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European Union's human rights and international humanitarian law due diligence policy on security sector support to third parties

1. Introduction

The European Union's human rights and international humanitarian law due diligence policy (EU HRDDP) establishes a **framework to ensure that security sector support provided by the EU to third parties is consistent with international human rights law (IHRL) and international humanitarian law (IHL)**. The EU HRDDP is based on the principles and legal obligations set out in the **Treaty on the European Union (TEU)**¹.

The EU HRDDP is implemented in line with the **EU Integrated Approach to Conflicts and Crises**² and the **2016 Joint Communication on elements for an EU-wide strategic framework to support the security sector reform**³. This policy applies to **Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) /Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)** instruments, including **CSDP missions and operations**, assistance to partners such as through **European Peace Facility**, as well as other operational actions by the Union, such as under Article 28 TEU. **EU Member States** are likewise encouraged to adapt their human rights and IHL risk management practices to this policy framework.

The EU HRDDP helps to ensure that **reasonable care is exercised** when providing support to third-party security forces and actors and – through identification, assessment and mitigation – that specific measures are taken to manage the risks of potential human rights and IHL violations. While contributing to the protection and promotion of human rights and IHL, the application of the policy also ensures that there is early attention to situations where support to security forces and actors may give rise to legal, political or reputational risks for the EU, its Member States and its partners. Although exercising due diligence will not eliminate risks altogether, human rights and IHL risk management can significantly reduce the likelihood of adverse human rights impacts and violations of IHL. The application of the EU HRDDP also protects **EU's credibility and legitimacy** as a value-based actor by minimising the risk of being directly or indirectly affected by or associated with IHRL and IHL violations committed by others.

The EU HRDDP constitutes an important building block in the EU's human rights policy architecture and is part of the EU's wider efforts and commitment to respect, protect and promote all human rights and to defend their **universality, interdependence and indivisibility**. The EU continues to actively support the **United Nations human rights system** and considers human rights as a priority in its external action. This policy strengthens the **coherence and consistency of EU action** by demonstrating EU's commitment to abide in its own action by the same principles and obligations it advocates around the world. Finally, it provides a policy framework that facilitates principled security sector action based on respect for human rights and IHL and helps to build trust in public institutions and contributes to safer and more secure environments.

The EU HRDDP is an overall policy framework, which reinforces and complements existing EU human rights and risk management policies, tools and practices. It is implemented by each EU

CFSP/CSDP instrument and actor taking into account their specific mandate, the nature and the extent of the support, as well as the political and operational context where the support is provided. The EU HRDDP can be implemented through the existing procedures and mechanisms that can be further developed in line with and with the support of the policy. Where an instrument or actor does not have suitable pre-existing procedures, tools and mechanisms for carrying out due diligence, these should be established on the basis of this policy.

1.1. Legal, political and policy framework

The EU is guided by its foundational values of **respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights**⁴ and seeks to advance these principles and international law in the wider world.⁵ According to Article 6(1) of the TEU, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which has the same legal value as the Treaties, is binding for the EU's institutions and the Member States when they implement EU law. Furthermore, Article 6(3) of the TEU specifies that fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and as they result from the constitutional traditions common to the Member States, are general principles of EU law.

The EU has a comprehensive policy framework for the promotion and protection of human rights and IHL, and for security and defence in its external action. The **EU's Strategic Framework for Human Rights** (2012) and three consecutive **Action Plans on Human Rights and Democracy**⁶ describe and elaborate the EU's external human rights policies and objectives. A number of dedicated **guidelines** have been issued for the promotion of human rights and IHL in the EU's external action.⁷

The 2022 **Strategic Compass for Security and Defence**⁸ aims to respond to fast-changing threats, emerging challenges and geopolitical dynamics by guiding the EU towards becoming a stronger and more capable provider of security. In line with the Strategic Compass, the EU is stepping up its security and defence-related support, and regularly operates in complex crises and conflict environments.

