



EUROPEAN  
INSTITUTE  
OF PEACE



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# STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2022

SHAPING CONFLICT RESOLUTION TOGETHER

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# FOREWORD

By Executive Director Michael Keating



Building trust is the cornerstone of successful conflict resolution. Without trust, there can be no pathway to lasting peace.

Our role as the European Institute of Peace is to nurture the right conditions for trust to grow. We do this by working with people across the social and political spectrum to find ground on which to build sustainable agreements.

There are many challenges to writing a strategic plan at a time of great upheaval. Covid-19 has revealed many of the structural factors that contribute to conflict, including: inequality; chronic poverty in an age of mass consumption; discrimination and marginalisation, whether on the basis of ethnicity, skin colour, religion or gender. People affected by violence in and from fragile and conflict-affected states are among the most vulnerable in the world.

During this third decade of the 21st century, we intend to play to our strengths as a European player with a global network, able to initiate dialogue and design processes that bring people together across ideological and political divides. In doing so, we will support the European Union as a standard bearer of multilateralism and human rights rooted in international law, a role that has assumed greater importance as the United States retreats from a global leadership role. This entails the Institute going the extra mile to support inclusive processes, not least by committing ourselves to gender equity in the design, management and implementation of all our activities.

A central issue during the period covered by this plan will be to support conflict-sensitive responses to the social, economic and political impact of Covid-19 upon societies affected by conflict. This foreshadows an even more existential crisis, with ever more tangible impacts, namely, climate change.

We will work to identify and seize any openings that these threats create to engage in dialogue, to reduce violence, and to secure peace agreements, while working with others to ensure that the responses to Covid-19 and climate change address, and do not exacerbate, underlying drivers of conflict.

## OUR VISION

Achieving sustainable transitions from violence to peace through dialogue and partnership.

## OUR MISSION

The European Institute of Peace is shaping responses to conflict, promoting conflict sensitive engagements, and ensuring an optimal European role in supporting sustainable, lasting peace agreements.





Participants at the European Institute of Peace retreat on Economic Diplomacy and Peacemaking at Château Jemeppe, January 2020.

## THE INSTITUTE'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2022: SHAPING CONFLICT RESOLUTION TOGETHER

The European Institute of Peace is contributing to shaping conflict resolution.

Our expertise and ability to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances mean that we are agile and have impact in mounting effective responses to protecting and improving the lives of people experiencing, at risk of, or recovering from violent conflict.

Our activities range from facilitating local reconciliation to providing support for mediators, from building the capacity of negotiators to facilitating high-level, quiet consultations. The work we do is demand-driven and informed by careful analysis, including of the political economy and other drivers of instability.

Geographically, we are active in the Middle East including Syria and Yemen; in Afghanistan; in the Horn of Africa, notably Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudans; in the Great Lakes region; in Latin America including Colombia and Venezuela; and in Europe's Eastern Neighbourhood. Scoping work is also underway in response to specific requests, including in the Sahel and the Mediterranean basin.

Alongside partner organisations, the European Institute of Peace works to ensure that what we do complements and strengthens the work of other actors. We continue to work with a broad range of local and international actors, from civil society, governments, the EU, UN, the World Bank and regional bodies so we can shape conflict resolution together.

The Institute is not a think tank, but we have developed partnerships with prestigious research organisations, with whom we share knowledge and practical ideas concerning particular contexts or on specific topics. Engagement with other track 2 actors is also increasing, not least on ways to complement our respective roles and strengthen the sector as a whole, which resulted in the "Statement of Intent"<sup>1</sup> in early 2020.

The Institute designs activities that provide a basis for ensuring that popular perceptions and demands for justice inform political dialogue and peace agreements. We are strengthening our conflict analysis and resolution work by applying a "*whole of Institute approach*" on gender, so that it is incorporated effectively in our work, both internally and externally, through our Gender and Peacemaking (GPM) Strategy. We identify the openings that climate change and environmental issues create in addressing grievances and forging common interests.

Our work is guided by international law, human rights and a commitment to inclusivity and sustainability – which are all essential if conflict resolution is to result in lasting peace. Without justice, peace is unsustainable.

We also provide a safe space for sensitive discussions, bringing unlikely combinations of people together for well-informed, discreet meetings that generate ideas and catalyse practical proposals.

