

Annual Report 2024

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 Prize Laureate and former President of Finland Martti Ahtisaari, we have since grown to be a leader in the field of international peacemaking.

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KEY NUMBERS 2024

17 million euros total funding
87 employees in Helsinki and Brussels
22 conflict resolution and prevention projects globally

20 716 participants in CMI events and activities

19 established dialogue platforms supported
18 peace processes in 22 countries or regions supported
19 international, regional or national actors provided with technical advisory support

86 capacity building workshops or trainings by CMI
1711 meetings with conflict parties and stakeholders
1375 meetings with international actors and peers
150 dialogue meetings convened by CMI
9702 direct beneficiaries of conflict resolution activities
3642 direct beneficiaries reached by activities in Finland

59%
of women
participants in
CMI events and
activities

Building bridges for peace

A more pluralistic field of peacemaking is emerging. CMI actively connects diverse stakeholders, including traditional and emerging mediation actors.

In 2024 military conflicts deepened as Russia's war in Ukraine entered its third year and violence surrounding the war in Gaza expanded across the region. Sudan's civil war evolved into the world's largest humanitarian crisis and armed conflict intensified in the Great Lakes region.

CMI actively builds bridges between diverse stakeholders, including traditional and emerging mediation actors.

These overlapping crises reflect a deeper shift in the global order. It is marked by the return of major inter-state warfare, the persistence of internationalised civil conflicts, and a growing erosion of the international norms and institutions that once offered a framework for peace.

In parallel, a more pluralistic field of peacemaking is emerging. Traditional state actors and private actors such as CMI now operate alongside a growing constellation of middle powers, regional actors, private organisations, and new types of mediators, including military and intelligence actors.



Janne Taalas
Chief Executive Officer, CMI

Photo: CMI

This increasing diversity of actors presents both challenges and opportunities. On one hand, it can lead to fragmentation and competition, making it harder to coordinate peace efforts and ensure accountability. On the other, it brings a broader spectrum of perspectives, relationships, and skills into the process. It can increase cultural sensitivity, innovation, and the range of tools and resources available to support dialogue.

CMI actively builds bridges between diverse stakeholders, including traditional and emerging mediation actors. In the coming years, we aim to deepen these connections further to strengthen collaboration and enhance the effectiveness of peacemaking.

In 2024, CMI launched a global seminar series inspired by the legacy of President Ahtisaari, exploring how his principles remain relevant amid today's geopolitical upheaval and weakening international norms. Together with our key partners, we began this conversation in Ankara and Brussels and will continue these critical dialogues around the world throughout 2025. Beyond 2025, insights from these legacy seminars will inform our ongoing work on evolving peace paradigms and reinforce our efforts to shape more effective policy and practice in a changing global context.

With the support of our long-term strategic partnerships with Finland, Sweden and Ireland, key project donors, and our implementing partners we were able to expand our work in 2024. With shifting priorities toward defense and deterrence, we remain particularly grateful for the support of our partners and continue making substantive contributions to peace even in the most difficult environments.

Strengthening multilateralism, shaping the future of peacemaking

Multilateralism is at the very core of CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation's identity and mission. Our efforts contribute to the multilateral system wherever we operate. Today multilateral actors, systems and processes are under growing pressure. Institutions such as the United Nations are facing mounting operational and political challenges which seriously undermine their ability to act and to fulfil their mandates.

As AI changes how societies address conflict, it is essential that peacemaking is not left behind.

We have made the deliberate choice to continue to deepen CMI's partnership with multilateral actors including the African Union, the United Nations, the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. CMI's strategic partnership with the European Union reached a significant milestone in 2024, as we are now collaborating with more EU structures and operating in more regions than ever before. In fact, the EU became our largest funder for the first time this year. This development reflects not only the deepening of our cooperation but also affirms CMI's relevance as a trusted partner and a critical friend supporting international responses to mediation and dialogue.

In the coming years, CMI remains committed to strengthening multilateral efforts. Sustainable peace, in our experience, rests on coordination, legitimacy, and accountability, none of which can be achieved in isolation. It requires broad-based cooperation

and shared frameworks that all parties genuinely support. That said, this work is not getting easier. The global trend is drifting away from multilateralism, making our commitment more necessary.

Another trend impacting political and conflict dynamics is the rapid evolution of artificial intelligence. While the short-term effects of AI are often overstated, the long-term consequences are frequently underestimated. One of the most pressing concerns is the global erosion of trust triggered by the spread of misinformation, disinformation, and manipulation. These developments may profoundly alter the ways conflicts emerge, are understood, and are addressed.

Despite its growing impact, AI remains an underused resource in peacemaking. At CMI, we are partnering with researchers and innovators to explore how AI can support more inclusive dialogue, improve conflict analysis, and strengthen our practical tools and approaches.

As AI changes how societies address conflict, it is essential that peacemaking is not left behind. At CMI we aim to be at the forefront of shaping the future of peacemaking.



