

**The Role of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) in Situations of
Conflict and Post-Conflict
(Human Rights and Conflict Project)**

STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT MEETING

Concept Note

Date: 30 January 2018

Location: Rue Royale 138, 1000-Brussels, European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI) Secretariat

Objectives:

- Take stock of the variety of forms that the engagement of NHRIs with regional and international stakeholders can take in situations of (post) conflict, and identify promising practices;
- Identify where this collaboration can be enhanced to maximise impact in conflict areas and support further NHRIs in their specific role to promote and protect human rights in such contexts;
- Agree how ENNHRI's project on Human Rights and Conflict can foster this cooperation, including possible synergies and/or overlap with stakeholders' actions on the ground.

Context:

[National Human Rights Institutions \(NHRIs\)](#) play a key role in conflict and post-conflict environment. The multi-faceted and broad mandate of NHRIs ensures that they can address the full range of human rights issues, often arising at the core of (post) conflict tensions. At the same time, their independent and impartial character is essential to provide a neutral approach to conflict related-issues.

The specificity of the role and mandate of NHRIs in (post) conflict has been recognised by NHRIs and international actors at various occasions, including at the [Kyiv Conference on the role of NHRIs in \(Post\) Conflict](#) in 2015. Coordination of action with stakeholders was discussed, and NHRIs raised the importance of including stakeholders in their work in (post) conflict areas.

In fact, cooperation with regional and international stakeholders can prove essential for NHRIs in (post) conflict, as they often face a combination of new and constantly evolving areas of work, possible limited resources and capacity, heavily polarised environments and shrinking democratic space, in addition to an overall increase of human rights violations.

Several consultations with ENNHRI members and stakeholders showed how cooperation can help alleviate some of the challenges that NHRIs face in (post) conflict. The breadth of existing international tools, instruments and channels available for support was also put forward for discussion. However, this cooperation has been



conducted to different degrees, and since the Kyiv Conference, both actors have called for further engagement. In particular, a number of ENNHRI members proved keen to gain further insights on the role and activities of regional and international stakeholders in (post) conflict settings, including available means of support to face their challenging contexts.

ENNHRI's Human Rights and Conflict Project has been designed to provide space and means to further this engagement, along with other activities aiming at enhancing the effectiveness of NHRIs to promote and protect human rights in (post) conflict.

Approach:

The Stakeholders' Engagement Meeting will gather European NHRIs operating in (post) conflict, together with a range of regional and international stakeholders with actions and interventions in such contexts (e.g. CoE, UNDP, OHCHR, EU institutions etc.).

An emphasis will be put on the exchange of good practices related to existing and available channels for cooperation, and possible avenues to increase further their engagement.

For maximum interactions, the meeting will include panels with interactive discussions and working group sessions. Each of the working group session will focus on one stakeholders' mandate and activities and will allow ENNHRI members to address specific thematic areas for collaboration.

ENNHRI's project on Human Rights and Conflict will be discussed to agree where its support is the most needed in this area, and further explore avenues for possible collaboration, and avoiding any overlap with activities led by stakeholders.

Further Information:

For additional information on ENNHRI's Project on Human Rights and Conflict, including this event, please check [ENNHRI's website](#) or contact ENNHRI Secretariat at Valentina.Purcel@ennhri.org.

The Kyiv Declaration on the Role of NHRIs in Situations of Conflict and Post-Conflict can be consulted [here](#).

NHRIs and ENNHRI

[ENNHRI](#) brings together 41 National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) from across wider Europe. ENNHRI's mission is to support, strengthen and connect NHRIs to promote and protect human rights across wider Europe, in line with Paris Principles. NHRIs are independent state bodies, with a broad mandate to promote and protect human rights. They are trusted actors within the human rights framework, at local, national and international levels, given their regular accreditation by reference to the UN Paris Principles to ensure their independence, pluralism, accountability and effectiveness.