



Austrian
Centre for Peace
SCHLAINING · VIENNA

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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IMPRINT

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NEW PATHS TO PEACE

Tobias Lang is the new Director of the ACP



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I took over the management of the ACP on 1 March 2025. Even though peace is in crisis - the number of violent conflicts is at a record high, the climate crisis is escalating, liberal democracies are under pressure, civil society's room for manoeuvre is dwindling and disinformation is doing the rest - I am looking forward to this new challenge. With its wide range of activities, the ACP is well equipped to work towards a future of peace.

With its focus on environmental peacebuilding, the ACP can constructively address new challenges in peace work, such as environmental conflicts. PeaceTech initiatives enable new training programmes for experts in crisis areas.

As in 2023, the Austrian Forum for Peace was a great success in 2024. The conference is unique in Austria in this form and is set to gain further international relevance.

As part of its extensive training activities, the ACP registered more than 500 participants in 2024. In the area of peace ed-

ucation, over 20,000 pupils have attended workshops on violence prevention, conflict and peace skills, respectful communication and team building since the start of the project.

My aim is to strengthen the ACP, with its unique location at Peace Castle Schlaining, as an international hub for practice-oriented peace and conflict research. Our international mediation and conflict resolution activities, for example in the Middle East and Africa, are to receive more scientific support. At the same time, the regional anchoring of the ACP in Burgenland is very important to me. In addition to peace education, our "Neighbourhood Mediation" project also contributes to a more peaceful coexistence in Burgenland. This allows us to make our work tangible in the region.

Tobias Lang, ACP-Director since March 2025

OUR FIELDS OF ACTIVITY

Contents and insights into our work at the ACP

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Training Programmes

Capacity Development for Humanitarian Assistance in West Africa - HAWA

International Civilian Peacebuilding Training Programme - IPT

European Union's Civilian Training Initiative - EUCTI

EUAM Ukraine (Online)

SSR-Training for EUCAP Sahel Mali

EUBAM Libyen - Basic Course on Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

augMENTOR: Next-Generation Learning with Artificial Intelligence

SkillDrill: Virtual Reality-Enhanced Training for Field Readiness

Integrated Training Programme for Civilian,

Police and Military Experts – ESDC

24th Summer Academy on OSCE

Peace Education

7 Days for Peace - Conference

Peace Weeks

University course Global Peace Education

Holocaust History Workshop

School development project "Partner school of Friedensburg Schlaining"

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Developing a Complex Understanding and Engagement
with the Conflicts over the Holy Land

Communal Peace and Conflict Work in Burgenland

Promoting Resilience through an HDP Nexus Approach: South Sudan and Uganda

Dialogue in the Gulf Region

Global Partnerships in International Mediation

Georgia: Mediation Training for Women Leaders

Sudan Dialogue Meetings

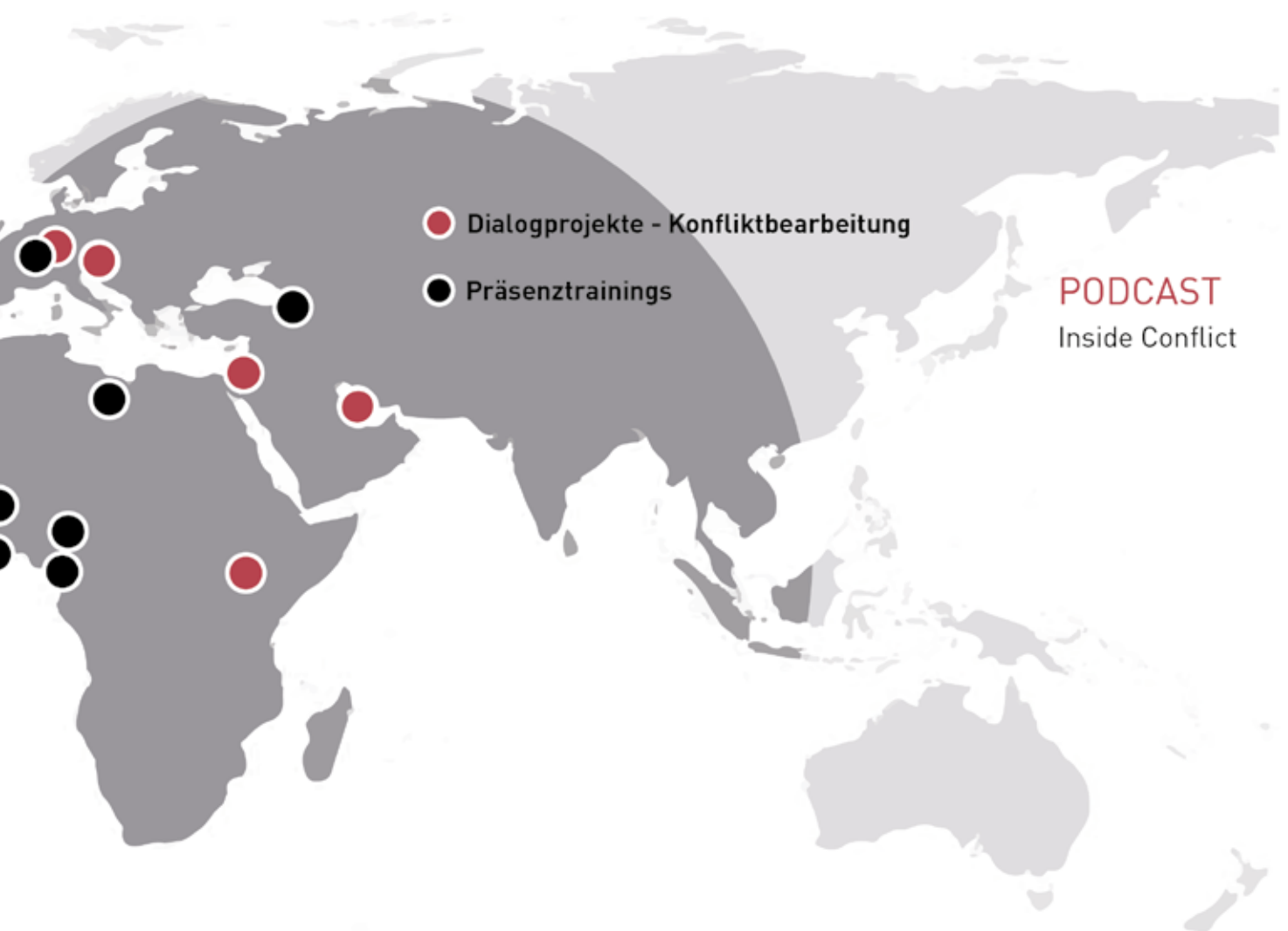


RESEARCH

Development of a University Concept in Stadtschlaining
Austrian Forum for Peace Working Papers
Policy Advice

Events

Austrian Forum for Peace
Network Peace and Conflict Research in Austria - NeFKÖ



PODCAST

Inside Conflict

ABOUT US

The Austrian Centre for Peace (ACP)

Events in various parts of the world indicate that war is increasingly becoming a routine matter. The revived rivalry between major powers, the ongoing loss of livelihoods due to the environmental and climate crises, a lack of distributive justice and the effects of rapid and often uncontrolled technological change are having a dramatic impact on peace, security and stability around the world. However, statistics show that wars rarely produce winners.

