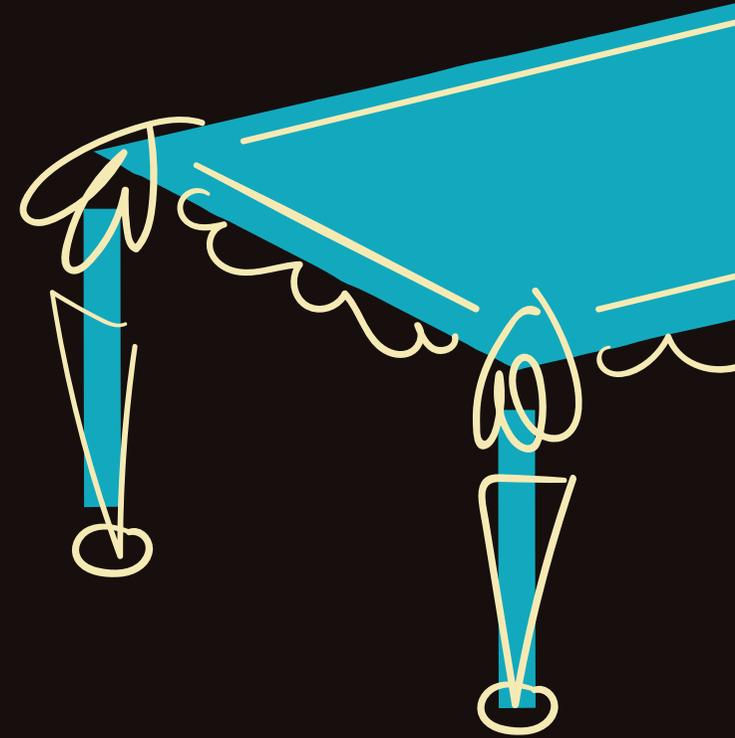


15 years of gathering people
around the same table.



ANNUAL REPORT 2014–2015





CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

As CMI turns 15 this year I feel like a father of a teenager. I am very proud of the organisation I founded, which has grown into one of the leading organisations in the field of conflict resolution. Over the years, CMI has created a strong personality and found a unique niche in a challenging environment.

THE FIELD OF peace mediation has changed over the years. In the early years, CMI mainly dealt with crisis management, which also led to the name Crisis Management Initiative. Today we use the acronym CMI as the organisation has shifted its focus to conflict resolution.

THE defining factor between then and now is professionalism. The peace mediation field has taken a huge leap forward. Working methods have been standardised and systematised, the latest research and know-how is used in projects and processes, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms have been developed to support the work. These peace mediation professionals appeal increasingly also to the funders.

NOWADAYS, preventing a conflict is at the forefront. This means identifying early warning signals and reacting in a timely manner. Building and developing a society is all but easy. I must once again emphasise that in my opinion our Nordic model outsmarts other economic models. Large

CMI HAS FOUND A UNIQUE NICHE IN A CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENT.

socio-economic disparities cause critical problems, restlessness and may be the sparks that ignite a conflict. I truly believe that equality is good for everyone. A society that gives a fair chance to all citizens in terms of a good education and health care is worth fighting for.

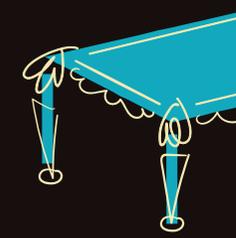
CMI agreed on new organisational values in the beginning of this year. One of them is that "it is all about people". This is well said. CMI's core competence lies in its staff. From the very beginning the staff has been exceptionally qualified and committed. We say that it takes a village to raise a child. CMI's invaluable staff has over the years shaped the organisation into what it is now. CMI has also grown together with other organisations, partners and donors who have allowed us the space to develop, learn from our mistakes and cross barriers to achieve results. I am grateful for the partnerships and individual contributions CMI has had.

WHILE I continue to guide CMI to its adulthood, I also consciously remain in the background and let the organisation make its own journey. It has always been my vision that CMI should be able to stand on its own two feet. I wanted to create something that continues to exist long after me. No organisation can rely on a single person and CMI has proved this right.

Martti Ahtisaari

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What's the story behind the table on the cover?

Read more about our anniversary campaign on page 50.

Illustration by Toni Halonen/
Mirum agency.



All conflicts can be resolved.

HYBRID WAR, HYBRID PEACEMAKING: THE NEW NORMAL?

Are we doomed to repeat the atrocities of every generation since the dawn of time, asks CMI's executive director Tuija Talvitie.

I WAS STRUCK by a comment from an experienced UN hand, **Hans Corell**, who said that we as human beings are very poor at transferring knowledge from one generation to another. The content of his message didn't strike me but its infinite sadness did. Are we doomed to repeat the atrocities of every generation since the dawn of time?

AS we watch the news on our ever-lit screens, it certainly seems so. Not only are conflicts not going away, they are getting more complicated. The internet and social media have made the world more connected than ever, and have enabled extreme acts in one corner of the globe to spark violence in another. And yet, there are academics who argue compellingly that regardless of our deep concerns about the growing violence around us, the world has never been more peaceful than now. That we mustn't confuse ease of access to seriously disturbing imagery and accounts with absolute figures.

THE twentieth century rules and systems we developed to deal with inter-state wars are severely strained by the twenty-first century's messy, intra-state conflicts, with the borders between criminality and armed violence ever more blurred. We increasingly ask if our institutions are up to the task. When we look, we see that formal institutions are often supported by informal actors – NGOs, movements, networks whose niche qualities can add to a more fit-for-purpose response to the hybrid conflicts experienced across the globe today.

CMI IS ONE CONSTRUCTIVE ACTOR IN A BUSY, COMPLEX AND EVERCHANGING CONTEXT.

ALL of these actors – UN envoys, foreign ministers, regional organisations, NGO project leaders, grassroots activists – are part of a system. This means that they are not like doctors acting neutrally upon a sick patient, but themselves form part of the body whose ills must be carefully addressed. Their motivations, their actions, their words, their silences and their non-actions impact the functioning of the system just as those who take up arms, and those who suffer the consequences of that. Understanding and appreciating this requires a willingness to do so; and a great deal of humility and integrity as all self-reflection.

WHAT is CMI's response, and how do we see our small part in this critical operating theatre? CMI is pragmatic and humble but also believes ambitiously that every conflict can be resolved. We know that sustainable peace cannot be achieved or measured in months but years, often decades. We see ourselves as one constructive actor in a busy, complex and ever changing context. We contribute the benefits of our work for the greater, interconnected good, understanding that trust among the different actors working for the resolution of conflicts is not a given. We know that our trump card is the ability to create spaces where the people involved can discuss the issues at stake rather than their political positions.

FOR us at CMI, the foundations of this approach lie in solid and iterative analysis of what really drives a conflict. We design our interventions based on where in the process we have best access, and can add real value. We recognise that the moral

duty of an independent actor is to constructively question the prevailing wisdom: are we being as effective as we can? We are a small cogwheel in a big mechanism; we cannot control the actions of large organisations and states, or events at national or regional levels. But we know that operating within peace processes is a delicate undertaking, with human life and death, at stake. Therefore we move carefully, complementing and connecting with the efforts of other actors, and recognising that long-term work on dialogues can be combined with shorter-term crisis interventions.

OURS is a long-term game where measuring progress is not for the faint-hearted. But there is great comfort and great beauty in striving to work together for a common goal; combining different fortes, viewpoints and convictions. True, it would be easier not to have to negotiate common ground but that, dear friends, is an indulgence from times long gone.



LEADERSHIP TEAM

CMI's leadership team supports the executive director in planning and decision-making. Chaired by the executive director, it is made up of the programme directors, the director for finance and administration and the head of communications and fundraising. The team meets monthly and holds regular workshops with CMI's board on key strategic topics.

From left:

Heidi Huuhtanen, programme director

Jaana Seppänen, director, finance and administration

Elina Lehtinen, head, communications and fundraising

Tuija Talvitie, executive director

Ville Brummer, programme director



ENSURING A COHERENT AND EFFECTIVE PROGRAMME

2014 was the first year of CMI's new comprehensive programme, focused on making meaningful contributions to peace processes in four regions. The three overarching themes identified in the programme have proven to be an effective framework for designing and managing our work.

DURING 2014, we have been able to further crystallise CMI's added value and build a more coherent programme around our key themes thereby ensuring a more effective use of our resources.

Mediation and dialogue

Mediation and dialogue is at the heart of our work. Here, we increasingly focus on informal, yet high-level engagements. This does not mean that we only work with elites or duplicate the efforts of official actors. Instead, we engage with select individuals who can work between and within the official and unofficial levels, and can thus influence the broader political landscape in different ways.

Occasionally, such engagements may lead to more officially acknowledged processes, such as our work with South Sudan's ruling party. More often, however, the added value of our work lies in the unofficial nature of the process. At best, when the official positions can be left outside the room, we can offer spaces where essential questions related to the conflict can be discussed, analysed and agreed on without them being immediately used as bargaining chips in the broader political battle.

WE CAN OFFER SPACES WHERE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS CAN BE DISCUSSED.

Mediation support

Within the last years, the focus of our mediation support activities has also shifted somewhat. In parallel to more long-term capacity-building efforts, we increasingly focus on providing timely on-demand support to peace processes.

These activities can be carried out within long-term partnerships, such as our cooperation with the African Union and the European Union. In 2014, the most prominent example of this type of work was our support to the peace process in the Central African Republic. Another corner stone of CMI's operational support is our ability to link the unofficial dialogues to support the official efforts. Examples of this kind of work can be found in Eastern Europe, where our informal dialogue processes are linked to support the efforts of the respective parties and the international community.

Support to national actors in conflict prevention and resolution

The third theme of our programme is a more exploratory component, where we have given ourselves the space to formulate our niche. Our underlying assumption is that, to prevent and resolve conflicts, countries don't always need external mediators or peace processes separate from the normal political and societal practices. On the contrary, many times the critical success elements of peace processes - national ownership, legitimacy of elected leaders, accountability of executives and synchronisation of conflict solving with long-term political processes - can be best guaranteed when the conflict prevention and resolution efforts are embedded to nationally-led entities within the existing political system.



Here, we believe that although there is no need for a peace process, the political processes in conflict-affected and post-conflict countries can benefit from the best practices of mediation and dialogue, namely fostering trust, compromise and inclusion in a solution-driven manner. As an independent actor, who does not challenge the legitimacy of national actors, we are a suitable partner for such work.

Achieving concrete results

At CMI, we are fully aware that as an NGO we cannot influence all the ever-shifting pieces of the global and regional puzzles. Rather, the effectiveness of our programme lies in our ability to work on such issues and with such people that hold a promise of constructive results and multiplied effects.

This may mean responding to demands rising from evolving contexts when needed exemplified by our work to resolve critical issues within South Sudan's ruling party. Other times to achieve results we may need to work on solving issues which are currently bubbling below the surface, but which may become influential in the future. Our long-term engagement in the post-Soviet space, particularly Ukraine, is a prime example of this. The personal contacts, trust and analysis we've fostered during the past years – a time when most other organisations had little interest in the region – were vital in allowing us to start preparing an internal Ukrainian dialogue during, not after, the Maidan events.

WE LOOK TO PRODUCE MEANINGFUL AND SUSTAINABLE RESULTS OVER THE MEDIUM AND LONGER TERMS.

