



Bonn International Center for Conversion

B · I · C · C

bulletin

No. 65

July–October 2014

Human rights at the external borders of the EU

By Ines Jacqueline Werkner et al.

According to the non-governmental institution “United,” at least 17,000 people have died at the external borders of the EU in the past 20 years. All too often, boats with refugees have been intercepted in the open sea and sent back. The border control agency Frontex carries part of the responsibility for such practices. This ‘fortress Europe’ does not go well with the international responsibility to protect (R2P): How can EU states intervene militarily in the framework of R2P but at the same time let refugees starve and die of thirst in their boats and violate their rights on a daily basis? European border politics contradict the value systems and norms of the EU and prove to be inefficient. The sealing off of the outer borders of the EU does not really change much with regard to the real challenge of migration. This is awkward, in particular in countries where cultural homogeneity is a central pillar of national statehood. Chances of migration can, however, be life-saving. Besides, Europe highly depends on migrants, both from an economic but also from a demographic point of view.

Human rights do not stop at the external borders of the EU. We have to improve the protection of refugees and develop a rights-based migration policy. One important step in that direction has been taken by the European Parliament Committee on Civil Liberties: In February 2014, it rewrote the rules of engagement for Frontex, which the European Parliament supported on 16 April. The European border protection police now have the duty to save lives at sea—which actually ought to be a matter of course and is an integral part of maritime law. But, under certain conditions, Frontex can still push back boats and control passengers—on the open sea, of course. Only safe third countries are permitted as exclusive

destination. With this ruling, however, this so-far illegal practice, with a few exceptions, has been turned into legal practice.

We also demand to abolish the rule, anchored in the Dublin III-Regulation, according to which the country that the refugee has stepped on first is responsible for the asylum procedure. (...)

We consider it to be wrong that the EU continues to rely on technical solutions and the dislocation of border security into neighbouring and transit states of the EU to stop unwanted migration. The surveillance system EUROSUR is to detect refugees before they reach European soil. This system violates human rights, causes horrendous costs, but also secures lucrative orders for European arms producers. It is also problematic to ‘strengthen’ border protection forces in neighbouring states, such as Libya, in the establishment of reception centres in the Sahara. By advocating such ‘outsourcing’, the EU is pulling back from its responsibility as it is obvious that neighbouring states that themselves suffer from violent conflict cannot offer the protection refugees need. (...)

The humanitarian catastrophe in Syria

The Geneva Conference earlier this year could have pointed the way towards peace negotiations in Syria: For the first time, representatives from government and opposition negotiated a cease fire in the civil war. But hopes were dashed; a diplomatic solution after the failure of the conference is more unlikely than ever. Many in the West have argued against a humanitarian intervention because they feared that this could turn the civil war in Syria into a regional firestorm. This is exactly what has happened, even without Western intervention; an expansion of the conflict to the entire region seems unstoppable; the support of the conflict parties by external actors continues. The horrors of the civil war in Syria are also damaging the reputation and validity of the Responsibility to Protect that was adopted in 2005 by the UN General Assembly.

The success in the disarmament of Syrian chemical weapons is the only positive develop-

ment to date. The International Community has to ensure that all Syrian chemical weapons holdings are destroyed, as agreed, by the end of June 2014. We consider technical support to be self-evident; in particular from those countries that had previously delivered parts for these weapons. (...)

The suffering of the Syrian people is immense. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, there are around 9.3 million Syrian refugees of whom 6.4 million are internally displaced and urgently need humanitarian assistance. In Syria, international aid organisations are confronted with all but insurmountable obstacles. The infrastructure, in the fourth year of fighting, is mostly destroyed; bombed out roads, hospitals and lacking personnel make it neigh on impossible to supply the suffering population with basic services. This war has so far claimed more than 150,000 lives. About one-quarter of a million people are hemmed in like in Homs. (...)

The neighbouring countries are pushed to their limits as the reception of Syrian refugees is concerned; this also bears an inherent conflict potential. We appeal to the EU Member States to provide more humanitarian support. The EU agreement with Turkey of 2013 on visa facilitation is a disgrace. It binds Turkey to take back refugees who have illegally entered the EU via its territory.

German admission policy is also quite outrageous: Germany has decided to grant asylum to a mere 10,000 Syrian refugees. We appeal to the German government to correct that number and accept at least 200,000 refugees in view of the humanitarian catastrophe.

Extract from "Peace Report 2014. Editors' Statement: Current Developments and Recommendations." Ines-Jacqueline Werkner et al. (eds.). 2014. Friedensgutachten 2014. Münster: LIT Verlag.