The Austrian Centre for Peace (ACP) has been showing ways to peace for over 40 years. It offers a neutral platform for dialogue and mediation, whether at the Peace Castle in Stadtschlaining, its second location in Vienna, or worldwide. The ACP capacity development programmes prepare experts for conflict-sensitive work in crisis regions. Research at the ACP provides the basis. Peace education sensitises the younger generations of our society. The ACP has i.a. been awarded the United Nations title "Peace Messenger" and the UNESCO "Peace Education Prize" for its work.

The path to security, stability, and ultimately to peace, is long, extensive and complex. The ACP is seeking to achieve it through various partnerships in the political and security policy context as well as with civil society in Austria and worldwide.

The Austrian Centre for Peace (ACP) was founded in 1982 and is organised as a non-profit, independent, non-partisan association. It consists of the following bodies: General Assembly, Board, Management, Scientific Advisory Board, Auditors and Court of Arbitration. The rights and duties of the members of the respective bodies are set forth in the ACP constitution.

Capacity Development

In terms of capacity development, the ACP focuses on two core areas: the training of peacebuilding experts who are or will be deployed in crisis regions and peace education for schools in Austria. Hundreds of civilian, military or police experts are trained as part of the various training programmes worldwide or in Austria. In this area, the ACP cooperates

with the EU, UN and OSCE. The effects of environmental degradation and the climate crisis are an integral part of many training programmes. The use of new technology as a tool for peacebuilding, known as "PeaceTech", is also playing an increasingly important role. ACP's training work in West Africa focusses in particular on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. The ACP develops and offers customised training courses on request.

Peace Education

Every year, more than 1 000 pupils take part in the ACP's peace education programmes on conflict and peace skills, non-violent communication, bullying and violence prevention, respectful behaviour, integration and diversity, as well as team building and solidarity. In parallel, systemic skills training is offered for teachers. Moreover, the ACP cooperated with the University College of Teacher Education and the Burgenland Children's and Youth Ombuds Office in developing the "Global Peace Education" university course.

Conflict Resolution

In the past, Austrian stakeholders have made important contributions to international peace policy as valued mediators in conflicts. Against the backdrop of an increasingly conflict-ridden world, this potential needs to be fully utilised again. For mediation to actually contribute to peace, recognised principles such as impartiality, consent of the relevant parties, inclusivity and the principle of doing no harm through one's own actions must be upheld. Peace can only be made with enemies. A peace process must therefore include the parties who exert influence on the conflict.

The ACP supports official negotiations and informal dialogue processes, mediating directly between the parties to a conflict. Initiatives take place at the local, regional and national levels and in a dialogue with formal and informal armed actors, political interest groups and civil society. These activities form the core mission of the ACP.

At international level, the ACP's peacebuilding activities

ABOUT US

The Austrian Centre for Peace (ACP)

have focussed on the Middle East, Africa and the OSCE region for many years.

Many conflict-ridden countries in Europe's immediate neighbourhood are exceptionally hard hit by the climate crisis, but also particularly ill-equipped to deal with its effects. This further exacerbates or creates new conflict dynamics. The ACP is therefore vigorously pursuing climate change adaptation programmes combined with conflict prevention approaches, particularly in the form of environmental peacebuilding.

In Austria, the ACP specialises in the design and management of conflict resolution within communities, which is intended to contribute to peaceful coexistence

Research

The ACP contributes to the dialogue on current peace policy issues through research, specialist conferences and publications. Such research also forms the basis for policy advice from the ACP. Likewise, research is an important companion to conflict management. On the one hand, it enables to identify significant trends, and on the other, it helps to better understand complicated dynamics in specific conflict areas and thus to propose more realistic solutions to the conflict parties. ACP publications include policy briefs and reports.

MANAGEMENT Moritz Ehrmann

TEAM

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Nathan Coyle
Ilse Divosch
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Susanne J. Györög
Adham Hamed (Juni - Mitte November in Väterkarenz)
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Amt der Burgenländischen Landesregierung

Abteilung 7 – Bildung, Kultur und Wissenschaft



Bundesministerium
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Stadtgemeinde Stadtschlaining
Ständige Vertretung der Schweiz bei der OSZE
UN Women
U.S. Mission to the OSCE
Wiener Städtische Versicherung
Wirtschaftsagentur Burgenland
Wirtschaftskammer Österreich

ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
ACP	Austrian Centre for Peace
AU	African Union
BD	Burgenland Department of Education
BMEIA	Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe and International Affairs
BMLV	Austrian Federal Ministry of Defence
CEP	Centre for European Perspective
CPD, CPDC	Conflict-Peace-Democracy-Cluster
CPOC	Comprehensive Protection of Civilians
EAPTC	European Association of Peace Operations Training Centres
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ENTRI	Europe's New Training Initiative for Civilian Crisis Management
ESDC	European Security and Defence College
EU	European Union
EUAV	European Union Aid Volunteers Initiative
EUCTG	European Union Civilian Training Group
EUCTI	European Union Civilian Training Initiative
EUPCST	European Union Police and Civilian Service Training
FCDO	Britisches Außen- und Entwicklungsministerium
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GSVP	Gemeinsame Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik
HAWA	Humanitarian Assistance in West Africa
HDP Nexus	Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus
IIIP	International Institute for Peace
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IPT	International Civilian Peacebuilding and Peacekeeping Training Programme
IQCM	Iraqi Center for Negotiation Skills and Conflict Management
KAIPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
KIJA	Ombudsoffice for Children and Youth Burgenland
LVak	Landesverteidigungsakademie (National Defence Academy)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ÖAD / NRO	Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation
OSZE, OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PeaceRep	Peace and Conflict Resolution Evidence Platform
PH	Pädagogische Hochschule (Pedagogic Academy)
POC	Protection of Civilians
PSRP	Political Settlements Research Programme
SAK	Summer Academy
SFU	Sigmund Freud University
SSR	Security Sector Reform
StoP	State of Peacebuilding-Conference
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHAS	UN Humanitarian Air Service
UNMISS	UN-Peacemission
UN RCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolutions
USIP	United States Institute of Peace
VIC	Vienna International Centre
VN, UN	United Nations
WPS	Woman Peace Security
ZBG	Bilingual Federal Grammar School

FOCUS TOPICS AT THE ACP

Environmental Peacebuilding - How the Environment, Climate and Peace are Connected

The environmental and climate crisis is not only a problem of the future – droughts, extreme weather conditions, pollution, the depletion of freshwater and rising sea levels are already threatening millions of people. People in conflict regions, such as the Sahel, North Africa or the Middle East, are especially exposed to climate change. Environmental and climate crises are also leading to new conflicts there, e.g. over dwindling water resources. Conversely, violent conflicts have a negative impact on the environment including the destruction of important infrastructure, of forests and, the pollution of rivers. Resources and financial means are often used for acts of war instead of investments into a future that is ecologically and socially sustainable. Climate, environment, security, and peace are therefore closely linked and require joint solutions.

An Innovative Focus

In light of this, the ACP has been focussing its work on environmental peacebuilding since 2022. Environmental peacebuilding examines how climate, environment and conflicts are linked, not only looking at causes and problems, but also at possible solutions. Environmental and climate issues can be a starting point for dialogue between conflicting parties. This is not just about the mere management of resources, but also about developing strategies intended to have a long-term and sustainable effect – such as projects relating to shared water resources which also offer job opportunities, initiate the regeneration of natural resources and focus on cooperation between the various parties to a conflict.

Environmental Peacebuilding in Practice

Following the introduction of the environment-climate-security nexus in the ACP capacity development programme in 2022, and as part of cooperation initiated by the ACP which involved several European training institutes, further events centering on this topic were held over the course of 2023.

