

Annual Report 2021

Mastering the craft of peace

CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation is an independent Finnish organisation that works to prevent and resolve conflicts through dialogue and mediation. Founded in 2000 by Nobel Peace Laureate and former President of Finland Martti Ahtisaari, we have since grown to be a leader in the field of international peace-making.

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KEY NUMBERS 2021

11,6 million euros total funding

25 mediation and dialogue projects worldwide

16 informal dialogue platforms supported

12 peace processes in **13** countries supported

95 staff

357 workshops or dialogue meetings

1345 meetings with conflict parties and stakeholders

1396 meetings with international actors and peers

6145 direct beneficiaries of conflict resolution activities

39 500 people reached directly by activities in Finland

52%

female
beneficiaries on
average across
programmatic
activities

contributions to peace that led to:

31 better peace processes
better peacemakers
better ways of building peace

99 requests towards CMI



Photo: Maria Santto / CMI

Responding to the resurgence of war

Janne Taalas,
Chief Executive Officer, CMI

War has returned to the international agenda. CMI will do its part in turning the path back from battlefields to the negotiating tables.

The rapid fall of the internationally supported Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to Taliban forces in August 2021 sent shock waves around the world. The Taliban retook Kabul not through negotiations, but by force of arms. The rapid collapse of the Western project triggered much soul searching. The long arch that started with international intervention in the Western Balkans in the early 90s seemed to have come to a conclusion in Afghanistan thirty years later. The discussion on lessons learned and the way forward will reverberate for a long time in the field of peace mediation.

It is clear that an over-reliance on military solutions can undermine efforts for creating sustainable peace. Political solutions to conflicts must be prioritised.

Another major trend of 2021 was the resurgence of armed conflict. Afghanistan was part of a troubling tendency that has put war back on the international agenda. A major escalation of armed conflicts in Ethiopia and Nagorno-Karabakh, an uptick in military coups, as well as the recent Russian invasion of Ukraine are a direct challenge to all who work for peace.

There has been a rude awakening in Europe as war has once again reared its ugly head in this region. For those working in the mediation field, this was not a surprise, as there had been strong signals of the resurgence of war in other regions of the world. CMI's respond has been to look for ways

to reenergise our work beyond Europe, so that we can do our part in turning the path back from battlefields to the negotiating tables. We have strongly argued that focus on European issues should not result in neglect of the broader global situation.

In 2021, the Covid-19 pandemic still had a major impact on peace mediation work, restricting possibilities to hold gatherings and to travel. On the positive side, working in a virtual context has become a well-honed practice that enables us to work more effectively for years to come.

The global developments driven by both shifting geopolitics and technological advances have triggered a number of armed con-

flicts. This is leading to an increasing demand for CMI's services. There were a record number of requests last year, and we predict the trend to continue in the future. Following a strong performance in 2021, we expect a busy and successful 2022.

“Over-reliance on military solutions can undermine efforts for creating sustainable peace.”

A world struggling for new equilibrium

Alexander Stubb,
Chairman of the Board, CMI



Photo: Riku Isohella

The war placed Ukraine on the front line of great-power competition. We don't yet know whether the deteriorating geopolitical situation will exacerbate wider tensions.

A mix of hope and fear pervaded 2021. The swift development of effective vaccines against Covid-19 was a remarkable scientific achievement. At the COP26 summit in Glasgow there were signs of progress towards climate ambition. And after years of disengagement, we saw the US recommitting to multilateralism.

On the other hand, many things seemed to be moving in a more worrying direction. Extreme climate events, from catastrophic floods to long-running wildfires, wreaked havoc around the world. And despite some promising signs, the coronavirus pandemic continued to take a heavy toll on communities and exacerbate inequality. Both climate change and the global health crisis are likely to have far-reaching consequences for international relations.

In geopolitics, great-power contestations continued to intensify and alliances shift in unprecedented ways. In particular, the rivalry between the US and China put serious pressure on all parts of the world. Tumultuous adjustments are now taking place as countries across the world re-assess their positions. A normative shift is underway, the results of which are uncertain.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine placed Ukraine on the front line of great-power competition. The war marks a historic turning point for European security. We don't yet know whether

the deteriorating geopolitical situation will exacerbate wider tensions. The war is already creating a global food crisis. At the same time the multilateral order faces serious challenges. When international organisations weaken, new alliances and coalitions fill the void. A number of contending alignments have already emerged.

“When international organisations weaken, new alliances and coalitions fill the void.”

As the world struggles for new equilibrium, a growing number of armed conflicts are brewing in different parts of the world. Also, with the advent of modern hybrid warfare our overall security environment is changing. Even though hybrid warfare is not a completely new phenomenon, there has been a discernible shift in recent years concerning how states employ, for instance, non-state actors and information technology in conflicts. This affects CMI's work in a profound way. In the changing environment independent actors such as CMI have an even more crucial role in supporting conflict resolution.

2021 marked historical changes for CMI. In May, it changed from being an association to CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation, and Ambassador Janne Taalas was appointed as the foundation's first CEO. With these changes and with a new strategy until 2030 we have further strengthened our capacity to prevent and resolve conflicts of the coming decades.

Working as a trusted partner for peace

Reflecting the diminished capacity of official diplomacy to provide solutions to conflicts, the demand for CMI's services reached an all-time high in 2021.

2021 saw the continued disruption of the global order and its institutions that had started already in 2020 with the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic. The year ended with Russia's demands for a new world order and European and transatlantic security architecture – actions that have taken a much more dramatic in 2022 with the country's war against Ukraine.

These geopolitical shifts were coupled by increased violence and use of force, for example in Ethiopia and Myanmar, stalled transitions and military coups, for example in Sudan and Mali, and obstacles to international cooperation. Moreover, the United States' withdrawal from Afghanistan and Taliban taking the full control of the country just in few weeks, was recognised as a critical turning point of modern history.

Covid-19 has been a catalyst for these current developments, as it has reduced connectivity and interpersonal contacts. In many places the elites have isolated themselves from the general population, which analysts consider a main reason, for instance, for the change of Russian strategy on Ukraine.

CONNECTIONS AND SKILLS IN FULL USE IN UKRAINE

Many of the peacemaking efforts of last year seem to have had only limited influence.

The external developments described above also influenced CMI's work and called for a recalibration and adjustment of some of our projects – such as those for Myanmar, Afghanistan and Sudan – as well as concerning organisational procedures due to the pandemic-related travel restrictions and uncertainties. Nevertheless the demand for CMI's services has seen an appreciable increase, with the number of requests for cooperation reaching an all-time high in 2021. This reflects the rising number of armed conflicts but also the diminished capacity of official diplomacy to provide solutions to conflicts.

The early months of 2022 have provided fresh perspectives to the potential of peacemaking: while the situation in Ukraine is indeed horrific, we can detect signs of hope in many other places. In Ethiopia and Yemen, ceasefires and political engagement open prospects for a better future, and in the Middle East, cooperation among the key capitals has increased exponentially last year.

In Ukraine, while specific mediation structures, such as the Minsk Agreement, are in doubt, the main results of CMI's work of earlier years – interpersonal contacts and conflict resolution skills – are in full use. And while reintegration efforts in the country are on hold, the support provided to Ukrainian society in the form of peaceful approaches to reintegration are well aligned with the country's current needs for unity against external aggression.

These examples provide a basis for assessing CMI's contributions to peacemaking in a broader perspective. It is not difficult to see the linkages between the types of results that CMI has produced and current realities in conflicts. In Yemen and Ethiopia, efforts to maintain contacts and analyse different options for moving forward – even in the absence of immediate success – are now utilised as the broader political dynamics allow for the advancement of the peace processes. Although in Ukraine the situation looks extremely difficult, one can see that strengthened internal cohesion within society and multiple links to different geopolitical contexts have played a crucial role in preventing the country from collapsing under external aggression.

STRENGTHENING THE OWNERSHIP OF PEACEMAKING EFFORTS

In all these cases a crucial element is the ownership of peacemaking efforts, which is one of the core building blocks of a sustainable solution. Strong ownership ensures that the processes move forward even after international attention has decreased, and it enables the "honourable exit" of actors who need to retain their political legitimacy also after the guns have been silenced. Here, CMI's approach of working as a trusted partner for different actors provides a framework where ownership of the process and the solutions will remain with the actors who must live with the solutions agreed.