Fostering trust, solutions and inclusion

On the practical level we base our work on a three-dimensional results framework, which helps us to manage and communicate our results:

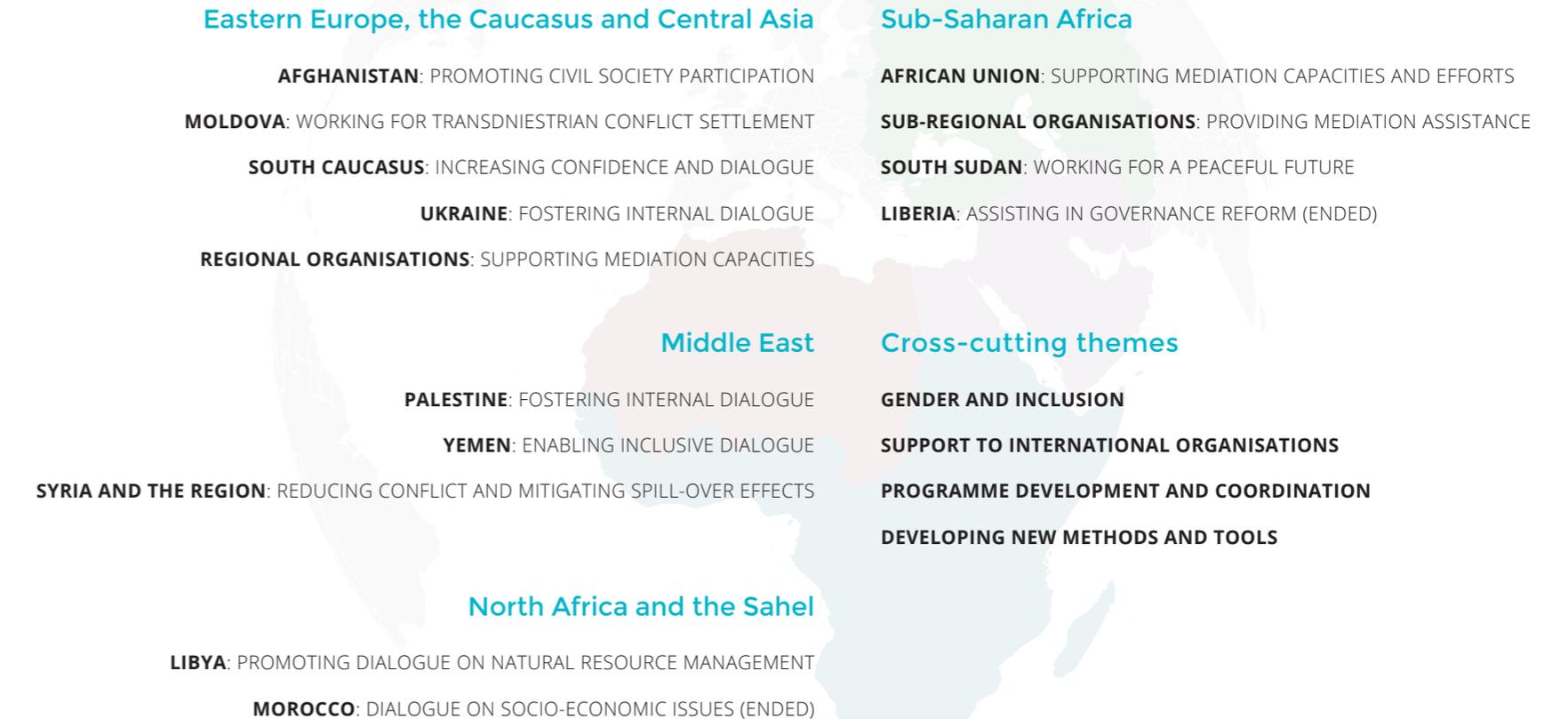
TRUST is a crucial element in a successful peace process. There needs to be trust between us and the parties, between and within the parties themselves, as well as between the parties and the broader society. And there needs to be enough trust among the international community.

SOLUTIONS for us are more than names on a piece of paper. There needs to be commitment and capacity by all respective parties to advance the agreed issues in society.

INCLUSIVENESS is at the heart of our work and something we as an NGO are well-positioned to promote. Working between and within the official and unofficial levels, our programme not only links people, but builds genuine cooperation among decision-makers and those who, for whatever reason, are not part of the official structures.

We currently use these three dimensions to analyse the results of our activities. At CMI we are privileged to work with donors and partners who share the understanding on the complexities related to our work and the difficulties in showing easily measurable results. This does not imply that there would not be a shared understanding about the importance of identifying, analysing and communicating results. Rather, the foundation of our cooperation with our donors is accountability - not only short-term wins, but producing meaningful and sustainable results over the medium and longer term.

CMI'S PROJECTS 2014-2015



Cross-cutting themes

- GENDER AND INCLUSION**
- SUPPORT TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS**
- PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION**
- DEVELOPING NEW METHODS AND TOOLS**

DIFFICULT TIMES AHEAD

Ivan Krastev, leading expert on the post-Soviet space, believes that the disintegration of the Soviet Union did not end in 1992. In our interview, he explains why the process is only ending now.

THERE IS A LONG history of unresolved conflicts in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Political scientist Ivan Krastev, a long-time member of the board of the European Council on Foreign Relations chaired by President Ahtisaari, agreed to give us his take on why the past 20 years have been so difficult.

Many of the Eastern European countries have faced significant challenges since the collapse of the Soviet Union. What type of legacy did the Cold War leave them with?

The communist period left different legacies for the countries of the former Warsaw pact. In Central Europe, the era did not question the nature of the state and its borders. Conversely, Eastern Europe became the biggest state construction site that Europe had seen since World War I.

The challenges faced in the post-Soviet space were not simply how to democratise or achieve a market economy, but how to build an effective and legitimate state. New states had to be created, some from borders that only existed on paper. It was a huge problem for some of the Central Asian countries, which didn't have any history of a modern state. It was a problem for Russia itself because it had never been anything but imperialist in its history. Also in places like Belarus and Ukraine, building a state identity was very difficult.

Why do these countries continue to struggle with their economies and basic governance structures?

We have state failure in many places in the post-Soviet space. The state normally guarantees you a notion of a future and longer-term development. But the elite that came to power in the Eastern European countries was short-sighted, basically trying to get as much as they could for themselves, and not investing in their own countries but channelling all the money outside. The population was not only suffering in economic terms, but they didn't have any trust in the elite. This led to very weak governance.

Even when the situation started to improve in economic terms, for example in Russia, this was not due to better governance but the increasing oil and natural resources prices. So, paradoxically, for all of these 20 years, the relationship between the elite and the people has never been based on accountability, except for the Baltic States.

How would you describe the current situation? What is going on?

I believe that the disintegration of the Soviet Union did not end in 1992 – it started then. What we're seeing is the end of the process. It is going to be a very difficult period. While it started with the notion that the borders of the post-Soviet space were going to be recognised, it now ends with the idea that these borders should be revised.

THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE SOVIET UNION DID NOT END IN 1992 – IT STARTED THEN.



WHO?

Ivan Krastev is a Bulgarian political scientist and the chairman of the Centre for Liberal Strategies, a research and analysis NGO. He is also a permanent fellow at the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna and a founding board member of the European Council on Foreign Relations.

One of the reasons for this next stage is that some of the previous post-Soviet countries now identify themselves as pre-EU countries, such as Moldova, Georgia or Ukraine. Simultaneously, for the first time in 20 years, the most powerful country in the region has revised the principle on which the peaceful disintegration was based; that the Soviet-made borders would remain. The failure of the Russian state to modernise led to their new agenda where the state is defined by gaining territory rather than competitiveness in the global market.

Do you see that the disintegration could happen in a peaceful way?

I believe that what is happening now is the end of a status quo that was unviable. Thus, the changes can be more positive than they may seem at the moment.

Also, earlier there was only one major actor in the post-Soviet space. Now, in addition to the EU playing a major role, we're probably going to see a third important player in this space as a result of Russia's decision to open up to China. Chinese money and influence is going to be very important when states are built.

In the end, the most important question is how the succession is going to take place in many of these countries where the political regimes are built around certain personalities. It's impossible to predict at this point if we're going to see positive political changes or if this will only lead to more insecurity and chaos.

TO OUR LAST question of whether he dares to guess about the coming years, Krastev just laughs: "It's safe to say that they'll be good for some and bad for others."



ROXANA CRISTESCU, head, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia

Comparative advantages

CMI has for almost a decade been working to contribute to a peaceful future for the region. We support ongoing peace processes, foster dialogue among different parties, and enhance regional conflict resolution capacities. Our aim is to build confidence across the various unresolved conflict divides that exist in the post-Soviet space. Our impartiality, regional experience and Finnish identity brings us a comparative advantage in this context where we are quite well-known and few other private diplomacy actors are present.

Projects

Afghanistan
Regional mediation capacities
South Caucasus
Transdniestrian conflict settlement
Ukraine



INTERVIEW WITH

Victor Osipov, deputy prime minister, Moldova

THE TRANSDNIESTRIAN CONFLICT A ROADBLOCK TO ALL DEVELOPMENT

Moldova's deputy prime minister pushes hard to start the political negotiations again to solve the Transdniestrian conflict. He was previously a member of CMI's expert group and continues to have a constructive relationship with us.

“YOU WILL NEVER be a politician nor a minister,” said a father to his son when he repeatedly ordered the boy to put the books away. “I loved reading. Other members of my family worked outside on the farm. Books were my world.” This is a story that Moldova's current deputy prime minister **Victor Osipov** tells with a sparkle in his eyes.

At the time of Osipov's childhood, Moldova was a part of the Soviet Union. The small country of four million citizens gained its independence 23 years ago when the Soviet Union collapsed. However, ever since then there has been an internal conflict over the Transdniestrian settlement. Now there is even more tension in the region due to the Ukrainian conflict.

Regional instability has an impact

“Ukraine used to be one of the guarantors of the Transdniestrian process,” reminds Osipov. Although the negotiations are still considered to be ongoing, the official sessions stopped in June 2014 when the Transdniestrian side made specific requests that should be addressed for their participation to continue.

Now the negotiations to solve the conflict have been frozen for almost a year. “Everyone understands that the major player here is Russia,” he says and emphasises that there is now a lack of clarity in the region.

Yet, Osipov is not someone who would stand still and wait for better times. He is pushing hard to start the political negotiations again with internal and external players. Osipov himself has been nominated as chief negotiator representing Moldova's government.

Prior to his current governmental posts, Victor Osipov was part of CMI's high-level expert group working to build trust



Roxana Cristescu, CMI's head of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and minister Osipov continue to seek ways to solve the conflict.

CMI CREATED A PLATFORM FOR DISCUSSING SENSITIVE ISSUES, BUILD TRUST AND SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND.

and find common ground between contradicting views in the Transdniestrian conflict. “These unofficial platforms are necessary to build trust.” Osipov's experiences from CMI's projects are entirely positive. He even claims that the networks, relationships and different viewpoints have helped him in his current job.

CMI creates platforms for sharing different views

“CMI created a platform to discuss sensitive issues, build trust and search for common ground. The group is like a bank of experts who give you food for thought. We also wrote valuable documents and

created future scenarios. Many of these were supported by the whole group.” According to Osipov, CMI's work demonstrates that beyond the official circles, there exists a community of people on all sides of the conflict divide who are willing to solve the Transdniestrian conflict.

What worries many Moldovans in the current unstable situation is the brain drain. Talented young people are moving away to study and work. “I hope they will move back after having experiences abroad. Then they will bring along their knowledge of how things are done elsewhere,” Osipov concludes.



Moldova

Capital: Chişinău
Population (2014 est): 3.6 million
Independence: 1991
Livelihood: agriculture, industry (food processing, machinery, appliances)

The Transdniestrian conflict

The conflict stems from a short but traumatic war in 1992 between the armed forces of the Republic of Moldova and the self-declared authorities of Transdniestria. Despite on-and-off negotiations for over 20 years and considerable international mediation efforts, little progress has been made to solve the dispute. The tensions have had a significant impact on the population on both sides, limiting socio-economic development in the area.

CMI's work

CMI has worked since 2011 to support the Transdniestrian conflict settlement process. We foster dialogue and confidence-building among senior independent experts and officials from across the conflict divide. Our standing dialogue group includes political analysts, former negotiators in the official political process, former senior diplomats and advisers to top leadership from Chişinău, Tiraspol, Moscow, the EU and the US.

The members meet regularly to analyse the most important political, economic and social issues, and develop joint recommendations for the political negotiators and the international community. CMI also supports the conflict parties, mediators and observers with regular briefings.

LOST IN TRANSITION

As yet another year passes, the Middle East and North Africa face difficult and uncertain times, believes CMI's analyst Mikko Patokallio.

ALTHOUGH THE ARAB Spring may seem quite distant, the region's politics continue to be shaped by the legacy of the transitions. At the same time, this legacy is overshadowed and redefined by the violence that has occurred since.

In addition to multiple concurrent violent conflicts, there is a sense of regional turmoil, which also affects countries not directly impacted by the spillover. Most recently, the rise of the violent and dogmatic Islamic State – more commonly known as ISIS – has become a disturbing symbol of regional chaos.

ISIS IS A SYMPTOM, NOT THE SOURCE, OF THE WIDER REGIONAL ILLS.

The emergence of ISIS is alarming and merits attention, but it is important to bear in mind that ISIS is a symptom, not the source, of wider regional ills. The most critical challenge has been the inability of states to satisfactorily address ongoing economic and societal changes, and manage popular expectations. Most Middle Eastern and North African states rely on external rents, which distances elites from the wider population. This disconnect between the state and society is aggravated by authoritarian, mostly closed political systems. When faced with serious challenges like persistent and growing societal inequality, elites prefer to avoid substantial reform, lest they end up undermining the system. The previous dynamic was inherently unstable, and paved the way for the Arab Spring protests.

The past order cannot be rebuilt

Four years later, the results of the popular movements are distinctly mixed. With the happy exception of Tunisia, other transitions have fallen off track, either into violence (Libya) or resurgent authoritarianism (Egypt). Those regimes, which nervously held their breath to see whether their popular protests would reach critical mass (Morocco), have now been able to re-exert their control. Nonetheless, the protests and the brief political openings they forged have had a lasting impact on the region.