Marko Ahtisaari
Chair of the Board, CMI

Photo: Saara Autere

REGIONS & PROJECTS 2024

CMI continued its long-term work in Eurasia, Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa, and prioritised investing in Women in Peacemaking and Digital Peacemaking.

EURASIA

CMI's work in the Eurasia region operates at various levels given the fragility of the European peacemaking system. CMI has supported capacity building for government actors across the region, especially in Ukraine, as well as supporting dialogue at a sub-regional level in Moldova and the South Caucasus. At the regional level, informal spaces convened by CMI provided opportunities for dialogue between Ukraine and other European actors. At the national level, CMI-facilitated spaces have contributed to dialogue between political and societal actors within Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia and Azerbaijan. The work that is done in the Eurasia region also supports coordination between formal and informal actors, and improved policy on peace and security.

- Strengthening Coordination Among Ukrainian and International Stakeholders
- Building Resilience in Conflict through Dialogue
- Advancing Conflict Settlement and Prevention Efforts in the Moldova Context
- Supporting Institutionalised and Sustainable Dialogue on the Gagauz Autonomy
- Supporting Efforts for Stability and Peace in the South Caucasus
- Supporting Regional Mediation Efforts
- Supporting Dialogue in the Western Balkans

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

CMI works in the Sub-Saharan Africa region at three inter-connected levels; regional organisations, regional level as well as national level. In order to support regional organisations in 2024, CMI contributed to increased mediation capacities as well as dialogue through its support to, for example, the African Union and IGAD. At the regional level, in the Horn of Africa, CMI's informal dialogue spaces provided opportunities for dialogue for better informed peacemaking and reducing regional tensions. At the national level, various CMI-facilitated spaces contributed to dialogue between political and civil society actors as well as women and youth in contexts such as Burundi and Sudan.

- African Union Mediation Support Project
- Advancing Constructive Dialogue in Burundi
- Enhancing Constructive Dialogue and Cooperation on Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa
- Supporting the Resumption of a Political Process and Inclusive Peace in Sudan

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

CMI's operating environment in the MENA region continued to be challenging, amidst continued escalatory conflict trends. Nevertheless, CMI contributed to increasing the political agency of civilian actors such as political parties with a focus on women's political agency. Moreover, CMI provided informal regional dialogue spaces in contexts of dysfunctional regional cooperation frameworks such as in the Maghreb-Sahel region as well as process design support to the efforts of the EU in reviving a political process for the Arab-Israeli conflict.

- Supporting regional dialogue in the Maghreb-Sahel Region
- Supporting Dialogue for Unity in Palestine
- Foster Dialogue on Pathways for a Revitalised Middle East Peace Process
- Supporting an Inclusive Peace Process and Enhanced Agency Among Key Stakeholders in Yemen

GLOBAL

In its first year, the project "Improving the global connectivity of traditional and emerging conflict resolution and prevention actors and approaches" succeeded in facilitating knowledge exchanges through targeted consultations with conflict prevention and resolution related entities in Qatar, United Arab Emirates, China, Türkiye, Iraq, South Africa, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan, resulting in increased mutual understanding of effective conflict resolution approaches in the shifting global order. These dialogues have begun to advance mutual understanding on the challenges faced by mediators in an increasingly uncertain environment, bringing forth the legacy of President Ahtisaari and highlighting the need for cooperation and mutual learning, to ensure more effective, multi-track conflict resolution efforts.

ASIA

CMI's work in Asia is largely conducted in the absence of official political and transition processes. However, there is an emerging international approach to Afghanistan and increased regional efforts to address the deteriorating situation in Myanmar. In this context, CMI has been able to deepen and expand its work with national actors and to enhance connections to regional and international networks of actors in both countries. CMI also accelerated its work on peacemaking policies and capacities in the region. Firstly, CMI increasingly made its networks and expertise available to the regional organisation ASEAN, whose role is as important as ever. Secondly, China's role has significantly increased in addressing conflicts in the region and globally through mediation diplomacy. It is therefore important to continue exchanges with Chinese experts and officials to develop policy thinking along with and assessing China's aspirations in mediation.

- Exploring Context-Specific Approaches to Peace in Myanmar
- Supporting Inclusive and Regional Peace Efforts in Afghanistan
- Supporting Regional Peace Structures and Inclusive Peacemaking in Asia

WOMEN IN PEACEMAKING & DIGITAL PEACEMAKING

Across its programme, CMI highlights women's roles in peacemaking and the new opportunities and risks digital technologies, particularly AI, present to mediation. In 2024, CMI also elevated youth in peacemaking as its third strategic focus area. CMI supported women's agency in dialogue and peace efforts across Palestine, Yemen, Sudan, Libya, and Afghanistan, with emphasis on young women's participation. We continued to advance inclusive mediation through experience sharing and targeted capacity-building of leading peacemakers globally.