REGIONS & PROJECTS 2021

EURASIA

- Advancing Dialogue in and Around Ukraine
- Building Resilience to Conflict Through Dialogue in Ukraine
- Supporting Inclusive Dialogue and Strengthening Capacities for a Better Functioning Gagauz Autonomy in Moldova
- Supporting the Peace Process in Georgia
- Supporting Competences for a Negotiated Settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict
- Eurasia – Supporting Regional Mediation Efforts

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

- Supporting Dialogue and Conflict Mitigation in Libya
- Fostering Regional Dialogue in MENA
- Supporting Palestinian Resilience Through Dialogue
- Supporting Broader Inclusion and Participation in the Yemeni Peace Process
- Dialogue Within Iraqi Society and the Region Contributing to Societal Cohesion in Iraq

ASIA

- Unlocking Peace Potential Through the Security Sector in Myanmar
- Support to Peacemaking in Asia
- Enhancing Sustainability of Efforts to Resolve Conflict in North-East Asia
- Supporting inclusive and regional peace efforts in Afghanistan

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

- Addressing Regional Conflict Dynamics in the Sahel
- African Union Conflict Prevention and Mediation Capacities Support Project
- Inclusive Dialogue for Regional Peacebuilding in the Lake Chad Basin
- Advancing Constructive Dialogue in Burundi
- Fostering Dialogue Around the Red Sea
- Supporting the Transition in Sudan

THEMATIC PROJECTS

WOMEN IN PEACEMAKING

- Strengthening Women's Political Influence in Conflict Resolution
- Enhancing Inclusive and Gender Sensitive Mediation Capacities

DIGITAL PEACEMAKING



Lviv, Ukraine, March 2022. Photo: Annalisa Ausilio / IFRC

Working for peace amidst war in Europe

CMI has been working actively in Ukraine since 2009. The constant work has created a vision and in-depth connections that help support a path towards sustainable peace.

The outbreak war in Ukraine in February 2022 caught most of the world off guard. Although CMI has been working in the country since 2009, and understood the possibility of such a major escalation in its scenario planning, the work in Ukraine still had to change drastically from 2021 to 2022.

“In 2021 we were in the eighth year of what was really a protracted conflict. We were planning our activities for months or even years in advance. Now, when this new phase of the war began, we had to work very much on a day-to-day basis”, says **Denis Matveev**, Senior Advisor of the Eurasia team.

Before the February 2022 escalation of the war, one of CMI's projects in Ukraine, funded by the EU, was focused on building the country's national unity through dialogue. In the pro-

cess, CMI held face-to-face and online meetings and consultations as well as closed-door events to build the capacity of the key stakeholders of the official peace process.

Whereas in 2021 the situation was already difficult in terms of peace mediation in the region, the current work is entirely tied to what happens on the battlefield.

In the first weeks after February 2022, CMI was working on the humanitarian aspects of mediation, particularly how to limit the damage to civilians. As the armed conflict continues, the team focusing on Ukraine and Russia aims to prevent the repetition of the situation, whether in Ukraine or elsewhere in Europe.

UKRAINE IN NUMBERS 2021

774

people participated in CMI's EU-funded project supporting the multi-track dialogue process in Ukraine.

28

multi-track dialogue sessions and meetings arranged in the project.

15,6

million people reached within CMI's EU-funded project via traditional and social media.

CMI works with all parties to the conflict in order to find solutions for a sustainable and just peace. This work is particularly valuable in a situation where official mediation structures are challenged, stresses **Irma Pidtepa**, CMI's Project Manager in Ukraine. CMI's local partners and advisors are the key actors to initiate the direction of the organisation's work.

"Ensuring local ownership is our main priority. Our work is very much driven by our partners' and stakeholders' needs and aspirations, what they think is necessary and needs to be done."

Pidtepa gives an example of such local ownership: "Our partners in Ukraine told us they wanted to have a platform to improve the national support for dialogue as a social and political practice. We had never done that kind of project in CMI, but eventually helped in designing, launching and supporting our partners' project."

LONG-TERM PRESENCE AND PARTNERSHIPS AS A TOOL FOR PEACE

CMI's main assets in Ukraine are the deep knowledge about the history of the armed conflict, the actors involved and what their expectations are regarding the situation. CMI's broad network of high-level experts across Europe, in the US, Ukraine and Russia has helped to adapt to the situation and to gain a wider perspective.

"Now that the current form of communication between the sides is mainly through waging war, knowing that you can still be in contact with the various parties is very valuable", Matveev explains.

As an independent organisation, CMI benefits from its position in the field of conflict resolution. Pidtepa says that CMI's ability to talk to all parties can help to create richer analysis and to have a more holistic view on the situation. This ultimately helps in creating dialogue and mediation support projects, which are more relevant to the parties' needs. Inde-

pendence also creates a wider scope for discussion.

"When we talk to parties of the conflict it is a less politicised conversation compared to the ones led by multilateral organisations or governments. We have the flexibility to talk to all parties of the conflict without it being interpreted as a diplomatic signal or a message from one side to the other", says Pidtepa.

WAR IN EUROPE CREATING A NEW SECURITY LANDSCAPE

The conflict in Ukraine has affected the peace landscape of the whole region. CMI's Eurasia team now faces new challenges in many countries due to the changed situation. What happens in Ukraine has a far-reaching impact.

"Everybody is watching Ukraine and waiting to see whether they will be able to maintain some sort of normality in their countries and conflict-affected regions. People in Chisinau and Tiraspol are afraid of a spillover of the armed conflict because of their geographical location, and people in Armenia and Azerbaijan are weighing the impact of the war in Ukraine on Russia's peacekeeping operation in the South Caucasus", Denis Matveev explains.

Matveev stresses that understanding what happens in Ukraine and its security is also important for the rest of the European continent.

"We live in a completely new environment where the previous agreements built up in the last 70 years no longer work. Whatever is ultimately agreed upon in Ukraine may end up being a precedent or at least a de facto first step for rebuilding a security system for Europe as a whole."

Some have seen the outbreak of the war in Ukraine as a failure of mediation work in the region. In the case of CMI, Matveev does not see the situation the same way. Long, protracted conflicts can be unpredictable and different phases are common in conflict resolution work.

In urgent, escalated conflict circumstances, Matveev describes CMI as an ambulance – a professional, well-equipped service in the middle of an emergency.

"Providing comprehensive ambulance services does not prevent people from getting sick, but it does stop some people from dying and the community from facing bigger social problems. When things are calmer you need more than just an ambulance – you need a plan for how to build a better hospital and prevention strategies to reduce rates of illness."

New hope for peace in Yemen

The war between the Houthi movement, officially called Ansar Allah, and the government-aligned forces backed by the Saudi-led coalition continues, but there is hope for positive change.

As of end of February 2022, a truce has been agreed between the conflict parties in Yemen, and the Presidential Leadership Council – an interim executive body – has been established. These are two significant achievements that it is hoped will enable a more conducive environment for dialogue, the re-start of official peace talks and a permanent ceasefire after nearly eight years of war. CMI has supported the involvement of political parties, tribes and women to bring about sustainable peace. These are all key groups that have been excluded from the main negotiation tables in the official UN led peace process.

SUPPORTING THE POLITICAL PARTIES

The conflict in Yemen has weakened political life and inhibited politics as a peaceful building block of society. CMI has laid the groundwork for renewed Yemeni political party activity and engagement in the peace process by strengthening parties' internal structures and capacity in addition to fostering dialogue among them.

"We have high hopes in political parties to bring about peace and participate in meetings, consultations and talks to resume political life and political activities during the upcoming transitional period. We hope to establish a stable state with sovereignty that guarantees political pluralism and representation for all", says **Aidah Abdullah**, Head of the Women's Department of the General People's Congress (GPC) in the Lahj governorate and member of the Permanent Committee.

In practice, support for parties has entailed mapping and addressing their internal needs and challenges to increase the effectiveness of their political work, and to engage the major parties in inter-party dialogue on joint principles for political action and their role in the peace process.

Recent developments in Yemen, with the establishment of a Presidential Leadership Council, an interim executive body, and the two-month truce, agreed separately, offer hope for positive change in the Yemeni conflict. And there is a new momentum for political parties.

"For the first time since the beginning of the war, political parties are meeting and discussing the formation of a new government. This is a new stage in political activities at the national level and in rebuilding the state after the period of war and conflict for the period of peace and reconstruction that leads to permanent and honourable peace", says Abdullah.

Considering the complexity of the situation and the value of long-term third-party engagement, CMI's continued work in Yemen is necessary to ensure a sustainable outcome.



Tribal leaders ratifying the joint statement together with Farae Al-Muslimi of the Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies, Dec 2021.

Photo: Maria Santto / CMI

WORKING ON INCLUSIVE PEACE

The conflict has further deteriorated the involvement of women in Yemen's politics. It is essential to establish effective mechanisms for their inclusion in political parties, including through quotas and legislation, to strengthen women's capacities, and to continue to ensure gender-balanced representation and gender-sensitive language in all initiatives.