The **EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy for 2020-2024**⁹ provides for the development of an EU HRDDP to 'ensure that EU security sector support, including in the context of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations, is in compliance with IHRL and IHL.' Furthermore, the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence and the **Civilian CSDP Compact** (2023)¹⁰ include references to the need for compliance with IHL and IHRL and the need to develop and implement due diligence policy in this regard.

The EU Integrated Approach¹¹ is the framework for a more coherent and holistic engagement by the EU to external conflicts and crises and promotion of human security. In respect of various mandates, roles, aims and legal frameworks of the EU stakeholder involved, it makes use of all relevant EU policies and instruments at every stage of the conflict cycle from conflict prevention and mediation to peacebuilding, including crisis response, crisis management and stabilisation.

The Joint Communication on '**Elements for an EU-wide strategic framework to support security sector reform**' (2016)¹², which sets out the EU's objectives of promoting and supporting partner countries' efforts to provide security for individuals and the state, foresees the development of a

comprehensive risk management methodology on EU support that should include mitigating measures.

The **EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid** (2007)¹³ underlines the point that the EU will strongly and consistently advocate for the respect of international law (including IHL, IHRL and refugee law) in the humanitarian aid context. The **New Consensus on Development** (2017)¹⁴ reaffirms the need for conflict sensitivity and human rights, and establishes the principle on which the EU implements a comprehensive rights-based approach to development cooperation, which was translated into the Human Rights Based Approach methodology to International Partnerships and the Neighbourhood (2021)¹⁵.

The **Civilian CSDP Compact** (2023)¹⁶ entails the Member States' commitment to promote and systematically mainstream human rights, exercise human rights due diligence and ensure compliance with international law, in particular IHRL and IHL. This commitment is accompanied by a **concrete deliverable that stipulates that the EEAS will include human rights impact and risk analysis in all planning documents of civilian CSDP missions from 2024 onwards** and ensure conflict sensitivity and the 'do no harm' approach throughout the conduct of missions.

While implementing the EU HRDDP, **the existing human rights and risk management policies and tools, including by CFSP/CSDP instruments, remain valid and should continue to be applied** fully as they are adapted to the specific settings. Examples of existing policies and tools include:

- the Integrated Methodological Framework for assessing and identifying the required measures and controls for assistance measures under the European Peace Facility (2020)¹⁷,
- the Civilian Operations Commander Operational Guidelines on Human Rights Mainstreaming and Human Rights Due Diligence (2021)¹⁸,
- the EU Concept on Effective CIVMIL Coordination in Support of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (2019)¹⁹,
- the EU Responsibility to Protect – Atrocity Prevention Toolkit (2018)²⁰,
- Updated toolset for EU Conflict Analysis and Conflict Early Warning Objectives, processes and guidance (2023)²¹,
- the EU Guidance Note on the Use of Conflict Analysis in Support of EU External Action (2020)²²,
- Applying the Human Rights Based Approach to international partnerships: An updated Toolbox for placing rights-holders at the centre of EU's Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation (2021)²³,
- An updated Risk Management Framework Plus (RMF+), applying to all implementation modalities in the current Multi Annual Financial Framework 2021–2027 of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI).

1.2. Key definitions

For the purposes of this policy, **EU security sector support** includes any type of activities provided in the context of CFSP/CSDP to third party national security forces and actors and regional

peacekeeping missions and peace support operations with the aim of enhancing their strategic, operational and tactical capacities and capabilities.

In line with the 2016 Joint Communication on elements for an EU-wide strategic framework to support the SSR, this policy adopts the OECD-Development Assistance Committee's Security System Reform guidelines²⁴ definition of a **national security sector**, which includes the law enforcement institutions (police, gendarmerie, customs, border guards, etc.), the criminal justice system (penal courts, prosecutor's office, detention, corrections), the armed forces, the intelligence services, the institutions that provide political, financial and judicial oversight (competent public authorities such as ministries, parliamentary committees, court of auditors, the judiciary, etc.) and non-state security actors, including customary authorities, traditional courts, guerrillas and liberation armies, private military and security companies.