Our Digital Peacemaking leveraged technology to enhance dialogue processes in contexts such as Maghreb-Sahel, Ukraine, Yemen and Afghanistan. CMI was invited to share its practical use cases in various policy fora related to peacemaking. Major milestone was also the delivery of a comprehensive training for the UN Office of the Special Envoy for Yemen (OSESFY) on artificial intelligence in mediation support.

THEMATIC PROJECTS

- Women's Political Agency in Conflict Resolution
- Policy and Praxis of Gender Inclusive Mediation
- Digital Peacemaking

OTHER PROJECTS

- Enhancing International Peacemaking Practice
- Global Education – Ahtisaari Days

Strengthening our impact on peace: CMI's strategy for the future

As the world becomes increasingly divided and the nature of conflict evolves, CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation has reviewed its strategy to adapt to these changes. This article outlines our key priorities for the future.

Profound global shifts are impacting our peacemaking efforts. Recent conflicts such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the war in Gaza have exacerbated geopolitical fragmentation. Multilateralism is weakening, and institutions like the United Nations face significant challenges in upholding peace and international security. Adherence to commonly agreed-upon international norms is diminishing.

The nature of conflict is shifting, with more internationalised intrastate conflicts and technology playing a growing role in both warfare and peacemaking. Rapid urbanisation and a youth demographic bulge continue to increase the risk of social unrest but also offer opportunities for positive change.

These shifts are reflected in CMI's updated Strategy 2030, which realigns our future direction while continuing to serve as our guiding framework in contributing to peace where we operate. Based on this review, we identify these key areas of focus:

1 Working alongside youth in preventing and resolving conflicts

The youth bulge has the potential to become either a demographic dividend or a source of social and political instability. CMI must seize this opportunity and work alongside young people as essential partners in conflict prevention and resolution.

CMI has extensive experience working with youth in regions such as South Sudan, the South Caucasus, and the Lake Chad Basin. In Finland, CMI's peace education project, Ahtisaari Days, has pioneered efforts to strengthen young people's conflict resolution skills for more than a decade. CMI has also contributed to Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) policy frameworks both nationally and globally.

To enhance our programmatic work and meet the increasing demand from stakeholders, we will place greater emphasis on the agency of youth in dialogue and mediation. Our existing thematic priorities, Women in Peacemaking and Digital Peacemaking, will be complemented by a third thematic priority: Youth in Peacemaking.

By 2030, we aim to be recognised as a leading independent partner on youth, peace, and security-related issues, having demonstrated measurable impact and established our distinctive role in the field.

2 Leveraging artificial intelligence

The forces of war have effectively harnessed new technologies to further their agendas. It is now imperative for the forces of peace to strive to close this gap. The rapid evolution of digital technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), has the potential to profoundly reshape the peace and security landscape. While AI's analytical capabilities offer unprecedented opportunities to enhance conflict prevention and resolution, these same advances are also enabling more sophisticated forms of warfare, such as autonomous military systems, targeted cyber-attacks, and AI-powered information warfare. This technological revolution presents peace organisations with the dual challenge of harnessing AI's constructive potential while addressing its destabilising effects on global security.

CMI has made significant progress in realising its

Strategy 2030 vision of becoming a pathfinder in Digital Peacemaking. The organisation has successfully utilised digital technologies across its operations to advance peace, strengthening foresight, inclusion, and joint analysis in CMI-led dialogue processes.

However, more work remains to fully realise the potential of digital approaches, particularly AI. To address the new opportunities and challenges that this technological leap presents, CMI will invest in leveraging AI to enhance both impact and operations.

Our approach will continue to balance the application of technology with our core human-centred values, ensuring that digital tools and AI serve to enhance, rather than replace, the critical human elements of peacemaking.

Bridging gaps and strengthening multilateralism

3

The multilateral system is struggling to deliver on its mandates as the global balance of power shifts. Polarisation, distrust and uncertainty are rising, with new centres of influence challenging traditional powers. Consensus on key peace and security issues remains elusive. As a result, peacemaking is becoming more fragmented rather than unified under the United Nations umbrella.

CMI's Strategy 2030 is based on complementarity, focusing on engagement, coordination, and collaboration with international, state, regional, and civil society actors. As local conflicts are increasingly connected to complex global dynamics, effective coordination of support for dialogue and mediation becomes more critical and challenging.

CMI has a strong track record of cooperating closely with, and supporting, multilateral actors, and will

continue to champion multilateral solutions. Over the next five years, we will continue to strengthen cooperation with the EU and focus on strengthening networks and partnerships with other key global and regional peacemaking actors, especially the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

We will deepen our engagement with middle powers and regional coalitions, many of which have long been diplomatically active but are gaining influence amid a shifting global landscape. We will also create spaces for the exchange of diverse peacemaking approaches and methodologies, contributing to both policy and practice, and fostering cooperation in specific contexts where our goals align.