"We, as women in political parties, strive for a sustainable peace that would meet the aspirations of all groups, and a peace process that is inclusive of all, men and women. We

believe in the return of political life and parties as an alternative to armed conflict", says Abdullah.

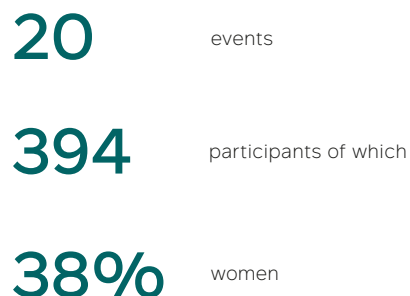
The initiative has also confirmed women's important role in tribal communities where they play key roles in local level resolution of disputes and peacemaking.

"As women, our role in peacemaking is in helping others realise solutions," says **Hayam Al-Qarmoushi**. She and other tribal women are contributing to peace in Yemen by mediating prisoner exchanges and feuds between families.



Naji Murait (left) and Hayam Al-Qarmoushi (right) in Istanbul at a CMI workshop, 2021.
Photo: Olli Puumalainen / CMI

YEMEN IN NUMBERS 2021



ESTABLISHING THE TRIBES' ROLE IN MEDIATION

The project has also assisted a unique platform of tribal leaders. The project has also assisted a unique platform of tribal leaders and influential women from tribal communities to further their role in the peace process. Both have a long history of settling disputes and resolving conflicts. Tribal leaders mediated about half of the ceasefires in Yemen between 1989 and 2018. Tribes can play a major role in ending the war, acting as guarantors for local ceasefire agreements, and initiating and overseeing local confidence-building measures such as prisoner exchanges.

"The tribe can be a tool for war or peace, depending on what you decide to do", says sheikh **Naji Murait**, who has been one of the most successful mediators of prisoner releases during the war in Yemen. "I urge the other sheikhs not to keep silent at home. They must work on stopping the bloodshed. They must work on ending the war." In practice, CMI facilitated a series of meetings between influential Yemeni tribal leaders from different governorates. The meetings identified potential roles for tribal representatives to engage in the peace

process and achieve a nationwide ceasefire and included a joint statement calling for an end to violence and a restart of the political process.

Scan this QR code to watch "A path to peace: Tribal mediation and the war in Yemen"



The link to the EU

CMI strengthened its presence at the heart of the EU in 2021 by appointing Jibecke Jönsson as the head of CMI's Brussels office. Jönsson sees cooperation with the EU, its member states and multi-lateral organisations as essential to CMI's work.

In 2021, you were appointed Head of CMI's Brussels Office. Is there something in CMI's work that has surprised you?

The quality and professionalism of the work. I have never worked somewhere where people are so genuinely committed to the cause. They are more concerned about the outcome than for example being seen to be doing something. The commitment to making a difference is unique.

CMI has strengthened its collaboration with the EU. Last year CMI ran several large projects with EU support, including our work in Ukraine and Yemen. How would you describe cooperation between the EU and CMI?

Collaboration is already very good but also something that should be growing. The EU is a funny animal in the sense that it can be easier to get large grants than funding for the smaller types of projects that our activities normally lend themselves to. Therefore, I think the fact that CMI is growing also helps our partnership to grow.

But funding is only one side of the coin. The other is political and here, the cooperation is intensifying even further. The EU and the EU member states are increasingly calling upon CMI to exchange situational updates and analysis, as well as to brainstorm and explore opportunities for how to address situations, most recently as the war in Ukraine unfolded.

The EU has worked to strengthen its capacities in peacemaking. What does this mean concretely?

The EU has made important progress in developing the policies and concept of mediation and conflict prevention, and is now trying to understand what that means in more operational terms. An important part of what CMI can do in Brussels right now is to try to feed that thinking based on our experience of what work for peace can look like in practice. To a large extent, the EU's peacebuilding work consists of conflict analysis and horizon scanning, and the process of going from early warning to action. CMI can play a role in helping the EU understand what that could be like.

The main aim of the Brussels office for 2021 was to enhance CMI's relations with the EU and its member states as well as non-governmental organisations. What is the status of CMI among these actors?

We have good relations and are well-respected among our peers. CMI is also quite well known by the EU member states, in particular those who fund us, such as Finland, Sweden, Belgium, Ireland and the Netherlands. Those who do not work on

peacemaking may be less familiar with CMI.

In Brussels, many NGOs and civil society networks do advocacy work. I think we could call our work in Brussels light advocacy, meaning that we naturally want to influence the EU's work and shape the policy and practice of peacemaking – learning from our experience and applying best practices – but we do it through informal discussion and exchanges rather than traditional advocacy work.

Brussels is home to many multilateral organisations. What is the character of multilateral cooperation in the era of growing geopolitical tension and alarming conflicts – and how can CMI best work in this global environment?

Multilateralism is clearly challenged by growing geopolitical tension. We should as much as possible, cooperate closely and work transparently with international organisations – the more, the better. We of course have to be careful to ensure our independence, but I believe that we have to show support to multilateral organisations and that we share many of the same commitments, with the UN in particular. For example, during our recent work in Afghanistan, supporting the EU in setting up a Afghan Women Leaders' Forum, we made sure that the UN was informed from the outset. It is essential for CMI to work in a way that also reinforces multilateralism.

In its origins, the EU is a peace project. How do you see the importance of advancing this project in these turbulent times?

The situation in Ukraine has united the EU in many ways and brought it back to its roots, showing that indeed it is a peace project. EU unity has recently been challenged. Even if cooperation was advancing on paper, divisions were visibly undermining implementation. Currently, the unity of member states is to a large extent expressed through defence cooperation, but I do not think that it will stop there. Attention is slowly shifting towards also softer and more long-term security issues such as resilience, prevention and peacebuilding.

What are the key themes or areas in CMI's work you wish to take forward in 2022?

It is impossible to pinpoint one thing or area. Our work is important and interesting throughout all projects and activities. Women in Peacemaking is something always to be highlighted in our engagements, and Digital Peacemaking is very timely and important. Recently in Brussels we have also been looking more at climate, peace and security, and youth peace and security.

WORKING WITH MULTILATERAL ORGANISATIONS

- CMI has for a long time worked closely with several regional and international organisations. This collaboration is one of CMI's key strengths and lies at the heart of our work to complement official peacemaking efforts.
- Our added value in this area is our ability to provide independent, expert and solution-oriented advisory support for officially mandated peace processes.
- In addition to the EU, we work with the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE), the African Union, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).



Jibecke Jönsson. Photo: Maria Santto / CMI

JIBECKE JÖNSSON

- Head of the CMI's Brussels Office, focusing on maintaining relations and building strategic partnerships with the EU, EU Member States and Brussels stakeholders.
- Previously seconded by Sweden to the European External Actions Service (EEAS) with focus on the EU-UN partnership on peace and security.
- Some prior roles include Head of Policy and Best Practices, Challenges Forum for Peace Operations; Political Adviser of the EU Delegation to the Kyrgyz Republic; Programme Manager and Research Assistant at the United Nations University in New York.
- Holds a PhD in Political and Social Sciences from the European University Institute in Florence focussing on global governance and UN peace operations.
- Areas of expertise are peacebuilding, UN peacekeeping, EU crisis management, multilateralism, global governance and partnerships.



Memorial service for the victims of the Tigray conflict organized by the city administration, Nov 2021. Photo: Eduardo Soteras / AFP

CMI Senior Advisor Alexander Rondos:

“What happens in Ethiopia affects everyone in the region”

– calls for comprehensive political settlement

Ethiopia is at risk of disintegrating in the absence of prospects for a political settlement. So warns Alexander Rondos, CMI’s new Senior Advisor and former EU Special Representative to the Horn of Africa, who here discusses CMI’s work in the region and his 30-year experience of peacemaking.

After more than 18 months of devastating war, there’s a cautious hope for peace in Ethiopia’s Tigray region. Ethiopia’s government and the Tigray Defence Forces have agreed a truce to allow for humanitarian aid to be delivered to millions of civilians suffering from the war.

But there is also increased awareness that the country is at risk of disintegrating if steps are not urgently taken to find a comprehensive political settlement to address Ethiopia’s multiple disputes. They include competing visions over how power is shared: whether Ethiopia should choose centralism or federalism as a political model, or something in between. The dire economic situation, now aggravated by spiralling prices of wheat and fertilisers due to the war in Ukraine, is making the situation more fragile. The unravelling of Ethiopia, traditionally the linchpin of regional stability, could destabilise the whole Horn of Africa.

