



3rd Transatlantic Dialogue on Humanitarian Action

Looking Ahead: Addressing current and future challenges in humanitarian assistance

— Conference Agenda

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3rd Transatlantic Dialogue on Humanitarian Action

**Looking Ahead: Addressing current and future challenges in humanitarian assistance
Draft Agenda**

Date: June 8th, 2009

Location: Renaissance Hotel, Brussels

This 3rd Transatlantic Dialogue on Humanitarian Action is an integral component of the transatlantic research and dialogue program entitled "Raising the Bar: Enhancing transatlantic governance of disaster relief and preparedness," jointly led by the Global Public Policy Institute and the Center for Transatlantic Relations at Johns Hopkins University.

The "Raising the Bar"-Project is designed to enhance transatlantic coherence and cooperation in humanitarian action. Over 18 months, a project team based on a unique network of transatlantic organizations has conducted empirical research on four key topics in humanitarian assistance: linking relief, rehabilitation and development; implementing lessons learned; business engagement in humanitarian action; and civil-military relations. In order to foster joint transatlantic action, "Raising the Bar" also contains a multi-stakeholder dialogue component. The core of this component is a conference series, the Transatlantic Dialogues in Humanitarian Action. Bringing together approximately 30 to 40 experts, practitioners and EU and U.S. policymakers, the dialogue sessions seek to encourage debate; facilitate networking among participants; and foster joint transatlantic action.

This upcoming conference will be the final dialogue session of the "Raising the Bar"-Project. We hope to use this occasion to present some key findings and recommendations of our research and discuss how to move forward and improve transatlantic cooperation in humanitarian assistance. In particular we will focus on new challenges the transatlantic partners face in humanitarian assistance, such as the effects of the financial crisis, emerging powers, and the fine balance between maintaining humanitarian space and addressing the root causes of ongoing problems. The breakout groups during the conference will focus on the research themes that are being pursued as part of the "Raising the Bar"-policy paper series.

The project is generously supported by



Additional financial support for the program is provided by



09:45 am Registration and welcome coffee

10:15 am WELCOME

Daniel Hamilton, Director, Center for Transatlantic Relations, SAIS, Johns Hopkins University

10:30 am PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT'S RESULTS

Julia Steets, Associate Director, GPPi

- Key findings and recommendations of the "Raising the Bar"-Project

11:00 am PANEL DISCUSSION I

Sudan: Tensions between Principles and Practice

Goals of this session: Sudan has been a regular recipient of foreign assistance for over 20 years. The prolonged nature of the conflicts in Sudan has led some humanitarian NGOs to concentrate more on addressing the root causes of the conflict and taking a more political stance. Using Sudan as an example, this session aims to highlight the tension between maintaining the humanitarian principles and space and addressing the root causes of conflict in practice. The panel will discuss policy options for dealing with these tensions for donors such as the European Commission and the U.S. Government.

Moderator: Daniel Hamilton, Director, Center for Transatlantic Relations, SAIS, Johns Hopkins University

Panel members:

Nicky Smith, Director of Advocacy and Government Relations, International Rescue Committee

- The fine balance between supporting international efforts to address root causes and maintaining operational neutrality to provide aid in Sudan

Gemma-Tracee Apiku Duddell, relief worker and former refugee

- A beneficiary perspective on the tension between providing aid and addressing the root causes of emergencies in Sudan

Jeremy Lester, European Commission, DG DEV E2, Head of Unit Relations with the countries and the regions of the Horn of Africa, Eastern Africa and Indian Ocean

- European perspectives on root causes versus strictly principled action. How to overcome the challenges donors face in complex emergencies such as Sudan

12:30 pm LUNCH

1:30 pm

BREAKOUT GROUPS

Participants will discuss key topics in disaster relief and preparedness in breakout groups. As part of the “Raising the Bar”-Project, policy papers were prepared. They are sent to participants prior to the meeting. The authors of the policy papers will lead discussion on these core issues and their implications for EU and U.S. policy, as well as their enhanced cooperation. The third breakout group will be an opportunity to further discuss the implications of the project’s key findings and recommendations outlined at the beginning of the conference.