These included the development of a common training approach for CSDP missions. The approach included dialogue between state and civil-society actors from the Global South and North as well as international organisations, to identify commonalities and to derive recommendations for dealing with the topic.

The Environmental Peacebuilding specialisation course was successfully held at the Peace Castle for the second time in November 2024 (see page 15).

Moreover, the ACP, together with its partner institute, the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Accra, Ghana, as well as local implementing partners, organised workshops in Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Ghana on disaster risk reduction for humanitarian assistance professionals in civil society, state agencies, the military and the police. There, the participants discussed the influences of the changing climate which communities often experience as extreme weather events such as droughts and flooding (see pages 13 and 14).

Participants in the ACP's dialogue project in the Persian Gulf – a region affected by extreme water shortages – are facing equally great challenges. The consequences which water scarcity has for security and potential sustainable solutions to the problem were therefore an important part of the dialogue discussions (see page 24).

What the examples illustrate is this: Environmental peacebuilding is a matter of crucial importance for peace work. The ACP intends to expand its commitment further in the coming years.

FOCUS TOPICS AT THE ACP

PeaceTech is reflected in all areas of ACP activities

Modern conflicts are increasingly shaped by new and emerging technologies. The discourse revolves around weighing the security threats posed by these technologies against their potential for preventing and resolving conflicts through peacebuilding.

“PeaceTech” describes the various tools and processes, such as social media, geographic information systems, data analytics, virtual reality frameworks and other digital technologies which can provide added value in various areas to improve analytical support. This includes a better understanding and monitoring of conflicts, enhanced situational awareness, boosting innovation in capacity building and training, as well as scaling up peacebuilding efforts.



A PeaceTech marketplace took place as part of the Austrian Forum for Peace 2023

The ACP has focused on integrating PeaceTech methods in its work since 2022. Relating to the ACP capacity development programme, this includes developing mixed reality training frameworks for training of skills for civilian experts in crisis situations.

PeaceTech is also highly relevant in the ACP’s conflict resolution work. This is especially urgent since research has shown a severe lack of peace and conflict data which are georeferenced via technology-conflict-peace interfaces and dynamically visualised, thus allowing for predictions about various types of conflicts before they arise.

These first steps allow us to develop PeaceTech-based approaches as a core competence to offer integrated solutions for the prevention of conflicts before they become violent and for contributions to sustainable development. In this regard, cross-sectoral coordination with other Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus partners enables us to coordinate for more impact on the ground.



WEBSITE

www.ac4p.at

20 864 users
in 172 countries

AUSTRIAN FORUM FOR PEACE 2024

Towards a Climate of Peace

The Austrian Forum for Peace was established in 2023 to find new emerging approaches to conflict work and peace-building and to contribute to global sustainable peace.

The renewed rivalry between major powers, the increasing loss of credibility of the so-called liberal world order, but also the ongoing loss of livelihoods due to the climate crisis and the effects of often uncontrolled technological change have a dramatic impact on security and stability in the world.



Opening, 1 July 2024: M. Ehrmann, L. Gewessler, H. Fischer, L. Kajfež Bogataj, N. Darabos, E. Huber, H.P. Doskozil (from left) © Foto Lexi

Between 1 and 4 July 2024, the ACP team welcomed guests from five continents to Schlaining Castle as part of the Austrian Forum for Peace 2024 "Towards a Climate of Peace" sponsored by the provincial government of Burgenland (a.o.). As one participants put it, the exchange between so many diverging perspectives "allows us to understand each other a little bit better than yesterday".

With more than 150 representatives from diplomacy, science, business and civil society, the opening ceremony on 1 July 2024 was a brilliant start to the four-day conference. Speakers included the Federal Minister for Climate Protection Leonore Gewessler, Burgenland's Governor Hans Peter Doskozil or former Austrian Federal President Heinz Fischer.



Public panel discussion, 2 July 2024: D. Pressl, M. Ehrmann, St. Fenkart, R. Nägeli, D. Prugger (from left)

Over four days, the conference participants attended panel discussions, workshops and networking events. They represented universities, international organisations and initiatives, such as the United Nations, Chatham House, Global Forum on Sustainable Energy, Naif Arab University, Xiangshan Forum, Domestic Data Streamers, International Relations Council of Turkey, Doha Institute, Confluence Advisory, Center for Global Pluralism, Open Knowledge Foundation and the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ).

These were the Main Topics of the Conference:

- A climate of peace? What are the future challenges for peace and multilateralism in a changed world characterised by altered geostrategic networks and global systemic conflicts? How can peaceful coexistence be achieved in the future? What role will traditional peace actors play in the future? What are the options for multilateral organisations in a changed world?
- New mediation actors and how to deal with them: Who are the new actors in international conflict mediation and what are their strengths and weaknesses? How and under which conditions can we work together with them? What are the challenges and limitations arising in this context? What role does the Global South play

AUSTRIAN FORUM FOR PEACE 2024

Towards a Climate of Peace

in the Ukraine war? What power relations and areas of tension are emerging in West Africa, and what are the global implications?

- Climate and conflict: What is the connection between climate change, environmental degradation and conflict dynamics? Who are the people mainly affected worldwide, what divides and what unites them? How can common interests in securing vital resources be used in peace work and mediation? How can communities play an active role in shaping climate projects and how can conflicts be managed constructively at local level? How can climate and conflict be dealt with within the education system?
- Technology for peace: What data and technologies on climate and environment do peace organisations and actors need to optimise their effectiveness and better address and make good use of the nexus between climate, environment, war and peace? What is the significance of technology in peacebuilding? How can access to peacebuilding technology in crisis areas be simplified?



Panel discussion, 3 July 2024: A. Kane, M. Aydin, J. Happymon, L. Yanqi (from left)

The twelve-page results paper “Alliances for Peace - Austrian Forum for Peace 2024: Towards A Climate of Peace” was

presented to an audience of experts in Vienna on 29 July. Moritz Ehrmann exchanged views with European Voices Editor-in-Chief Thomas Seifert and explained: “The Austrian Forum for Peace has taken another step in its development. The programme attracts high-profile personalities from almost all parts of the world and contributes to a much-needed strengthening of peace work. The exchange that takes place here strengthens trust and mutual understanding in our polarised times.”



Panel discussion, 4 July 2025: F. Lashi, P. Behluli, F. Hanna, S. Petti, N. Coyle, D. Pressl (from left)

SOCIAL MEDIA

f Reach: 45 157
Instagram Reach: 3 428
LinkedIn Impressions: 132 585

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AT THE ACP

Capacity Development for Humanitarian Assistance in West Africa – Phase IV

Developing Capacities to Face Complex Humanitarian Challenges in West Africa

The “Capacity Building for Humanitarian Assistance in West Africa” (HAWA) project aims at strengthening effective humanitarian crisis response in the West African region. It is a project funded by Austrian Development Cooperation and supported by the Austrian Ministry of Defence. In 2024, the West African region has again seen a significant increase in substantial humanitarian challenges, with numerous countries grappling with prolonged crises marked by frequent natural disasters and/or conflicts, sustained food crises, the collapse of livelihoods, and inadequate institutional capacity to respond to these crises. The crises are further characterised by serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, extremism, and massive displacement. The changes of some political regimes in recent years (i.e. in Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali) as well as their de-alignment from the regional Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) further compounded the challenges of collaboration in the region. It is crucial for the HAWA Project to ensure that its capacity development efforts adequately respond to the unprecedented humanitarian challenges and rapidly changing context in the West African Region. In 2024, 160 persons joined capacity building activities within the HAWA project.

