

FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A EUROPEAN CIVIL PEACE CORPS (ECPC)

1. Background Information

The EU is seeking to improve the effectiveness of its assistance to third countries in times of crisis and in particular of non-military interventions at all stages of conflict, including early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management. In this regard, different initiatives have been proposed.

The idea of a “European Civil Peace Corps” (hereafter referred to as “ECPC”) was first adopted by the Parliament’s resolution on the functioning of the TEU in 1995 which aims at providing the EU with an additional instrument to enhance its external action in the field of conflict prevention and peaceful resolution of conflict in third countries.

The proposal was most recently brought forward in the Parliament’s resolution of December 2001 on the Commission’s Communication on Conflict Prevention (based on the Lagendijk Report) and a parliamentary question was addressed to the Commission on this issue in January 2002.

The Commission also decided to support the build-up of Member States’ personnel capacities for supporting EU activities in crisis management. In October 2001 it launched a pilot project¹ in the area of training for experts in rule of law and civilian administration, establishing an informal EU-wide network of the major national centres involved in civilian training. The project, which has been highly successful so far and found large support in Member States, has to date been funded through the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights. In January 2004 the project entered its third phase and the follow-up for the next phase is now being discussed with a view to sustaining the results achieved so far.

The budgetary authority decided to create a new budget line ² to cover preparatory action to set up a voluntary technical assistance programme in countries in need and to finance a feasibility study on the establishment of a ECPC going beyond humanitarian aid in stricto sensu. The EC services decided to conduct this study through a framework contract.

In addition, Article III- 321.5 of the Constitutional Treaty³ signed by the Heads of State or Government and Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the EU held in Rome on 29 October 2004 provides for the establishment of a European

¹ EC Project on Training for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management B7-701/2003/3047.

² Budget line n°19 02 13 « Voluntary Technical Assistance Programme-Preparatory Action ».

³ document CIG 87/2/04 REV 2.

Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (hereafter referred to as “EVHAC”) to allow young Europeans to jointly contribute to the humanitarian aid operations of the European Union. If and when the Constitutional Treaty is ratified, the Commission will have to propose a law setting up an EVHAC.

2. Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of the study is to provide the services of the European Commission with an analysis of the feasibility of the establishment of an ECPC, and bearing in mind that the Commission may have to develop, at a later stage, a proposal for the implementation of an EVHAC establishing the framework for joint contributions from young Europeans to the humanitarian actions of the Union, as provided for in article III-321.5 of the Constitutional Treaty.

The specific objective of this study is the feasibility of the creation of mechanisms to mobilize civilian volunteers for a broad range of activities in third countries : civilian crisis management, conflict prevention, post conflict peace building, rehabilitation, and development. In the basis of a review of the existing structures (EU structures, Members States, Red Cross, NGO, others...), the study shall determine whether, under which conditions, and for which type of interventions, the establishment of new EU structure(s) would be justified.

For such purpose, the study shall determine the added value of the creation of a new EU structure in addition to those already existing, the complementarity and impact of a said new structure with current EU instruments and funding sources.

The study shall also take into account the recent Commission proposals on the financial perspectives 2007-2013 on new instruments to be created in the external relations area⁴ as well as the role of the Council in ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy) and crisis management.

The final beneficiaries that could be positively affected by the results of the study would be populations, organisations and governments in countries in crisis. An improvement in the delivery EC assistance in the field of civilian crisis management, conflict prevention, post conflict peace building, rehabilitation, and development would be of direct or indirect benefit to these beneficiaries.

3. Anticipated Results

The anticipated results of the study shall be an analysis of the feasibility and sustainability of the establishment of an ECPC aimed at providing the EU with an additional structure to enhance its external action in the areas of conflict prevention, civilian crisis management and post conflict peace building.

⁴ cf. Communication of the Commission on the Financial Perspective 2007-2013 of 14 July COM (2004) 487.

It shall propose the most adequate option(s) to be considered in order to meet the objectives defined in article 2, taking into account all policy, technical, security, economic, financial, institutional, management and gender-related aspects as well as all the implications and requirements related thereto (budgetary implications, training...).

