

Alicia Cebada, Director, CITpax

09:10-09:30

Brief presentation of the project aim and the topics for discussion

Alvaro Garcia-Ormaechea, project manager

09:30-11:00

Past and current cross-Caucasus peace building Initiatives

Participants to describe their own experiences working in projects *at regional level* in which they have been (or are currently) involved. The main action lines will be recorded on flip charts and will inform the open discussion II of the following day.

11.00-11.15

Coffee break

11:15-13:00

Political developments in the Caucasus

Participants to explain what the key political challenges in their areas are, bearing in mind the issues of:

- Democratization/ good governance

13:00-14.00

Lunch (Picasso Restaurant, Eresin Hotel)

14:00-15:30

Political developments in the Caucasus

Participants to explain what the key political challenges in their areas are, bearing in mind the issues of:

- Human security /cross-border cooperation

15:30-15:45

Coffee break

15:45-17:15

Political developments in the Caucasus

Participants to explain what the key political challenges in their areas are, bearing in mind the issues of:

- The role played by Civil Society / tools and instruments

17:30

End of the session

20:00

Dinner

Sunday, 28 June

Place of the meeting: *Mallorca/Sevilla room, Eresin Hotel*

09.30-11.15

Open discussion (I)

“The lack of internal democratization as a threat to cross-border security”

11:15-11:30

Coffee break

11:30-13:15

Open discussion (II)

“What role can Civil Society play at regional level to foster peace and inter-community cooperation”

13:15-13:30

Wrap-up and closing remarks

13:30

End of the meeting

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Ms Liana Kvarchelia, Deputy Director, Center for Humanitarian Programs (CHP), Abkhazia

Ms Asida Shakryl, Coordinator of Civic Education and Human Rights programs, Center for Humanitarian Programs (CHP), Abkhazia

Mr Mikayel Hovhannisyan, Programme Manager on European Integration Eurasia Partnership, Armenia

Ms Isabella Sargsyan, Communications Officer, Eurasia Partnership, Armenia

Ms Nouneh Dilanyan, Deputy Chair, Non-Governmental Organisation "Mijnaberd", Armenia

Mr Avaz Hasanov, Director, Society for Humanitarian Research Azerbaijan

Ms Suheyra Jafarova, Communications Specialist, Combating Gender-Based Violence in the South Caucasus, UNFPA, Azerbaijan

Mr Shahin Rzaev, Director, Institute for War and Peace Reporting, Azerbaijan

Mr George Khutsishvili, Director, International Center on Conflict and Negotiation (ICCN) Georgia

Mr Mikheil Mirziashvili, Project Coordinator, Conflict Management Initiative – CMI Georgia

Ms Lusine Musayelyan, Associate Editor of analytical journal "Analyticon", Karabakh

Ms Lira Tskhovrebova, Director, Resource Centre for NGOs of South Ossetia, Tskhinval

Ms Irina Yanovsjaya, Director, Journalists for Human Rights, South Ossetia

Mr Oliver Wolleh, Caucasus Expert, Berghof Foundation, Germany

Ms Alicia Cebada, Director, CITpax, Spain

Mr Alvaro García-Ormaechea, Project coordinator, CITpax, Spain