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- Terre des Hommes international federation
- World Coalition against Death Penalty
- World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)
- World Vision

## HRDN statement on the Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's External Action

4 July 2017

The Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN) takes note that the Joint Communication on *A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's External Action* was published on 7 June 2017.

HRDN welcomes the EU's acknowledgement that the global trends of shrinking civil society space, and attempts to erode the universality and indivisibility of human rights, make support for individuals and groups who defend human rights and fundamental freedoms an imperative part of the EU's resilience strategy. We further welcome that the EU highlights the explicit link between inclusive and participatory societies, which are governed by accountable, transparent and democratic institutions on the one hand, and sustainable development and the prevention of conflict on the other hand.

We underline our call that **“building state and societal resilience should not support governance forms that risk consolidating authoritarian or repressive regimes, in the name of security”** outlined by the HRDN in its position *A Rights-based Approach to Resilience*. At the same time, we reiterate the need for the EU to support the resilience of individuals in claiming their rights; hold perpetrators for human rights violations and grave international crimes accountable in its diplomacy; and apply human rights conditionality in relations with partner countries.

While we take the note of the emphasis on strengthening and broadening the Conflict Early Warning System to report on environmental and social stress factors we urge the development of a similar Early Warning system for the Shrinking Civil Society Space which would feed into the EEAS and Member States external relations' planning and would be connected to the full range of EU instruments and policies.

HRDN further recalls that a rules-based international order and upholding the universality and indivisibility of human rights are crucial to building resilient societies both externally and internally.

We call on the EU to be guided by these principles and by the Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy (2012), and Action Plan (2015-2019) in implementing this communication.

*The Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN) is an informal grouping of NGOs operating at EU level in the broader areas of human rights, democracy and conflict prevention. Participation in the network is open to non-governmental organizations which engage at EU level in the promotion of human rights, democracy and conflict prevention in and outside the EU.*

*The vision of the HRDN is that human rights and democracy are placed at the heart of the EU's internal and external policy agenda. This vision should manifest itself in a EU that effectively protects human rights at home and is a force for positive change in the world. In pursuit of this vision, the network aims to influence EU and member state human rights policies and the programming of their funding instruments to promote democracy, human rights and sustainable peace.*