“We’re witnessing a rising level of potential violence in Ethiopia. Even if Tigray resolved itself, the other conflicts may not. The fundamental preconditions for trust and confidence in a movement towards peace are not yet in place,” says Rondos. He stresses that instead of a narrow focus on the humanitarian situation, there should be a much broader emphasis on building conditions for a political settlement. The role of the international community is vital in encouraging the parties to negotiate. “Key people from different political communities would need

to be brought together to lay the grounds for the next stage of Ethiopia’s political future. We have conflict because political trust broke down.”

CMI HELPS KEY ACTORS TO WORK FOR PEACE

CMI can provide spaces for dialogue and assist in building peace, Rondos says. CMI’s new EU-funded project, launched in 2022, focuses on advancing sustainable peace in the Horn of Africa as a whole. “What happens in Ethiopia affects everyone else in the region.”

The project centres on bringing together international and regional actors so that they can more effectively work for peace and better understand conflict dynamics in the region. “It is about having a constant rolling analysis of a region which dynamics keep shifting. For instance, at the moment all the parties in the region who are in conflict or potentially in conflict are reviewing their positions in the light of global developments due to the war in Ukraine. And we need to take that into account. I think CMI is very well-positioned to help do that. That means bringing parties together from global to local level.”

One source of tension are the various unsolved border disputes in the region. For instance, the war in Tigray has exposed a long-running dispute between Ethiopia and Sudan over al-Fashaga, an

area of fertile borderland. A war between the Horn of Africa's two biggest countries could destabilise the whole continent. "Have we looked as creatively as possible at how one builds dialogue across borders? This is very pertinent right now in the Horn of Africa, where everything is interconnected. A lot of policies are focused on countries rather than on how one diminishes rivalry and the threat of conflict between countries."

The vagueness of borders themselves offer potential for conflict. The border regions are rich in natural resources. The people living there are often marginalised from the rest of society.

"That is where the real violence is occurring and where that violence is being used and exploited, often for competing national interests."

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Rondos has extensive experience of peacemaking in the Horn of Africa. From 2012 to 2020 he was the European Union's Special Representative in the region.

During his overall peacemaking career, which spans more than 30 years, Rondos has been involved in conflict mediation in the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East.

When talking about what he has learned during his career as a peacemaker, Rondos repeatedly returns to the notion of people's sense of belonging – or lack of it – either as a path to peace or as a root cause of violence.

"To stay ahead of the problem, peacemakers need to understand that most crises that end up in violence start very, very locally. It tends to be about groups of people who are marginalised, and who then connect with others who are also marginalised. And so it builds up."

Peacemakers need to think outside the box to get the right people around the same table in a given conflict to solve

problems, Rondos explains. "We need to be very creative and open-minded about who we talk to."

This means bringing people together who one might not necessarily think of as natural stakeholders in finding a solution to a crisis.

"Women know far more about what is happening in a community than almost anyone else, because they bear the brunt of what is going on and what is going wrong. If we're not talking to women, we're missing something."

KEEPING AN OPEN MIND

Making peace is also about "talking to people who normally you'd be least likely to want to talk to," Rondos stresses. For instance, the rise of armed groups as key players in conflicts underlines the need to keep an open mind.

Rondos thinks that independent organisations such as CMI are well placed to help make peacemaking efforts truly inclusive. For him, treating all people equally reflects the greatest legacy of CMI's founder, Nobel Peace Prize laureate **Martti Ahtisaari**.

The key to a more peaceful future is giving young people the respect they deserve, Rondos points out. They are, after all, also the ones who in their frustration can be exploited by others to use violence. "It's about creating the next generation of peacemakers. It's about giving young people space and boosting their ability and confidence to shape their own future. Let's try and help them liberate themselves to do things that bring a touch of kindness rather than unkindness."

ALEXANDER RONDOS

- Greek national
- Born in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, in 1954.
- CMI Senior Advisor as of August 2021.
- 2012 – 2020 EU Special Representative to the Horn of Africa.
- Previously worked as adviser to the Foreign Ministry and the Government of Greece and involved in conflict mediation in the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East.
- Extensive experience of relief and development work.



Alexander Rondos. Photo: AU-UN



Afghanistan lessons

– How to build lasting peace in a complex world?

The experiences from the past two decades illustrate the need for future endeavours to focus on finding sustainable solutions to conflicts. This analysis appraises some of the key changes in the field of crisis management and how approaches have evolved over the past 20 years.

The war on the Taliban led to a 20-year long series of operations, costing numerous countries over a trillion euros, and involving overlapping and continuous civilian and military crisis management missions, counter-terrorism operations, and development work. The evident failure of policies on Afghanistan have prompted soul searching in terms of how to effectively manage similar crises. It was also 20 years ago that CMI was established, as the fields of crisis management, conflict prevention, and peace mediation developed and matured. The experiences of CMI and other organisations in the field from the past two decades illustrate the need for future endeavours to focus on finding sustainable solutions to conflicts. Below, we appraise some of the key changes in the field of crisis management and how approaches have evolved over the past 20 years

The containment or management of a crisis by imposition—either by large operations or by a strong outside actor—does not create peace. As we have witnessed in Afghanistan, an over-reliance on military solutions can undermine efforts for creating sustainable peace. Crisis management responses relying on the principles of force or pressure often erode the social contract between the people and the government, meaning heavily invested peace operations are often coun-

terproductive in the long term. In this regard, they risk aggravating the dependency on external assistance and political will – which are not infinite resources. Over the past 20 years, failed interventions have thus prompted the need for and underscored the value of sustainable approaches to crisis management.

Political solutions to conflict are not straightforward. Political solutions need to be meaningfully inclusive of women and minorities (whose perspectives might otherwise be excluded) and need to purposefully and sensibly include groups that are parties to violent political conflict (who might be excluded or might seek to be included by means of force). In many cases, engaging with some of these excluded, non-state actors, such as armed groups, may also be proscribed internationally. The criminalisation of some forms of engagement with certain stakeholders closes channels for dialogue and hinders peacemaking efforts that help find non-violent solutions to political grievances or at a very minimum, help conflict parties explore violence-reduction measures. The inability or unwillingness to appropriately integrate political solutions into crisis management operations is reflected in past approaches to Afghanistan and can prove detrimental for longer term political reconciliation.

Through these aspects, the approaches to crises in Afghanistan and in Africa's Sahel have some common characteristics. The key feature often mentioned is the primacy of military solutions to achieve stability, and another, reflective of narrow scope, is the inability to understand politics and navigate through political change and reform. There is a tendency not only to define political outcomes through use of force but also to "developmentalise" the political space: to make it merely subject to capacity-building and technical knowledge transfer, instead of truly acknowledging and working from within the political arena of the state. This easily leaves the causes of conflict unaddressed and renders the social contract as a project deliverable, instead of an outcome from an organic process of confrontations, demands and an inherently emerging awareness of the need to change – and to lead change. For any peace process and the ensuing political settlement to succeed, these needs are to be considered and integrated into crisis responses.

Siloed approaches to managing conflict still remain, and greater coherence, coordination, and cooperation is needed, between states; across the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus; as well as between those working to mediate conflicts and foster dialogue. While the impetus must come from within, some limitations actors face for realising an optimal approach have been observed, such as ill-defined mandates, different and sometimes competing interests, as well as varying restrictions on our work. Such conditions have often led to differing responses and ultimately, impact. Therefore, there is a need to develop the capacity to respond quickly and flexibly to new challenges, both in crisis management operations and in parallel actions. This should include reinforcing mechanisms for enabling greater cooperation between and within the different layers of actors as well as prioritising shorter and more targeted operations that do not require years of commitment with the broadest possible mandate, as was the case in Afghanistan.

In the past twenty years, we have seen a shift toward regionalism in the fields of crisis management and conflict resolution, both in terms of roles and as an approach. While international organisations have extensive capacities to provide support, regional organisations like the European Union (EU),

African Union (AU), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have become increasingly invaluable as forums that can provide an authority to convene. While similar limitations as described above may conflict with the crisis management roles these take on, the shift of responsibilities and mechanisms to regional spheres has only increased in the past years. Regional approaches have helped promote and enable dialogue between member states and external actors alike. Regional actors have also shown willingness to contribute to stabilisation efforts in conflicts where established international frameworks are not acceptable or where the international community needs reliable partners to help stabilise regions and implement agreements. Consequently, regional actors have increasingly acted, by extension, as support actors for nation building. Some, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), have openly taken on this role for over 20 years.