Bonn International Center for Conversion
bulletin No. 65

BICC (Bonn International Center for Conversion) is an independent, non-profit organization that deals with a wide range of global topics in the field of peace and conflict research centering on Conversion Studies.

This newsletter is published quarterly by

© BICC

Pfarrer-Byns-Straße 1, 53121 Bonn, Germany.

Responsible for this issue: Susanne Heinke,
Heike Webb (editing, layout).

Phone: +49-228-911960

Fax: +49-228-91196-22

E-mail: bicc@bicc.de

Internet: www.bicc.de



This publication is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-No Derivs 3.0 Unported License - [cf. creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/)

Staff Spotlight



Susanne Heinke

BICC turned 20 on 2 April 2014—an anniversary year which is more about change than about looking back. Susanne Heinke's work is very much interlinked with the development of BICC as she is generally responsible for communication. As Head of Public Relations, Susanne carries out a plethora of journalistic activities. She is responsible for the concept of BICC's Annual Report, website; she designs, plans, organizes, and implements BICC events and conferences. National and international networking also belongs to the core activities of her work. At present, she is very much engaged in developing BICC's new corporate design which, based on its concept of Conversion Studies, will reflect the changes in BICC's work. One of the results of this process—so far not shared—is that BICC will have a new logo and new publication series as of Fall this year.

Another result is that BICC-Bulletin 65 will be the very last edition of this publication. On this occasion she would like to thank all the authors and colleagues who have contributed to it in the past 20 years as well as Heike Webb, BICC's English language editor, for their commitment.

Susanne's personal motto "Nothing is more constant than change" has been shaping her work at BICC which she joined in 1997. Previously, she had studied Slavic Studies at the University of Cologne, worked as a journalist at *Volkszeitung*, *Sowjetunion heute* and *Wostok* and as freelancer for German and international media, amongst them WDR and Deutsche Welle. Her first project at BICC was "ConverArt – The Art of Disarmament", later she became BICC's first press spokesperson. In all these years, she learned that conversion is always about the conversion of the mind. And she still feels privileged to be able to take part in BICC's vision of a more peaceful world.

Susanne's hobbies are hiking and reading; she is the mother of an adult son und lives in Düsseldorf with her husband.

➔ For further information please contact
Susanne Heinke at pr@bicc.de

BICC International Conference Peace Report 2014

On the occasion of its 20th anniversary, BICC will be hosting a two-day international academic conference on “Challenges of organized violence: New research and potentials for conversion” from 27 to 28 October in Bonn. Panelists and speakers will be high-ranking academics from peace and conflict research. Around 100 experts and practitioners of various disciplines from Germany and abroad are expected to participate.

The conference will be opened by Svenja Schulze, Minister for Innovation, Science and Research of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia. The keynote speaker will be Carolyn Nordstrom, University of Notre Dame Indiana, USA.

The aim of the conference is to approach current dynamics of organized violence from a critical angle and pose a number of important questions that go far beyond Europe: How can and should we address current problems of violence? Can some manifestations of organized violence be eliminated once and for all? Can others be contained and controlled at the very most?

Speakers and panelists will reflect these questions by focusing on concepts, means, and practices of organized violence. ‘Concepts’, in BICC’s understanding, are discourses that legitimize the use of violence, such as security policies or military strategies. ‘Means’ refer to the tools and material infrastructure of organized violence, such as the arms industry, conventional weapons (in particular Small Arms and Light Weapons—SALW) or military bases. Visible patterns of behavior are investigated in the ‘practices’ of organized violence which lead BICC to conduct research on rules, norms, and types of actors. Building on these three dimensions of research at BICC, ‘natural resources’ and ‘migration’ have been identified as two intersecting themes touching organized violence in societal contexts.

The conference is sponsored by the Foundation for International Dialogue of the Savings Bank in Bonn.

Program information at
http://www.bicc.de/fileadmin/Dateien/pdf/events/2014/Draft_agenda_BICC_Conference_Oct_2014.pdf

→ For further information please contact
Susanne Heinke at pr@bicc.de

On 3 June 2014, the five leading German peace and conflict research institutes presented the *Peace Report 2014 (Friedensgutachten 2014)* at the Federal Press Conference in Berlin. The editors Dr. Ines-Jacqueline Werkner (FEST) (this year’s lead), Dr. Janet Kursawe (INEF), Dr. Margret Johannsen (IFSH), Dr. Bruno Schoch (HSFK) and Dr. Marc von Boemcken (BICC) call for a new orientation of European neighborhood policy in view of the crisis in Ukraine. According to the authors, the ‘peace project European Union’ needs a pan-European security architecture. The peace researchers also critically discuss European arms exports controls and migration policy. In view of the humanitarian catastrophe in Syria, they call on the German government to receive at least 200,000 Syrian refugees.