For the purposes of this policy, **support recipients** are any security forces and actors belonging to national security sector that are benefitting from the EU security sector support. Support recipients also include regional peacekeeping missions and peace support forces. Support can be provided either **directly by the EU or indirectly** through an implementing partner.

The **types of support** envisaged by this policy include:

- (1) training, assisting, mentoring, monitoring, advising, capacity- and institution-building and other forms of technical cooperation for the purpose of enhancing the strategic, operational and tactical capabilities of third-party security forces and actors;
- (2) support to civilian or military authorities directly responsible for the management, administration or command and control of third-party security forces;
- (3) provision of equipment, supplies, infrastructure, financial, technical, logistical or other forms of assistance.

Inherent human rights and IHL risks associated with the security sector support may lead to serious violations of human rights and grave violations of IHL.

For the purpose of this policy:

- **serious human rights violations** include violations of basic human rights such as extra-judicial, summary or arbitrary killings, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, enforced disappearances, rape and sexual violence or abuse, enslavement, imprisonment or other deprivation of liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law and forced population transfers;
- **grave violations of IHL** are war crimes, as well as the crime of genocide and crimes against humanity as defined in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;
- **other violations of IHRL and IHL** of a similar gravity, or committed systematically or in a widespread manner, are to be considered.

2. Crosscutting principles of the EU HRDDP

2.1. The ‘do no harm’ principle and conflict sensitivity

The ‘do no harm’ principle guides all EU actions. All instruments and actors should ensure that their intervention does not cause unintended negative outcomes or otherwise aggravate the situation. In the context of security sector support, exercising human rights due diligence helps to prevent and mitigate a risk of directly or indirectly causing harm to civilian populations.

Moreover, various other mutually reinforcing and complementary approaches are available and applied in the context of EU’s external action to uphold the ‘do no harm’ principle and which can also be used in the context of EU HRDDP. **Human rights-based, conflict-sensitive and gender-sensitive approaches** are useful analytical frameworks for identifying and assessing risks.

Conflict sensitivity means that the EU tries to avoid that its actions have a negative impact on conflict risks and dynamics by maximising positive impact on peace, thereby contributing to conflict prevention, structural stability and peace building²⁵. It is based on the assumption that any significant intervention in a fragile or conflict-affected context may have unintended impacts on conflict risks or conflict dynamics and conflict drivers. Conflict-sensitive approaches in EU external action aim at mitigating these risks in line with the ‘do no harm’ principle (as a minimum standard) by acting on risks of violence, tensions, divisions or conflicts, while also by supporting sustainable, resilient and inclusive development, democratisation, human rights protection and the rule of law.

2.2. Gender-responsiveness

The EU is fully committed to the **Women, Peace and Security (WPS)** agenda and the Council has adopted Conclusions in 2018²⁶ and 2022²⁷ on this subject as well as an **EU Strategic Approach to WPS (2018)**²⁸ and an **Action Plan on WPS (2019)**²⁹. The Action Plan has since been incorporated into the **EU Gender Action Plan III**³⁰. Integrating a gender perspective in all peace and security-related actions is a principle that applies to all EU policies in order to avoid that the EU’s actions unintentionally reinforce gender inequalities and exclusion.

Conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) is a brutal tactic of warfare. It is a grave occurrence in most armed conflicts and is of particular relevance for the EU HRDDP. CRSV is preventable and is considered a serious crime in relevant provisions of IHRL, IHL and International Criminal Law, but is still often underreported, stigmatised and dismissed. Gender-based violations of IHRL and IHL and of CRSV in particular should be a standard part of risk identification and assessment, and should be managed according to specific gender-based needs and consequences. Depending on the context, other forms of **sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)** not directly linked to conflict should be included in the EU HRDDP process, especially when they might result from the presence of security forces and actors. In this regard, possible incidents of **sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse (SHEA)** by international and national security forces and actors need to be prevented and addressed.