<sup>1</sup> The "Statement of Intent" was signed by the European Institute of Peace in April 2020 together with nine other peace organisations, including the [Berghof Foundation](#), the [Carter Center](#), the [Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue](#), [CITpax](#), [CMI](#), [Conciliation Resources](#), [Forward Thinking](#), [Inter Mediate](#), and [Sant'Egidio](#). It agrees on a range of measures to ensure our work is complementary and mutually reinforcing.



Participants at a European Institute of Peace event as part of the 'Women Setting Tables' project at Château Jemeppe, Belgium, January 2020.



## THE CONTEXT IN WHICH WE ARE OPERATING

The need for conflict resolution expertise is as great as ever. Even before Covid-19, the number of people experiencing or exposed to violence, notably but not only in fragile states, was going up. The risk of new conflicts, whether between states or internationalised civil wars, is growing.

The last decade has seen a resurgence of great power politics; intensified regional and global competition for resources, technological supremacy, and influence; an expansion of military capabilities; and the weaponisation of economic and financial power.

New threats to peace include: climate change; pandemics; demographic shifts; extremism and authoritarianism; the inability of many governments to meet the basic needs of their growing and often youthful populations; growing inequality; and perceptions of injustice.

The task of resolving conflicts is becoming ever more complex. Success depends upon many factors including strong political will to end violence and a willingness to make compromises for the common good, as well as coherent international support for peaceful resolution of conflicts and firm management of spoilers.

It also requires: sound analysis, including of the political, social and economic dynamics that propel and sustain violence; well-conceived and -sequenced interventions; inclusive as well as discreet dialogue; effective mediation; and adequate and sustained investment to ensure that peace agreements improve human security and can actually be implemented.

European states and the EU can make a decisive contribution to conflict resolution – and prevention. The EU's financial capacity, normative role, trade, environmental and other policies and instruments – plus its diplomatic network and weight as a development and humanitarian actor – provide it with unique credentials and capabilities.

These have been successfully deployed in a number of locations including the Balkans, Colombia and Somalia, and are insufficiently appreciated. But there are examples such as Eritrea and Libya where Europeans struggle to cohere around unified approaches. There is, therefore, great scope for more strategic use of Europe's soft power in preventing and resolving conflict. The challenges are both political as well as operational.

Europe cannot afford not to strengthen its role in preventing and resolving conflict in its neighbourhood and beyond – and in supporting other actors to play their part. The consequences of failure, including to support the poorest and most fragile countries to respond to looming threats such as pandemics and climate change, will be enormous for Europe's own security, democracy and commitment to rule of law.

## OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

IF peace agreements are well conceived **AND** Europe is able to play a coherent role in bringing them to fruition and supporting their implementation **THEN** resulting agreements are more likely to result in real benefits for people, both those in societies that are directly affected and for Europeans. These benefits include sustainable reduction in violence; peace dividends; ensuring the space and means for political differences to be resolved through dialogue; and conditions conducive to improved human security.

In line with this Theory of Change, the Institute's strategic objectives over the coming years are to:

- 1) Be a centre of excellence for conflict resolution supporting lasting peace agreements
- 2) Optimise Europe's contribution to conflict resolution, dialogue and mediation
- 3) Empower the Institute to deliver the change necessary to upgrade conflict resolution

A certain number of assumptions underlie this theory of change. The Institute does not operate in a vacuum and the success or failure of our work depends at least in part on the wider context in which we operate. Taking each of the three objectives in turn, for the Institute's efforts to be successful, then the following assumptions need to be valid:

- 1) Be a centre of excellence for conflict resolution supporting lasting peace agreements
  - European actors, mediators, and conflict parties welcome the Institute's mission, and are open to constructive engagement with the Institute;
  - The Institute is able to access both the parties to conflict and decision-makers, both in Europe and affected regions;