What makes a political order legitimate has been one of the central questions raised by the Arab Spring. Countless proposals have been made – democratic, populist, nationalist, Islamist, royalist – but no definitive answers have been reached. This societal dialogue has been vibrant but also chaotic and difficult to direct. Egypt's errant political process reflects how established political actors have reacted at times both recklessly and cautiously. It is an environment where the political game is the same, but the rulebook is still being written.

One thing is clear, however; it is not possible to reconstruct the past order, which has been successfully challenged or overthrown. To skirt around the complicated issue of what should replace the past order, regional politics are increasingly defined through negation – being anti-regime, anti-opposition, sectarian, or anti-Islamist. This translates into both reactive and reactionary politics that suppresses alternative paths without presenting a way forward.

THE RESULTS OF THE ARAB SPRING UPRISINGS ARE DISTINCTLY MIXED.

Rights and recognition at the core

Closely linked to the debates of what constitutes legitimate political order comes the proliferation and strengthening of sub- or non-state identities – tribal, sectarian, social. Sectarian identities have grown particularly prominent as transnational factors, linking different political spheres in new ways.

To a large extent this awakening is organic, taking advantage of the newfound space for alternative identities. It is also driven by the desire of political actors to mobilise support around these identities. At the same time they cannot fully control the forces they seek to harness. Current sectarian narratives overstate the role of religion, as the core issue is over identity and politics – rights and recognition – not theology.

These fundamental questions of political identity and order have left regional politics unbalanced, as states and societies grapple with these issues. The obvious breakdown of the grand national narratives of the past have opened up a necessary space for these issues to be discussed, but it is still a thoroughly confusing experience. The Middle East and North Africa will continue to be shaped by this difficult, but ultimately necessary, debate.



WHO?

Mikko Patokallio works as an analyst at CMI developing conflict analysis methods, tools and practices. He has worked and published extensively on Middle East policy analysis, and is a regular guest on Finnish TV and radio.

SAANA KESKITALO
senior manager,
Middle East

MARUAN EL-KREKSHI
head,
North Africa & the Sahel



Added value from informal dialogue

CMI works in the region to foster inclusive dialogue, and to support and complement nationally-led peace efforts. We believe that the underlying regional challenges can only be solved if all relevant actors are involved and the solutions are developed locally. Our work brings added value as it enables informal dialogue and increases key actors' capacities to solve conflicts. These processes can begin and continue despite constant changes in the political environment, while we also continuously strive to feed the results to the official processes.

Projects

Libya
Palestine
Syria and the region
Yemen
Morocco (ended)

FROM HIGH HOPES TO A HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

A lot has happened in Yemen since CMI began supporting the country's peaceful development five years ago. Despite the current dire situation, activist Bahria Shamsheer continues to fight for a peaceful future.

"IN THIS CONFLICT there are no winners. We all lose," Bahria Shamsheer says sadly. Having championed Yemen's peaceful political transition for years, she is desolate about the civil war that broke out in 2014. However, this independent political activist is also a shining example of how even crises can foster changes that would have been hard to believe some years earlier.

Violence interrupts peaceful progress

Yemen is a prime example of the unpredictable and volatile contexts CMI faces in its work. A lot has happened over five years. In 2011, the Arab Spring effects spread to the country, one of the world's poorest, leading to demonstrations and violence. After months of unrest, a historic national dialogue was convened.

With high hopes more than 500 Yemenis gathered for 10 months to discuss their country's future. Bahria Shamsheer was among them. The participants agreed on many of the conflict issues, but not all. As the efforts to solve

the remaining concerns continued Shamsheer stayed optimistic. "When the negotiations were ongoing, I trusted that we were on the way to peace," she says. But just as the new constitution was being drafted last year, the violence returned. In late March 2015, the already dire situation took a turn for the worse as neighbouring countries became involved.

A humanitarian crisis is now a reality in the country that only a year before stood at the verge of a peaceful future. Shamsheer is afraid. "I don't want to see polarisation destroy Yemen. It will be very difficult to rebuild the society." Still, she intends to continue fighting for a peaceful future.

Women have the right to participate

Paradoxically, Yemen also provides an example of the silver lining that a crisis can foster. With one of the highest gender inequality rates in the world, women's participation in any public life was until recently almost unheard of. All this changed in the run-up to the national dialogue. Women stood up for their rights and managed to ensure a 30% representation.

PARADOXICALLY, YEMEN IS ALSO AN EXAMPLE OF THE SILVER LINING THAT A CRISIS CAN FOSTER.

"Women need to struggle for their rights to participate alongside men," Shamsheer believes and urges women to have confidence in themselves. She herself has been actively involved in CMI's efforts to ensure that women retain their hard-won rights to be a part of Yemen's political life. The CMI-supported group of influential women from diverse backgrounds was even able to get the political parties' insurance that their views would be considered when preparing the constitution. Then the violence broke out.

Efforts have not been in vain

"We did not expect that the conflict would escalate to this point," Shamsheer exclaims. Nearly all of Yemen's 20 governorates are now affected by the conflict.

However, even during the current crisis, the enthusiastic group has demonstrated that they can make a difference. When few other avenues existed, they managed to maintain contacts among the different political groups. Bahria Shamsheer refuses to believe that all hope is lost.

"Everyone should now focus on bringing about peace," she urges.

RISKY BUSINESS

The risks that CMI faces in its line of work are often graver than those of most organisations. Working in fragile countries with weak infrastructures and security threats is a risk that we have to accept.

Working with conflict societies adds to our challenges. Endlessly changing political dynamics and cycles of violence create volatile conditions. Change, if it takes place in these circumstances, takes time. There are no quick and easy fixes.

We need to tolerate a certain level of risk but also manage the risks that we can control. Well-planned activities are often overtaken by unforeseen events. We value managed flexibility, the ability and tolerance for change, while assessing and mitigating risks. Our robust risk management approach ensures constant analysis, monitoring, and prevention. This capacity to quickly adapt to changing circumstances is one of the key added values of independent actors like us.



CMI supports women to have a say in Yemen's future.

Yemen

Capital: Sana'a
Population (2013): 24 million
Human Development Index (2014): 154/187
Literacy rate: men 82% / women 48%

CMI's work

CMI has been working in Yemen since 2011, when we were able to bring all key Yemeni groups around the same table, including political parties, armed groups and revolutionary youth. Over the years, we have supported two core groups to informally discuss critical national issues: one including key actors from across the entire political spectrum, and the other bringing together influential women.

Although the situation is dire at the moment, we don't believe that our efforts over the years have in any way been in vain. Our dialogue platforms and contacts with all political and armed groups in the country, including the women, are still there to support unofficial communication between key actors. These structures will be vital when the negotiations continue.



COMPLEX REGIONAL DYNAMICS

The past year presented a number of challenges for peace and security in Africa. CMI's senior adviser Nureldin Satti believes that a new vision is needed to move from a culture of war and confrontation to that of peace and reconciliation.

AFRICA CONTINUES TO face serious difficulties, such as the crises in South Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR), the persistent instabilities in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa, and the violent expansion of terrorist groups like Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab.

As we look ahead, these challenges remain along with other instability triggers, such as a number of upcoming contentious presidential and parliamentary elections. Conflicts in Africa will also continue to be characterised by their regional impact. The crises are typically transnational and influenced by regional dynamics. In this context, supporting regional conflict prevention approaches becomes increasingly important.

Instability inevitably affects neighbours

Complex regional dynamics and interests can exacerbate crises and prolong peace efforts. Even in civil wars, actors, resources and events often span across national boundaries. For example, the involvement and often competing interests of countries neighbouring South Sudan have regionalised the internal crisis, thereby making peace efforts protracted and difficult. In the CAR, the historically close involvement of Chad continues to pose challenges.

In regions where cross-border trade and mobility are vibrant, instability in one country inevitably affects its neighbours. We have seen this in the Great Lakes region but also in the Sahel.

The humanitarian impact of these transnational conflicts is particularly grim, as exemplified by the vast number of refugees on the continent. South Sudan hosts over 200,000 refugees from Sudan, while over half a million South Sudanese have fled to neighbouring states. More than 190,000 people have left the CAR since late 2013.

Transnational terrorist groups pose unique challenges

Regional dynamics are also at play in the fight against transnational terrorist groups. Boko Haram's violent uprising in northeastern Nigeria has spilled over to the border regions of Chad, Niger and Cameroon. Similarly, the actions of the Al-Shabaab terrorist group are no longer limited to Somalia but constitute a real threat to peace and security in neighbouring Kenya and Ethiopia.

The transnational character of these groups poses unique challenges to the region and requires the neighbouring countries to adopt a regional approach in mobilising forces to jointly fight these terrorists, as has been the case in both above-mentioned examples

Moreover, Sub-Saharan Africa does not exist in isolation but is increasingly influenced by its interaction with and exposure to other regions. The countries are affected by crises beyond the region, as is evident by the recent influx of small arms and refugees into the Horn of Africa due to the instability in Yemen.

Sustainable solutions require regional efforts

The continent's transnational conflicts with deep-rooted regional dynamics pose unique challenges to national, regional, and international actors. Solving them requires regional collaboration.

REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS ARE UNIQUELY POSITIONED TO MEDIATE IN THE CRISES.

Possessing robust legitimacy and local knowledge, regional and sub-regional organisations are uniquely positioned to mediate in these conflicts. Compared to international actors, they are also more closely affected by the crises, thereby making their leadership vital in conflict resolution.

In Africa, the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities are increasingly active in the field of peace and security. The international community, including private actors like CMI, should support the efforts by these actors to consolidate and strengthen a peaceful environment in Africa.



WHO?

Ambassador **Nureldin Satti** supports CMI's work in Sub-Saharan Africa as a senior adviser. He has worked in the region for more than three decades, primarily for the United Nations.



ITONDE KAKOMA, head,
Sub-Saharan Africa

Promoting peace and security

CMI works in Sub-Saharan Africa particularly to support regional and sub-regional organisations in their efforts to promote peace and security on the continent. We help them build their mediation capacities and assist in actual mediation efforts.

We also promote the possibilities of women and youth to participate in resolving conflicts and supporting reforms. In addition, our activities help key individuals to strengthen their conflict prevention and resolution skills.

Projects

African Union
Sub-regional organisations
South Sudan
Liberia (ended)

FLEXIBLY SUPPORTING THE AFRICAN UNION

CMI's long-standing partnership with the African Union is set to continue for another three years.

ONE OF CMI'S longest partnerships has been with the African Union (AU). For the last six years we have supported the regional organisation's mediation capacities together with our partner, the African Centre for Constructive Resolution of Conflicts.



Ambassador Nicolas Bwakira (on the left) together with CMI's senior advisers ambassadors David Kapya and Nureldin Satti discuss peace mediation in Africa at a seminar in Helsinki.

Over the years, solid trust has developed between the three partners. As a sign of how successful the partnership has been, the collaboration will continue for another three years.

The core philosophy behind CMI's work is our understanding that sustainable solutions to complex conflicts require regional efforts. This is particularly true in Africa, where the African Union faces multiple challenges, as ambassador **Nicolas Bwakira**, former AU special representative to Somalia and CMI's senior adviser, notes:

"The environment in which the AU operates is very diverse and complex. Just recently, the AU has been involved in assisting Nigeria, Somalia and Mali to tackle terrorist attacks, addressing intra-state conflicts in Libya, South Sudan and Egypt, and mediating in Lesotho and Burundi."

Varied support

The highly challenging environment means that CMI needs to flexibly respond to the AU's needs. "Because of local and regional interests, the multiplicity and complexity of the conflicts, and the limited human and financial capacity of the AU, CMI has to be flexible to be helpful," highlights the experienced diplomat.

Building on this need, the project's focus has during the years shifted increasingly towards providing operational support. Based on the AU's requests, CMI has worked in contexts varying from Madagascar to the Central African Republic and Ivory Coast.

WE ARE EXTREMELY HONORED THAT THE AU WANTS TO CONTINUE WORKING WITH US FOR ANOTHER THREE YEARS.

Work remains

"CMI has played an important role in providing diversified technical and advisory support to the AU. Our assistance has spanned from conflict analysis to process design, facilitation, and frequent thematic advice. The AU has especially benefitted from our agility, impartiality and discreetness as a non-state actor," Bwakira believes.

Looking back, he concludes that the AU's mediation capacities have increased in recent years thanks to the support from various partners. "However, there is still a lot of work to be done. This is a fruitful partnership and we are extremely honoured that the AU wants to continue working with us for another three years," he says.

A WORD FROM THE FUNDER

"Mediation and conflict resolution are corner stones of Finland's foreign policy. We are thus a proud partner in the development of the African Union's mediation capacities through the joint AU-ACCORD-CMI initiative. We consider the tripartite arrangement particularly valuable, and it is evident that ACCORD and CMI are well placed to support the AU."

