



The  
Federal Government

Guidelines on

# Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace





After more than 50 years of civil war, the „Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia“ (FARC) laid down their arms. A Colombian woman reacts with joy to this historic event. With the peace agreement of 2016, FARC ended their existence as a guerrilla group. © picture alliance/Photoshot

## Why we need the guidelines

The demands placed on German crisis management around the world have grown immensely. That is why we need a compass to show us the way towards a modern peace policy. The German Government therefore drew up the guidelines on “Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace” under the auspices of the Federal Foreign Office. Together with the 2016 white paper and the German Government’s 2017 Development Policy Report, they form the strategic framework for the German Government’s engagement in the sphere of peace policy.

## What history teaches us

Germany’s special responsibility for peace as a result of its history forms the foundation for these guidelines. Preventing wars and genocides, protecting minorities and human rights, are all part of Germany’s national ethos. Furthermore, there are hardly any crises nowadays whose effects are not felt by Germany at some point. For that reason, preventing crises, resolving conflicts and building peace are also very much in Germany’s interest.

## How we can help bring about lasting peace

For the German Government, assuming international responsibility means identifying potential conflicts and crises at an early stage and helping to defuse them. Crisis prevention addresses the structural political and social causes as well as the drivers of conflicts while attempting to prevent escalation and outbreaks of violence as well as making long-term contributions to peaceful coexistence. The German Government underpins this approach within the framework of its foreign, security and development policies, adhering to the primacy of politics and prioritising prevention. Military operations remain the last resort and must be embedded in an overall political strategy and be combined with civilian approaches.



Working for peace – Germany provides staffing and financial support to United Nations, EU, NATO and OSCE missions.

© picture alliance/blickwinkel

*„Only by acting in a coordinated manner and adopting a linked-up approach can we respond properly to the fact that peace, security and developments are inextricably intertwined.“*

*Angela Merkel, Federal Chancellor*



Children play at Hasansham refugee camp near Mosul, Iraq. Germany provides support to the population that has fled the so called Islamic State and helps to meet the most critical needs. © dpa

## Why we have to act together

Peace, security and development are not isolated spheres. They are mutually interdependent. A minimum level of security is a prerequisite for development: no farmer will plough his field if it is mined. But the reverse is equally true: no development prospects means no security. A military peacekeeping operation cannot succeed if there are no political processes and people have no long-term prospects. The new guidelines provide a framework which brings together all of these spheres. They form a foundation for Germany's peace and security policy.

## How we coordinate our work

To ensure that the various instruments are working together optimally, the German Government is strengthening coordination among the ministries, linking their approaches across the entire spectrum more closely with one another and bringing them together in a joint strategy. In Mali, for example, diplomatic, military and police operations – within the framework of UN and EU missions – as well as projects aimed at promoting stabilisation and sustainable development serve a common goal: consolidating the peace process.



Malian children watch Bundeswehr soldiers near Gao, Mali. With a whole-of-government approach, relevant German ministries support peacebuilding efforts in Mali. © Bundeswehr/Susanne Hähnel

## Why we need patience

Experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq, for example, have shown that crises take anything but a linear course. Anyone who tries to have a positive impact in a difficult environment also has to expect setbacks and accept that there are no guarantees of success and often only limited scope for exercising influence. The guidelines therefore call for realism, pragmatism and flexibility. On the road to realising our long-term goals we have to proceed step by step, factor in setbacks and be prepared to take risks and enter into compromises.

## Where we are taking a fresh look

Are we always doing the right thing with the right tools? To further develop our instruments, we need fresh impetus as well as the expertise which civil society and academia have to offer. The “PeaceLab2016: A Fresh Look at Peace and Security” was established at the same time as the guidelines were being drafted – and met with an overwhelming response. We are continuing this debate process – on the PeaceLab blog, the Twitter account as well as at events for interested members of the public.

## Further information

The guidelines in full: [www.diplo.de/leitlinien](http://www.diplo.de/leitlinien)

The PeaceLab blog: [peacelab.blog/debatte/english](http://peacelab.blog/debatte/english)

 [www.twitter.com/peacelabblog](https://www.twitter.com/peacelabblog)

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