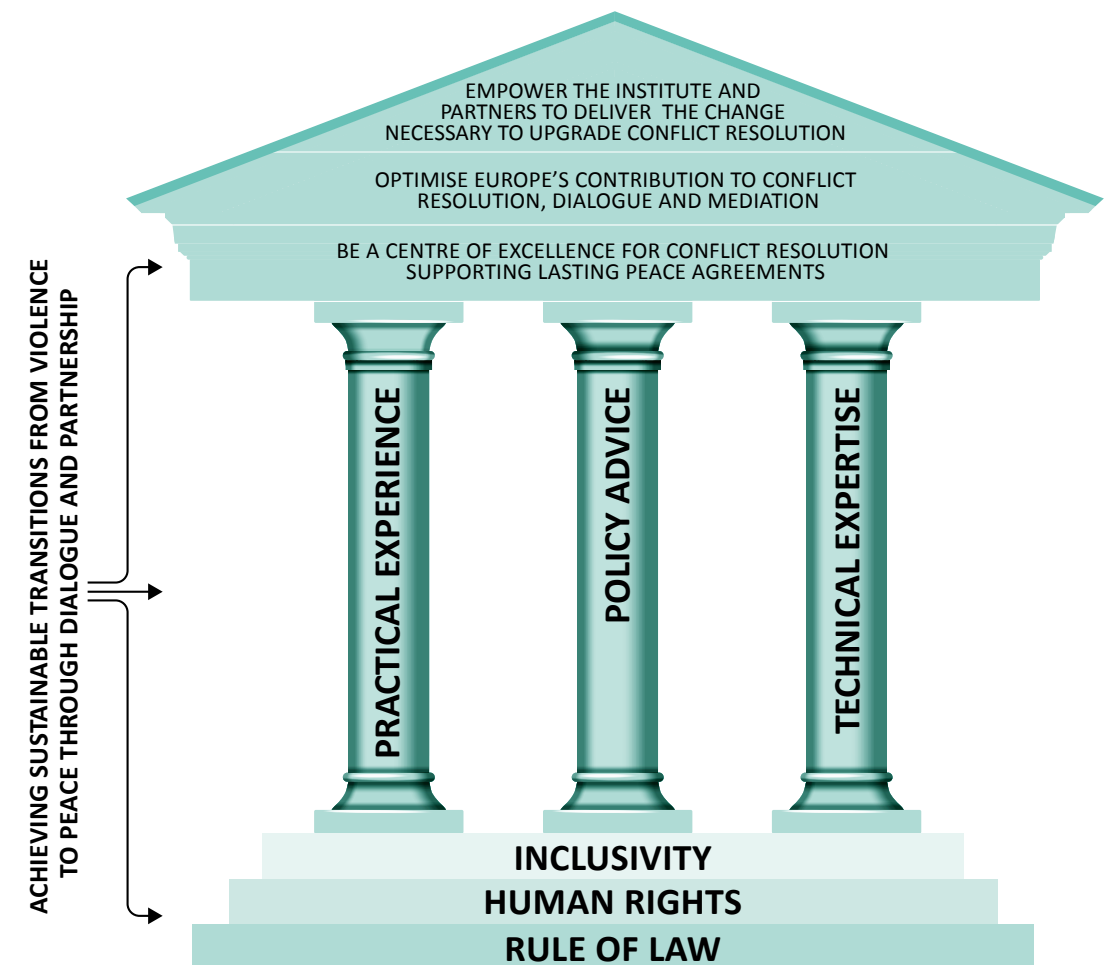
### 2) Optimise European states' and the EU's contribution to conflict resolution, dialogue and mediation

- There is political commitment from the highest level, both within European states and in EU institutions, to strengthen Europe's role in conflict resolution;
- European actors are willing to invest time and money in efforts to achieve greater coherence in preventing and resolving conflicts, both in specific contexts and systemically;

### 3) Empower the Institute to deliver the change necessary to improve conflict resolution

- The Institute's Board members will provide the political and financial support that will allow the Institute to deliver;
- The Institute's funding partners will invest in the Institute's operational capacity and financial sustainability – rather than exclusively in projects.

## SHAPING CONFLICT RESOLUTION TOGETHER



## IMPLEMENTATION

### CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION SUPPORTING LASTING PEACE AGREEMENTS

Negotiating the end of conflict is fraught with difficulty and often ends in failure. Even where an agreement is reached, more often than not, conflict re-emerges in the short to medium term. The Institute is committed to understanding what works and does not work in negotiating peace, and putting smart, custom-designed approaches before those engaged in efforts to end and prevent conflict. We believe strongly in not just a commitment to but a consistent practice of context-specific approaches based on accurate analysis, strong relationships, and privileged access. The Institute's aim is not simply to help ensure that agreements are reached, but that they are designed and built in a way that provides the greatest possible chance of them surviving the headwinds they will inevitably face in the short to medium term.

The Institute's programme work is divided between two units which enable it to operate through both top-down and bottom-up approaches to enhance the prospects of sustainable peace. The two units work together wherever possible in joint teams, affording custom-designed expertise across a range of issues.

In so doing, we seek to sharpen our focus, with one eye on the perspective of people directly affected, and the other on approaches by external actors that can support positive momentum, so that we can in turn support measures that will foster the right conditions to address immediate and long-term challenges to peace.