Even beyond institutionalised regional formats, support for nation building has become a regional endeavor. Afghanistan is the most recent example of this trend. In the past few years, neighbours have more openly expressed their shared interest in ensuring, at least, minimum stability and security in and around the country. In this regard, common interests have enabled support for Afghanistan's nation-building project, for which regional cooperation and integration play a central role. Contrary to the current popular narrative, the concept of nation-building in Afghanistan is not dead, rather it has shifted both in context and content. Overlapping interests and objectives are evolving into regional approaches, which could ultimately connect to larger, international efforts. Considering this, regional coalitions – driven by regional powers and their groupings – are becoming more diverse, thus also resulting in a representation of more diverse interests within them. These coalitions have traditionally addressed issues based on their needs and interests. These interests have sometimes acted as drivers for proxy involvement and the past years have seen an alarming rate of proxy activity in conflicts. While such reality has complicated crisis management responses, it has also reinforced the notion that external, regional actors may also be key stakeholders that need to be engaged in political and other processes.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Creating sustainable peace is not possible if crisis management responses are driven by imposition
- Political solutions to conflicts have been under-utilised and political dynamics have not been properly understood and addressed in past approaches
- Siloed approaches to managing conflict still remain, and greater coherence, coordination, and cooperation are needed between actors
- Regional actors and approaches have become increasingly common and are valuable for crisis management and conflict resolution

This text was first published in our new publication series **CMI Insight** in September 2021 following the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan.

Scan the QR code for more CMI Insight publications.



Strengthening women's participation in peacemaking

In 2021, CMI's Women in Peacemaking team continued to support women working for peace and advocating a greater role for women in post conflict politics and society.

Women with backgrounds in political parties, human rights advocacy and civil society activism play a crucial role in peace and reconciliation efforts everywhere. In many countries and conflict situations where CMI works, women politicians and civil society actors are key players in advancing peace processes. CMI's Women in Peacemaking team has engaged with stakeholders at local, national and international levels, depending on how women and their organisations prioritise their work.

space in which power relations become visible and are often reinforced. If previously marginalized groups or actors become part of negotiations on how to end conflict and take steps towards peace, they gain a new status as political players. It also becomes more difficult to exclude them later on. This is why CMI continues to work on issues of inclusion in general and on women's participation in particular.

In 2021 the global Covid-19 pandemic closed borders and airspaces, forcing many meetings to be held online. Digital platforms offer new and versatile means for peacemaking and dialogue. CMI supported meetings involving Yemeni and Libyan politicians and civil society activists that focused on strategy, joint priorities among women actors, and creating a common vision about the future of their country. The online platforms also created links between women actors, as they enabled participants from different backgrounds and places to join in.

PLATFORMS FOR YOUNG WOMEN

Important steps were taken by CMI in 2021 to understand the priorities and to establish communication platforms for young women to take part in discussions on peace, justice and social change. In countries where women's political participation is restricted and rights are denied, it has become ever more important to maintain safe spaces for dialogue and enabling channels to voice demands for change.

In Palestine, the women's movement has called for dialogue on critical issues related to Palestinian reconciliation process and the need to include young Palestinian women in addressing generational change. In 2021, CMI and its partner organisation Masarat supported the creation of a Young Women's Platform with participation from West Bank and Gaza. In Afghanistan, despite harsh and violent conditions, women still participate in demonstrations, meet online and in one another's homes, post on social media and advocate for rights to work and education. Young women face the worst risks in the current situation. They must not be left alone.

CMI workshop for Yemeni women in Amman Jordan, Dec 2021.
Photo: CMI



Efforts to improve a general understanding of the gendered dynamics of contemporary peace processes and decision-making is not only a question of equality; it is also a matter of security. In countries such as Libya, Yemen and Sudan, women's efforts to move their country towards a peaceful and democratic future have suffered setbacks. Women activists and politicians face increased security risks, both online and on the ground. These vary from being attacked for their peace activism to being targeted due to their political work.

SUPPORTING POLITICAL DIALOGUE

Despite an active engagement in mediating conflicts at local and community levels, and despite a clear leadership in efforts demanding peace, democratic change, and equal rights for all, women are still largely absent from formal peace processes and from official peace tables. While the peace table is not the only place where important decisions on a country's post-conflict future are made, it is a highly symbolic

Peace in Sudan will not happen without women

In Sudan where military rule has defined much of everyday life for decades, women have grown up fighting for freedom and justice.

In a country where military rule has defined much of the social and political life for decades, Sudanese women have grown up fighting for freedom and justice. Despite the active efforts of past years, the demands of the Sudanese revolution have not been fulfilled.

As with most women in Sudan, the political upheavals have strongly influenced the life of lawyer and activist **Afaf Ibrahim Mohamed Arbab**. Her early years in law were largely defined by the rule of autocrat Omar al-Bashir. During the revolution that ousted the leader in 2018-2019, Afaf became a high-ranking lawyer working for freedom and justice for the people.

Women in Sudan are determined to change the direction of the country. Afaf believes that to establish a civilian democratic government in Sudan it is essential to first take the necessary legal measures. This would involve having all the transitional institutions subject to a constitutional conference. The second main goal, according to Afaf, is to have democratic elections.

While the Draft Constitutional Declaration calling for a peace agreement was signed by military, political parties and civilian representatives in 2019, many of the demands of the revolution have not been realised. In 2021, CMI provided operational support to nine delegates from a major national coalition, Women of Sudanese Civic and Political Groups (MANSAM), to participate in formal peace negotiations as observers and as members of technical committees and working groups.

Afaf was a senior member of the delegation, and the only MANSAM representative to sit in the negotiation room. She wants to improve women's ability to take part in politics and be empowered socially, politically and economically everywhere in society.



In 2020, the Sudanese government approved a National Action Plan to implement Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, 20 years after it was passed. One of the key goals of the action plan is to abolish all laws that are biased against women. It's a positive development, but much remains to be done.

In order to support the peace and democratic transition, women in Sudan rely heavily on grassroots involvement. To link local communities to the national process, women, particularly in rural areas, need support to strengthen their capacity and knowledge of their political rights.

Having gone through a popular uprising, women have entrenched their role as key players in peace building and democratic transition in both formal and informal activities linked to the national peace process.

"Peace, as mentioned in the constitutional document, is a priority in the transitional period. Peace is the main entry point for freedom and justice", Afaf explains.

Afaf Ibrahim Mohamed Arbab photographed at home in Khartoum, Sudan, by Ayman Muhammed for CMI.



Photo: Daily Sabah

Supporting Libyan owned solutions to the conflict

The momentum of 2021 inspired efforts to influence the country's political process in Libya. CMI has supported the work through facilitation, expert support and capacity building.

Early 2021 was the most hopeful period in Libya for several years. The 2020 ceasefire had held, and the UN-led political dialogue forum had led to the selection of an interim government that was meant to pave the way towards elections – a critical step in overcoming the legitimacy deficit marking the Libyan political system.

But the momentum waned, as the intense competition and contestation by the political elites overtook the process, meaning that no constitutional basis or electoral framework could be achieved. Both are necessary steps for conducting free and fair elections. Despite all parties hanging onto the notion of elections until the last minute, it became clear that without the necessary minimum conditions in place, and good will in the form of a code of conduct amongst key actors, another round of political conflict would soon ensue. This has materialised through new competing governments.

The initial momentum of 2021 inspired many of CMI's partners in Libya to rejuvenate their efforts to positively influence the political process: through recommendations, increased efforts to solve local conflicts and attempt at broader consensus building around the longer term challenges.

FACILITATING TRUST-BUILDING

CMI's local counterparts, while not central to the narrow, official negotiations, have a potentially critical role to play in the broader transition process: they include political party representatives, women civil society leaders and influential figures from Libya's Southern region. The parties' coordination increased and intensified in preparation for the elections – new parties emerged and old ones reactivated their work. Women came together to discuss the role of women in the

lead-up to elections, both within parties and in their leading civil society roles. Local actors have continued throughout the year to conduct discreet trust-building work between communities in the Fezzan region.

CMI has supported all these efforts through dialogue facilitation, expert support and capacity building. Our added value in convening and supporting key stakeholder groups and local mediators, relies on strong local ownership and demand for the shared work – this is what makes CMI's work in Libya valuable.

Results in terms of trust and confidence between political actors, parties and communities, are significant, but their impact is limited by the current weakness and fragility of the formal process. One missing piece in Libya is the involvement in a more systematic and recognised way of influential and constructive figures in a broader dialogue process geared towards a national vision for the country.

The current narrow official negotiations only seem to replicate the problem. Another question is the agenda-setting question, where only power-sharing remains the focus, and political, economic and security tracks separate. This allows space for those not wishing to see real progress on the ground to spoil the existing efforts. These issues are not easy to overcome, but the solutions will finally need to be Libyan owned, and preferably stem from a broader consensus. In the meantime, it is important not to give up on the numerous local actors working to advance reconciliation and peace within their communities, and to promote the emergence of a more institutionalised, stable and accepted political system – if anything, the Libyan conflict remains multi-faceted and layered.