- CMI recognises the indispensable role of women in building and sustaining peace, and we work to expand the political space for women to contribute to peace efforts as political agents.
- In Yemen, CMI's current project supports the country's political parties, with a strong focus on women's meaningful participation as a prerequisite for lasting peace.
- The project is a continuation of CMI's long-standing engagement with Yemeni political actors. CMI has been working in Yemen since 2011.
- The project has advanced women's meaningful participation by increasing their status within their own parties, and enhancing cross-party dialogue and collaboration, for instance. In addition, it has supported the UN in enhancing the inclusivity of the formal peace process in Yemen.



Carving a space for women in Yemeni politics

Ten years of war have significantly weakened Yemen's political institutions, limiting their capacity to serve as a foundation for peace and stability. In response, CMI is working in close cooperation with Yemeni political parties to support their efforts in restoring political relevance and public trust. A key focus of this work is the empowerment of women in political life, recognising them as political agents and critical components of building a more inclusive and sustainable peace.

Ahad Saleh Abdulkareem Al-Kasadi, 30 (pictured left)

Head of the Department of Rights and Freedoms in the Secretariat of the Yemeni Socialist Party in Hadramaut Governorate

“The first obstacle to women's participation in politics in Yemen is that their roles are restricted to traditional expectations. We rarely see women involved in critical and sensitive departments within political parties. For instance, women hardly ever work in political or economic departments, and they rarely participate in military or diplomatic matters. This means women are often unaware of or uneducated about these issues.”

“I believe we can overcome these obstacles by supporting women's representation in political departments within the parties and involving them in military matters as well. We can educate women on these topics by conducting workshops, for example. Through these

workshops, we can also better understand the mindset of women and how they perceive these issues. Women have a deeper understanding of the conflict and its impact on their lives because they are among the most affected by what is happening.”

“The overarching goal of CMI's project, as well as the workshops organised since January 2024, has been to engage women directly in political parties and in political life, thereby supporting and strengthening their political agency. We have worked effectively to facilitate a shared vision for Yemen's political life and activities to achieve that vision. These discussions, in turn, have strengthened women's roles and activism.”

“We should not be discouraged by the situation in Yemen. Our goal is to break the ice between different political parties by fostering dialogue. This dialogue will eventually lead to de-escalation or, at the very least, prevent further escalation of the situation.”

Aref Mohammed Naji Qaid, 50

Member of the Political Department in the Islah Party

“There are obstacles to women's political participation in Yemen because democracy is still in its early stages, and norms and traditions impose restrictions on women's involvement in political life, especially.”

“Through the activities of NGOs like CMI, we can build the political agency of women. We need more such activities to support women in becoming active participants in political decision-making. This can also be achieved by raising awareness among political party leadership about the importance of women's engagement and participation. Additionally, we need to educate women leaders about their rights and how to achieve them.”

“There has been a change in women's political status in Yemen, although it remains limited. Some women have reached parliament, and others have served as ministers in governments before the war. Yemeni women have also reached leadership positions within political parties.”

“Women are half of society, and we believe they will play a significant role in building peace through their work in politics, official positions in government, and in the media. Women are the sisters of men, and there is no doubt that they must be involved in any decision that is made.”

“What I have realised through my participation in this series of workshops is that the political agency and process in Yemen cannot progress without women's political participation. If one day I become a decision-maker within my political party, I will work to empower women significantly.”

Where is peace in the new European Security Architecture?

As the EU leadership was still very much trying to come to terms with the new reality of “Europe between two wars”, CMI intensified efforts to try and help inform, shape and advance EU peacemaking policy and practice. With attention being on defence, and the EU and many EU Member States gearing up for elections, we leveraged our expertise and extensive networks to try and help advance conversations about the future of Europe’s peace and security at different levels and in different formats, as a way to try and make sure that peacemaking came as high up as possible on the EU agenda despite many and urgent pressing priorities. Our dialogue work in Ukraine and Moldova has focused on existing security challenges, supporting policy dialogue between relevant domestic and international actors on the future of the European Security Architecture, and feeding into Finland’s preparation for the 2025 OSCE Chairpersonship.

CMI kicked off the year with the Annual CMI Brussels High-Level Dialogue, gathering experts, leaders, policy and decision-makers to consider “Where is Peace in the new European Security Architecture?”. In a CMI Insight based on those discussions, CMI made targeted recommendations to EU policy and decision-makers that were repeatedly referenced across different fora and sparked further discussions and consideration. One of those recommendations was with regard to EU enlargement and the importance of getting this right to enhance rather than halt or even reverse peacemaking. CMI continued this conversation in a panel discussion during the EU Community of Practice on Peace Mediation, following which, another CMI Insight was published looking specifically at the case of Moldova, showing when and how EU enlargement can serve as a powerful tool to strengthen resilience and stability within candidate countries. Alongside more visible activities and public events, central to efforts were strategic exchanges including closed door meetings and informal discussions. In light of elections across Europe and beyond, including a new US Administration, and instability in the (peace) funding climate, working with existing partners and expanding to include new partners was becoming ever more important. CMI thus made an effort to bring together our global partners including those with an evolving role in peacemaking, with EU and European stakeholders to discuss both specific and more general peacemaking contexts and themes. This contributed to ongoing conversations in Brussels about values versus interest in the context of