2.3. Age sensitivity

The negative impact of conflicts on children persists for generations. It is therefore particularly important to use all necessary means, including the EU HRDDP, to minimise and mitigate the harmful impact of conflict on children and to uphold **children’s rights** in conflicts. The EU HRDDP should

be therefore implemented in an age-sensitive manner, including by placing violation of children's rights in conflict such as killing and maiming of children; recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups; sexual violence against children; attacks against schools or hospitals; abduction of children; and denial of humanitarian access for children, within the scope of work to identify, assess and mitigate the risks associated with security sector support.

The EU has developed its own framework for advancing children's rights in conflict settings, in particular the EU's Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict (2008)³¹ and its Revised Implementation Strategy (2010)³². Moreover, the Joint Communication on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) from 2021³³ also clearly refers to children's rights in DDR-related processes. Where relevant, due consideration should be given to the **youth dimension** in line with the EU Youth Action Plan in EU external action 2022-2027³⁴. Conversely, the EU HRDDP should also take into account the heightened risks of violations and abuses that **older people** often face during armed conflict.

2.4. Inclusivity, transparency and communication

The EU HRDDP should be **communicated to the authorities of partner countries** and as part of the EU's established political, policy, security and human rights dialogues. Host-country authorities and beneficiaries of security sector support should be informed in advance of the core principles, the working methods and the modalities applicable to the EU's support including the possibility that such support may be suspended or discontinued in cases of unaddressed serious IHRL and grave IHL violations and mass atrocities. The policy should also be communicated to the wider public and there should be engagement with local civil society organisations and communities on the existence and the application of the EU HRDDP to the EU's security sector support.

Civil society engagement and dialogue with communities helps ensuring inclusivity and taking account of differing perceptions and perspectives of security and human rights situations, concerns and needs. The guidelines on civil society engagement developed for CSDP civilian missions can be useful in this context.³⁵ However, many civil society organisations operate within a shrinking civic space and are subject to restrictions, therefore, the EU should apply a 'do no harm' approach being aware of possible limitations, while also ensuring inclusion of marginalised and vulnerable groups.

2.5. Coordinating and cooperating with the United Nations system

Human rights and international humanitarian law underpin **the UN-EU strategic partnership on peace operations and crisis management**. Its 2022-2024 priorities include stronger cooperation on human rights aspects of conflict management and in particular on international human rights and humanitarian law risk management to ensure compliance with international human rights law and humanitarian law.

In 2011, the United Nations Secretary-General adopted a mandatory human rights due diligence policy (UN HRDDP) to ensure that any support provided by United Nations entities to non-United Nations security forces is consistent with the UN Charter and international law more generally and to protect the legitimacy, credibility and reputation of the organisation³⁶. An inter-agency review group chaired by OHCHR and Department of Peace Operations (DPO)-Department of Political and

Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) steers and assesses implementation of the UN HRDDP across the system.

Recognizing the UN's experience in the implementation of its Policy, exchanges of experiences, **cooperation with UN entities is important in the implementation of the EU HRDDP**. The UN's strong human rights presence in a large number of countries, often with mandates to monitor and report on human rights situations as well as strengthen the capacities of national institutions to fulfil their human rights obligations, is particularly important in this respect. Beyond consistent political messaging vis-à-vis supported partners, potential areas of cooperation may include human rights risk assessment related to security sector support, information sharing and training; as well as the joint design, implementation and monitoring of technical assistance and other measures to mitigate risks of HRs and IHL violations³⁷.

3. Core elements of the EU human rights and IHL due diligence

The EU HRDDP consists of three core stages: (1) **risk identification and assessment**; (2) **risk mitigation**; (3) **monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning**.

3.1. Risk identification and assessment

Each support provider needs to identify and assess the risks of serious human rights violations and grave IHL violations before approving and providing support to a third-party security force or actor. The main purpose of the risk identification and assessment is to provide necessary elements for informed and responsible decision-making that considers the potential negative impacts and unintended consequences of the support – to the extent that they can be prevented and avoided.