The Engagement, Dialogue and Process Design Unit (EDP) uses tailor-made engagement strategies, political dialogue, as well as process and mediation support activities to catalyse peacemaking. It works in a matrix setting and is both geographically- and process-oriented. It strives to ensure that the right people are brought together at the right time to discuss the right things in specific contexts. It also prioritises the proper preparation of those engaged in conflict resolution, including by offering space for reflection and analysis. It is concerned mainly with those engaged directly in peace talks or those who are working directly with them as advisors. It has a top-down focus.

The Peace Practice and Innovation Unit (PPI)'s work focuses on parts of society less directly involved in talks, but directly affected by conflict, and whose support for any process is likely to be essential for sustained peace. In this sense, its approach can be understood in broad terms as bottom-up. Its work is characterised by a common method: deep and focused consultation; a commitment to context-specificity; and a concentration on short to medium term results. It then brings its specific, world-class expertise on issues of conflict resolution to the situation in question.

The Peace Practice and Innovation Unit divides its content-led work into four areas: Conflict Justice and Reconciliation; Responding to Violent Extremism; Environmental Peace Making; and Gender, Peace and Security. The Engagement, Dialogue and Process Design Unit's focus includes four process-led complementary areas: Comprehensive Peace Support; Sustainable Process Design; European Policy Support; and Early Assessment and Action. The Institute came to the identification of these areas after evaluating and reflecting on our first five years of operations.

While both units are, ultimately, engaged in the design and implementation of the most effective possible processes to create space, secure, and support sustainable peace, the combination of the top-down and bottom-up approach gives the Institute a unique structure and focus which embraces both the related aims of securing agreements and of building peace.





Helga Maria Schmid, Secretary General of the European External Action Service (left) meeting the European Institute of Peace Executive Director, Michael Keating, February 2019.

## OPTIMISING EUROPE'S CONTRIBUTION TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

A founding purpose of the Institute is to contribute to and strengthen the role of the European Union as an agent of peace.

The European Union and several European states, including several that are not members of the EU, make significant contributions to conflict resolution and mediation in particular. They do this by drawing upon their own diplomatic and technical networks, or by supporting others, including regional organisations and national and local actors, both governmental and private.

In an increasingly polarised international environment characterised by growing US-China tensions, gridlock in the UN Security Council, threats to international law, fierce competition for technological superiority, influence and access to resources, and a growing number of internationalised civil wars, the EU has an extraordinarily important role to play, particularly in locations and on issues where it is more trusted than other actors.

To be effective in contributing to conflict resolution, Europe needs a high degree of self-awareness, including as to how its own values and its political, economic, security and humanitarian objectives are viewed by conflicting parties; and how these can be delivered in ways that are conflict sensitive, promote dialogue and advance sustainable peace.

The value of deploying individuals with appropriate skill sets, and of ensuring that envoys and senior officials have access to the analytical capacity, experience, local knowledge and technical support they need in order to play a positive role on conflict resolution, dialogue and mediation, cannot be under-estimated.

The Institute will work to increase the role we play in supporting European actors, whether by convening context-specific policy discussions to encourage or support coherent approaches, identifying options for action on the ground, sharing experience or increasing access to technical skills and knowledge.

In doing so, the Institute's purpose is to complement the work being undertaken by the European External Action Service and by mediation and stabilisation units within European states. Our added value stems from independence and agility, particularly when official European positions on specific conflicts are unclear, contested or not delivering results; and in bringing stakeholders together, including official actors, experts, civil society and parties to conflict.



EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Eamon Gilmore (left) and Director for Engagement, Dialogue and Process Design at the European Institute of Peace, Stine Lehmann-Larsen (right).

## EMPOWERING THE INSTITUTE TO DELIVER THE CHANGE NECESSARY TO IMPROVE CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Success in enabling the Institute to deliver its strategic objectives and fulfil its mission depends upon attracting and retaining talented and knowledgeable staff and advisors, securing adequate financial support, managing and accounting for the use of resources, and communicating the results of our work.

Our human resource management policies and practices are being strengthened to attract talent and support career progression. Priorities include the revision and roll-out of a revised salary grid; upgraded recruitment, performance appraisal and promotion policies; training and mentoring opportunities; team-building opportunities; and staff welfare support.

Ensuring the Institute's financial sustainability will remain a central challenge, one that is not made easier by budget reallocations to address Covid-19.