the need for Europe to engage in more transactional partnerships for peace and security, as well as an enhanced understanding and connectivity between actors. Linked to these efforts, CMI continued working with conceptualising and demonstrating the importance of engagement in all settings including those referred to as politically estranged. This shows how CMI seeks to bring attention also to contexts receiving less attention where CMI is active and sees opportunities for the EU to engage.

As the new EU leadership was taking shape, CMI ended the year by organising a Martti Ahtisaari Legacy Seminar in the European Parliament. Again, CMI gathered a big audience from the EU, UN, peers and non-EU Member States, to discuss the future of European peace and security with a particular focus on the former. Amidst geopolitical shifts, democratic backsliding, and ongoing conflict, the Seminar was both a tribute and a call to action and to invest in peace. It tied together discussions that had been had throughout the year related to the EU’s identity as a peace project, strategic partnerships and balancing principles with interests, EU enlargement and peacemaking, and multilateralism and the rules-based order.

CMI IN THE EU

Brings attention to, informs and shapes EU peacemaking policy.

Supports EU efforts to advance peacemaking and peace processes.

Promotes engagement, inclusivity and agency in EU peacemaking.

Photos: Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU
From top right clockwise: Luigi di Maio, EU Special Representative for the Gulf Region, Renata Dwan, Senior Advisor, CMI - Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation, Ambassador Pavlo Klimkin, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Ambassador Weronika Frydryszak, Representative of Poland to the Political and Security Committee (PSC) of the Council of the European Union.



CMI Mediation Efforts in Sudan

Context

Sudan's fragile transition to democracy in 2019 has been marred with conflicts in various regions, divisions among pro-democracy forces and a fragmented security structure which eventually led to war between the Sudanese Armed forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in April 2023.

The war has caused the largest humanitarian catastrophe in the world with 14 million, about 30% of total population, forced to leave their homes according to IOM. Last December, a famine was officially declared by the UN in parts of North Darfur and the Nuba Mountains region, along with imminent famine in parts of South Darfur.

The continued cycle of violence has created a protection of civilians' crisis, with the UN's Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for Sudan recommending deployment of an independent and impartial force to protect civilians from the human rights violations the warring parties have been committing. There is an urgent need for protection of civilians and for the belligerents to at a minimum reach a cessation of hostilities to allow for humanitarian access.

In parallel, there is an urgent need to resume a political process to solve the underlying issues to the conflict, and to identify viable options to key national issues that can sustain an eventual ceasefire. As part of this process, preparing key groups for negotiations and preparing the ground for 'the day' after a ceasefire remains critical. Within this framework, CMI has worked with political and civilian groups, including women and youth, to build consensus around issues related to a ceasefire, ending the war and the resumption of an inclusive political process that could lead the country back on the path of a democratic transition.

Mediation and inter-civilian dialogue

CMI has convened a series of inter-civilian dialogues to build trust among key groups, and consensus around issues related to the resolution of the conflict as well as around a shared vision for a political and broader peace processes. The dialogues have involved a wide range of political and civilian actors with different positions on the current war, including political parties and alliances, armed movements, youth, women and civil society. CMI has also increased capacities among key political actors on process design, ceasefire mediation and inclusion, as

well as provided technical inputs and support to various official multilateral efforts to end the war and resume a political process.

Women's inclusion

Meaningful participation of women in ceasefire, peace and political processes is at the centre of CMI's efforts in Sudan and beyond. 30 percent representation is ensured in dialogue meetings, and gender-responsive language is included in any outcome documents. In 2024, CMI convened a major representative group of women to increase their capacities on ceasefire mediation and women's inclusion therein. The representatives established four working groups that have been working on concrete joint actions on women's political participation and the resumption of an inclusive political process. As part of the joint actions and agreed strategic plan, CMI has increased the women leaders' capacities on negotiation and advocacy strategies.

After the outbreak of war in 2023, CMI conducted broad-based consultations on the priorities and efforts of women's groups and alliances and identified the need for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) among women leaders as a key priority. Consequently, CMI has delivered MHPSS to Sudanese women leaders, to support their ability to mobilise as leaders and changemakers in peace processes and beyond.

Photo: UN Photo/Maimana El Hassan

Discussing the future of peacemaking

In 2024, CMI launched a global series of discussions focused on the legacy of our founder, President Martti Ahtisaari (1937–2023). These events, held in various locations around the world, continue to explore the future of peace mediation in an increasingly unstable world.