4. Target Groups

The principle interlocutors for the study will be all the actors involved in the field of conflict prevention, civilian crisis management and post conflict peace building as well as in the EC external assistance programmes (Member States, other donors, NGO, UN volunteers, OSCE...).

5. Issues to be studied

5.1 The main tasks of the study will relate to diagnostic work in order to analyse the feasibility of an ECPC.

In particular, on the basis of a broad consultation of the actors in this field (as defined in article 4), the study shall:

- draw up an inventory of the existing structures of voluntary service, (including European Voluntary Services (EVS), the UN volunteers, the US Peace Corps, the major volunteers schemes run by the Member States involved in the field);
- determine which of these organisations could contribute volunteers for EC external assistance programmes relating to development cooperation, conflict prevention and crisis management and focus on the distinct conceptual models employed by said structures respectively (volunteers integrated into a full range of missions including peacekeeping, specific projects for volunteers...);
- give an overview of the administrative resources and legal issues that are raised when directly recruiting individuals to be deployed in countries in crisis with particular emphasis on security aspects (overview of the arrangements made by the Member States to recruit personnel for international missions...);
- identify the principal options, such as but not limited to (a) the provision of volunteers near existing structures, (b) the establishment of an executive agency with the function of recruitment, financial management and logistical support to directly recruited experts, (c) creation of a fully fledged ECPC structure;
- do a preliminary cost-benefit analysis of each of the above mentioned options;
- determine the added value and complementarity and impact of each of these options compared in addition to the existing initiatives⁵ funded by the Member States and/or the EU and with working through NGO.

⁵ For this purpose, the European cooperation in the youth field should be considered, in particular voluntary activities under the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Action Programme and the Community Action Programme “European Voluntary Service (EVS)”.

5.2 For the purpose of the study referred to in Article 5.1, the following issues shall be covered:

- nature and duration of the volunteers' assignment: type of activities that could be carried out by an ECPC (development cooperation, crisis prevention and post conflict reconstruction tasks...), long-term and/or short term assignments, field work in certain sectors (social sector, health, infrastructure, rural development, environment...), assisting work with NGO and in post-conflict related work (rule of law, human rights monitoring, electoral observations...);

- profile of volunteers to be deployed according to the type of activities they would carry out : young and relatively inexperienced people, people with some degree of education, training and experience (retired people, judiciary, public administrators, private sector workers, independent consultants, non-state experts, professionals involved in NGO's activities...);

- possibility to engage international and local experts: interpreters, advisors on local conditions and situations, legal experts on the specific national context, experts towards the international tribunals, experts with development bank expertise, individual/personalities having a special expertise in conflict area and likely to be accepted by all conflicting parties and act as a mediator...;

- conditions of the volunteers' recruitment and training necessary to ensure that the volunteers can carry out their mission effectively and without being engaged in unacceptably risky missions in dangerous environments: establishment of European standards for training and recruitment of civilian personnel in these areas, training at national and/or European level, including possibility of training programmes within the EC Delegations.

For this purpose, possible coordination with the EC pilot project in the area of training referred to in article 1 should be envisaged.

- planning, mission support and evaluation for civilian crisis management: identifying long-term and short-term civilian objectives and operational requirements based on needs assessments and best practices exploring different options of deployment including rapidly deployable cross-disciplinary teams; planning and management of the interventions in order to ensure a coherent and integrated response, lessons learned reports relating to civilian interventions from across the EU institutions;

- the way the contribution of volunteers would fit in the present system of procurement grants;

The study should also make recommendations based on previous experience of managing networks of voluntary service organisations.

5.3 The creation of a specific EVHAC referred to in paragraph 5 of new Article III.321 of the Constitutional Treaty shall be subject, as the case may be, to a separate study.

6. Reporting requirements

6.1 content, language, format and number of reports

The expert shall have to deliver five (5) paper copies of the final report and a copy in electronic form including :

- an executive summary ;
- findings of the research and recommendations with reference to the actions carried out under the contract ;
- annexes including : description of the methodology, timetable of actions, list of persons consulted and of documents examined and other relevant documents.