Workshops in Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Ghana

In 2024, the ACP successfully conducted three local multiplier workshops in Nigeria, Burkina Faso, and Ghana. These workshops served as platforms for participants from civil society, state agencies, the military, and police to deepen their understanding of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), address current challenges, and strengthen professional networks across sectors.

The workshops in Lagos, Nigeria, and Koudougou, Burkina



Faso, focused on developing localised disaster risk reduction plans, enabling participants to identify region-specific risks and propose actionable solutions. In December 2024, the ACP introduced an innovative cross-border approach by piloting a workshop in Northern Ghana. This initiative brought together participants from both sides of the Ghana-Burkina Faso border for three days of training and collaborative work, focusing on enhancing cross-border coordination and improving civil-military cooperation.



CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AT THE ACP

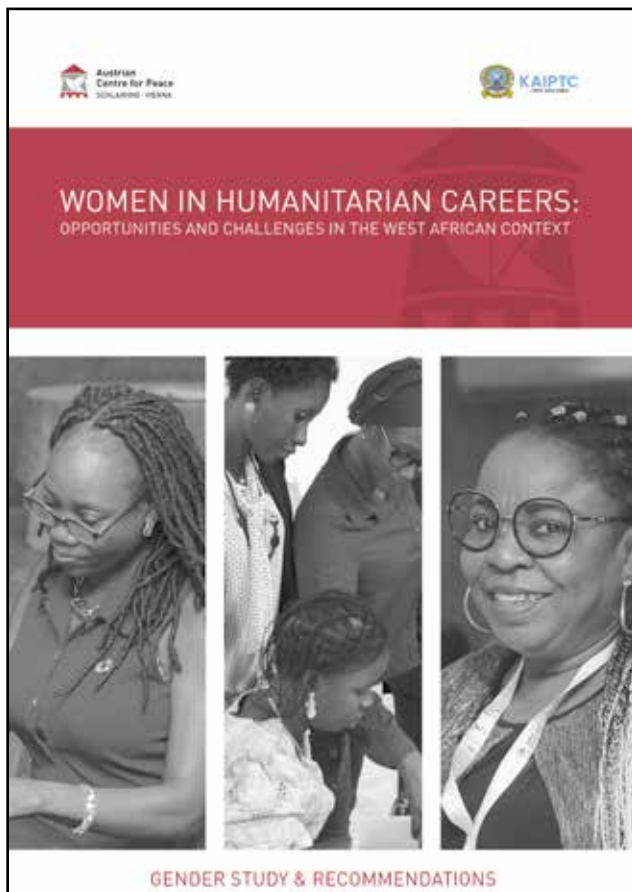
Capacity Development for Humanitarian Assistance in West Africa – Phase IV

Webinar on the Gender Action Plan (GAP) of the SENDAI Framework

In March 2024, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) launched the Gender Action Plan to Support Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. In response, the ACP organised a two-day webinar for 36 francophone West African participants introducing the Plan and helping HAWA alumni explore practical ways to integrate it in their organisational and operational work.

Gender Study: Women in Humanitarian Careers

Female professionals play a vital role in responding to humanitarian crises – yet, they are still underrepresented in humanitarian careers. What motivates women to become humanitarian professionals? And what challenges do they face in entering and progressing in their careers? In the newly published study “Women in Humanitarian Careers: Opportunities and Challenges in the West African Context”, the ACP explores these questions and provide recommendations for policymakers, humanitarian organisations, and other stakeholders within the humanitarian sector. The study is available in English and French and can be downloaded here.



CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AT THE ACP

International Civilian Peacebuilding Training Programme (IPT)

Strengthening Civilian Capacities to Face new Realities in Peacebuilding

Given the resurgence of armed conflict across the globe and the growing complexity of peacebuilding tasks, capacity-building programmes for civilian staff working in conflict and post-conflict settings is more critical as ever. In 2024, 52 individuals from 41 countries and five continents participated in different IPT trainings. As multipliers in their organisations and countries of deployment, they contribute to peace and stability in the Central African Republic, Cameroon, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Georgia, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, Venezuela, and beyond.



Excursion to Burgenland Energie's Green Tech Bio Campus during the IPT specialisation course *Environmental Peacebuilding*

Increasing Effectiveness and Sustainability of Peacebuilding Practices by Applying an Environmental, Climate, and Intersectional Lens

With the aim to prepare peacebuilding practitioners for new and complex realities in conflict-affected and post-conflict regions, the ACP has placed environmental peacebuilding, intersectionality, and PeaceTech at the heart of its capacity-building initiatives within the IPT Programme in 2024. The

IPT Specialisation Course on Environmental Peacebuilding took place for the second time in Stadtschlaining in November 2024 and shed light on the complex interlinkages between the environment, climate, peace, and security. While recognising that climate change, environmental degradation, and competition over natural resources can act as driver and risk multiplier of conflict, the training put an emphasis on how cooperation on environmental and climate issues can offer entry points and opportunities for peace. Through lectures, group work, case studies, and role plays participants learned how to apply a climate and environmental lens to different aspects of peacebuilding work, including conflict analysis, early-warning, conflict prevention, and post-conflict rehabilitation. Local good practices in environmental peacebuilding, the human rights impact of climate change, climate justice, and a tour through the Green Tech Bio Campus on renewable energy and sustainable agriculture run by Energie Burgenland were also part of the programme. Additionally, in January 2024 the IPT Specialisation Course on Intersectional Gender Work took place, which equipped participants with the knowledge and skills to apply innovative intersectional gender practices to peacebuilding work. In conflict-affected societies, intersectionality offers a tool to analyse how multiple aspects of identity intersect and define people's experience, interests, needs, and agency, as well as their views towards what constitutes sustainable peace. This, in turn, allows for a better understanding of conflict dynamics and the development of more inclusive and sustainable peacebuilding strategies. Lastly, the IPT Course for Peacebuilders was conducted twice in 2024 and included the ACP's flagship topics environmental peacebuilding and PeaceTech in an updated course curricular.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AT THE ACP

PeaceTech

AI-Powered Training for the Future

Funded by the EU Horizon Europe Programme, the augMENTOR project is set to innovate education and training by integrating artificial intelligence (AI) in a way that is practical and accessible. Designed to support civil society organisations, NGOs, universities, and EU missions, the project provides tools and approaches that help close skills gaps. Whether it is simplifying AI for non-technical users, testing innovative teaching methods, or building a skills repository tailored to educators and EU needs, augMENTOR is paving the way for smarter, more adaptable learning.

The ACP has been instrumental in building a strong community across the augMENTOR project. By hosting training sessions and events, the ACP has brought together participants from nations across Europe, creating opportunities for collaboration and shared learning. These gatherings not only enhance the project's reach but also ensure that its tools and methods are shaped by diverse perspectives and experiences.

At the heart of the project is a focus on personalised, collaborative learning. augMENTOR moves away from a one-size-fits-all approach and embraces a learner-centred model, building paths that foster critical 21st-century skills such as communication, creativity, collaboration, and digital literacy. By combining human insight with AI's capabilities, the project creates customised learning experiences that respond to individual needs and goals.

The AI toolkit developed by augMENTOR is built to support this vision. It uses big data and learning analytics to offer recommendations for finding the right educational resources and designing tailored learning profiles. Students benefit from tools that help them manage their progress while teachers gain a clearer view of how their students are learning. This allows them to adapt their teaching, track progress,

and better prepare future educators to use new technologies critically and effectively.