Jarno Syrjälä, director general of the Department for Africa and Middle East, Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs



The steering committee of the AU project includes all the partners and the Finnish foreign ministry as the funder.

Supporting regional organisations

Regional organisations are prominent building blocks for the new peace and security architecture necessary for solving today's multidimensional conflicts. CMI currently supports two key organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa to build their mediation capacities; the African Union and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

We support ECCAS particularly in the Central African Republic (CAR). Throughout the international mediation process we have provided dialogue and mediation expertise. Our efforts in the CAR also aim to support a stronger role for women in the political transition. We have among others supported the preparations of women's platforms for the upcoming national dialogue.

"The partnership between ECCAS and CMI in the Central African Republic started in July 2014 in the context of the Brazzaville forum for national reconciliation and political dialogue. Under my supervision, CMI and ECCAS experts served as secretariat for this forum in a spirit of frank collaboration, and with proficiency and devotion," notes ECCAS representative ambassador **Adolphe Nahayo**.

Ambassador Nahayo envisions a long collaboration between the organisations: "The preparatory commission for the national Bangui forum deeply appreciates CMI's expertise in support of ECCAS. This is just the beginning."

FOSTERING CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE

The world's youngest nation South Sudan is in the midst of a violent civil war. To help bring peace closer, CMI has supported talks between the leaders of South Sudan's ruling party. This dialogue aims to complement the official peace process.

THE DAY OF 21 January dawned hopeful and ended even better in Arusha, Tanzania. On that day, the principal leaders of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) signed an agreement on reunifying the party. In the document, they outlined the key issues that have led to the current crisis and the basic tenets of reform towards addressing them. The three signatory leaders were the president of South Sudan and SPLM chairman, **Salva Kiir**; the former vice-president of South Sudan and chairman of the SPLM/A-In Opposition, **Riek Machar**; and the head of the SPLM Leaders delegation, **Deng Alor**. The ceremony was witnessed by several regional heads of state and leaders from Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and South Africa.

Before the agreement could be reached, confidence and trust between the groups needed to be built. To that end, CMI supported dialogue between the groupings over the course of autumn 2014 and into January 2015 in close partnership with Tanzania's ruling party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), and the country's Ministry for Foreign Affairs. During the talks, CMI provided technical support and expertise on mediation, particularly in terms of dialogue process methods and regional political analysis.

While the international community was largely supportive of the agreement and the dialogue, some criticism has been raised that the dialogue has provided an opportunity for the parties to shift

venues and evade difficult decisions or compromises. In view of those concerns, CMI has together with the Tanzanian partners endeavoured to ensure that the progress in Arusha strengthens the formal peace process.

Consensus fosters ownership

During the talks, consensus was ensured for every step in the process, including on agendas and timelines. The conducive environment allowed the parties to engage in frank and constructive dialogue. It also helped them to identify the root causes of the crisis, including acknowledging "collective responsibility" for the current state of affairs in South Sudan.

THE CONDUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT ALLOWED THE PARTIES TO ENGAGE IN FRANK AND CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE.

The willingness of the SPLM groups to engage in debate was largely welcomed by the international community. More than a dozen official statements were issued by various international and regional stakeholders immediately following the signing.

South Africa's deputy president **Cyril Ramaphosa** stated that "this is a big night for peace on our continent." **Børge Brende**, Norwegian minister for foreign affairs, welcomed "that the different factions of the SPLM have agreed to cooperate in finding a sustainable solution to the conflict within the party and in the country."

Since January, the parties have taken some steps towards implementing the agreement. The process has been led by its co-guarantors: CCM and South Africa's ruling party, the African National Congress.



CMI's head for Sub-Saharan Africa, Itonde Kakoma (on the right) and project officer Philip Haspeslagh during final consultations with Tanzanian president Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete (second from right) and CCM secretary-general Abdulrahman Kinana (second from left) just prior to the signing of the reunification agreement on 21 January.

Official peace process scheduled to continue under "IGAD-Plus"

The dialogue supported by CMI strived to complement the formal peace process, which is led by the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD). The initiative was not a formal mediation effort, but a consultative dialogue. The discussion agenda was set by consensus.

The negotiations for peace in South Sudan are anticipated to continue in summer 2015 under the umbrella of "IGAD-Plus". It is likely to be a multi-stakeholder mediation effort, which may include countries of the Troika (US, United Kingdom and Norway), the EU, the UN and China.

As for the reunification agreement, a key priority for its co-guarantors will be to coordinate the implementation phase closely with the formal process. Progress within the party needs to feed into, strengthen and reinforce the official peace process.



South Sudan

Capital: Juba
Independence: 2011
Population: 11million
Age structure: 65% under 25 years

CMI's work

In addition to the Arusha process, CMI has supported the inclusion of women and youth groups in the political dialogue to help them contribute to the future of the country.

Our work with the women parliamentarians' caucus has aimed to collect women's views related to the future of the country. For many, it has been the first time to be engaged in political processes. The positive effect extends wider through the participants' active networks in their constituencies.

The youth dialogue work has aimed at creating spaces for discussion and information sharing among young people across the country. The young leaders have been willing to make the dialogue as constructive as possible. CMI aims to create confidence between diverse youth networks across regional and ethnic divides.



South Sudanese youth discuss their country's future.



ANTONIA POTTER PRENTICE
senior manager,
gender and inclusion

Inclusivity is key

CMI works to support a stronger role for women in peace processes, better overall capacities in gender-sensitive mediation, and considerations of gender issues in peace agreements.

In our work, we do not believe that women are better than others or that they somehow hold the key to unlocking the gates to sustainable peace. But we believe that women must have their place alongside men to overcome the challenges violent conflicts pose to the families, communities and societies that we build and share together.

Projects

Fostering a stronger role for women in peacemaking

Engaging women in national peace processes

VIEWPOINT

Antonia Potter Prentice, senior manager, gender and inclusion

LASTING PEACE NEEDS WOMEN

We count ourselves as champions of the efforts to ensure women's role in peacemaking, says CMI's senior manager Antonia Potter Prentice.

ALREADY 15 YEARS have gone by since the UN officially recognised the role of women in peace and security – as many years as CMI has been actively supporting peace. We count ourselves as champions of the international efforts to ensure women's role in peacemaking, which is a key focus of our programmatic work.

THE foundational UN Security Council resolution on women, peace and security (UNSCR 1325) was adopted in 2000. Today, it has six accompanying resolutions, which strengthen and reinforce its core messages: women's participation and decision-making in peace and security; better prevention, protection and prosecution regarding sexual violence in conflict; and the need for training on gender-sensitive approaches in conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and humanitarian response.

MEDIATION and negotiation are a small part of this vast domain of international ac-

tion. However, these efforts tend to have a high profile and are often vital in defining pathways out of cycles of violence in conflict-ravaged nations. It is often for mediation and negotiation efforts that the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded – though still rarely to women.

EVERY year the UN Secretary-General reports to the Security Council on how the implementation of the resolutions is progressing. One of the areas of weakest progress continues to be women's meaningful participation in peace processes. UN statistics show that only 4% of signatories, 2.4% of chief mediators, 3.7% of witnesses and 9% of negotiators between 1992–2011 were women. Let's see what the updated figures for the 15th anniversary will be.

EXPERTS agree that these low numbers are rooted in the persistent inequality between men and women in terms of access to power and decision-making. Extensive research since 2000 has shown that there is no lack of qualified and able women to play roles as mediators and negotiators. They are also competent in the full range of issues relevant to the conflict and its resolution, not only the so-called women's issues.

THERE IS NO LACK OF QUALIFIED AND ABLE WOMEN TO PLAY THE ROLES OF MEDIATORS AND NEGOTIATORS.

We concur that this is not a problem of supply but of demand. In our analysis, both sides of the equation need to be engaged to make real progress, both in terms of representation and the overall quality of peace process outcomes.

IN our work, we use the agency and experience of women in conflict-affected countries as the starting point. We work with existing, diverse groupings of women such as parliamentary caucuses (South Sudan); gender units in sub-regional organisations (the Economic Community of Central African States) and informal but influential citizen groups (Yemen and South Caucasus), which often bring together women from across political, religious and ethnic divides. With our support, the women are able to analyse conflict drivers and potential solutions. They can then define shared views and options, including strategies for engaging and influencing decision-makers.

ON the other side of the equation, we contribute to strengthening the practical skills of prominent UN and regional peace envoys and independent mediators. During the high-level seminar we organise together with the UN and the Peace Research Institute Oslo, they learn to consider gender approaches and engage with women at all levels in their work. New research from Geneva's Graduate Institute demonstrates how effective a mediator's role can be in ensuring women's quality participation.

MEDIATION may still be a male-dominated stronghold. But increasingly women are finding multiple ways to influence this still-closed space, and to build paths to enter it in their own right. Ultimately this leads to more sustainable peace.

Q + A



Peace agreements more likely when women participate

We sat down with **Thania Paffenholz** to discuss her latest research on including women in peace processes. The results drawn from over 40 conflict case studies provide clear evidence that women's participation is not just a normative issue

What surprised you most in your research?

I was surprised that women were actually the second most included group in peace processes. From what I had heard before, many complained that women were not really included. We found out that, besides civil society, women were quite well represented. This was quite astonishing.

What was your key finding?

It is not the quantity of inclusion that matters but the quality. To put it simply, paying attention to the number of women around the table is not enough, they need to be able to influence the process and have decision-making power. Inclusion for the sake of inclusion does not help anyone.

What would you advise to mediators be?

Don't think that women's inclusion complicates things. This is not true. We know from evidence that peace agreements are reached more likely when more women's groups are actively involved.

Thania Paffenholz is a senior researcher and project director at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva.

WORKING FOR GENDER-SENSITIVE MEDIATION

Over the past three years, more than a hundred peace envoys and mediators have gained advice and shared experiences on how to design more inclusive peace processes.

IN SPITE OF many global and regional commitments, only a few women and gender experts are actually included in official peace processes even today. Moreover, the majority of peace agreements do not address gender-related issues, nor do they harness women's resources for reaching sustainable peace.

Recognising this gap, the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA) together with CMI and the Peace Research Institute Oslo developed in 2013 a seminar series to address these issues. The seminars provide participants with practical "how-to" strategies and tools for designing more inclusive mediation processes, and for including gender issues in peace agreements.

"Promoting women's effective participation in conflict mediation and addressing their specific needs in peacemaking efforts is a priority not just for the UN but for the entire peacemaking community. UNDPA appreciates that the high-level seminar on

gender and inclusive mediation processes has been a multi-institutional effort both in terms of organisation and participants," underlines **Jeffrey Feltman**, UN under-secretary-general for political affairs.

Prominent participants

Altogether six seminars have been organised in Helsinki and Oslo during the past three years. They have attracted more than 120 high-level mediators from the United Nations, regional organisations and civil society. Among the graduates are such distinguished experts as **Smail Chergui**, AU's peace and security commissioner; **Betty Bigombe**, Ugandan minister and former lead mediator; **Margot Wallström**, Swedish foreign minister; and **Nicholas Haysom**, the UN secretary-general's special representative and head of the UN assistance mission in Afghanistan.

Feltman says that the UN has been impressed by both the level of the participants and their active engagement: "Over the past three years we have been able to consistently engage senior mediators from a range of institutions, including our own, for the two and a half day seminar. This shows just how central these issues are to the mediation agenda."

The six seminars organised in Helsinki and Oslo between 2013-2015 have attracted more than 120 peace envoys from the UN, regional organisations and the civil society.



Q + A

Addressing sexual violence in Nigerian peace agreements is critical

The snow is falling in the Holmenkollen mountains in Norway, providing a very different backdrop to that of northern Nigeria, the home of one of the participants at the gender and inclusive mediation seminar. Gazing out of the window, imam **Muhammad Ashafa** reflects on the past three days of intimate experience-sharing, learning and group work.

Tell us about your current work environment

I am a professional practitioner in peace and mediation working across the African continent. I currently work in many violent situations in Nigeria and the Sahel, especially with different groups affected by Boko Haram. In my home country, over 250 school children between the ages of 15 and 19 have been taken away by them. Also, many women and girls in different communities have been sexually abused. The psychological terror is spreading around the communities.

What was your key take-away from the seminar?

We have been thinking about how to deal with issues related to sexual violence. The expert ideas shared at the seminar made me understand that sexual violence is a key issue that we need to take on board in the peace agreements in Nigeria. I was really encouraged as a professional during the days.

Imam Muhammad Ashafa is the executive director of the Interfaith Mediation Centre in Nigeria.

CRAFTING TOOLS FOR PEACE

The methods and tools team develops new methods to help facilitate peace processes.

SUCCESSFUL PEACE PROCESSES need experienced mediators, but also flexible process design which favours creativity. At CMI, we strongly emphasise the development of new approaches and practices, which allow for adaptable yet systematic process design.

