



EUROPEAN CENTRE
OF EXCELLENCE
FOR CIVILIAN
CRISIS MANAGEMENT

**Speech of the
Founding Director of the CoE
Dr Volker Jacoby**

**on the occasion of the opening of the
European Centre of Excellence for Civil Crisis
Management
(Centre of Excellence - CoE)**

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Your Excellency, dear Heiko Maas,
Members of Parliament,
Excellency,
Colleagues and friends,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you, Minister, for your thoughtful and encouraging words.

I feel privileged - and humbled to lead a Centre that carries “excellence” in its title. But I second the Minister’s words: It is the commitment of the pioneers and supporters of the Centre of Excellence that makes it – that will – make it truly excellent.

Giving examples, the Minister mentioned the police officer from Portugal working in Ukraine, and the Coast Guard from Ireland working in Somalia. We could add here the Deputy Head of Mission from Germany working in Palestine, or the gender advisor from Finland working in Mali. We can talk about hundreds of people in missions working on community policing, access to justice, women’s empowerment, civilian security sector reform, reconciliation, or so-called “hybrid threats.”

- How do we find and recruit enough good and capable people with the right attitude to work on those challenging tasks?
- Do existing national and European training structures make key training capacities available to all personnel deployed to civilian crisis management missions?
- How do we ensure equal representation of women and men at all levels in missions?

- How do we make sure that joining a Mission does not deal a blow to their career, but instead gives it a boost?
- Under whose duty of care are they, and what does this duty of care entail?
- And, eventually, will the roll-out of so-called “mini-concepts” for civilian CSDP become a success?

A lot to ponder. A lot to do.

In the coming months, the Centre of Excellence will work on these questions. The goal is to identify good practices among member states and partner organizations, augment them with our own expertise and analysis, and make the results of our work equally accessible to the triangle consisting of member states, the EEAS, and EU missions.

Yesterday, the Centre facilitated very engaging and fruitful discussions during a workshop on “How to increase women’s participation in civilian crisis management missions”. One of the main takeaways for me was the fact that participants underlined the necessity for a complex - a holistic approach to equally tackle all barriers in our way when working towards achieving this goal – this goes way beyond women’s empowerment alone.

We deliberately dedicated our first workshop to this topic, as a key priority for the Centre will be promoting women’s equal representation at all levels in civilian crisis management missions. This workshop was the beginning of a discussion, gaining a first overview of ideas. We will continue down this path, mapping good practices in the alignment of the triad of secondment, mission preparation (or training), and career path development.

The Centre has got – the Minister mentioned it – 18 member states, and more will join soon. Their commitment is not only reassuring, it is truly excellent. I am discussing with member states whom they could second to the Centre, as highly capable personnel is much-needed to

work on all issues mentioned above that were identified by the CoE members as topical to the Centre's mandate.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I should not end without thanking you all for your interest, the CoE member states for their support, the CSDP department at the Federal Foreign Office for their inspiration and dedication, Minister Maas for the idea of creating such a Centre (*although he authored the idea together with other people as we just learned*), the wonderful staff at EEAS for their partnership, Cristina Gallach, Johanna Sumuvuori, Katja Dominik and Florence Gaub as well as all the speakers today and at yesterday's event for their valuable and insightful contributions.

Special thanks go to my small – but excellent team at the Centre for their spirit and for their power when hitting the ground running.

Thank you