But augMENTOR does not just focus on the tools. It is also about addressing broader challenges in education—how to make classrooms more dynamic, how to understand learning as a process (not just an outcome), and how to ensure students and educators alike can thrive even during unexpected disruptions. By combining technology with a strong focus on community and connection, the project aims to make education more responsive and human-centred.

One of the project's key goals is to provide practical advice to all kinds of education stakeholders. Whether it is helping to identify learning difficulties, supporting gifted students, or shaping individual learning paths, augMENTOR is about creating systems that work for everyone. It also takes a proactive approach to addressing gaps in education, thus helping organisations and policymakers make informed decisions about the future of learning.

A great example of how augMENTOR collaborates is through its Ethical Hacking for Peace initiative. By exploring the possibilities of AI and machine learning, this programme feeds valuable insights back into the project, keeping it fresh and innovative. Together, augMENTOR and its partners are working to ensure that education keeps pace with the rapidly changing world.

For the ACP, augMENTOR fits perfectly into its larger mission of creating meaningful training opportunities. The project has the potential to play a key role in the development of a University of Capacities in Stadtschlaining, offering a solid foundation of advanced, personalised tools and methods. It also supports ACP's wider efforts to enhance online training programmes, making them more flexible, accessible, and tailored to the needs of learners in peacebuilding and beyond.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AT THE ACP

PeaceTech

By linking cutting-edge AI with real-world learning needs, augMENTOR offers a glimpse of what's possible when technology and education come together to meet the challenges of today—and tomorrow.

Virtual Reality-Enhanced Training for Field Readiness

The SkillDrill project, funded through the collaboration of the Austrian Ministry of Finance and the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG), represents a groundbreaking approach to crisis management training. Developed by the ACP in partnership with leading organisations such as the Austrian Institute of Technology (AIT), Mindconsole GmbH, the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Johanniter Österreich Ausbildung und Forschung gem. GmbH (JOAFG), and the Austrian Ministry of Defence, the initiative sets a new standard in preparing personnel for complex field operations.



A PeaceTech marketplace took place as part of the Austrian Forum for Peace 2023

This innovative project aims to create a cutting-edge mixed reality (MR) training framework, designed to expand the training options available for essential skills in planning and preparing for foreign missions. SkillDrill aligns with the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy

(CSDP), which seeks to strengthen civil and military crisis management by ensuring that personnel are appropriately qualified to meet the challenges of peacekeeping, conflict prevention, and international security. By addressing the diverse requirements of modern crisis management, Skill-Drill incorporates areas such as strategic and deployment planning, security protocols, intercultural competence, and medical care. Training content spans all critical phases, including general mission preparation and mandate-specific topics, equipping participants with the skills necessary to operate in challenging environments. This includes essential capabilities such as monitoring, mediation, situational awareness, and decision-making, all taught through a combination of theoretical learning and practical exercises which foster collaboration among civilian, military, diplomatic, and humanitarian stakeholders.

The training system operates on three levels of immersion, ensuring flexibility and adaptability to a range of scenarios:

- **Digital Level:** Focused on strategic planning, this level offers course content in a digital format, providing a foundation for mission preparation.
- **Virtual Reality (VR) Level:** VR technology delivers immersive training for mission-specific skills required on deployment. Participants can practise essential competencies such as safety and security protocols (e.g. checkpoint behaviour), negotiation techniques, and intercultural communication. Training sessions can be conducted individually or collaboratively regardless of location, thus enhancing accessibility and cost-efficiency.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AT THE ACP

PeaceTech

- **Mixed Reality (MR) Level:** Modern MR technology elevates training to an unparalleled level of immersion. For example, medical training is enhanced through the use of manikins and emergency equipment integrated into VR scenarios. Trainees can practise patient care realistically within a dynamic, virtual environment which replicates the complexities of foreign missions.

SkillDrill leverages the latest advances in Virtual Reality (VR) and Mixed Reality (MR) to create an immersive and cost-effective training system. By integrating socio-cultural aspects and real-world dynamics, the platform ensures that participants gain the skills and confidence to navigate critical situations effectively. This innovative approach addresses the unique challenges of crisis management, providing robust preparation for personnel operating in peacekeeping, disaster management, and international aid.

As SkillDrill comes to a close, the ACP has successfully secured funding via the FFG to bring the project forward into its next phase. This new initiative, titled EnviPeace, will focus on using immersive technologies for environmental peacebuilding and mobile training in missions. EnviPeace is set to commence in January 2025, marking an exciting new chapter in the application of immersive solutions for global peacebuilding.



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CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AT THE ACP

EU-Trainings

European Union Civilian Training Initiative (EUCTI)

Since its inception in 2021, ACP has been a key partner in the EU Civilian Training Initiative (EUCTI), an EU-funded project led by the Slovenian Centre for European Perspective (CEP) and implemented by a consortium of eight European training organisations. The project, which concluded in July 2024, aimed to strengthen civilian crisis management and stabilisation missions through training and the development of qualified personnel.

During the final phase, the ACP continued to chair the consortium's working group on evaluation, overseeing the assessment of 11 training activities, including 4 conducted by ACP. As in previous years, evaluations highlighted high levels of participant satisfaction across all events.

April and May were particularly busy months for ACP, with intensive preparation and delivery of training sessions targeting civilian CSDP missions, including EUAM Ukraine, EUCAP Sahel Mali, and EUBAM Libya:

EUAM Ukraine

Online training activities on the climate-environment-security nexus delivered to two distinct target audiences: senior management and the "Green Team".

In April and early May 2024, ACP conducted two online training events for 16 EUAM Ukraine mission members, enhancing their understanding of the climate-environment-security nexus. These activities supported the EU's Joint Communication on Climate Security by improving climate literacy among CSDP (Common Security and Defence Policy) mission members.

- **Training Activity 1** "Strategic Insights – Exploring the Interplay of Climate, Environment, and Security in Ukraine", designed for senior managers, focussed on raising awareness of the links between climate, environment, and security and encouraged the integration of these considerations into mission operations.
- **Training Activity 2** "Empowering the Green Team – Enhancing Environmental Performance", aimed at EUAM Ukraine's staff members interested and willing in engaging more proactively in the topic ("Green Team"); this training provided practical tools for environmental analysis, action planning, and promoting sustainable practices within the mission.

SSR-Training to EUCAP Sahel Mali



SSR-Training to EUCAP Sahel Mali

Following a successful security sector reform and governance (SSR) training delivered to EUCAP Sahel Mali in the autumn of 2023, the mission requested a second course

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AT THE ACP

EU-Trainings

to include additional national and international staff. In response, ACP conducted a tailored, one-week programme aligned with the mission's mandate, contextual challenges, and specific needs, incorporating feedback and lessons from the initial training.

EUCAP Sahel Mali, headquartered in Bamako and established in January 2015, supports national SSR strategies and works to strengthen governance and accountability within Mali's internal security forces. The training was structured around a fictional case study which was specifically developed for this purpose and target group and served as a foundation for the programme.

Over the course of five days, participants engaged in facilitated discussions, examined the complexities of SSR in fragile contexts, and enhanced their practical skills for supporting or implementing SSR processes. This highly participatory and immersive approach fostered team cohesion, a sense of shared responsibility, and a deeper understanding of each participant's role within the mission.

EUBAM Libya - Basic Course on Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

EUBAM Libya supports Libyan authorities in border management, combating cross-border crime, and countering terrorism through technical advice, capacity-building, and strategic guidance. At EUBAM's request, ACP designed a training programme to strengthen conflict resolution skills for a diverse group of international and local advisors, enhancing collaboration with external partners and within the mission. The 3-day online course, which was held in early March, combined practical exercises with theoretical insights tailored to participants' professional contexts.

