EU-UN cooperation in peacebuilding: natural partners?
Thursday, 21 January 2010
12:30 – 14:00

Speakers’s Biographies

Catriona Gourlay
Catriona Gourlay is a Research Fellow and Project Manager at the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) in Geneva. Previously, she was a Marie Curie Fellow at UNIDIR, funded by the Directorate-General for Research of the European Commission (EC) to work on a research project and a doctoral thesis on EU-UN cooperation in crisis management and peacebuilding. Drawing on her research, Ms Gourlay authored a UNIDIR report of EU-UN Cooperation in Peacebuilding: Partners in Practice?, which was published in November 2009.

From 1995 to 2005, she was the Executive Director of the International Security Information Service, a Brussels-based research organization working on European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). She has written extensively on the development of civilian crisis management and peacebuilding capacities and policies, in particular those of the European Union (EU). She holds a Master’s in International Relations from the University of Pennsylvania, and a Bachelor’s in Politics and Philosophy from the University of Oxford.

Nicola Harrington
Building on her work with the United Nations on four continents, Nicola Harrington-Buhay coordinates the UN Brussels’ policy engagement with the European Union. European institutions now regularly turn to the UN as a recognized source of guidance and support for EU development and humanitarian policy making. Ms Harrington-Buhay was previously UN Resident Coordinator in Serbia and Montenegro, as well as director of fundraising for the UN Development Programme, where she contributed to deep-seated institutional reforms and helped the UNDP attain its highest levels of core resources. Prior to serving in the UN, Harrington-Buhay worked for the Bank of England, specializing in financial trade liberalization and building bridges between government and industry positions in international negotiations. She has co-authored research on British preparations for European integration, public value and leadership in post-crisis settings, and is the coordinator and principal author of the annual report series “Improving Lives” on results of the partnership between the UN and the European Commission. She is a World Fellow of Yale, a member of the advisory board of the EU-GRASP research programme: Changing Multilateralism: The EU as a Global-Regional Actor in Security and Peace” and a participant in the GARNET Network of Excellence on Global Governance, Regionalisation and Regulation. Ms Harrington-Buhay holds an M.Sc. (Econ) in international political economy from the London School of Economics and a Masters in Public Administration from Warwick Business School.
Kristin de Peyron

Kristin de Peyron is Head of Unit for Multilateral Relations - United Nations, OSCE and the Council of Europe - in the External Relations Directorate General of the European Commission. She previously for several years focused on EU-UN relations in the area of peace and security, as well as on the EU’s efforts to support UN reform. She has also been involved in the preparations of the EU’s institutional reforms, through participating in the drafting and negotiations of the new draft Treaty of the EU as a member of the Secretariat of the European Convention and the Commission’s Task Force on the Future of the Union. Ms de Peyron has also worked in the Enlargement Directorate-General and in the Enterprise Directorate-General in. Prior to joining the European Commission, Ms de Peyron was in the Swedish diplomatic service, with posts at the Embassy in Paris and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm, dealing with Swedish EU accession negotiations, the European Economic Area and multilateral disarmament negotiations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Stockholm. She has also been a researcher at the Stockholm School of Economics in the area of Business Ethics.

David Spence

David Spence is First Counsellor at the European Commission Delegation to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva. He has been Head of training for the Commission’s External Service and was Secretary of the Commission’s task force for German Unification. Before joining the Commission, Mr. Spence was Head of European Training at the United Kingdom Civil Service College and academic adviser to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office’s conference centre, Wilton Park. He is currently an adviser to the Centre International de Formation Européenne, an adviser to the Institut des Hautes Études Internationales de l’Université de Nice and adviser to the Netherlands Institute for International Relations (Clingendael). A graduate of Sussex, Oxford and Nice Universities, Mr. Spence has lectured and published extensively on EU issues.