Equipping peacemakers with digital tools

In 2021, CMI's Digital Peacemaking project continued to identify new tools and methods to benefit peacemakers in addition to equipping them with digital skills. Combining Finnish expertise in technology and peace mediation offers great potential for developing these tools and methods in the future.

At CMI, digital peacemaking refers to both leveraging digital technologies to support its peace efforts and mitigating new challenges from the increasing use of digital technologies globally. In 2021, CMI's work continued to focus on building networks in Finland and internationally, collaborating with technology companies and promoting digital peacemaking as a theme both internally and externally.

Peace processes and the digital realm are nowadays interconnected. The digital space is not removed from conflicts since it can serve as a platform for warfare. As it is no longer possible to exclude the digital space from peacemaking, peacemakers need to understand their role in cyberspace and strengthen their skills both in leveraging digital technologies and managing digital risk.

BOOSTING CYBER SECURITY KNOW-HOW

In 2021, CMI's Digital Peacemaking project identified new methods and tools to benefit peacemakers. To support related efforts, the project engaged with the private sector to build its own networks. CMI continued to collaborate with Finnish software company Includ and payment platform Zippie and partnered with a top Finnish security company, WithSecure. Together with WithSecure, CMI is developing cyber security awareness in CMI's work and the peacebuilding community.

The project also went through a high-level consultation process, engaging individuals from academia, private and public sectors, which led to the recruitment of five members for an advisory group. The group will be regularly consulted to support CMI's digital peacemaking efforts.

IMPROVING INCLUSION

Digital technologies can make peace processes more inclusive and thus bring about more sustainable peace settlements. Peacemakers and technologists met to discuss the practical uses of digital technologies in peacemaking in CMI's side event 'Starting up with peace' at startup conference Slush. Leveraging digital technologies, such as Includ or Zippie, has enabled wider inclusion and low-emission development. Digital technologies were also often described as making it easier for previously excluded actors, in particular women, youth and minorities, to be involved.



Scan this QR code to watch the animation on digital peacemaking.



INCREASING UNDERSTANDING ON DIGITAL RISKS

Within CMI, knowledge on digital peacemaking was shared by hosting Peacetech cafés, introductory sessions on various digital peacemaking subjects open to all staff. CMI also collaborated with UNDPPA and the CyberPeace Institute to develop a Digital Risk Management E-Learning Platform for Mediators. The course aims to assist peacemakers globally in navigating the digital space safely. CMI also assessed its own potential to address tensions in cyber space. The assessment will be used for further work in this area in 2022. Overall, in 2021, the Digital Peacemaking project took many steps forward especially in building networks, establishing the project internally and externally, and gathering knowledge on topics relevant to digital peacemaking. Some of Finland's greatest exports include technology and peace mediation expertise. The question for Digital Peacemaking's future activities is how to combine these two even better.

Scan this QR code to access the Digital Risk Management E-Learning platform.



Strategic partnerships and funding



Janne Taalas at a donor Ukraine event, 2022 . Photo: Maria Santto / CMI

CMI's operational environment is inherently difficult. Political and economic instability, decreasing predictability, and agendas competing for attention and funds, are just a few examples of the challenges faced by organisations like CMI. These developments underline the vital value of cooperation, collaboration and partnership.

The long-term strategic partnerships with our core donors - Finland, Sweden and Ireland - continue to constitute a solid foundation that is complemented by project-based funding from the EU and a number of European governments. Ensuring a broad funding portfolio is critical for an independent organisation, not only to mitigate risk and to ensure sustainability of its operations, but also to expand its global impact through strategic partnerships.

We are grateful to our governmental and institutional partners and donors for their continuous support, which exceeds the merit of mere financial value. The complex and multilayered efforts of international peacemaking can only be advanced through the complementary undertakings of official and private actors. Peacemaking is not an individual activity but can only be practiced in teams.

INSTITUTIONAL DONORS



Government of Austria

Government of Belgium

Government of The Netherlands

Government of Norway

Government of Switzerland

OUR PRIVATE PARTNERS AND DONORS

Fundraising in 2021 was still overshadowed by the uncertainty caused by the coronavirus pandemic. CMI's events were held both virtually and face-to-face, and our partners showed much interest in the live events in particular. We were glad to see during the year a growing number of 'friends of CMI' who have taken interest in our work.

The Ladies for Peace Network (L4P) continued to be a prominent group throughout the pandemic. Its nearly two hundred members consists of women working in different fields but united by an interest in peace, world politics and global development. The network meets two or three times a year to discuss topical issues with CMI professionals.

CMI's new foundation-based form of activity introduced certain changes in fundraising strategy. An increasingly important priority of our work involves securing the financial stability of our operations and working closely with our donors.

FOUNDATIONS AND COORPORATE PARTNERS



DITTMAR & INDRENIUS



Sinikukka Saari, Leading Researcher at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA), and CMI's Programme Director Ville Brummer (right).
Photo: Maria Santto / CMI

PARTNER TO CMI?

Continued support from existing donors – along with new donors – is vital to sustaining CMI's mediation and peacemaking initiatives.

CMI receives strategic support and targeted project funding. Both are fundamental to our operations and development. Strategic support helps us to safeguard our independence, develop and innovate. Such flexible funding also allows us to respond rapidly to emerging situations and ensure coherence in implementation.

CMI greatly welcomes any interest from companies, private organisations and individuals or philanthropic foundations in becoming donors and partners to support efforts to reduce conflict, create peace and build opportunities for millions of people. A donation to CMI's endowment fund is a lasting, long-term investment in peace.

INQUIRIES: Riikka Kämppi, Senior Advisor in Public Relations: riikka.kamppi@cmi.fi

Communications

In 2021, CMI continued to strengthen its global profile through active communications as a professional, international and trusted partner for peace. CMI's new communications strategy was a major achievement of the year in review, laying the groundwork for consolidating this profile for years to come.

We were able to increase significantly our visibility among our target audiences. The number of our social media followers, newsletter subscribers and the number of people attending our events grew by 15%. CMI's communications continued to focus on informing about the impact and results of our work and to shape the policy and practice of peacemaking by providing critical insight.

Two new communications formats, the policy paper CMI Insight and the webinar series CMI's Peace Talks Live, were created to examine what it takes to build lasting peace in the current volatile global situation. Two published CMI Insights focused on the lessons of Afghanistan for peacemakers and the need for inclusive peacemaking in Yemen. The webinar series discussed key takeaways from the Afghanistan paper and shed light on how to make water diplomacy more effective as the climate crisis intensifies. In May, we also held a webinar: Investing in peace after the pandemic, which introduced our new CEO Janne Taalas to our audience.

CMI INSIGHT PUBLICATION

CMI Insight

December 2021

Jasce Jensen, Head of Brussels Office, CMI
Sylvia Thompson, Senior Manager, CMI

INCLUSIVE PEACE AND THE EU IN YEMEN:

A call to rethink actions and approaches

A longstanding partner in supporting the UN-led peace process in Yemen, the EU needs to be open to consider what it can do differently to create a conducive environment for peace in Yemen. Immediate approaches need to be explored to ensure equal participation of all groups, including those who have been largely excluded such as political parties and tribal leaders as well as women and youth.

Despite substantial and longstanding international engagement in support of peace in Yemen, the recent military escalation and lack of progress in restarting political talks shows a need to rethink the approach through which the UN-led peace process is supported, including by the EU.

On 7 December, the European External Action Service (EEAS) condemned the border attacks by Houthi forces on Saudi Arabia and urged all parties to support the UN-led peace process.

The UN Special Envoy Hans Grundberg has called for willingness to question efforts made so far and to find new ways to end the political deadlock and reinvigorate the peace process.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- There is a need to rethink how the UN-led peace process in Yemen is supported, to find new ways to end the political deadlock.
- It is essential that the EU and its member states try to do more to advance the peace process in Yemen, relentlessly engaging with all parties.
- Peace in Yemen requires that all parties are heard and that the narrative shifts to considering both political parties and tribal leaders as enablers for peace.
- The interlinkages between the conflict in Yemen and humanitarian aid must be taken into account, as must the protection of human rights.

PEACE TALKS LIVE WEBINAR

HOST

Hanna Klinge
Deputy CEO, CMI

SPEAKERS

Janne Taalas
CEO, CMI

Richard Gowan
UN Director, International Crisis Group

Kadri Liik,
Senior Policy Fellow,
European Council on
Foreign Relations

CMI's PEACE TALKS LIVE

MARCH 29, 2022 / 3-4 pm CEST + 5 pm EEST

**Rising geopolitical tensions,
waning international cooperation on peace**

To listen to CMI's Peace Talks podcast on Spotify, scan this QR code.