Breakout Group I: The rise of aid diplomacy? Emergency assistance as a tool to engage regional powers

Presenters: Johannes Luchner, European Commission DG ECHO, Head of Unit for General Policy affairs, Relations with donors, and Evaluation, Andrea Binder, Project Manager, GPPi

Based on the “Raising the Bar” Policy Paper *China’s Potential Role in Humanitarian Assistance*, this breakout group will look at different approaches towards humanitarian assistance as a possible policy area for engaging emerging powers and diversifying the humanitarian community.

Discussants:

Dr. Ajaz Ahmed Khan, Senior Policy Advisor, Islamic Relief Worldwide

- The growing role of Islamic countries in humanitarian assistance, the potential differences in the conception and principles governing aid

Asad Beg, European Commission, DG RELEX H2, Desk Officer China

- Using emergency assistance as a policy area for strengthening relationships to China / Arab countries

Breakout Group II: The importance of local ownership

Presenter: Beatrice Pouligny, Independent Consultant

Using findings from the “Raising the Bar” Policy Paper on local ownership as a starting point, this breakout group will examine the importance of local ownership in emergency response efforts and the difficulties in strengthening local capacity and creating local ownership.

Discussants:

Stephen Asubu, former Country Manager, Global Care Uganda

- What does it mean to be local? A perspective from the ground

Walter van Hattum, Policy Officer, European Commission DG ECHO

- Donor issues in supporting (local) capacity development

Breakout Group III: Bridging the Atlantic: How to enhance EU-US-cooperation in humanitarian assistance

Discussing the key findings and recommendations of the “Raising the Bar” Project presented at the beginning of the conference, this session will examine possible ways forward and new roles for the two partners to enhance collaboration among themselves and with other actors of humanitarian assistance.

Facilitators: Julia Steets, GPPi Associate Director and Daniel Hamilton, Director, Center for Transatlantic Relations, SAIS, Johns Hopkins University

Discussants:

Dana J. Francis, Refugee Officer, First Secretary, United States Mission to the European Union

- A US perspective on transatlantic cooperation in humanitarian assistance
H. Roy Williams, President and CEO of the Center for Humanitarian Cooperation and former Director of the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance OFDA

- Risks and opportunities of enhanced transatlantic cooperation on humanitarian assistance

Wolf-Dieter Eberwein, President of VOICE, the European network of Voluntary Organizations in Cooperation

- Between advocacy and liaison: NGO cooperation with transatlantic humanitarian donors

2:45 pm COFFEE BREAK

3:15 pm PANEL DISCUSSION II

Financial Crisis to Complex Crises

Goal of session: While there has already been much discussion of the financial crisis’ impact on aid flows, there has been limited discussion on the potential effects the financial crisis may have on fomenting new crises or exacerbating existing ones. The globalized economy means that decisions taken by bankers on Wall Street have effects in Bangalore. While the effects of the financial crisis in the Western world are measured in dollars and jobs, elsewhere the price will be paid in lives. This session seeks to explore the effects of the financial crisis on complex crises and what donors can do to mitigate them.

Moderator: Julia Steets, Associate Director, GPPi

Panel members

Ali M.S. Fatemi, President and Professor of Economics, European Center for Advanced International Studies, American University of Paris

- Why the financial crisis is affecting the developing world more harshly and what donors and international financial institutions can do to help

Jonathan Addleton, USAID Representative and Counselor for International Development at the US Mission to the European Union in Brussels

- The impact of the financial crisis on remittance flows and on aid flows. How the US is adapting its humanitarian response to these changes

Abdul-Wahab Sulleyman, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Ghana

- The effects of the financial crisis in Africa; what at risk nations need to prevent them from sliding into humanitarian crises

4:45 pm

FAREWELL AND NEXT STEPS

Julia Steets, Associate Director, GPPi

- Next steps for building on these results; the 2010 EU-U.S. Summit