The risk identification and assessment should be based on **credible internal and external sources** (for example, human rights country strategies developed by EU delegations, reports by EU Delegations, EU conflict analysis and structural country assessments, reports by CSDP missions and operations, other diplomatic missions, international and multilateral organisations, international and national human rights and civil society organisations and the media). Within the framework of an EU integrated approach, support by relevant EU actors in the headquarters and based in the beneficiary country is essential on the collection, verification and assessment of the data needed for a proper risk identification and assessment related to specific security sector support recipients. Relevant expertise (for example, legal, political, human rights, gender) should be sought among all relevant sectors (e.g. political, diplomatic, security/military, humanitarian), while also safeguarding principled humanitarian space.

The risk assessment should consider whether there is a risk that the security force or actor may commit (or the support may contribute to) **serious violations of IHRL and grave violations of IHL**, and where the mitigation measures might not suffice to prevent such violations. Risk assessments with regard to transfer of equipment should consider the possibility that it is used to commit or facilitate serious crimes including acts of sexual and gender-based violence.

The risk assessment should include (1) an **overall assessment of the country or the geographic context where the support is provided**, (2) an assessment specific to the **recipient security force or actor** and to the **type of support** as well as (3) an analysis of **risks if support is not provided**.

The overall assessment of the human rights situation and the respect for IHL in a beneficiary country or a geographic context provides a general understanding of the environment in which the recipient of security sector support operates, and of compliance with human rights and IHL obligations in the beneficiary country in general. The intended recipient's interests, capacity and track record regarding its past behaviour, should be assessed in order to identify the specific risks that may pertain to the type of support envisaged. This assessment allows a better understanding of the interaction between the type of support, the recipient security force or actor and the context, in order to better define mitigation measures and their implementation.

There is no overall formula for determining the level of risk with complete certainty because the **evaluation will depend on the circumstances in each individual case**. Risk assessments should therefore take into consideration both the probability and the impact of the adverse occurrence in question. A decision to provide, modify or suspend support should be taken on the basis of a thorough evaluation of the situation and after consulting with the (intended) support recipient concerned by the allegations of human rights and IHL violations, at the appropriate level of seniority and commensurate with the seriousness of the risks involved.

The overall evaluation should classify the existing **risk level as low, medium or high**, with each requiring a different type of response and course of action. Mitigation measures should be appropriate and proportionate in all three scenarios. In the presence of a high-level risk, in particular, the scope and the design of the support activity should include a more focused risk assessment together with robust measures to reduce and monitor the identified risks.

In accordance with the UN practice³⁸, for example, **low-level risk** generally indicates that no or limited additional measures to mitigate human rights and IHL risks need to be taken for the support to go ahead. The presence of a **medium-level risk** requires appropriate mitigating measures to reduce the risk of grave violations. The presence of a **high-level risk** indicates that mitigation measures might not suffice to lower the risk to an acceptable level and the support should therefore be reconsidered.

At beneficiary country level, an option to develop a **joint country risk assessment between different EU actors** could be considered. Such joint risk assessment could serve as a baseline for all EU actors and instruments operating on security sector support in a particular country. It would provide a shared analysis and understanding of the context and offer possibilities to develop coordinated and complementary mitigating measures.

3.2. Risk mitigation

Risk assessment provides the basis for **the identification and application of mitigation measures, which aim to reduce the risks of identified potential human rights and IHL violations**. Typical mitigation measures include: human rights and IHL training for security and defence forces; screening and vetting of beneficiaries; age verification mechanisms; measures to support internal control and external oversight mechanisms (including civilian oversight institutions and mechanisms);

accountability and corrective measures; monitoring and reporting mechanisms; protection of civilians policies and mechanisms; codes of conduct and prevention of SHEA; complaint and feedback mechanisms for victims of human rights violations and for civil society; capacity building of local civil society to play their full role as a crucial actor in the security sector (particularly on issues of civilian oversight and confidence-building) and delivery certificates and safe storage of supplies in cases of equipment delivery.

The application of mitigation measures may widen the area of possible support in situations where a risk of serious human rights or grave IHL violations is identified. Beneficiaries of EU security sector support may need technical assistance and capacity building to implement mitigation measures. To allow this, when feasible, funds or resources should be earmarked to the implementation of mitigation measures since the start of planning of a support activity. Furthermore, in line with the EU integrated approach, synergies between EU instruments should be sought when identifying and implementing mitigation measures.