CMI's Peace Talks podcasts covered topics ranging from Libya's fragile peace process to strengthening women's role in peacemaking.

In addition to our own communication channels, we continued to actively cooperate with both Finnish and international media. For instance, Finland's leading daily Helsingin Sanomat published two of our op-eds on the urgency to invest in peace and the impact of Afghanistan for the future of EU crisis management operations. Taalas' appointment was covered widely in Finland and our other experts were also interviewed by leading media outlets on subjects such as Sahel and Libya.

CMI continued strengthening its organisational communications capacity, including through training courses, awareness raising and joint collaboration between the communications team and different programmatic and thematic teams.

The creation of the new communications strategy engaged the organisation widely. The strategy aims at strengthening CMI's profile as the go-to organisation for peacemaking by building a mainstreamed, coherent approach to communications that is owned by the whole organisation.

Ahtisaari Days

In 2021, Ahtisaari Days continued to work for the two main target groups of the project: Finnish youth and schools. Daily school life has been heavily affected by the Covid pandemic and the barriers between school life and free time have become increasingly blurred due to online schooling and the use of social media. The pandemic impeded the work of the Ahtisaari Days team as it was impossible to make physical school visits. The stronger emphasis on using technology and virtual teaching materials prompted the team to revamp the visual look and website of the project, to make the information about the project and teaching materials more accessible and easier to find.

In November 2021, Ahtisaari Days started a new collaboration with the Finnish e-learning company Funzi. This was a result of a 2020 feasibility study by CMI and the Finnish National Agency for Education. The study revealed that there was a lack of conflict resolution teaching materials available for schools. The response was to create a mobile learning course about the basics of conflict resolution for Finnish teachers and students. The course content, including its themes, tools and case studies, has been created by CMI while Funzi has dealt with the form, platform and design of the course. The course was launched in March 2022.

CMI's young peace ambassadors, the Lennons, continued their youth-to-youth activities in 2021. The group made three

podcast episodes about reconciliation in everyday life focusing on the music, food, and sports industries. The group was expanded by 13 new Lennons in 2021 and CMI now has a network of about a hundred young peace ambassadors. The Lennons had several internal and external meetings and the learning sessions continued, involving training in conflict resolution and negotiation skills. In November 2021 the Lennons met with foreign minister Pekka Haavisto.

The Ahtisaari Days managed to reach a considerable number of students and teachers during 2021. A total of 43 427 teachers and students were reached using the package of course materials. When added Ahtisaari Days social media reach to this, the total outreach is 211 025. The new openings to develop teaching material were strengthened by continuing cooperation with TAT. In 2021, 38 330 ninth graders did Ahtisaari Days exercises as part of the preparatory materials of a youth business village Yrityskylä.

The long pandemic and the eruption on a violent conflict close-by have significantly increased the number of uncertainties facing young people. However, the Ahtisaari Days has managed to respond to the changing needs and platforms of the youth and continues to work for wider knowledge and skills in conflict resolution.

The Lennons meeting, 2021. Photo: Olli Puumalainen / CMI.



Finance overview

In 2021 CMI transferred its operations from being a registered association to a foundation, CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation. CMI's financial figures for the calendar year 2021 therefore consist of the final settlement of the association and the financial statement of the foundation. The combined total income was 11.6M€, up 22% from the previous year (9.5M€) whereas growth from 2019 to 2020 was 2%. The significant growth is partly explained by carryovers from 2020, which was impacted more heavily by the unexpected pandemic driven restrictions.

Finland, the EU and Sweden remain the biggest institutional funders of CMI's work. Total funding from Finnish MFA was 5.9M€, representing 52% of total funding. Funding from the European Union was 2.6M€ (23% of total) and Sweden 1.8M€ (16% of total). Funding from other governments was 0.8M€, 7% of total funding. Received funds from private fundraising stood at about the same level as the year before and is balanced between institutional and private donations.

The largest cost item in CMI's financial result is personnel costs of 3.8M€, an increase of 9%, followed by consultancy costs of 2.6M€, up 3%. This is in line with the way CMI implements its work through direct expert services. Travel costs were 1.9M€, a significant rise following the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020. Subcontracting costs were 1.1M€, up 8% increase from 2020. The combined net result was 145 000€³ which essentially mirrors the volume of CMI's private fundraising.

2021 marked the last year of the Finnish MFA-funded four-year Programme (2018-2021). The partnership with the MFA continues to be strong and new Programme funding was granted for 2022-2025. CMI seeks to strengthen its current partnerships but continues also to broaden its funding base by entering into new ones. CMI expects to continue a steady growth path with the support of the new Programme funding.

FINANCIAL MONITORING

The Finance Team continues to produce timely information for both regional teams as well as the Leadership Team so as to allow for well-informed decision-making by all parts of the organisation. Reports, budgets, forecasts, and actual expenditure are produced and compiled on a monthly and tertile basis. Finance updates are also produced regularly for the CMI Board. Several new tools have been adopted and developed, including the further development of a cloud-based HR recruitment tool that enables the management of

the recruitment process remotely. In addition, new collaboration tools, CRM and project management tools, among others, are being continuously mapped. The goal of streamlining and automate processes as well as providing a better value-added information flow within CMI will continue to be a key development project.

Best practice corporate governance and financial monitoring of CMI activities are essential for coherently and transparently adhering to regulations and fulfilling our donor requirements. CMI follows a set principle of internal policies and carries out regular monitoring to ensure adherence to agreed internal rules, policies, and processes. The change of CMI's legal status to a foundation registered in Finland has set further requirements for both corporate governance and financial reporting. CMI's policies and processes have been complemented and adjusted according to the change in legal status, relevant regulation as well as the increasing volumes and complexity of the external operating environment.

Regular financial monitoring allows CMI to respond swiftly to emerging challenges and to mitigate risks proactively. CMI's projects are regularly audited according to various donor requirements. The Finance Team also carries out regular monitoring visits to the field to ensure that processes and activities are being conducted according to set principles. These monitoring visits recommenced in 2021 after a period of restricted travel.

In 2021, the Finance & Administration team was able to strengthen its structure and resources and secure sufficient capacity to carry out its work after the turnover experienced in 2019 and 2020. Nevertheless, the continued growth of CMI will require ensuring that sufficient capacity is retained together with the continued streamlining of processes, while ensuring the wellbeing of the team.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

SOURCES OF FUNDING 2021

Government of Finland	51 %
EU	23 %
Sweden	15 %
Other governments	6 %
Private fundraising	2 %
Ireland	1 %
Other	1 %

USES OF FUNDING 2021

Middle East and North Africa	27 %
Eurasia	22 %
Sub-Saharan Africa	22 %
Asia	8 %
Thematics	8 %
Programme Support	5 %
Other	9 %

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

INCOME *)	2021
Public funding	11 354 599
Private fundraising	520 054
Other income	1 988
TOTAL INCOME	11 631 394
EXPENSES	2021
Personnel costs	3 377 073
Depreciation	17 015
Other expensis	8 091 946
TOTAL EXPENSES	11 486 034
SURPLUS / DEFICIT	143 360

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS	2021
Long term assets	
Machinery and equipment	14 084
Current assets	
Project Income Receivables	532 367
Other current assets	167 897
Financial assets	1 999 000
Cash and bank receivables	2 733 194
TOTAL ASSETS	5 446 542
LIABILITIES	
Equity	
Own capital	50 000
Endowments	331 405
Profit / Loss	291 399
Short term liabilities	
Project Income Advances	3 036 778
Accounts payable	758 083
Other short term liabilities	978 877
TOTAL LIABILITIES	5 446 542

*) Combined income and expenses from the association 1.1.2021 - 30.4.2021 and the foundation 1.5.2021 - 31.12.2021

Our people

ORGANISATIONAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES

At the end of 2021 CMI had 70 employees, 63 of whom were based in Helsinki and seven in Brussels. In addition to employees, CMI has both long- and short-term consultants,

numbering around 100 at any given point during the year. Compared to the previous year, the overall number of employees has slightly increased and is expected to continue growing in 2022.



CMI Senior Advisor Georg Charpentier (left), Project Manager Marie Makweri (center) and Project Assistant Esteri Hukka (right), 2021.
Photo: Olli Puumalainen / CMI

SECURITY

Following the start of the coronavirus pandemic, CMI developed and mastered peacemaking approaches that combine face-to-face dialogue work with the use of digital technologies. 2021 saw greater opportunities to return to in-person meetings, while maintaining the beneficial aspects of digital peacemaking.