The seminar series is an integral part of President Ahtisaari’s legacy. Conversations about peace are urgently needed in a situation where the space for such dialogue has narrowed. “President Ahtisaari didn’t want monuments; he wanted his legacy to live on and be discussed. This series of discussions furthers that goal. At the same time, we want to create hope. CMI is driven forward by Ahtisaari’s vision that all conflicts can be resolved,” says CMI’s CEO, Janne Taalas.

The series brings together decision-makers, peace mediation professionals, and representatives from civil society and the business sector. CMI organises these events in cooperation with local partners.

The series began in Ankara, Türkiye, in October 2024. At the event, Finnish President Alexander Stubb emphasised the urgent need for multilateralism in peacemaking, arguing that a multipolar world leads to disorder. We need both the United Nations and the resolve of Martti Ahtisaari more than ever, Stubb said. Türkiye’s Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Burhanettin Duran, praised Finland and Türkiye’s cooperation on peace mediation. The two countries have networks of mediators at their disposal, and the Group of Friends of Mediation continues to drive collaboration.

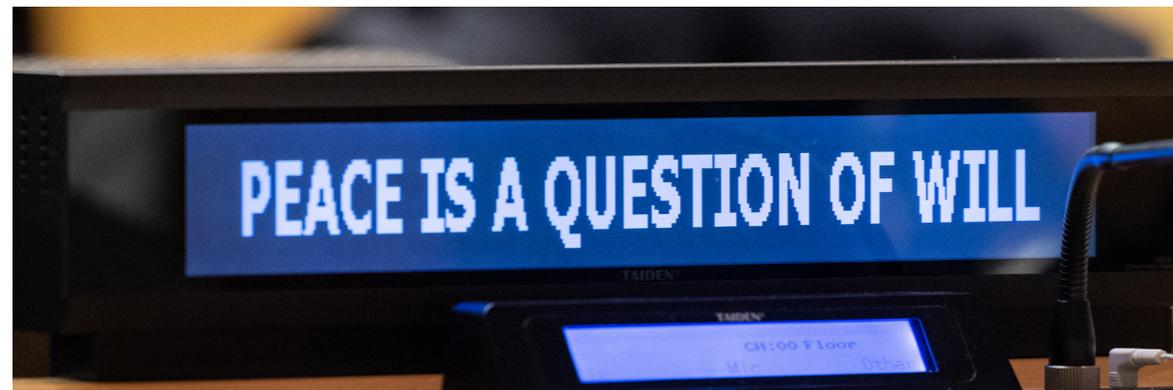
Ambassador Timur Söylemez, Türkiye’s Director General for International Mediation, discussed Türkiye’s peacemaking efforts in countries like Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan. He explained Türkiye’s mediation approach, emphasising local ownership and the importance of not imposing solutions on conflict parties.

The second seminar, organised in Brussels in December 2024, aimed to bring the peace agenda to the forefront of the newly elected European Parliament and the newly appointed college of Commissioners. It gathered MEPs, peacemakers, and diplomats to reflect on President Ahtisaari’s legacy and the EU’s future as a peace project. Ahtisaari frequently emphasised that the EU’s most important task is to build peace. The speakers agreed that the EU can and should play a larger role in this mission, but the work for peace requires greater commitment and funding.

It became clear at the seminar that the legacy of President Martti Ahtisaari is not merely historical; it is a call to action for Europe today. The participants emphasised that the path to peace begins with the will to talk and the courage to listen. At a time when the EU faces unprecedented internal and external pressures, rediscovering this legacy is both a moral imperative and a strategic necessity.

The series has continued this year in cities like Geneva, Pretoria, New York (pictured on the right) and Jakarta. The events will culminate in CMI’s 25th anniversary celebration in Helsinki in autumn 2025. Ahtisaari founded CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation in 2000 to continue his life’s work.

Photos:
Tasavallan Presidentin Kanslia (top right) / Agaton Ström (others)
Top: President of Finland Alexander Stubb in Ankara
Bottom: Former prime minister of Finland Sanna Marin, former Columbian president Juan Manuel Santos, CEO of International Crisis Group Comfort Ero in New York.



Strategic partnerships and funding



Savonlinna Opera festival, kick start to the Martti Ahtisaari Legacy Seminar Series. Photo: Melis Yasat / CMI

Yielding sustainable results in international peacemaking requires long-term engagement in complex conflict settings, while also requiring the institutional agility to respond swiftly to emerging needs. To balance these needs, we rely on the strategic support of our long-term core donors — Finland, Sweden, and Ireland — and receive project-based funding from the EU and several other governments. In 2024, EU funding became the largest source of support for the first time in the Foundation’s history, marking a significant milestone.

We remain committed to maintaining and expanding a diverse funding base — not only to sustain our operations but also to uphold our independence. Through strategic partnerships, we ensure the sustainability of our operations and amplify the global impact of our peacemaking work.