In the second half of 2024, ACP contributed to developing the project concept and proposal for a new civilian training

initiative, led by the Centre for European Perspective (CEP) and funded under the EU's Foreign Policy Instrument. The initiative, known by the abbreviation EUTI, involves a larger consortium of civilian and police training institutes from across Europe. This new initiative will carry on the legacy of ENTRi, EUP(C)ST, and EUCTI, with ACP continuing to play an active role. The project will start in 2025.

ESDC Courses

In 2024, the ACP conducted the usual number of four specialisation courses, including two SSR (Security Sector Reform) and two POC (Protection of Civilians) courses as well as a Pre-Deployment Training in the framework of its long-standing cooperation programme with the Austrian Ministry of Defence as part of the academic programme of the ESDC (European Security and Defence College).



CPOC course in May 2024 at Schlaining Castle

Due to the challenges in the large UN peacekeeping operations in Africa, participation numbers saw a slight decrease. In any case, the CSDP missions mostly remaining in place will continue to make use of the specialisation courses which the ACP continues to offer.

Furthermore, the ACP also co-organised a Pre-Deployment Training at the ESDC Offices in Brussels, preparing EU civilian and military expert staff for their deployment to the field.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AT THE ACP

EU-Trainings

ESDC Configuration on Climate Change, Environment, Security and Defence (CCESD)

In February 2024, Monika Psenner, ACP's Head of Capacity Development, was elected Chairperson of the newly established ESDC configuration addressing climate change, environmental degradation, and their impact on security and defence. ACP, supported by EEAS and European partner institutions, had advocated for such a working group since late 2022. Its formation was enabled by the EU's Joint Communication, A New Outlook on the Climate and Security Nexus: Addressing the Impact of Climate Change and Environmental Degradation on Peace, Security, and Defence, published on 28 June 2023. Following the ESDC Steering Committee's decision in December 2023, the configuration formally launched in 2024 with a kick-off meeting which saw the election of the chairperson, and subsequent meetings defining its mission, rules of procedure, and four thematic priorities for training:

1. Climate-environment-peace-security nexus
2. Environmental crime
3. Climate-energy-defence nexus
4. Environmental management and performance

Security Policy Workshops and the 3C Process

As part of the cooperation with the Austrian MOD on political advisory, the ACP assisted in designing and co-organising a series of three security policy workshops as follows:

- Workshop on Humanitarian-Development-Security Workshop on Moldova, exploring a harmonised whole-of- government approach to support cooperation with the partner country.
- Security Policy Workshop on Climate Protection, Peace, Security and Development, exploring possible synergies for a joint whole-of-government approach to climate change challenges.
- Security Policy Workshop on Levant, mapping the region in order to identify potential opportunities for intervention by Austrian stakeholders in the sub-region.

The series was concluded by the annual 3C-Conference, bringing together governmental and civil society stakeholders to discuss policies and approaches for an improved implementation of shared development cooperation and support to peace and security.

PEACE EDUCATION AT THE ACP

The 20 000th Pupil at the Peace Weeks

A Contribution to Social Cohesion

Our children and young people are becoming more and more violent! This was a headline in the media in 2007, marking the birth of the successful "Peace Weeks" project. As is so often the case in Schlaining, it began with a vision and turned into remarkable success: In April 2024, the 20 000th pupil was welcomed to the Peace Weeks. Thousands of young people have become peace ambassadors, learning in Schlaining that violence is not a solution - and what the options are to deal with conflicts creatively and cooperatively and thus improve the situation for everyone.



© Peter Seper

Peace education measures should enable people of all ages to recognise conflict dynamics, deal with conflict potential using peaceful means and avoid conflict escalation. Since 2007, a dedicated team of experts has been training pupils from the 3rd to the 13th year of education in conflict and peace skills. This requires not only knowledge and capabilities, but also the internalisation of peace-promoting norms, values and attitudes. All of this is taught in various peace education programmes at the ACP. In addition to the "small peace" in our social environment, it is also about dealing with the "big peace" with all its global contexts.

"Peace Weeks" project: From I to You to We

Successful teaching and positive interaction at school in-

clude the promotion of social skills and the strengthening of a positive self-image as a prerequisite for developing constructive group competence. Fundamental areas of social behaviour are contact, cooperation and conflict behaviour, self-control and awareness of rules. A good classroom climate does a lot to support learning processes. Accordingly, the Peace Weeks focus on appreciative language, a courageous, constructive and creative approach to conflicts, a departure from violence and aggression towards socially competent behaviour. "I and you" - everyone plays a relevant role in arriving at a successful "we" in the classroom.

A diverse Peace Education Programme

Over the years, the ACP has developed a broad range of peace education training programmes and activities in cooperation with the Burgenland University of Teacher Education, the Burgenland Ombuds Office for Children and Young People and the Burgenland Board of Education. These include the annual peace symposium "7 Days for Peace", the university course "Global Peace Education", the peace fairy-tale book "Frieda and Friedo", the "Holocaust History Project", which was awarded the Theodor Kery Prize in 2024, and many more. The goal is a more peaceful society for all - perhaps this vision will also come true one day...

Systemic Competence Training:

- 2024: 24 teachers
- Since the beginning: 505 teachers

Holocaust History Project:

- 2024: 33 school classes
- Since the beginning: 221 school classes

7 Days for Peace 2024:

- 350 participants

PEACE EDUCATION AT THE ACP

Peace at the Museum

With the redesign of the museum at Schlaining Peace Castle in 2024, peace also returned as a theme. On the third floor of the castle, an exhibition entitled “Schlaining & Peace” highlights the ACP’s commitment from its beginnings to the present day.



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It all began with a vision of peace. The first room tells of the beginnings of the Peace Centre in the 1980s, a time when the world was characterised by the Cold War and the constant threat of nuclear war. Since then, the ACP has developed into a place where leading international peace thinkers come together, and so do thousands of course participants, students and teachers, as well as over 20,000 pupils, to all learn and practise peace skills.

However, the exhibit not only sheds light on the history but also the methodology and working methods of the ACP – in an approach which is extremely valuable for peace education. How do we talk to each other? How do we deal with conflicts? And what are the key peace skills? All these questions can be explored interactively in the second room – from the languages of giraffes and wolves to the peace staircase, the

conflict type test and the guilt wheel. The portraits of famous peacemakers show that each and every one of us can make a valuable contribution to more peace in the world.

Speaking of the world: The third room is all about our homeland Earth. Humanity likes to see itself as the crowning glory of creation, acting as if there is an abundance of everything. However, we are faced with challenges such as climate change, resource scarcity, waves of migration, armed conflicts and new wars now. It is high time we recognised that we can only avert impending disasters and achieve a new quality of human and earthly life by working together and taking prudent, global action. After all, it is up to us to “be the change we want to see in this world” (Mahatma Gandhi).

The fourth room deals with democracy and peace: Democracy does not just happen at the ballot box, but also through standing up for values and norms, and through actively shaping society - locally, nationally and globally - as the UN’s Agenda 2030 shows. This involves changes at the economic, social and ecological levels with a vision of enabling peaceful and inclusive societies for all people.

The corridor connecting all the rooms is dedicated to the Peace Castle’s greatest treasure: “Sadako’s crane”. This refers to a tiny origami crane. Who was Sadako Sasaki and what is the story behind the paper birds? The touching story of the girl as well as her strong message of peace can be explored under the wings of a thousand origami cranes...