Priorities over the period of the strategic plan are to:

- a. diversify sources of funding to broaden the donor base and explore the scope of funding from private sources;
- b. encourage existing and prospective Board members to provide unrestricted funding or in-kind support including secondments;
- c. secure more multi-annual funding;
- d. implement policies agreed with the Board on the definition of core costs and the use of programme resources to meet costs that are central to the Institute's mission, including on monitoring and evaluation, safety and security, climate-friendly travel and operations, programme communications and public affairs;
- e. develop a closer financial relationship with the European Union beyond funding on a project-by-project basis.

Accounting to the Board and project donors for the use of resources is critical to the Institute's reputation and future. Its capacity to provide compelling narrative as well as financial reporting to donors will continue to be upgraded, notably through support to project managers, by strengthening relationships and communication with donors as well as by upgrading teamwork between colleagues with programmatic and operational responsibilities.

Over the period of the strategic plan, the priority is to upgrade awareness of and support for the Institute's policy and conflict resolution work, including by strengthening the Institute's "brand", its online and media presence, and by strengthening outreach to both European policymakers and to constituencies that can contribute to conflict resolution and dialogue for peace.



Ethiopian Ambassador to the European Union, the Royal Kingdom of Belgium and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Grum Abay Teshome on left (serving 2018-2020) meeting with the European Institute of Peace's Michael Keating in August, 2018.



## GOVERNANCE OF THE INSTITUTE

President of the Board of Governors of the European Institute of Peace, Annika Söder

The Institute's Board of governors in 2020 consisted of eight member states (Belgium, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Spain, Sweden), in addition to the President and Vice President. Each member state nominates one representative/governor who can serve up to four terms of two years each. Both President and Vice President are elected by the governors and can serve up to three terms of two years each.

In July 2019, Annika Söder, at the time State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, was elected President of the Board of Governors of the Institute, succeeding Pekka Haavisto who assumed the post of Foreign Minister of Finland. Staffan de Mistura, UN envoy in multiple locations and former Deputy Foreign Minister of Italy, served as the Board's first President from 2014 to 2016.



The Board provides strategic, political and technical support to the Institute. It meets at least twice a year to review the programme portfolio, institutional budget and operational policies, as well as to provide guidance to the Executive Director and Senior Management. A Financial Oversight Sub-Committee drawn from the Board meets at least four times a year to review and advise on the Institute's finance and operations and make recommendations to the full Board.

Membership of the Board, which may have up to 15 members, is open to European states that are willing to provide advice, a minimum financial commitment or an in-kind equivalent, and political support to the achievement of the Institute's mission and to specific conflict resolution and mediation objectives. The European External Action Service and the European Commission are invited to attend the Board meetings with one observer each. The European Parliament is invited to attend with up to five observers.

The Institute is advised by an Advisory Council, chaired by the Executive Director. The Advisory Council consists of up to 20 thought leaders and practitioners in the field of mediation and dialogue.



**MICHAEL KEATING**  
Executive Director



**STINE LEHMANN-LARSEN**  
Director, Engagement, Dialogue  
and Process Design and Deputy  
Executive Director



**PAUL SEILS**  
Director, Peace Practice  
and Innovation



**ANGELO CASERTA**  
Chief Operating Officer

## FINANCE AND SUPPORT

The Institute's status is listed as 'public interest foundation' in accordance with the Belgian law of 27 June 1921 on non-profit associations, international non-profit associations and foundations. Donations are received from several countries through membership fees and project funding from national governments and the European Commission.

In 2019, we had a total operating income of approximately 8 million euros and corresponding expenditure.

At the beginning of 2020, the Institute was managing over 30 projects with a duration of between 12 months and 2 years. Over 90 percent of these projects are directly funded by EU Member States, Norway and the United Kingdom and from board membership fees. The rest of our project-based funding comes from the European Commission.

The Institute will continue to strengthen its relationship with states that are not currently members of the Board but that provide significant project support, including Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United Kingdom. We will also seek to deepen our partnership with the Service for the Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI) of the European Commission.

At EIP we have two units: Engagement, Dialogue and Process Design and Peace Practice and Innovation.