INSTITUTIONAL DONORS

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 Government of The Netherlands
 Government of Norway

Government of Sweden
 Government of the United Kingdom
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 Rockefeller Brothers Fund
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- Rauhalinna
- Savonlinnan Oopperajuhlat
- Spahotel Casino
- TBWA
- VIP Cruises
- WithSecure

PRIVATE AND PUBLIC FUNDRAISING

Private funding plays a crucial role in enabling us to respond swiftly to emerging conflicts and maintain our operational independence. CMI’s private fundraising strategy rests on three key pillars: individual donors, corporate partnerships, and foundations in Finland and abroad. Our efforts focus on building strategic partnerships with private sector actors that align with our mission, while also actively and systematically identifying potential supporters in Finland and internationally to help sustain and expand our work.

MARTTI AHTISAARI PEACE FUND

The Martti Ahtisaari Peace Fund is an endowment fund launched by CMI–Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation to secure the long-term sustainability and independence of its peace mediation work. With a long-term fundraising target of 30 million euros, the fund is supported by both public and private donors, including the Finnish Parliament with a 10 million euro donation received in 2024–2025. The fund is conservatively invested to generate stable returns, enabling CMI to respond swiftly to emerging crises and uphold the legacy of President Ahtisaari’s commitment to resolving conflicts through dialogue.



Finance Overview

In 2024, CMI's total income was 17.1M€, growing 23% from the previous year (13.9M€). Finland, EU and Sweden remain the biggest institutional donors to CMI's work. Funding from the Finnish MFA was 6.1M€ representing 36% of the total funding. 67% of Finnish funding was received under the programme funding instrument encompassing the period 2022–2025. Funding from the European Union was 6.4M€ (38% of total), from Sweden 1.6M€ (9% of total) and from other governments 2.1M€ (12% of total).

The partnership with the Finnish MFA remains our corner stone. 2024 is the third year of the current programme period 2022–2025 with the Finnish MFA. Programmatic work at CMI is organised around geographic and thematic teams. In financial terms the areas dominating CMI's work are Eurasia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Use of funding for the projects in the Eurasia region was 4.3 million euros, or 26% of total funding, and for the projects in Sub-Saharan Africa region 4.0 million euros, which is 24% of total funding. The project volumes in other regional teams remained steady for Middle East and North Africa at 2.9 million euros (18% of total funding), Asia 1.3 million euros (7%) and thematic projects 0.6 million euros (4%). Costs for programme support (1.8 million euros, 11% of total) and administration (1.1 million euros, 7% of total) remained at the same level as 2023.

Personnel was the biggest cost at 5.1M€, which remained at the same level as in 2023. The next main cost element was consultancy costs at 3.4M€, which increased by 28% compared to 2023. Travel costs amounted to 3.8M€ with 44% growth in line with project activities. Subcontracting costs for partner organisations grew substantially during 2024, amounting to 2.0M€ by the end of the year (2023: 0.9M€). The growth is in line with the growth in EU funding, as most EU-funded projects are implemented together with formal partner organisations. CMI's net result was positive at 0.5M€ which is at the same level as the previous year. The main drivers for this were actualised income from investments as well as fundraising activities promoting the legacy of President Ahtisaari and CMI's efforts to raise donations for the Martti Ahtisaari Peace Fund.

BALANCE SHEET

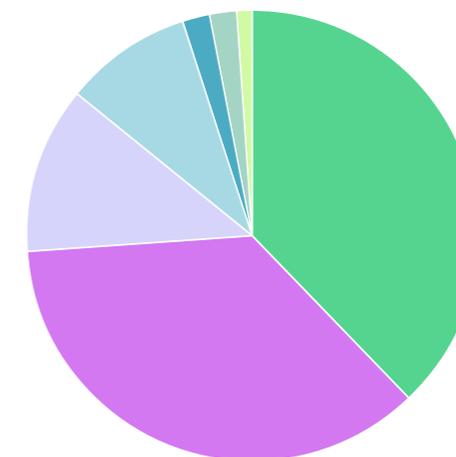
ASSETS	2024	2023
Long term assets		
Machinery and equipment	61 618	82 157
Current assets		
Project Income Receivables	417 241	755 820
Other current assets	255 058	321 293
Financial assets	10 440 090	3 340 866
Cash and bank receivables	1 804 959	3 492 671
TOTAL ASSETS	12 978 965	7 992 807
LIABILITIES		
Equity		
Equity capital	50 000	50 000
Restricted reserves	5 069 213	0
Other reserves	1 031 405	431 405
Retained earnings	104 814	61 445
Surplus (Deficit) for the Financial Year	531 286	643 369
Short term liabilities		
Project Income Advances	3 524 016	4 909 001
Accounts payable	960 045	893 089
Other short term liabilities	1 708 187	1 004 500
TOTAL LIABILITIES	12 978 965	7 992 807