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AT THE ACP

Our Work and Projects in the Field of Dialogue, Mediation and Conflict Resolution

Sudan: Supporting the Establishment of a Civilian Platform

Since the outbreak of civil war between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Sudan in April 2023, there have been a number of competing negotiation initiatives. In the shadow of the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, Sudan is facing an enormous humanitarian catastrophe and the “world’s largest displacement crisis”, according to the UN.

ACP’s involvement in Sudan dates back to 2015, with the support of the Austrian Development Agency working to end the recruitment of child soldiers. After the fall of the Bashir regime in 2019, the ACP supported the political transition process by working with rebel groups from Darfur. This led to the declaration of a unilateral ceasefire by a significant rebel group in 2021. Even after the military coup in October 2021, this engagement continued through involvement of civilian and political opposition groups with the support of the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs.

After the outbreak of the civil war in April 2023, various mediation initiatives failed. Following the termination of the UN transition mission UNITAMS and the freezing of the ceasefire talks conducted by the USA and Saudi Arabia, the central negotiating mandate was transferred to the African Union and the regional organisation IGAD.

In 2024, the ACP supported a process led by the African Union and IGAD to create a civilian platform in opposition to the two belligerent sides. Such an alliance would include political parties and players, as well as civil society actors. The focus of the ACP consisted of establishing the conditions for two armed rebel groups from Darfur to join the alliance.

Persian Gulf Inclusive Regional Dialogue

The Gulf Region is subject to constant change, it is fragile and vulnerable. It is also the centre of the global energy market, and a major trade node. In recent years, countries in the region have sought to move from confrontation to dialogue. Launched in early 2022, the ACP Gulf Inclusive Regional Dialogue, supported by the Austrian Federal Minister of European and International Affairs, is designed to foster the development of a regional constituency to reinforce this emerging dialogue dynamic in the region through confidential and constructive dialogue, and the collaborative development and dissemination of policy recommendations.

The format brings together experts from Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, Iran, Iraq, and Yemen for informal discussions on two parallel and intertwined tracks: Security Discussions and Environmental Peacebuilding. The first one tackles ongoing challenges such as the conflict in Yemen, arms control, and maritime security. The second engages the shared regional challenge of water security within the context of climate change, and the potential for states in the region to address this shared critical challenge through collaborative regional complex environmental regeneration.

The initiative has organised in-person meetings at the Peace Castle in Stadtschlaining and in Vienna, as well as a series of online Workgroup Dialogues on Security and Environmental Peacebuilding. In relation to the issue of water security, research was developed on water scarcity as an entry point for Environmental Peacebuilding in the Persian Gulf. The initiative concluded the series of meetings with final meeting in December 2024.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AT THE ACP

Our Work and Projects in the Field of Dialogue, Mediation and Conflict Resolution

Training Women in Georgia Across Divides

In 2023, with support from the UK Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF), UN Women partnered with ACP to build confidence among young Abkhaz, Georgian, and South-Ossetian women through the training programme “**Women, Peace and Security and Youth, Peace and Security Nexus.**”

Building on this success, the “**SheLeads**” initiative was developed at UN Women Georgia’s request, funded by Denmark, to empower women leaders from conflict-affected communities in Georgia, including Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia. The first stage, certified by the University of Basel in cooperation with Swisspeace, was designed by Professor Gal Harbat in consultation with ACP.

The course, held in Larnaca and Nicosia, Cyprus, from 23-29 November 2024, provided a six-day immersive learning experience combining theoretical insights, experiential practices, and field-based research. Participants engaged with an in-depth curriculum covering human rights, gender theories, WPS and Youth, Peace and Security agendas, SDGs, feminist foreign policy, as well as gender and militarism. A key highlight was a visit to Nicosia’s buffer zone, offering insights into the Cypriot conflict and fostering collaboration.

South Sudan and Northern Uganda: Empowering Local Peacemakers

South Sudan’s displacement crisis is one of Africa’s most significant in recent times, with 2.3 million refugees spread across neighbouring countries and another 2.2 million internally displaced within South Sudan. Uganda hosts over 40% of the South Sudanese refugees in the region, more than half of which are women and girls. Conflicts between host and refugee communities arise frequently over resources such as food, land, water, or firewood. Domestic, sexual,

and gender-based forms of violence are widespread within both groups, often linked to insufficient food ratios, toxic gender roles, trauma, and substance abuse. In one of the refugees’ places of origin, Kajo-Keji County in South Sudan, inter-communal violence occurs periodically between local farmers and nomadic cattle herding communities, leading to further displacement, destruction of livelihoods, and trauma.

Since 2021, project partners in Austria, South Sudan, and Uganda, have been supporting refugee and host communities through the provision of livelihoods support, skills training, and psychosocial support activities, supported by funding from the Austrian Development Agency. The project aims to strengthen the resilience of communities affected by violence in both countries by applying the humanitarian-development-peace nexus (HDP nexus) approach and providing multidimensional support to achieve a common goal.

In 2024, the ACP and its local peacebuilding partner Community Empowerment for Progress Organisation (CEPO) in South Sudan, as well as partners in Uganda continued to focus on building the capacities of community peace monitors. These are selected individuals from host and refugee communities – women, men, youth, and church leaders – who receive training on communication skills, conflict analysis and conflict resolution. They serve their communities as third parties when domestic and inter-community conflict occurs.

As a result of the successful trainings, the ACP also developed additional capacity development measures for community peace monitors in South Sudan as well as a cross-border, advanced level training programme for selected participants from both countries with the aim of integrating local approaches to peacebuilding for maximum impact and sustainability. In the first half of 2024, this marked the end of activities in this project.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AT THE ACP

Our Work and Projects in the Field of Dialogue, Mediation and Conflict Resolution

Neighbourhood Mediation in Burgenland

A survey conducted among municipal politicians and other local stakeholders revealed that neighbourhood conflicts are playing a growing role in the life of communities. These conflicts are not only a problem for those affected and their immediate surroundings, but often have an impact on local and regional politics, the police, judiciary and social work. Starting in 2022, the ACP undertook the first experiments with neighbourhood mediation in cooperation with Oberwarter Siedlungsgenossenschaft (OSG), a housing association known for its innovative approaches.

The research project “Conflicts and conflict management in the housing and tenancy context with a focus on multi-party residential buildings in Burgenland” was launched in 2023 with funding from the ERDF, a European programme locally managed by Wirtschaftsagentur Burgenland. The project partner, Burgenland University of Applied Sciences, provides scientific support to the process while the ACP organises the mediation sessions after referral by OSG.

By the end of 2024, 34 conflicts had been mediated by a team of five ACP mediators. The offer was successfully accepted. The mediators have to deal with a comparatively wide range of conflict constellations, from classic neighbourhood conflicts to complex conflicts with external actors. One thing can already be mentioned at this point: The research interviews and other networking activities have further increased interest on the part of housing associations, municipal politicians, social workers, the judiciary and the police in initiating constructive forms of conflict resolution in this area, which has a significant influence on the conflict behaviour of society.

The project seeks to explore the following issues:

- Opportunities and limitations of mediation under the existing local conditions in Burgenland.
- Identification and establishment of networks for training, prevention, networking, generation of ideas and implementation of mediation.
- Survey of the financial and social costs of unresolved conflicts as well as cost avoidance through structured conflict resolution measures
- Possibilities of digitalisation in the area of conflict management and mediation.

RESEARCH AT THE ACP

Austrian Forum for Peace Working Papers Series

As a result of the Austrian Forum for Peace 2023, a new publication series was created under the name “Austrian Forum for Peace Working Papers”. In 2024, five such Working Papers were published.