In Berlin, the editors met with representatives of the Federal Foreign Office and the Ministry for Development Cooperation as well as the committees on defense and development cooperation. They discussed with the parliamentary groups of the Green Party, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the Linke. Furthermore, they met with Pax Christi and other organizations of the peace movement, and held an open discussion in the French Church organized by the Protestant Academy Berlin and WIIS.de.

→ For further information please contact
Marc von Boemcken at boemcken@bicc.de

New BICC Publications

Jan Grebe. 2014. „Mut zur Veränderung oder Fortsetzung struktureller Defizite? Deutsche Rüstungsexporte und ihre parlamentarische Kontrolle“. Bonn: BICC Focus 13.
<http://www.bicc.de/publications/publication-page/publication/courage-to-change-or-continuation-of-structural-deficits-german-arms-exports-and-parliamentary-cont/>

Conrad Schetter. 2014. „Afghanistan: Von der Bürgerkriegs- zur Interventionsruine“. In Ines-Jacqueline Werkner et al. (eds.). *Friedensgutachten* 2014. Münster: LIT, pp. 310-22.

Ruth Vollmer, Marc von Boemcken. 2014. „Europa off limits. Aufrüstung an den EU-Außengrenzen“. In Ines-Jacqueline Werkner et al. (eds.). *Friedensgutachten* 2014. Münster: LIT, pp. 126-13.

Marc von Boemcken, Jan Grebe. 2014. „Gemeinsam uneinig: Ambivalenzen in der Kontrolle europäischer Rüstungstransporte“. In Ines-Jacqueline Werkner et al. (eds.). *Friedensgutachten* 2014. Münster: LIT, pp. 140-53.

Lena Guesnet, Marie Müller (eds.). 2014. „Compensation Matters. Securing community interests in large-scale investments.“ *Dialogue* 13. Berlin
http://www.bicc.de/fileadmin/Dateien/Publications/other_publications/Compensation_Matters/Compensation_Matters_e.pdf

Wolf-Christian Paes. 2014. „Südsudan: Tragödie als Chance?“. *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik* 2/2014, pp. 29-32.
<https://www.blaetter.de/archiv/jahrgaenge/2014/februar/suedsudan-die-tragoedie-als-chance>

Elke Grawert (ed.). 2013. *Forging Two Nations. Insights on Sudan and South Sudan*. Addis Ababa: Organisation for Social Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA).

Peace Report, Germany, and Ahmed Khalifa, researcher and photo journalist, Egypt / Germany, as moderator.

→ For further information please contact Susanne Heinke at pr@bicc.de

On 18 June, BICC researchers and advisors presented various SALW projects at a side event at the German House during the BMS5. The side event is organized by BICC and the Bundeswehr Verification Center. Lars Wirkus presented the interactive SALW-Guide, whereas Wolf-Christian Paes, Nikhil Acharya and Luuk van de Vondervoort gave insights into current civilian arms control efforts in Darfur and the sub-region. Highlights were the premiere of the documentary “A Call for Arms – Community Security & Arms Control in Darfur” as well as first-hand information on cross-border efforts of SALW control by the Sub-Region Arms Control Mechanism (SARCOM).

→ For further information please contact Lars Wirkus at wirkus@bicc.de Wolf-Christian Paes at paes@bicc.de



On 10 April 2014, on the occasion of its 20th Anniversary, BICC organized an expert workshop at the Wissenschaftszentrum Bonn on “Conversion Studies put to the test—Base conversion in Germany and Europe.” Around 25 experts from Germany and Europe (representatives from research, politics, local administration and non-governmental organizations) discussed current topics in Conversion Studies and practice. BICC plans to publish a documentation of this event.

In the framework of the workshop, BICC showed photographer Isabel Kiesewetter’s exhibition “Conversion. An artist’s impression of the transformation process of former military bases” that was open to the public until 22 May 2014 at the Wissenschaftszentrum Bonn.

→ For further information please contact Susanne Heinke at pr@bicc.de

BICC Notes

On 1 July, BICC conducted the workshop “Western surveillance technologies and ‘ungoverned spaces’—Challenges to protect (media) freedom” at the World Conference Center Bonn (WCCB). Panelists were Menso Heus, Coordinator Internet Protection Lab, The Netherlands, Conrad Schetter, Director for Research at BICC, Germany, Marc von Boemcken, researcher at BICC and co-editor of the German