Before any concrete effort to a peace process is made, a solid conflict analysis and actor mapping is critical. This lays the groundwork for successful process design. Who is involved and how? What is being discussed, to what end, and when? How to do we structure the discussion and the overall process? How do we measure change?

The answers to these questions also change constantly during the process. We need active monitoring and analysis to ensure that our design continues to match the evolving environment and support the end goals.

Looking for the best approaches

CMI's methods and tools team works closely with the other teams to support their work. The methodologies we use and develop help to structure and support the mediation and dialogue processes. Our underlying philosophy is that the responsibility for reaching a sustainable solution rests with the conflict parties. Our responsibility is to assist them in finding that solution.

Mikaeli Langinvainio
senior manager

Juha Törmänen
analyst

Mikko Patokallio
analyst



We base the development of our methods on two complementary pillars. Firstly, we continuously seek to distil the best practices from our own programme. Secondly, we actively follow and adopt the best approaches from both the broader peacebuilding community, and other scientific disciplines and professional practices.

Innovative designs

We have been able to develop some components that we perceive as rather unique in our field. These include new ways of working on-line, visualising the results of the conflict analysis and the participants' views, using data mining to capture key messages from inclusive consultation processes, and building roadmapping methodologies that enable the considerations of political positions alongside more technical components of the process.

WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO RETAIN OUR CURIOSITY AND CONTINUOUS LEARNING.

Looking ahead, we see two different goals. On one hand, some of the methods should be mainstreamed even more broadly within CMI and possibly beyond. On the other hand, we hope to be able to retain our curiosity and continuous learning, so that our programme can continue to be a responsible test bed for innovation.

QUALITY COUNTS

The programme development and coordination team works to ensure high-quality results.

IN RECENT YEARS, CMI has worked hard to develop our programmatic quality assurance. In 2014, we began internally discussing our overall theory of change and the results we aim to achieve with our programme. These deliberations have shown that our activities tend to lead to at least one or more of the three outcomes outlined below.

Conducive environment

Increased trust and confidence
Channels created for dialogue and existing ones strengthened
Strengthened capacities to participate and contribute

Inclusion

Engagement of relevant actors and provision of alternative inclusion strategies

Solutions

Concrete and substantive input provided to support the search for solutions

We will continue these discussions as more thinking is required to define the core results that lead from tangible outputs to intermediate outcomes for our beneficiaries, and ultimately to a wider impact in resolving conflicts and building peace. In 2015, our efforts will be supported by a Swiss foundation, PeaceNexus.



CMI's results chain. From tangible outputs to intermediate outcomes and ultimately to a wider impact.

Reviews generate important lessons

The main tools of our planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) system are regular reports, internal reviews and external evaluations. During 2014, we have upgraded and consolidated many of our internal processes, including risk management. These efforts reinforce our capacities in results-based management.

For the past years, we have particularly focused on internally reviewing our projects.

During these stocktaking and planning exercises we discuss changes, results and lessons learned with the project team. The reviews allow for self-reflection and help to navigate the project forward in the complex environments we face, while also enhancing learning across CMI.

Since 2012, we have conducted 20 internal reviews. Last year alone, seven reviews helped to collect more than 100 useful lessons for us to learn from. Reviews enhance the credibility of the project team's assessment of the results, and may also feed into donor reporting. Accountability is further strengthened by external evaluations, of which two were conducted in 2014.



Programme development and coordination team.
PME manager Oskari Eronen and head Meeri-Maria Jaarva.

ADVISING PRESIDENT AHTISAARI IN HIS TASKS

THE OFFICE OF President Ahtisaari advises and supports the president and Nobel peace prize laureate in all his tasks. Currently his main undertaking is serving as the chairman of CMI's board, which provides a strong link between his office and CMI's main organisation.

In addition to working with CMI, the office staff works closely with the other organisations this former head of state is involved with, such as The Elders, the European Council on Foreign Relations and the Independent Commission on Turkey to name a few.

Past and present

President Ahtisaari founded CMI. In the beginning, the organisation's main task was primarily to support him in his tasks – the same work that the president's office does today. While CMI has grown to be much more than a support organisation, we have

also wanted to keep this original function within the organisation. In this way, we can remain in close contact with our founder's various involvements.

The team

The office staff includes: head of the office **Riikka Marjamäki**, senior advisers **Sami Lahdensuo** and **Jaakko Oksanen**, adviser **Minna Kukkonen** and personal assistant **Tuula Tanskanen**. The team is closely involved in CMI's work and projects to ensure effective coordination.

The daily work at the office is about meetings, travelling, coordination of activities and responding to different requests addressed to the president. He also actively pursues various issues, which the staff follows and advises him on.

Working with a former president and Nobel peace laureate certainly has its highlights:

SAMI LAHDENSUO, SENIOR ADVISER:

"President Ahtisaari's contribution to support Myanmar's peace and democratisation processes through his work with The Elders has been important and relevant. Myanmar is one of the most complex countries in the world with a fragmented history, ethnic conflicts and military rule."

RIIKKA MARJAMÄKI, HEAD OF OFFICE:

"CMI organises the Ahtisaari Days annually together with the Finnish foreign ministry. During these, we bring the idea of peace mediation and reconciliation to Finnish schools and different levels of society. In this way, we concretise our founder's message that no conflict or dispute is inevitable, all arguments can be resolved."

TUULA TANSKANEN, PERSONAL ASSISTANT:

"The past six years have been, no questions asked, the very best years of my career. The way my requests and responses are received all over the world confirms that it really matters what the president does and thinks. In return, I get to travel and meet people one can only dream of meeting in person."

MINNA KUKKONEN, ADVISER:

"One of the greatest gifts in life is to be able to work for a cause you believe in. Working in this office means that no one day is like the other. Issues range from peace processes to governance, from questions of language and human rights to creating sustainable societies. The different themes and topics keep continuously challenging you. The people you meet and have the privilege to work with make you want to embrace those challenges to the best of your ability. These people are the highlight of my work. Every day."



JAANA SEPPÄNEN, director, finance and administration

FINANCE

Expecting steady growth in the coming years.

CMI'S TOTAL INCOME in 2014 was 7.8 million euros; 6% more than in the previous year. Our growth is thus continuing after last year when we focused on programmatic planning. The biggest geographical areas continue to be Sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and the Middle East.

In 2014, the surplus decreased by 7.8% to a total of 143.489 euros. Our low administration costs – only 13% of the total income – contributed to this good result. In the coming years, we expect CMI to grow steadily but make smaller results as we will implement some critical internal improvements, such as upgrading our office spaces.

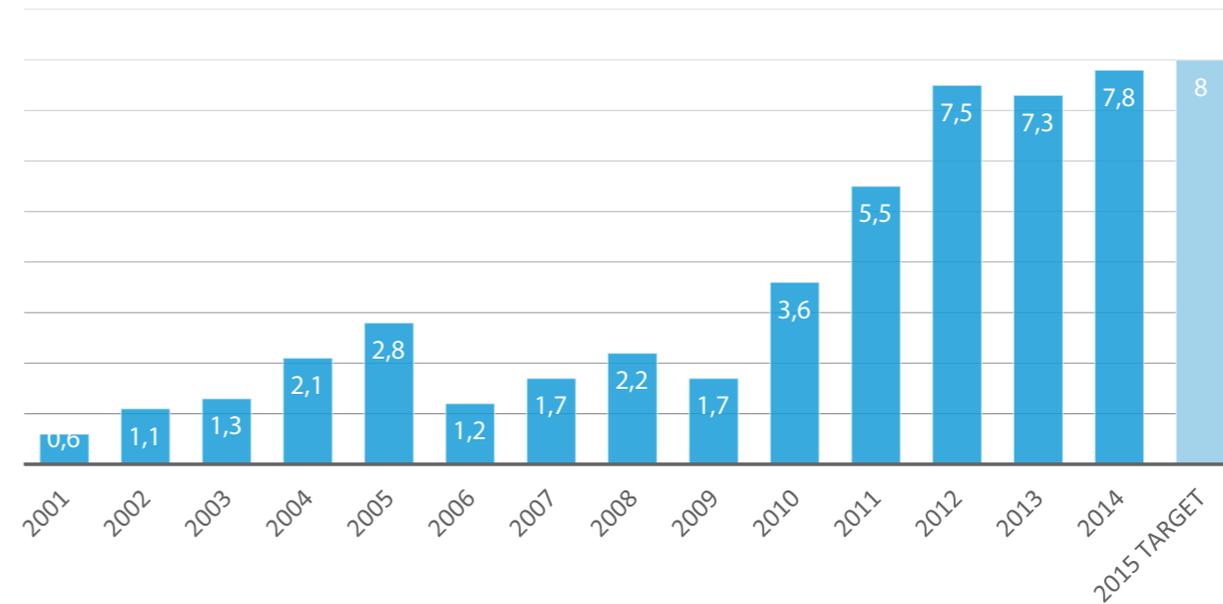
Our main funder continues to be the Finnish government, accounting for 71% of the total funding in 2014. Foundations and societies also significantly support our work (23%). The funding we receive from other governments grew compared to the year before.



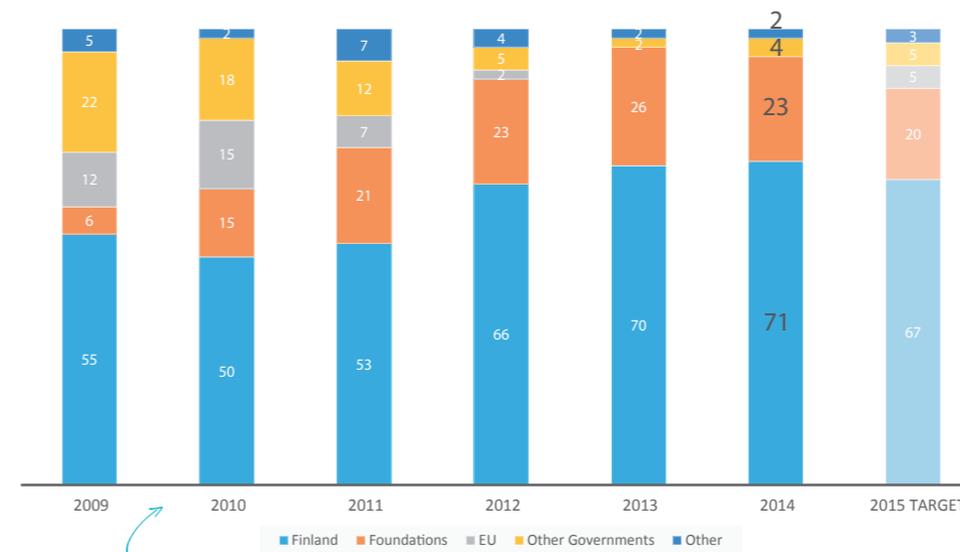
Supporting the whole organisation

CMI's finance and administration team provides support services to the whole organisation. The team is responsible for finances, human resources, office facilities and services, staff safety and security, and outsourced services, including ICT, legal services and accounting for the offices outside of Finland.

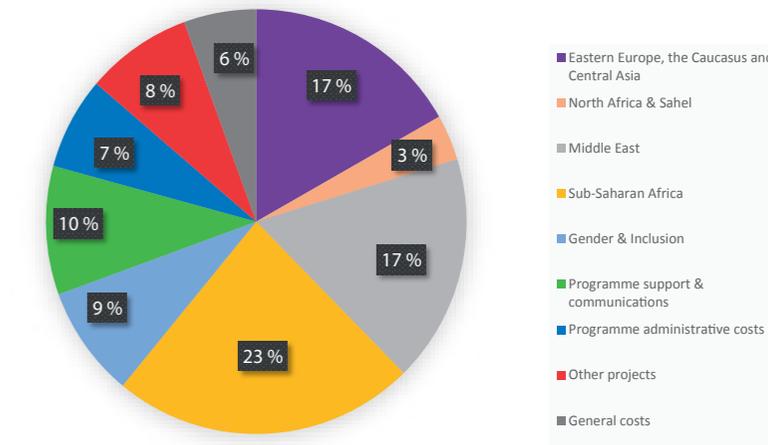
The team members are (from left): office management assistant Piia Launiainen, financial assistant Lauri Pullinen, office manager Hanna Puura, controller Jaana Salminen, team leader Jaana Seppänen, assistant controller Pekka Korhonen, travel officer Monika Myllymäki, and accountant Satu Lyytinen. CMI's security adviser Marko Jäminki is missing from the picture.



Revenue 2001-2014. CMI's revenue in 2014 was 7.8 million euros. This is 6% more than in the previous year. The anticipated target for 2015 is 8 million euros.



Funding 2009-2014. Our main funder continues to be the Finnish government; 71% of the total funding in 2014. Foundations and societies are a significant supporters as well (23%).



Actual Expenses 2014. Sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and the Middle East are the biggest geographical areas in terms of CMI's actual expenses.