01/2024: Emerging Approaches to International Mediation in a Fragmented World



The growing number of conflicts - Ukraine, the Middle East, Sudan, etc. - is accompanied by a weakening of the international system and a stalemate in important peace processes. While traditional actors in mediation are increasingly positioning themselves in support of specific conflict parties and are becoming less attractive as

“convening platforms”, the mediation efforts of new hosting states are often linked to specific interests. The publication discusses how Austria could position itself as a neutral actor within these new approaches to mediation.

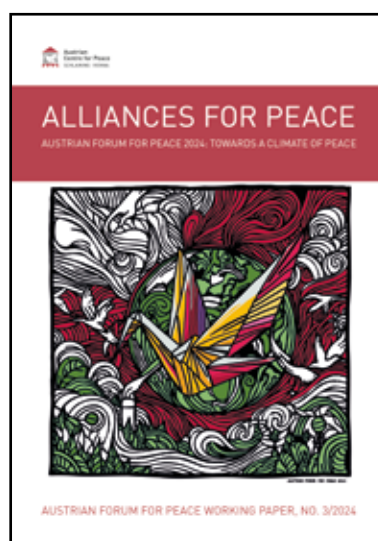
02/2024: Water Scarcity as an Entry Point for Environmental Peacebuilding in the Persian Gulf

Lack of water security, climate change, and water-intensive economic activities represent an existential threat to Gulf region states. An environmental peacebuilding approach can add nuance to traditional debates about water management at a time of climate breakdown. This report considers water in its full hydrological cycle and analyses the implications of water scarcity at a regional level as well as the double-binds



generated by technological solutions applied to water security. The paper concludes by giving suggestions for opportunities brought by an environmental peacebuilding approach, such as enabling complex regeneration through regional cooperation.

3/2024: Alliances for Peace

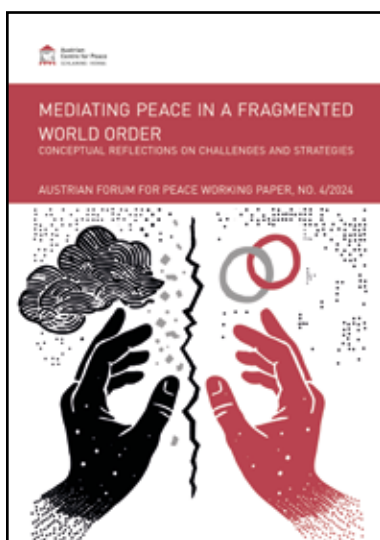


Apart from the results paper **Alliances for Peace - Austrian Forum for Peace 2024: Towards A Climate of Peace** (see page 11), the ACP produced the two-part publication **Mediating Peace in a Fragmented World Order** as an outcome of the conference.

RESEARCH AT THE ACP

Austrian Forum for Peace Working Papers Series

04/2024: Conceptual Reflections on Challenges and Strategies

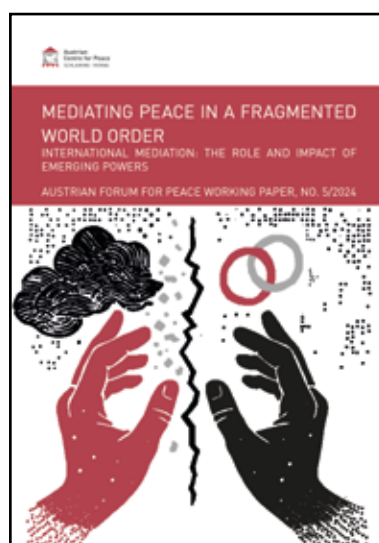


In this Austrian Forum for Peace Working Paper Jan Pospisil discusses why the rise of multipolarity, the resurgence of nationalism, and the increasing role of non-state actors are just a few factors contributing to global fragmentation, complicating the landscape of peace mediation. Moreover, potential approaches to armed

conflict mediation and post-conflict transitions which might be more effective in this context of fragmentation are explored. Finally, Jan Pospisil assesses whether new strategies are required to address the unique challenges posed by a fragmented global order and how these strategies might be implemented to foster sustainable peace in an increasingly complex world.

05/2024: International Mediation: The Role and Impact of Emerging Powers

In a changing world order, norms and practices of peace mediation — broadly defined as a means of assisting negotiations to prevent, manage, or end violent conflicts — are evolving. Alongside peace initiatives undertaken by the UN, regional bodies, and traditional Western mediators, there is a growing body of practice developed by emerging powers in assisting negotiations between conflict parties, especially in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. The Austrian Forum for Peace Working Paper by Bernardo Mariani examines the



role and impact of four emerging powers — China, Qatar, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates — in international peace mediation. It investigates the policies, motivations, practices, comparative advantages, and constraints of their mediation work as well as the implications for international peacemaking efforts.

MEDIA REVIEW

68 Mentions

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RESEARCH AT THE ACP

NeFKÖ Annual Conference 2024: Further Development of Peace and Conflict Research in Austria



Between 25 and 27 April 2024, the eighth annual conference of the “Network Peace Research and Conflict Research in Austria/NeFKÖ” took place at the University of Klagenfurt, in cooperation with the “Centre for Peace Research and Peace Education” at the University of Klagenfurt. The conference was dedicated to the topic “Further development of peace and conflict research in Austria”. During the three days of the conference, peace researchers, practitioners and representatives of civil society engaged in lively discussions. 18 different peace research and conflict transformation institutions in Austria and Germany were represented.

The conference began with a guided tour of the exhibition on the lives and works of Käthe Kollwitz and Ernst Barlach at Stadtgalerie Klagenfurt which asked the key question of “how to resist war”. In the discussion that followed, the importance of feminist perspectives and other marginalised groups in the resistance against war and conflict was emphasised. The need to focus the debate on the climate and biodiversity crises as issues relevant to peace was also emphasised.

The question of options for critical reflection on one’s own position in the practice of peace research and conflict trans-

formation was taken up in the discussion of the keynote speech by Fatma Haron from the Austrian Peace Centre (ACP) on the following day. This served as a starting point for the ensuing discussion on the gaps in peace and conflict research in the area of reflecting on one’s own assumptions and practices. On the final day of the conference, Anna-Laura Punkt from the collective “We are Vienna too” contributed a complementary perspective in a keynote speech on power-critical reflexivity.



Thus, both peace and conflict research and conflict transformation require perspectives and practices which are i.a. characterised by approaches critical of power and domination, sensitive to discrimination and trauma-informed. These topics will also be retained as cross-cutting themes at the ninth NeFKÖ Annual Conference next year. This will take place at the University of Graz from 23 to 25 April 2025 and will focus on the topic of the climate and biodiversity crisis.

RESEARCH AT THE ACP

Re-Establish University Capacities in Stadtschlaining

In 2024, the ACP engaged in a comprehensive planning process to develop the re-establishment of higher education capacity in Stadtschlaining. A comprehensive vision and roadmap for the potential reconstruction of a university-level offering in the field of peace and conflict research have been developed. These build on previous experience with the European Peace University (EPU) and address questions related to the official accreditation process and the development of university capacities - especially in teaching, research, administration and infrastructure, the exploration of international and national partnerships and networks. In partnership with World University Service, the ACP developed a risk analysis, a five-year process plan as well as an initial business case for a private university, adding to a feasibility study developed in 2023. The ACP also collaborated with the University of Applied Sciences Burgenland, Joseph Haydn Private University and the Private University of Education Burgenland in order to benefit from the experiences of regional higher education institutions.

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