The report will be written in English and shall follow any guidelines that the European Commission Project Manager may provide.

6.2 date of submission

The draft final report shall be submitted by the Contractor to the Commission for comments six (6) weeks before the final date of the assignment at the latest.

The Commission will have further thirty (30) days to examine the reports, present comments and possibly ask for modifications to be incorporated by the Contractor.

A final version of the report taking into account the Commission's comments and/or proposed modifications shall be provided for to the Commission before the final date of the assignment.

Neither the report nor any other document shall be distributed to third parties without the prior approval of the European Commission Project Manager.

The report, as well as press statements, etc, that would be made by the contractor, will make clear that any opinions expressed therein remain those of the contractor and do not represent the opinion of the European Commission.

Copyright on the report and all other material prepared under the study shall remain with the European Commission.

7. Duration and location of the assignment – schedule of activities

7.1 Duration and location of the assignment

The starting date of the assignment will be the 30 January 2005 and the finishing date will be the 31 July 2005.

The location of the assignment will be chosen by the experts for the part of activities to be carried out singularly by each expert or jointly.

7.2 Schedule of activities

The duration of the assignment shall be split into two phases :

- Phase one will include (i) briefing in Brussels, (ii) consultation of relevant documentation and initial desk work to identify the relevant organisations, (iii) elaboration by the Contractor of an inception note detailing the deliverables (series of visits and interviews that shall be made to the organisations identified as presenting the most interesting profile and that shall be agreed upon by the EC), proposing the methodology for the study and drafting the specific timetable of the study.

This inception note shall be provided for by the Contractor to the EC services in charge of the project within three weeks from the date of signature of the Contract at the latest, it being understood that an additional two weeks may be considered to include modifications to this note when suggested by the EC services.

The Contractor hereby agrees that, in the event the EC services would disagree upon the conclusions of the inception note, the Contract shall be terminated accordingly.

- Phase two shall include the carrying out of the study according to the agreed methodology and timetable and the drafting and submission of the final report by the Contractor to the EC.

The study will require desk research, telephone surveys and face-to-face interviews. Web-interface and other management tools could also be developed.

Briefing and debriefing meetings in Brussels between the contractor and relevant EC officials in charge of the project will be organised as frequently as necessary up to a maximum of fifteen (15) working days.

The overall duration of the assignment, which will include the first phase (inception note and feed back) and second phase (carrying out of the study and discussion of the draft report) shall not exceed a 6 months period..

8. Expertise required – Content of the Contractor’s offer

8.1 The contractor team that will undertake the assignment shall be composed by at least two (2) experts with the following education, experience and references :

- one or two expert(s) (category I) with proven experience of running a major logistical operation in a difficult country with background of at least one of the major donors (EU, UNDP,GTZ....) and , with a broad knowledge and expertise in:

- conducting capacity analysis and risk assessments in relation to Human Resources, legal and contractual issues, finance, economy and logistics;
- programming, planning, implementation and evaluation of development assistance interventions in the field of civilian crisis management (pre, active and post crisis situations) ;

This (these) expert(s) shall also have a good knowledge of the working methods and procedures of the Commission (budgetary instruments, projects cycle management, some awareness of the devolution process towards EC Delegations...).

- a second expert (category II) with some academic background in research methodology and policy formulation in the fields relevant to the present study.

The working languages shall be English or French.

8.2 When submitting his offer, the Contractor shall send a short methodology including an indicative list of organisations intended to be visited, a proposal for field visits and a proposed breakdown of tasks to be carried out by each selected expert according to his respective background and expertise.

This note shall be considered as forming part of the Contractor's offer for services and shall therefore be submitted by the Contractor together with his offer within fourteen (14) calendar days of the start of the assignment.

9. Budget

The maximum budget available for this study shall not exceed € 199.999, covering all costs, including travel and per diems to EC countries during the course of the assignment, the report drafting, the translation and reproduction of documents.