Many improvements during first partnership year

2014 marked CMI's first year as a partnership organisation of the Finnish foreign ministry. In particular, the partnership has affected our reporting and ICT software as the funding is no longer project-based. This gives our programme more flexibility and reliability as decisions can be made according to the needs in the field.

We are also pleased that the partnership allows for global matching funding, which is crucial for CMI. Public interest in our projects in Ukraine and elsewhere has already ensured that our matching funding is secured also for 2015.

During the year, finance functions were developed and improved in many ways. An assistant controller joined the team to provide additional support to the projects. All financial policies were reviewed and combined into one manual together with administrative policies to ensure easy access.

A comprehensive internal control was carried out by a pro bono lawyer from Dittmar & Indrenius, who supported us once a week for five months. During this time, all legal procedures, agreements, templates and tax issues were reviewed. The biggest risks were identified and discussed within CMI's leadership team.

The finance team performed several monitoring trips during 2014, e.g. to Moldova, Palestine, Jordan and South Sudan. The security situation in some countries did not allow for an actual visit. Instead, several virtual meetings between project teams and the finance team were held, for instance in the North Africa and Sahel area to plan for their financial processes.

THE FINANCE TEAM PERFORMED SEVERAL MONITORING TRIPS DURING 2014.

The daily business of monitoring and reporting

At CMI, general finance functions are divided into statutory (formal external accounting) and controlling (internal and management accounting). The finance team's headcount is five at the moment, but growth is expected. The amount of receipts in our accounting systems has grown by almost 20% in the last two years indicating increased financial activities.

All financial functions are insourced including payroll services for personnel in Finland. Finance monitoring is daily business for all finance personnel regardless of position or situation.

The finance team produces monthly reporting (finance flashes) for all the teams and areas, as well as the entire programme. These reports include the budget; actual and forecast figures; and traffic lights indicating immediately if there are problems arising with the expenditure. All aspects of travel data are monitored monthly, which enables teams to make cost-conscious decisions.

In 2014, reporting each tertile on financial and substantive information was initiated. The financial tertile report resembles a financial statement with more detailed information and estimates. For monitoring purposes, we have also launched key performance indicators (e.g. working days or activities per working days), which give additional information on key performances within a project. Furthermore, staffing and consultation expenditures are analysed monthly to review human resources and outsourced activities.

Fully transparent governance and finances

At CMI, corporate governance and financial monitoring has to be appropriate, adequate and fully transparent. A results-based approach and forecast management provide the framework for this.

FINANCIAL PROCESSES ARE ELECTRONIC AND TRANSPARENT.

Financial monitoring is conducted at the organisational, programme and project levels. All expenses have to be necessary, reasonable, and based on a budget. The donor grants have to be adequate and granted upfront. The funding has to cover recurring administrative costs and end up non-profit. The leading principle of all our finances is to follow all the applicable regulations and laws, and to be as transparent and open as possible.

Our financial monitoring activities are based on comprehensive financial instructions, regulations and policies, which are introduced and available to every staff member. All financial processes are electronic and transparent. To ensure the efficient use of resources, we also monitor the proportion of administration costs compared to project costs.

Regular monitoring allows us to respond swiftly to emerging challenges and to mitigate risks. All relevant CMI and donor practices that directly guide many of the expenses are included in Netvisor, which is the global enterprise resource planning system. All the actions and receipts are recorded and stored for future monitoring by us, auditors or donors to track the audit trail.

As a non-profit organisation, we must monitor our finances in such a correct and responsible way that the qualitative and quantitative expectations posed on our work are met.



Following the paper trail

Assistant controller Pekka Korhonen and controller Jaana Salminen have visited South Sudan and Moldova during 2014.

Monitoring trips ensure financial standards in the field.

For the past few years, the finance team has conducted monitoring trips to CMI's project areas. The aim has been to ensure that everything is in order and complies with regulations and policies, as well as to get acquainted with the local conditions.

The experiences from the monitoring trips have been good both for the finance team and the projects. The feedback from the field has been positive, as both sides have learned new things.

"The trips have really opened our eyes," says controller **Jaana Salminen**. One example of local difficulties is relying on cash, which can be quite risky. Bank transfers are not always available, but the team works hard to apply them as often as possible.

Further challenges are posed by currency issues. The contested territory of Transdniestria has its own currency, the ruble, which can only be obtained locally.

"The Transdniestrian ruble can only be used in Transdniestria, but if we're using local services, we naturally pay for them in the local currency. And that needs to be in cash," says assistant controller **Pekka Korhonen**.

The finance team aims to visit CMI's project areas at least once a year.

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS	2014	2013
Non-Current Assets		
Machinery and Equipment	0	10 049
Current Assets		
Project Income Receivables	507 787	400 437
Pre-payments and Deposits	115 773	124 869
Cash and Bank	2 204 790	1 371 012
TOTAL ASSETS	2 828 349	1 906 367
<hr/>		
LIABILITIES	2014	2013
Equity	14 223	14 223
Equity Capital	73 827	-81 814
Carryforward from Previous Years	143 489	155 641
Surplus/Deficit	231 539	88 051
<hr/>		
Short-term Liabilities		
Project Income Advances	1 359 868	886 264
Accounts Payables and Other Accruals	1 236 942	932 052
TOTAL LIABILITIES	2 828 349	1 906 367

INCOME & EXPENDITURE

Income	2014	2013
Governments	5 861 016	5 279 491
Private Foundations and Societies	1 764 336	1 868 185
Private Sector Companies	27 072	3 142
Other	119 604	168 870
TOTAL GRANTS AND DONATIONS	7 772 028	7 319 687
<hr/>		
Expenses	2014	2013
External Professional Services	1 531 329	1 326 132
Personnel Costs	2 440 003	2 478 120
Other Costs	3 657 206	3 359 794
TOTAL EXPENSES	7 628 539	7 164 046
<hr/>		
SURPLUS / DEFICIT	143 489	155 641



DECISION-MAKING

CMI MEMBERS

CMI's highest decision-making entity is the general meeting, which convenes CMI's members (currently 113) to approve our annual financial and working plans and reports, and to select the board members.

BOARD

CMI's board is ultimately responsible for our long-term strategy, significant financial decisions, the approval of new members, and the appointment of the executive director. It currently has nine members (from left):

Elina Pirjatanniemi
 Johnny Åkerholm
 Kirsti Lintonen
 Kari Lautjärvi
 Martti Ahtisaari, chairman
 Aleksi Neuvonen
 Kristina Pentti-von Walzel
 Juha Rantanen

 Gunvor Kronman, vice-chair (not pictured)
 Pictured on the far right is executive director Tuija Talvitie

LEADERSHIP TEAM

CMI's executive director leads the execution of our mission and the implementation of our strategy. A leadership team provides support in planning and decision-making.

OUR PEOPLE

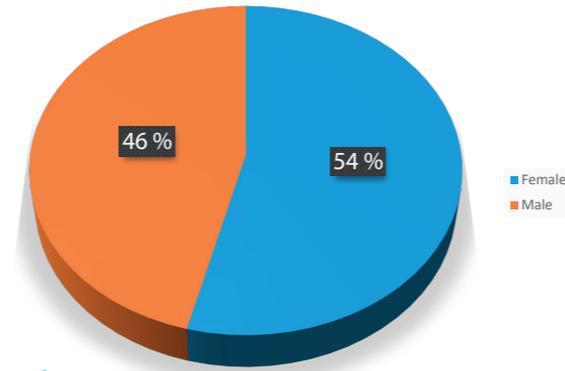
80 professionals representing more than 20 different nationalities work for CMI.

WE ARE PROUD of the diversity of our personnel. Our staff represents multiple cultural backgrounds; ages ranging from 24 to 77; and diverse educational backgrounds including international politics, mathematics and even forestry.

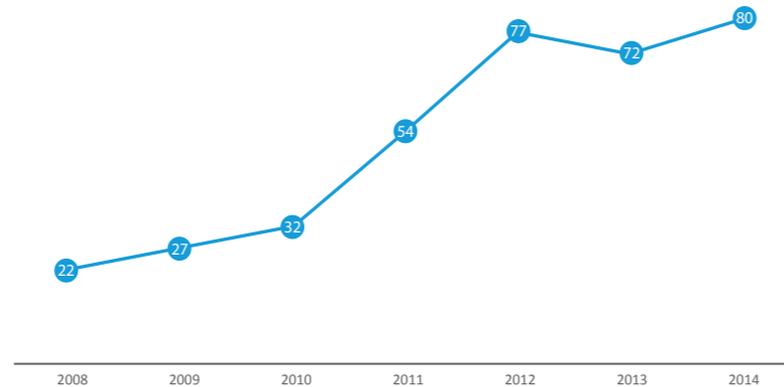
Staff wellbeing

In 2014, we carried out a staff wellbeing survey with overall positive results. Our staff particularly appreciates the working atmosphere, services offered and the meaningfulness of our work. They expressed some concerns about the organisation of work, communication, and the physical working spaces.

Key improvements to address these shortcomings have already been initiated, which will continue in 2015. Special attention is paid to developing leadership skills, and ensuring smooth internal routines. Our Brussels office has already moved to better premises, and our Helsinki office will be significantly modernised during 2015.



Gender balance 2014. CMI has a healthy gender balance. More than 50 per cent of our staff is female.



Headcount 2008-2014. CMI's headcount rose rapidly from 2010 to 2012 - more than doubling in two years. The number has since remained steady and stands at 80 in 2014.

Human resources

At CMI, we ensure that our HR policies are equal regardless of a staff members' location. Our electronic HR system is globally accessible. Due to the frequent travel, we emphasise optimal ICT and communications tools to enable smooth communication and virtual meetings. In 2014, we renewed much of our working equipment to lighter laptops and smart phones. We also introduced a new community tool (Yammer) to ensure knowledge-sharing among our global staff.

Travelling

Our staff is required to travel a great deal. In fact, the total amount of kilometres travelled by plane in 2014 was 6.7 million. We work to maintain safe and smooth travel processes. In 2014, we improved our travel management by recruiting a travel officer to support the entire process, and by selecting the most suitable partners and service providers.



Travel mileage 2014. Staff flight kilometers in 2014 were 6.7 million. That is 167,5 times around the Earth!



Security adviser Marko Jäminki monitors and assesses our travel locations and prepares security plans.

Safety and security

Our work often takes our staff to volatile and insecure regions. The safety and security of our staff is our highest priority. We carry out constant monitoring and safety assessments, and prepare security plans. In 2014, we began improving our security management even further by identifying an external health and security support provider. In 2015, we will be rolling out comprehensive security trainings for our staff.

The green initiative

In 2014, CMI joined WWF's Green Office programme to reduce our ecological footprint. We particularly focus on reducing our energy and paper consumptions, and monitoring the effects of our travelling. During our first year, we have already managed to reach all our annual reduction targets. Our ultimate aim is to significantly cut the greenhouse gas emissions that our activities generate.



ACTIVITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

The role that private diplomatic actors can play in supporting the resolution of violent conflict is less well known in the United States than in Europe.

CONSISTENT WITH President Ahtisaari's experience that a constructive relationship with the United States had been critical in advancing his mediation efforts, CMI is proud to be one of the few private diplomacy organisations with a sustained presence in Washington D.C.

Empirical research indicates that inclusive political settlements rather than narrow, elite-focused agreements are the only path for breaking repetitive cycles of violence and ending conflict. Private actors do not suffer from the same pressures as governments and international organisations to quickly broker ceasefires. Instead, they are able to support longer-term political transformations that yield more meaningful and sustainable solutions.

PRIVATE ACTORS ARE ABLE TO SUPPORT LONGER-TERM POLITICAL TRANSFORMATIONS.

Through our outreach in the United States, we seek to foster understanding of the role private diplomacy can play in confronting shared global challenges, from Ukraine to Yemen, Iraq to the Central African Republic.

TWO DISTINCT FRONTS

Liaising with key actors

CMI's senior adviser **Payton Knopf** liaises with the US government, the United Nations, and a broad range of foreign affairs and conflict resolution experts about CMI's work around the globe. In this way, we seek to cultivate new relationships and influence policy discussions on conflict resolution and mediation.

In the past year, our expert delegations have attended several high-level meetings and events, including at the United Nations (including the General Assembly), the White House and the US State Department.



Raising support and funds

The American Friends of CMI (AFCMI) was established in June 2013 to coordinate fundraising and to organise high-level foreign policy discussions among decision-makers and influencers.



The board of AFCMI (from left) consists of chairman Frank Wisner, vice-chairman Helen Marx and attorney Michael J. Student. Other board members include professor Chester Crocker, ambassador Barbara Barrett, and businessman Carl Ehrnrooth. Ritva Metso coordinates the board's activities.