**The Peace Practice and Innovation Unit divides its content-led work into the four areas of:**



Conflict Justice  
and Reconciliation



Responding to  
Violent Extremism



Environmental  
Peacemaking



Gender, Peace  
and Security

**Alongside its geographic work, the Engagement, Dialogue and Process Design Unit's focus includes four process-led complementary areas.**



Comprehensive  
Peace Support



Sustainable  
Process Design



European  
Policy Support



Early  
Assessment  
and Action

## OUR EIGHT BOARD MEMBERS ARE



Belgium



Luxembourg



Finland



Poland



Ireland



Spain



Italy



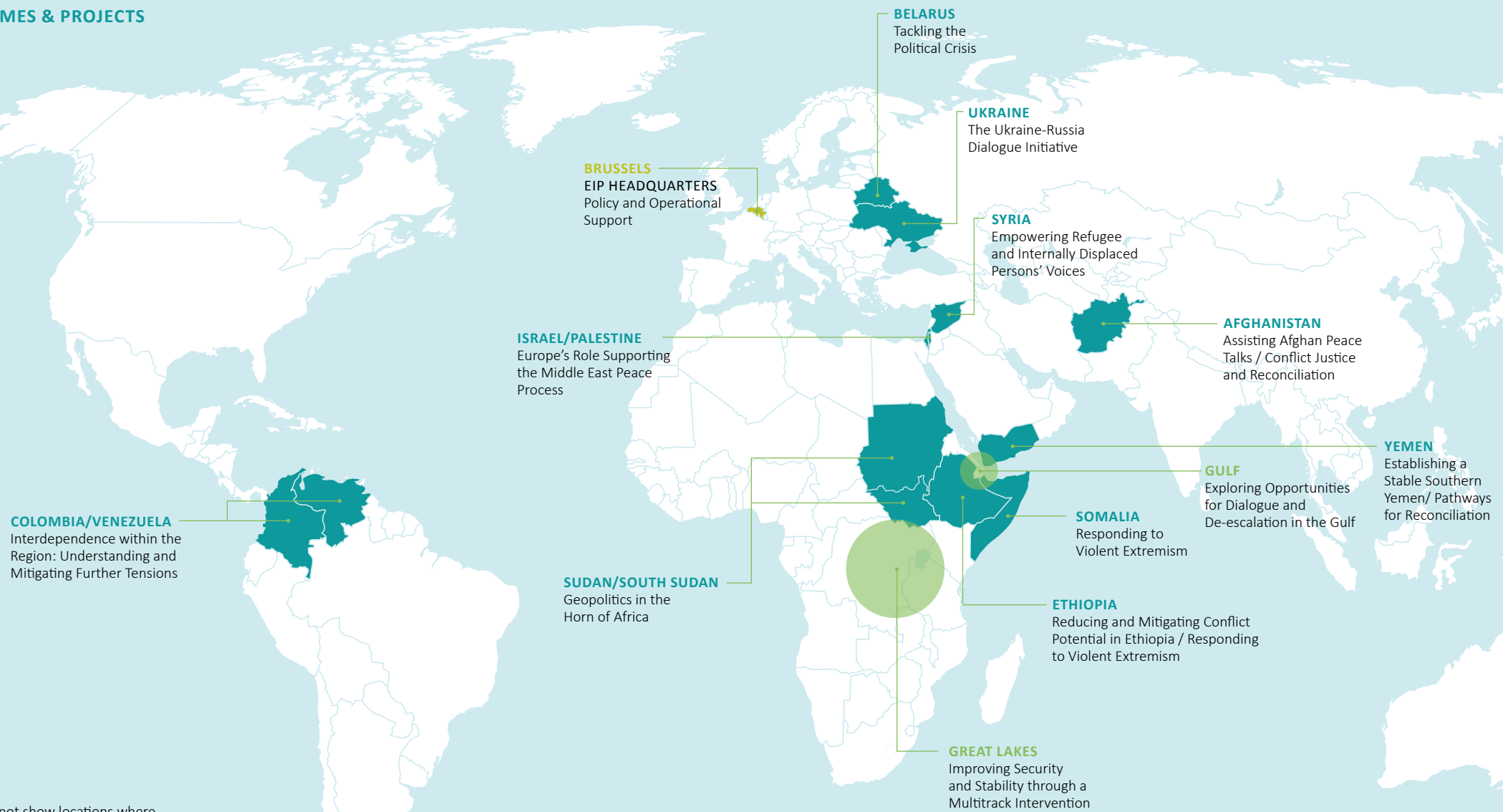
Sweden

They provide strategic, political and financial support to the Institute

# EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF PEACE

MAP OF ENGAGEMENTS 2020 (EXCLUDING GLOBAL ENVELOPES)

## PROGRAMMES & PROJECTS



This map does not show locations where the Institute is undertaking scoping activities. As of 2020, these included initiatives in Cameroon, Cyprus, Lebanon, Turkey and Somalia as well as within other countries as part of a thematic approach to conflict resolution. Evolving US-China tensions are also being closely monitored.





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