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

INCOME	2024	2023
Public funding	16 321 268	12 935 435
Private fundraising	282 179	768 762
Other income	465 297	220 913
TOTAL INCOME	17 068 744	13 925 111
EXPENSES		
Personnel costs	4 998 797	5 094 769
Depreciation	20 539	29 628
Other expenses	11 518 122	8 157 345
TOTAL EXPENSES	16 537 458	13 281 742
SURPLUS / DEFICIT	531 286	643 369

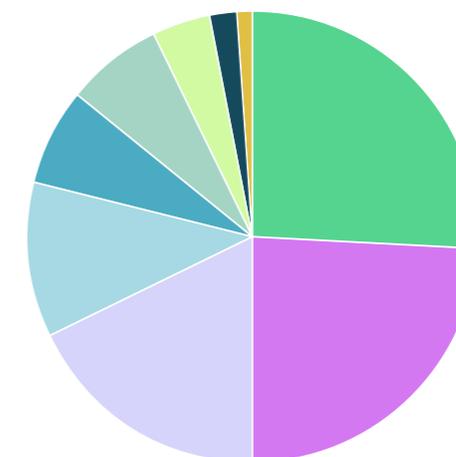
FUNDING SOURCES 2024

- EU 38%
- FINLAND 36%
- OTHER GOVERNMENTS 12%
- SWEDEN 9%
- FINANCING INCOME 2%
- PRIVATE 2%
- OTHER 1%



USE OF FUNDING 2024

- EURASIA 26%
- SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA 24%
- MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA 18%
- PROGRAMME SUPPORT 11%
- ASIA 7%
- ADMINISTRATION 7%
- THEMATICS 4%
- GLOBAL REGIONS 2%
- OTHER 1%





CMI Staff retreat 2024, Finland. Photo CMI

Our people

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Board oversees the Foundation’s administration and ensures that its activities are duly organised to promote the purpose of the Foundation. The Board is responsible for making appropriate arrangements for the control of the Foundation’s accounting and the management of its assets.

Following Alexander Stubb’s election as the 13th President of the Republic of Finland on 11 February 2024, the Board of CMI accepted his resignation at its meeting on 14 February 2024 and elected Marko Ahtisaari as the new Chair of the Board.

During the financial year 2024, the Foundation’s management team consisted of Janne Taalas, the Chief Executive Officer, Hanna Klinge, the Deputy CEO, Ville Brummer, the Chief Programme Officer (until March 2024) for whom Oskari Eronen deputised starting on 10 June 2024.

ONE TEAM

At the end of 2024 CMI had 87 employees, representing diverse nationalities from across continents. Of these, 78 were based in Helsinki and 9 in Brussels. Throughout 2024, CMI engaged with a variable number of long- and short-term consultants, totalling just over 100 at any given point during the year. Compared to the previous year, the overall number of employees and consultants increased in accordance with financial forecasts.

Efforts to ensure staff wellbeing, safety, motivation, and commitment in a demanding work environment continued throughout 2024. The participatory programme mid-term evaluation and Strategy 2030 review engaged numerous colleagues in reflection regarding CMI’s current position,

working methods and necessary changes moving forward. These processes were complemented by a one-day “CMI Ways” workshop for selected colleagues and an all-staff retreat comprising two day-long discussions on change and direction.

Throughout the year, several capacity-building initiatives were conducted, ranging from dialogue facilitation skills to gender-sensitive conflict analysis, linkages between mediation and human rights-based approaches, sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) prevention and digital foresight methodologies. Technical training was also prioritised, focusing on travel security and safety, cyber security, CMI’s hybrid working model, and supervisor training and support. Additionally, internal processes were strengthened, internal policies and contracts reviewed and modified to meet increasing compliance requirements. CMI’s agility in dynamic environments was further enhanced by foundational IT upgrades including e.g. a cloud migration that started in 2024 and which will be completed in 2025.

SECURITY

Global uncertainty continued throughout 2024. With CMI engaging with stakeholders in locations of high risk and volatility, security and safety management continued to be a key enabler of our work. CMI’s established approach to Duty of Care strives to minimise risks for all participants in dialogue processes; from employees to partners and stakeholders.

CMI’s security function continued to support the implementing teams, strengthened existing risk management practices and oversaw the fulfilment of Duty of Care. Integrating the best information security practices in our day-to-day work was also advanced.

LEADERSHIP TEAM 2024



JANNE TAALAS
Chief Executive Officer



HANNA KLINGE
Deputy CEO



OSKARI ERONEN
Chief Programme Officer

BOARD 2024



MARKO AHTISAARI
Chair of the Board



VEERA HEINONEN
Vice Chair,
Director, Democracy and Participation,
Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra



KARI LAUTJÄRVI
Lagman



ALEKSI NEUVONEN
Research Director,
Demos



KAI SAUER
Ambassador of Finland to
Germany



CHRISTOPH VITZTHUM
President and CEO,
Fazer Group

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