INTERVIEW WITH

Helen Marx, vice-chairman of the American Friends of CMI and an honorary consul of Finland

PERSONALLY ENGAGED TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Being a philanthropist comes naturally to the New Yorker Helen Marx. The former business woman is one of the founding members of the American Friends of CMI. She also has some quite interesting experiences with Finns.

"THE WORLD IS in such chaos. It is dysfunctional as it is. Someone must try to solve the problems," says **Helen Marx**, the vice-chairman of the American Friends of CMI and an honorary consul of Finland.

"When I meet an individual who is trying to see the greater picture of the world, that person will have my unconditional support," she laughs and alludes to her friendship with President **Martti Ahtisaari**. "It's the personal relationships that broaden one's horizon." Marx continues by explaining the importance of democracy, freedom, education and health care, which cannot be developed unless there is stability and peace in the society.

Finnish connections

Marx, a New Yorker and a descendant of Polish Jews, has come a long way to her current role as the driving force of the American Friends of CMI. The story starts in the 1960s when she, as a young boarding school student, met her husband-to-be Jim. Marx's husband studied law at Dartmouth, where he happened to be flat mates with a young Finnish student named **Paavo Lipponen**. According to Marx, the young men had intensive discussions on politics, philosophy and race issues.

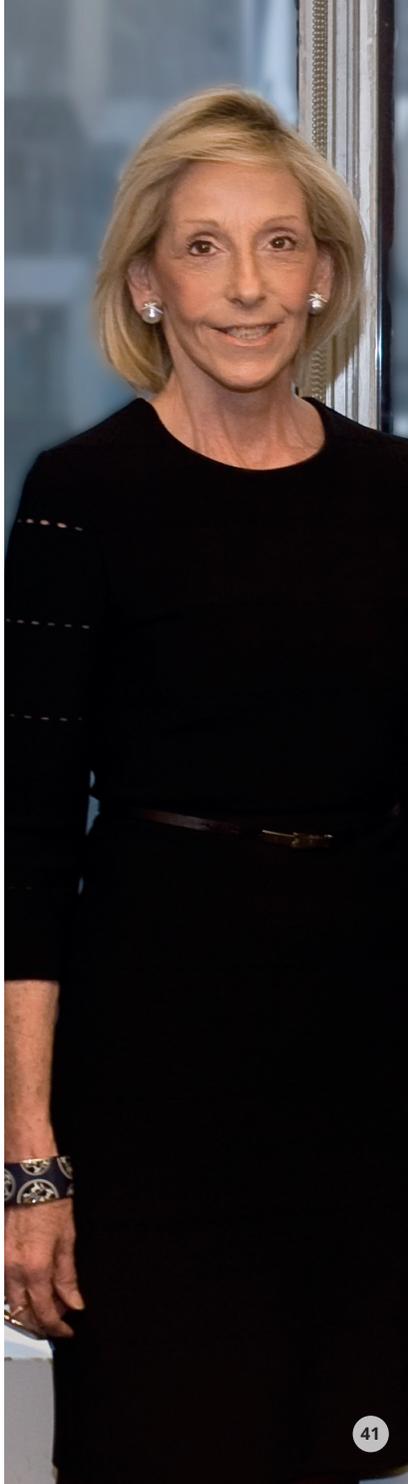
Socialist-minded Lipponen (Finnish prime minister 1996–2004) and the Republican-oriented **Jim Marx** became friends for life. Later, this Finnish connection led to the Marxes being introduced to another influential Finnish media couple, **Jane and Aatos Erkko**. "Suddenly having all of these interesting Finns as friends felt like all the pieces in life came together," Marx says and adds that Jane Erkko was her BFF - Best Finnish Friend. "The contrasts and quiet wisdom of Finnish people somehow attract me."

To do good as a mission

Many of us have important connections and friends. Yet we don't commit ourselves to invest lots of time and other resources in helping a foreign non-profit gain a foothold in the competitive environment that is New York.

"My parents were Holocaust survivors," Marx states. "Both of them lost everything and started a new life here in America. They were the most optimistic and encouraging people I have known." Although her parents never spoke about their past, she feels that her duty is to do good and correct the injustice.

"I am very fortunate that CMI came into my life. It has opened a whole new dimension. Too many people are afraid to take a position, to stand up for what they believe in. Someone must," she states confidently.





Georg Charpentier believes in innovative conflict solving.

“CONVENTIONAL ACTORS ARE not as trusted in peace processes as they were five years ago,” says **Georg Charpentier**, CMI’s senior adviser for Africa, sharply. “The geopolitical context has changed, mistakes have been made and not that many success stories can be told.”

Charpentier knows what he is talking about. A career of 30 years at the United Nations in over 20 countries has given him a clear understanding of the realities of conflict resolution on the ground.

Discovering the unknown

Born in El Salvador to a Swedish mother and Finnish father, Charpentier spent his childhood in India and Syria, until the family settled in Rome. The background was just a foretaste of his career. “My driving force was to discover the most remote places in the world,” he explains the switch from a self-made businessman to a United Nations young professional in the mid-1980s.

His specialisation in conflict resolution was not intentional. In 1999, Charpentier was asked to work in Congo-Brazzaville, which was ravaged by a civil war and a severe humanitarian crisis. The posting turned out to be successful. Political sensitivity and the ability to cope with pressure

I GUESS MY GOOD NERVES ARE INHERITED FROM MY FINNISH SIDE.

are assets in the field. “I guess my good nerves are inherited from my Finnish side.”

Don’t kill a fly with a bulldozer

Frustrated by bureaucracy and the few possibilities to develop new initiatives, Charpentier felt the urge for more substantive work in conflict resolution. He joined CMI in 2014.

“People are much more at ease with a small actor from a country without a colonial past. The big players are often seen as the arm of a Western vision.” Charpentier’s experience is put into use in the Central African Republic, where CMI supports the regional body ECCAS to facilitate the peace process. An approach that has proven effective, he says.

“Too often the major players want to take things in their own hands, thus killing a fly with a bulldozer. We should always try to resolve the crisis at the level of the lowest denominator. The same goes at home. When parents can’t cope with their fighting children, they don’t call the cops, but try to solve it together with their closest relatives.”

Georg Charpentier works as a senior adviser for CMI’s Sub-Saharan Africa team and the North Africa and the Sahel team.

IN THE FIELD IT IS CRUCIAL THAT CMI DOES NOT HAVE AN AGENDA.

Lack of trust damages confidence-building, says Ilkka Uusitalo.

“THE TOTAL LACK of trust between conflict parties,” **Ilkka Uusitalo**, CMI’s senior adviser for the Middle East and the European Union, replies quickly when asked about the most critical challenge for conflict resolution. Political interests and hidden agendas keep conspiracy theories alive.

“In the field it is crucial that CMI does not have an agenda of its own,” Uusitalo says. “Sometimes people even check on that. Once we attended a meeting and the participants told us that they had done a background check on us, which we had passed,” he laughs.

Supporting Iraqi reconciliation

Born in Finnish Osthrobothnia, Uusitalo went on to have an international career spanning decades. Twenty years went by at the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Red Cross until he was appointed as the head of the European Commission’s delegation to Sri Lanka.

The career continued via Pakistan to Iraq in 2006. “It was indeed a historical time to work in Iraq after Saddam’s regime had collapsed.”

At the moment, Iraq faces many challenges: a new political era

has begun after the elections last year, the armed group ISIS is a real threat and the price of oil is in a downward spiral.

CMI supports the country’s national reconciliation process. Uusitalo’s networks and his solid experience are valuable. “It is amazing how many of my old contacts in Iraq are still involved in politics.”

NGOs cannot solve conflicts alone

The situation in the Middle East worries Uusitalo. The crisis in Syria is far from being solved and the military involvement of Saudi Arabia in Yemen will polarise the tensions in the region.

“It is clear that NGOs cannot solve conflicts alone. We need different kinds of actors, official and unofficial tracks and hybrid know-how,” Uusitalo says. “CMI’s asset is that we can truly talk to everyone. This luxury is not possible for many state actors.”

Ilkka Uusitalo works as CMI’s senior adviser in the Middle East team, North Africa and the Sahel team as well as in our EU related work.

Senior advisers bring vast experience

CMI’s senior advisers have been selected due to their extensive experience, expertise, vast networks and proven track record and know-how in solving conflicts. With impressive careers behind them, they provide relevant input when strategic and operational decisions are being made. Altogether 12 senior advisers work for CMI.

ALL FORCES ARE NEEDED FOR PEACE

Sweden's foreign minister Margot Wallström believes that gender equality fosters peaceful societies. At her request, she visited CMI in early 2015 to learn more about our work.

You have stated that you support feminist foreign policy and that your country will become the first country in the world to conduct it. What does feminist foreign policy seek to achieve?

Sweden, as well as Finland and the rest of world, is characterised by some form of discrimination against women and girls. Achieving gender equality is fundamentally a human rights issue. Human rights are also women's rights.

There is also a clear link between a high level of gender equality, and peaceful and democratic societies. Therefore, gender equality is also a key issue for Swedish foreign and development policy – and I hope that many other foreign ministries will arrive at the same conclusion.

Why is the inclusion of women in foreign affairs so important?

The inclusion of women is necessary for making good policy. I believe in diversity, and half of the world's population are women. Diversity is a precondition for high-quality decision-making. The opposite of this is 'group think' among a homogeneous set of people where no one challenges underlying assumptions, or represents a different perspective.

Luckily today there are many positive examples of women in leading positions. Perhaps the most powerful politician in Europe is **Angela Merkel**. **Hillary Clinton** is running for US president. **Federica Mogherini** is the EU's high representative for foreign affairs and security policy, and **Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma** is the AU commission's chairperson, just to give a few examples.

However, women are still under-represented. One reason is historical path dependency. Foreign policy has for a long time been a traditionally male-dominated domain, closely linked to security and defence.

Another reason why women are under-represented in foreign policy may have to do with more generalised gender inequalities in societies, making it difficult for women to reach top positions. In the Swedish context, the abolition of joint taxation, together with publicly-financed day care and gender-neutral parental leave, have made it possible for women to have both professional careers and children. Not many other countries have implemented such progressive social reforms, though.

What led you to become such a strong advocate for women's inclusion in the first place?

How could you not? Ever since I was very young, in my first ministerial post in the Swedish government at the end of the 1980s, I have been working on these issues. In my experience, women do not want to be victims, they want to be actors of change.

WOMEN DON'T WANT TO BE VICTIMS, THEY WANT TO BE ACTORS OF CHANGE.

You have been vocal about the fact that more women should be included in peace processes. What added value do they bring?

Firstly, peace negotiations often set the entire direction of the post-conflict development and society. Obviously women should be represented in decision-making that will affect their own lives and

future living conditions. In addition, women may bring different experiences, perspectives and styles to the table, which can add value both to the substance and the process of the talks. Lastly, existing evidence shows that peace agreements resulting from processes where women have been involved tend to be more long-lasting.

In early 2015, you visited CMI and learned about our work, particularly in promoting women's participation in peacemaking. What do you see as the role of private diplomacy actors in supporting peace?

I believe in courage and patience in resolving crises and conflicts. Not just formal processes and official representatives play a decisive role. It is not something that happens automatically. It requires active and engaged leaders and individuals, as well as long-term commitment.

It was very interesting to learn about your work. There is a great need to raise issues related to gender and gender equality in international peacebuilding efforts. All good forces are needed in this work.



During her visit to CMI, minister Wallström met our chairman President Ahtisaari.



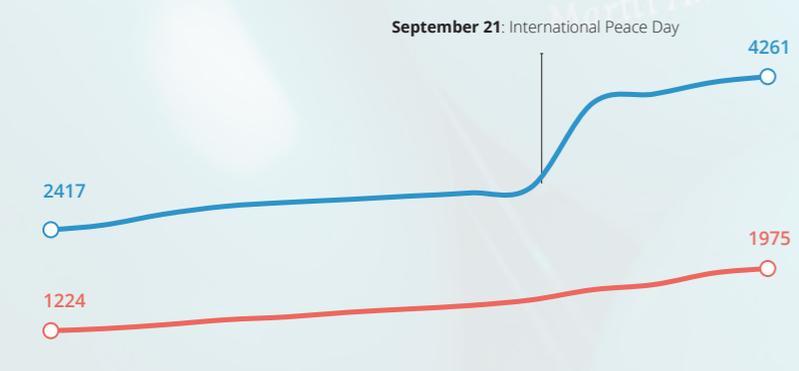
In 2013, minister Wallström attended the high-level seminar on gender and inclusion co-organised by CMI. She describes the practical field experiences shared during the days as invaluable.

COMMUNICATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

As we've built a strong brand in Finland, our sight is now set on global reach, says Elina Lehtinen, CMI's head of communications and fundraising.