CMI's security management model has been continuously developed to address the complex risk environment faced in the new normal. Uncertainty related to security risks in both physical and digital domains has increased, with the pandemic continuing to cast a shadow on all global travel and activity. Ensuring a do-no-harm approach is central to all CMI's work.

Security management is a full-time activity at CMI, overseen by a dedicated Security Manager. CMI's risk management function was strengthened and a new risk assessment approach was rolled-out throughout all our programme work.

Links to peer organisations and safety and security networks and partnerships are crucial in order to enhance the security of CMI and the peacemaking entity as a whole. It is through

participation in networks such as the Global Inter-Agency Security Forum (GISF) and Cyber Mediation Network that CMI actively contributes to and guides peer discussions on security and benefits from lessons learned. CMI continues to work with world-class partners in providing security for its staff members. In 2021, CMI partnered with F-Secure (later WithSecure) to spearhead digital risk awareness and management in the peacebuilding sector.

WELLBEING

In 2021 CMI took several steps to enhance the wellbeing of employees. The annual supervisor trainings were held on the topics of the coaching style of leadership and psychological safety. The annual training session for all staff concentrated on the topic of self-leadership to provide staff with practical tools for managing their workdays. The themes of the trainings were chosen based on feedback received from employee surveys.

In 2022, CMI will continue to focus on supporting wellbeing through providing supervisor training on clarity and effectiveness in management as well as team level workshops on the same themes. CMI will also continue developing struc-

tures and policy related to wellbeing and develop the office working space to ensure that it supports the new hybrid way of working.

GOVERNANCE AND DECISION-MAKING

CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation was established to continue the work of Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) association with effect from 1 May 2021. The purpose of the foundation structure is to expand operations and enable a more efficient decision-making and administration, and to enhance fundraising opportunities.

The foundation's corporate governance structure is based on Finland's Foundations Act, according to which CMI's

highest decision-making body is the Board of Directors. The board consists of the Chair Alexander Stubb and six other members who are selected for a two-year period. CMI's Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for CMI's long-term strategy, major financial decisions, the approval of new members and the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). CMI's Board of Directors convened four times in 2021.

Ambassador Janne Taalas was appointed the CEO of the foundation in May 2021. CMI's Executive Director leads CMI's operational work and the implementation of CMI's strategy. The Leadership Team supports the Executive Director in planning and decision-making.

LEADERSHIP TEAM 2021

JANNE TAALAS

Chief Executive Officer

HANNA KLINGE

Deputy CEO

VILLE BRUMMER

Chief Programme Officer



BOARD 2021

ALEXANDER STUBB

Chair of Board,
Director of the School
of Transnational Governance



MARKO AHTISAARI

Artistic Director, Helsinki Festival



VEERA HEINONEN

Director,
Democracy and
Participation,
Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra



KARI LAUTJÄRVI

Lagman



GUNVOR KRONMAN

CEO, Hanaholmen



ALEKSI NEUVONEN

Research Director,
Demos



KAI SAUER

Under-Secretary of
State, Foreign
and Security
Policy, Finnish MFA



CHRISTOPH VITZTHUM

President and CEO,
Fazer
Group



CMI Fundamental Principles

CMI's enduring vision is that all conflicts can be resolved. This vision is based on our conviction that people have the capacity to pursue peaceful change, even amid cyclical forms of violence. Everything CMI does in pursuit of this vision is guided by five fundamental principles that uphold our independence and are rooted in the experience of two decades of international peace mediation. These principles continue to serve as the cornerstones of our Strategy 2030.

HONEST BROKER

As an honest broker, we are open about our role, our goals, and our partnerships, with requisite discretion to safeguard our counterparts. Our impartiality ensures that we act without a political agenda, for the benefit of peace, and without leanings towards a party or interest.

OWNERSHIP

Our work relies on the commitment of conflict parties and stakeholders to address the key questions of a given dispute. Our experience shows that sustainable resolutions to conflict are reached when conflict parties own the settlement process and we, the peacemakers, accompany and support these efforts.

INCLUSIVITY

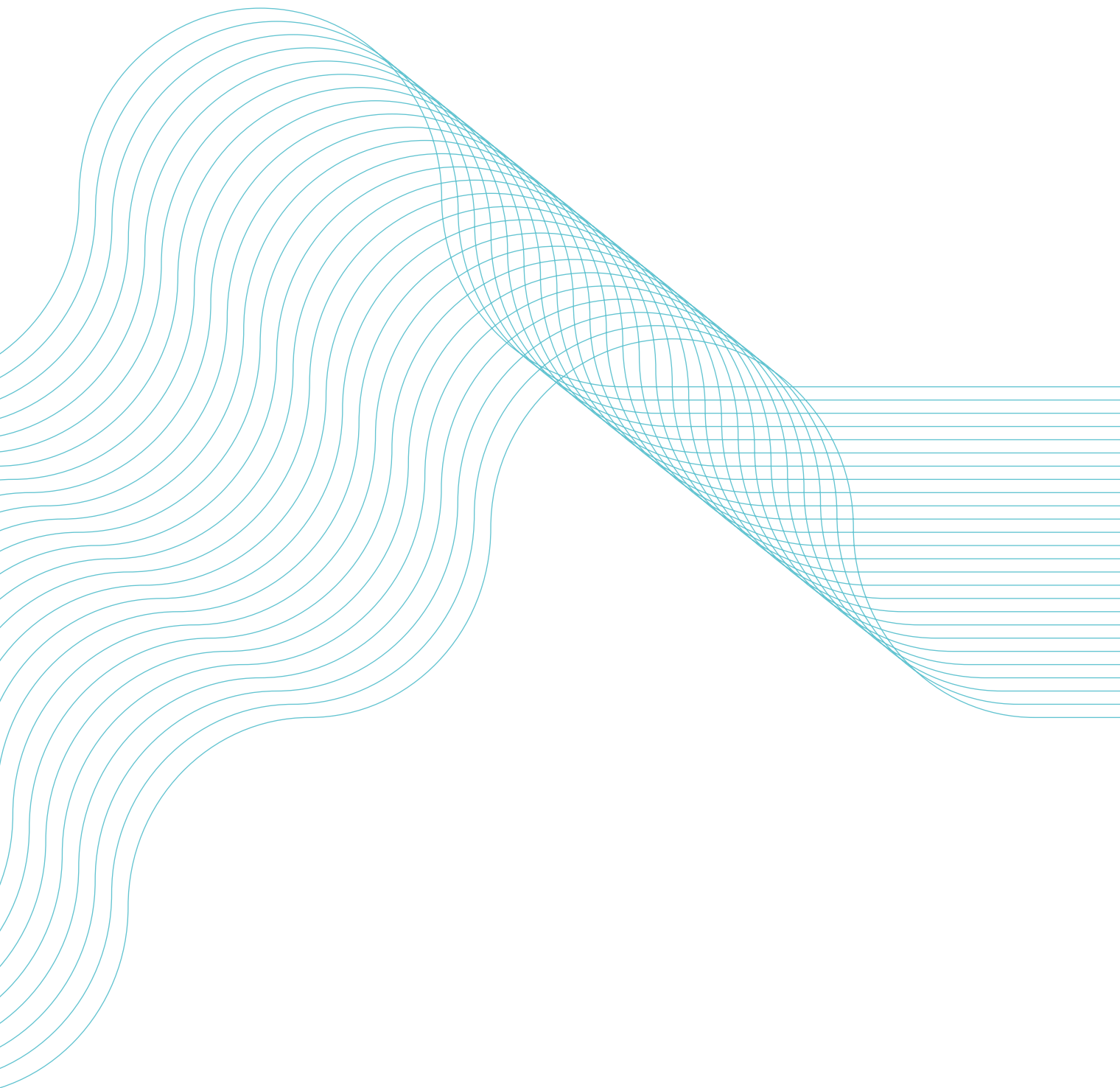
The inclusion of all relevant actors in a peace process is a precondition for the durable settlement of a conflict. Inclusivity of voices and actors paves the way for a broad consideration of the causes of and solutions to a conflict and sets a precedent for participatory and inclusive processes for the future. We engage with all relevant actors and lay special emphasis on the participation of women in peace efforts.


COMPLEMENTARY

We coordinate and communicate efficiently and effectively with relevant actors and stakeholders to ensure the complementarity and additionality of our efforts. We build synergies with local, national, regional and international actors. Our strength lies in our ability to take initiatives formal actors cannot – and our sensitivity to step back when needed. ‘

INTEGRITY

Maintaining independence from external agendas and influence is the foundation of our work. We do not compromise our principles and ensure that our work, partnerships, and resources align with the highest ethical standards.





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