3.3. Monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning

The EU HRDDP is a continuous process. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting should be ensured by each support provider, within the existing procedures for specific instruments. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting in the context of due diligence is twofold:

- (1) **Monitoring the behaviour of the support recipients** with regards to the respect of human rights and IHL during the provision of support. The support provider should try to detect and evaluate the impact of violations occurring in relation to the provided support. In cases where the support consists of the provision of equipment, the monitoring should also include field visits and spot checks;
- (2) **Monitoring and evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of the mitigating measures put in place.** If necessary, the measures should be adjusted and re-adapted. Continuous monitoring should also detect any major changes in circumstances that may affect the overall risk assessment as well as the need to modify or identify additional mitigating measures. In case of serious violations during the provision of support and the lack of remedial action by the support recipient, the activity may have to be suspended or terminated.

A full cycle of the EU HRDDP includes a **final evaluation or an ‘after assignment assessment’ that should feed into the planning of future activities** (learning from experience). Once a support activity has ended, a stocktaking exercise on the EU HRDDP implementation should be carried out to assess progress and impact, and to identify gaps and lessons with the aim of improving the policy’s efficiency and application.

3.4. Enhancing inter-institutional and inter-service synergies

Maximising synergies and complementarity between EU actors and instruments working on security sector and human rights through the EU integrated approach will be crucial for the successful implementation of the EU HRDDP. Facilitating the flow of relevant information, ensuring interaction and coordination of efforts and building consistency between practices and approaches by EU actors and instruments operating in the same country are key.

EU delegations/offices together with CSDP missions' field presences and EUSR offices are well placed to support coordination and access to information for due diligence purposes, including with the beneficiary country, the EU Member States, the United Nations and civil society organisations. They can also support country-level monitoring, evaluation and reporting between different EU actors and instruments involved in security sector support. They can carry out exchanges with civil society organisations, human rights defenders, national human rights institutions/commissions and international humanitarian law commissions (if present) during the risk assessment as well as monitoring, reporting and evaluation phases.

4. Way forward

The EU HRDDP will be implemented progressively taking into account the time needed to develop the necessary in-house knowledge, expertise and capabilities by developing and rolling out trainings, support measures and guidance materials.

An **EU HRDDP technical level working group will be set up** to jointly develop methodological, technical and operational advice and support (in particular on risk identification and assessment; risk mitigation measures; monitoring, reporting and evaluation; impact evaluation and the lessons process). It will be composed of relevant EU experts working in CFSP/CSDP, security sector and human rights. The working group will contribute to the effective implementation of the EU HRDDP and to facilitating coordination and cooperation between instruments and actors within the EU integrated approach.

Specific **internal capacity building will be developed** to facilitate the implementation of the policy, including **training, advice and technical assistance**. Services will explore options for establishing arrangements for engaging dedicated expertise, including through outsourcing. Services will also explore a possibility to develop specialised training on EU HRDDP, including via the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) and in cooperation with the Office of the High-Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The EU HRDDP should also be considered in the context of the **EU's peace, security and defence partnerships** with third countries and with international and regional organisations, to allow expanding a common understanding of human rights and IHL principles and obligations in security sector related activities.

The implementation of the EU HRDDP will be regularly reviewed to assess progress and effectiveness and to identify challenges and opportunities and ways to address them (learning from experience and analysing gaps in policy implementation). A first assessment on the implementation of the EU HRDDP will be conducted two years after its adoption.

The EU Member States, through the Council's relevant preparatory bodies, will be regularly updated on how the policy is being implemented.

¹ Articles 2, 6 and 21 of the TEU.

² [Council Conclusions on the Integrated Approach to External Conflicts and Crises](#), doc. 5413/18, dated 22 January 2018.

³ Joint Communication of the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament and the Council on elements for an EU-wide strategic framework to support security sector reform, 5 July 2016, JOIN(2016) 31 final. Endorsed by the Council on 14 November 2016.