CMI HAS A strong brand in Finland. We are seen as an international, professional, solution-oriented and reliable organisation. CMI clearly stands on its own feet. These are the results of a stakeholder survey conducted among our Finnish audiences in late 2014. At the same time, we were not seen as youthful and innovative as we would have liked considering our fairly young staff and our focus on developing new methods. Work remains.

This year we will look for ways to tell our story to increasingly new audiences. The strides we took in 2014 will support these efforts. Many previous records were broken. The amount of website visitors doubled, our Facebook fans grew by 75% and Twitter



Facebook likes and Twitter followers January–December 2014. CMI's Facebook fans and Twitter followers rose remarkably in 2014. The peak in September shows the success of our campaign for the International Peace Day.

followers by 60%, and a humorous video by President Ahtisaari negotiating a truce in the Angry Birds world received 1.1 million hits. We also launched a comprehensive Finnish-language website and significantly stepped up our social media activities, which we expect to activate new audiences.



Communications and fundraising team (from left): communications assistant Niko Vartiainen, communications officer Suvi Tuuli, communications manager Caroline Haga, fundraising manager Laura Seppälä, communications officer Antero Karvonen and head Elina Lehtinen.

Now our challenge is global. We want to communicate and spread relevant information not only among the general public, but also to the expert community and conflict parties. We have to communicate enough to add value, but not too much to harm a dialogue or mediation process. It's all about striking the right balance. In our line of business, communications must also be built on mutual trust and confidence.

PARTNERS AND DONORS 2014-2015

CMI would like to thank the following donors for their support in 2014

Af Jochnick Foundation
Anders Wiklöf
CMI Corporate Partners
CMI Premium Donors
The European Commission
Georg Russell
Government of Finland
Government of Ireland
Government of Switzerland
Government of United Kingdom
Hartwall Capital
Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen
Jane and Aatos Erkko Foundation
Jenny and Antti Wihuri Foundation

Kone Foundation
Konstsamfundet
Louise and Göran Ehrnrooth Foundation
Nippon Foundation
Nordic Moneta Ltd
Open Society Foundations
Planmecca Ltd
Rockefeller Brothers Fund
Tiina and Antti Herlin Foundation
TT Foundation
Unicef
Wärtsilä Ltd

Private funds secure impartiality

One of the greatest assets in CMI's work is impartiality, which cannot be achieved without private funds. Private fundraising is thus of utmost importance, although the main bulk of CMI's funding comes from public sources. This type of money is also essential for us to be able to quickly react to emerging or escalating conflicts.

CMI's private fundraising efforts rest on a four-fold fundraising strategy: businesses, foundations, private individuals and fundraising events. Corporate donors and private foundations form a critical share of our private funding. Our Premium Donors Club was launched in 2012 and has been well-received. The donors get a unique insider's peek into CMI's work. The membership fee is 2000 euros annually.

Corporate partners



Partners in-kind

Adidas, B2B Solutions, Boston Consulting Group, Cocoa, Franck Media, Helena Åhman D.Sc. (Tech), Hunting Minds, Hiekka Graphics Ltd, Iittala Group Ltd, I-Print Ltd, Infront Sports Finland, Marimekko, Mirum agency, Rosita Gustafsson-Nyman, Shearman & Sterling, Sullivan & Worcester



MAKING A DIFFERENCE IS A PRIVILEGE

Maria Bondestam, a CMI premium donor, believes in long-term philanthropy.

“DEAR PRESIDENT KEKKONEN,” began 9-year-old Maria Ahlström her letter to the Finnish head of state. The year was 1973. The spirited girl was worried that someone could get hurt on the dangerous ski jump ramp in her hometown. “Well, why don’t you do something about it?” her father challenged her. “You could write to the president!”

And Maria wrote. Months later, a reply arrived from Kekkonen’s adjutant thanking the young lady for her studious attention. Later on, the ramp was gone.

Taking responsibility

“A coincidence, I guess,” laughs **Maria Bondestam** more than 40 years later. A coincidence or not, her urge to make a difference has not changed. This is why she, a nurse by profession, also contributes to peacebuilding work.

“No one has opportunities or rights in a war zone. It’s important to delve into the root causes and concentrate on preventing conflicts,” she ponders.

Born into the Ahlström industrial family, bearing responsibility runs in Bondestam’s blood. The founders of the family business, **Antti** and **Eva Ahlström**, were remarkable Finnish philanthropists at the end of the 19th century. They believed that wealth obligates.

“I think that being able to contribute is foremost a privilege,” says Bondestam fiercely. The importance of helping those in need became a reality when she spent 15 years in seven different countries. “Working in a children’s shelter in a polluted Chinese city taught me that the world is not a good place for all.”

When Bondestam moved back to Finland she wanted to foster discussion on responsibility. “If educated, financially independent people don’t take responsibility, then who will? And if now is not the right time to act, then when is?”

Philanthropy needs to be realistic

In 2010 Bondestam established the Eva Ahlström foundation together with women of her extended family. The foundation focuses on supporting NGOs that work with underprivileged families, especially women and children.

Philanthropy needs to be realistic, Bondestam believes. Every heartbreaking orphanage cannot be supported. It is important to support trustworthy and professional organisations.

“Donating solely money can sound brutal. But we should be wise enough to admit that we cannot be experts in everything. Isn’t it smarter to give financial resources to those who know what they are doing?”

Maria Bondestam is a CMI premium donor since 2014.



DOING GOOD WHILE DOING BUSINESS

Planmeca supports CMI’s efforts to resolve international conflicts. Companies cannot neglect what’s happening in the world, says founder Heikki Kyöstilä.

SHINY WHITE DESIGN and pastel-coloured devices catch your eye in the luminous room. These are not tablets or gadgets. What you see is cutting-edge Finnish dental technology in an Eastern Helsinki showroom. “We are not that known among average consumers,” admits **Heikki Kyöstilä**, president and founder of Planmeca. “With dental professionals around the world, it’s a different story. We’ve been around for quite a few years.”

44 years, to be exact. Now the Herttoniemi-based Planmeca is a global leader in health care technology relying heavily on export. As much as 98% of the products are exported to over 120 countries. “With figures like this we cannot neglect what is happening in the world,” Kyöstilä says. “Supporting CMI’s conflict resolution work is a very good and suitable choice for us. Long-term peacebuilding is also important for Finland’s image in the world.”

Responsible by heart

It was in 1971 when the young Kyöstilä saw a market opportunity for manufacturing dental equipment after doing business for German companies in the same field. The rest, as they say, is history. “It was all about hard work and an urge to put Finland on the map,”

Kyöstilä, father of three sons, remembers. “However, 1000 Finnish marks as start-up capital – roughly 160 euros today – was nothing to boast about.”

The company quickly adopted a global sales approach and expanded its product range into patient chairs and dental units, and later on to 2D and 3D X-rays. “Corporate responsibility is embedded in our business,” Kyöstilä points out. “It feels good to wake up every morning to sell health care products.”

Conflicts affect business

The equipment and software find their ways also to unstable countries, such as Iraq, Pakistan, Sudan and Libya, to name a few. “Violent conflicts and sanctions reflect on our business. For instance the current chaotic situation in Iraq has affected our sales in the market,” says Kyöstilä.

CMI IS LIKE A SMALL FINNISH EXPORT COMPANY.

Donating to CMI’s peacebuilding efforts fits well with Planmeca’s business and values. “CMI is like a small Finnish export company,” Kyöstilä smiles. “Many bigger organisations have proved to be less efficient in your line of business.”

Planmeca is one of CMI’s corporate partners.

15 YEARS OF GATHERING PEOPLE AROUND THE SAME TABLE.

CMI celebrates its 15th anniversary this year. Since 2000, we have supported conflict parties to find common ground.

What's with the table?

What do the Paris peace treaties in 1947 and the Aceh peace agreement signed in Helsinki nearly 60 years later have in common? The table, of course. This mundane piece of furniture provides a surprisingly good insight into conflict resolution.

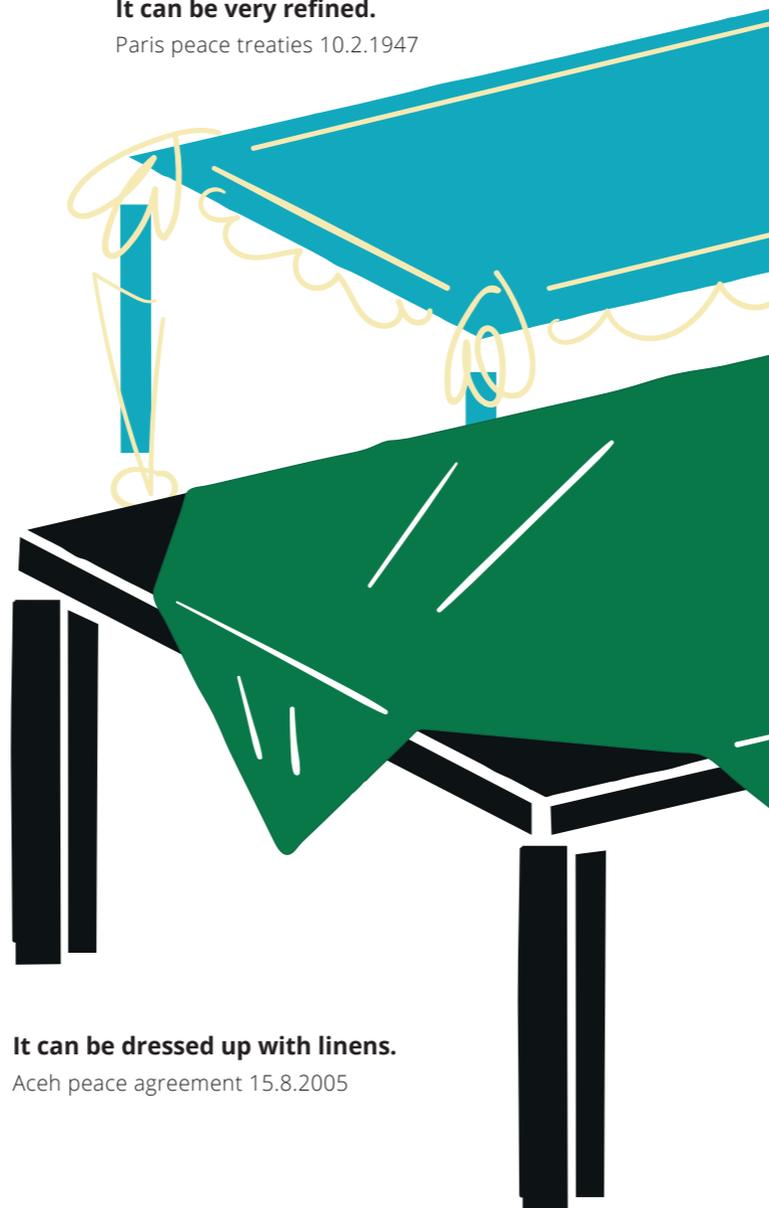
The most important decisions in life are made around a table. Family dinners, meetings at work... and crafting peace in fragile societies.

As in life, also in peace processes, we sit at many different tables. Numerous tables with various combinations of people are needed on the journey towards a stable society.

This year the peace table is at the heart of our anniversary campaign. The concept has been designed by Mirum agency.

Follow our campaign in the autumn 2015 and join us at the peace table.

It can be very refined.
Paris peace treaties 10.2.1947



It can be dressed up with linens.
Aceh peace agreement 15.8.2005



THIS N' THAT FROM ALONG THE WAY

President Ahtisaari's good friend George Soros encouraged him to found CMI after his presidency.

In the beginning, the office only had four staff members, including current head of programme development and coordination Meeri-Maria Jaarva. Today, we are 80.

The majority of CMI's staff are social scientists, but also include a teacher, mathematician and theologian.

CMI is one of the Finnish foreign ministry's development partnership organisations since 2014.

The Aceh peace agreement, mediated by CMI and President Ahtisaari, has lasted for 10 years.

CMI's revenue doubled in two years after our 10th anniversary. In 2015, it's expected to be 8 million euros.

Pictures from top left:

Meetings for all staff are organised regularly.

Johanna Poutanen has represented CMI in South Sudan.

CMI took part in Runfest in Helsinki in August 2014.

It's all about team work (Eemeli Isoaho, Juha-Matti Seppänen and Mikko Patokallio).

President Ahtisaari joined forces with Angry Birds to promote peace mediation.

Elisa Tarnaala and Silja Grundström work for CMI's gender and inclusion team.

CMI's Yemen representative, Abdulmajid Al-Fahed, laughing with colleagues.

The Sub-Saharan Africa team held a planning retreat in Finland.



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Graphic design and layout: Antero Karvonen

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Photography: Dar es Salaam State House, Caroline Haga, Saira Huusko, Taral Jansen, Antero Karvonen, Helka Lamminkoski, Elina Lehtinen, Tarja Tuppurainen, Niko Vartiainen, Tomas Whitehouse



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CMI is a partnership organisation of the
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