⁴ Article 2 of the TEU.

⁵ Article 21 of the TEU.

⁶ [The EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2012-2014](#); [the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2015-2019](#); and [the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024](#).

⁷ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/eu-human-rights-guidelines_en.

⁸ [A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence – For a European Union that protects its citizens, values and interests, and contributes to international peace and security](#), Council document 7371/22 of 21 March 2022.

⁹ Joint Communication of the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament and the Council and the Annex to the Joint Communication on the EU Action Plan for Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024; 23 March 2020, JOIN(2020) 5 final.

¹⁰ [Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the establishment of a Civilian CSDP Compact](#), Council document 9588/23, 22 May 2023.

¹¹ Council Conclusions on the Integrated Approach to External Conflicts and Crises, doc. 5413/18, dated 22 January 2018.

¹² [Joint Communication of the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament and the Council on elements for an EU-wide strategic framework to support security sector reform, 5 July 2016, JOIN\(2016\) 31 final](#). Endorsed by the Council on 14 November 2016, [Council document 13998/16](#).

¹³ [Joint Statement by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission on the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, 2008/C 25/01](#).

¹⁴ [Joint Statement by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission on the New European Consensus on Development: ‘Our world, our dignity, our future’](#).

¹⁵ SWD(2021) 179 final, 30/06/2021, https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-07/swd-2021-human-right-based-approach_en.pdf.

¹⁶ See reference number 12.

¹⁷ Council document 14209/20, 18 December 2020.

¹⁸ EEAS(2021)750, 13 September 2021.

¹⁹ EEAS(2018)1293 REV 5; Council document 5536/19, 30 January 2019.

²⁰ [Ares\(2018\)6371059-11/12/2018](#).

²¹ [Joint Staff Working Document, Updated toolset for EU Conflict Analysis and Conflict Early Warning Objectives, processes and guidance](#), SWD(2023) 295 fina, 5 September 2023.

²² [The 2020 Guidance Note on the Use of Conflict Analysis in Support of EU External Action](#).

²³ SWD(2021) 179 final, dated 30 June 2021.

²⁴ See the OECD DAC handbook on security system reform: supporting security and justice (OECD Publishing, Paris).

²⁵ The 2020 Guidance Note on the Use of Conflict Analysis in Support of EU External Action.

²⁶ Council document 15086/18, 10 December 2018.

²⁷ [Council Conclusions on women, peace and security](#), 14 November 2022.

²⁸ [Annex to Council document 5086/18](#), 10 December 2018.

²⁹ [EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security \(WPS\) 2019-2024](#), Council document 11031/19, 5 July 2019.

³⁰ [Joint Communication of the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament and the Council on EU Gender Action Plan \(GAP\) III – An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in EU External Action](#), JOIN(2020) 17 final, 25 November 2020.

³¹ Council documents 10287/1/08 and 10019/08, 16 June 2008.

³² Council document 17488/10, 6 December 2010.

³³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52021JC0035>.

³⁴ JOIN(2022) 53 final, 4 October 2022.

³⁵ Civilian Operations Commander Operational Guidelines on Civil Society Engagement, EEAS(2022)1705, 7 October 2022.

³⁶ UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on Support for Non-United Nations Security Forces, 5 March 2013, [A/67/775-S/2013/110](#).

³⁷ Since 2018, UN-EU cooperation in this area has grown significantly, in particular through the implementation of EU-funded projects to support African peace operations in the adoption and implementation of their human rights and IHL compliance frameworks. Between 2018-2023, the UN OHCHR implemented an EU-funded project to support the G5 Sahel Joint Force with the implementation of the human rights and IHL compliance framework across the five countries of the G5 Sahel. Since 2021, the EU Delegation to the African Union (AU), the AU Commission and the UN OHCHR have been jointly implementing an AU human rights compliance framework project for African peace support operations.

³⁸ [Guidance note on human rights due diligence policy on UN support to non-United Nations security forces](#).