



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Changing directions in foreign policies

IOB at 40: learning for performance

Report of the IOB lustrum symposium 2017

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Preface

On 14 December 2017, on the occasion of its 40th anniversary, the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, known as IOB, held its celebratory conference *Changing directions in foreign policy – IOB at 40: learning for performance*. It was attended by 275 guests.

This report reflects IOB's intentions in organising this celebratory event, as well as the enthusiasm of all who participated in it. It created valuable opportunities for reflection. It also reminded ourselves and our guests of the fact that we live in turbulent times. The challenges for us all, as citizens, policymakers, evaluators and knowledge workers, is to find meaning in the midst of fast growing flows of information, and more complex and interacting policy arena's.

Our keynote speaker Dr Constanze Stelzenmüller discussed the shifts in the world order and the opportunities and threats that these pose for the Netherlands. She warned that Europe can no longer rely on others. Therefore, policymakers have to invest heavily in a better-functioning European Union and in the resilience of their societies.

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In the fourteen workshops that followed, we reflected on foreign policy questions that are currently on IOB's evaluation agenda, and also on issues we may well take up in the future. The morning sessions highlighted nuclear disarmament, the role of local peace committees, European defence cooperation, the Ministry's travel advice, migration, the evaluation system and corporate social responsibility. In the afternoon, workshops were held on countering terrorism, climate adaptation, the agenda for aid, trade and investment, cooperation with the UN on fragile states, data-driven policy development, the Dutch position in an EU of 27 member states and support to civil society in developing countries.

The participants in all these workshops helped us to formulate the problems and the questions that really matter. They also challenged us to examine ways to meet the demand for more flexible and learning-driven evaluation products and methods. And finally, they reminded us that IOB enjoys the interest and support of an active and knowledgeable network of stakeholders from widely different backgrounds, who are keen to share their expertise and feedback.

On behalf of all of us at IOB, I thank all our guest speakers and participants for having made this conference such a memorable and inspiring event.

Wendy Asbeek Brusse
Director Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB)

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Plenary opening

Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Yoka Brandt, secretary-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, welcomed guests to the celebration of IOB's 40th anniversary. She briefly went over the history of the ministry's evaluation activities, reminding that the question of how to effectively spend Dutch aid led to the creation of 'IOV' in 1977 by then Minister for Development Cooperation Jan Pronk. In the 1990s, IOV became 'IOB'.¹ The mandate was broadened to include foreign policy as well. Brandt noted that a great deal has changed in 40 years, both in world affairs and evaluation methods. What has not changed, however, is the ministry's wish to know what kind of an effect its interventions are having and to look for better ways of achieving these effects. Brandt also stressed that the actual process of evaluation can be a learning experience.

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Brandt concluded that even after 40 years of hard work, we cannot rest on our laurels. Evaluating foreign policy is challenging due to the complex goals, but it is essential nonetheless. It is key that we learn from our experiences and mistakes. That is why IOB plays a crucial role. Brandt closed by congratulating IOB's former and current team on their anniversary.

¹ Operations Review Unit – Inspectie Ontwikkelingssamenwerking te Velde.

² Policy and Operations Evaluation Department – Inspectie Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Beleidsevaluatie.

Director of IOB

Wendy Asbeek Brusse, director of IOB, thanked guests for attending in such great numbers and expressed her hope that this reflected a growing public awareness of the relevance of today's global issues in our daily lives. She underlined that IOB's 40th anniversary is the perfect occasion to reflect, discuss and learn how to improve policies in today's turbulent times. Indeed, to achieve this, policymakers need to regularly redesign and redirect their policies to ensure that they remain relevant, coherent, effective and sustainable.

Asbeek Brusse identified globalisation as the most powerful driver of change since IOB's creation; it has lifted millions out of poverty but has also made nation states more interdependent than ever before. It has also changed how we evaluate foreign policy in at least three ways: foreign policy and diplomacy have ceased to be the sole domain of foreign ministries, the boundary between foreign and domestic policies has become increasingly porous, and conducting foreign policy nowadays increasingly involves running projects, plans, and programmes, each with their own budgets and policy goals. As a result, their management, monitoring, and evaluation are becoming more important.

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Asbeek Brusse noted that the challenge for policymakers and evaluators alike is to find meaning in the midst of fast-growing flows of information, and more complex and interconnected policy arenas. This requires knowledge of history, culture and context, as well as openness and a culture of critical self-reflection, experimenting, and learning in response to changing contexts and more complex problems.

Asbeek Brusse stressed it was IOB's ambition to contribute to this task by investing more in 'new' foreign policy fields, e.g. migration and environmental policies. Furthermore, it is IOB's ambition to engage more in *ex ante* and *ex durante* evaluations as well as to provide policy advice up front and engage in new evaluation methods in order to meet the demand for more flexible evaluation products. She concluded that at 40, IOB is still an open organisation, ready and willing to listen, learn, and adapt. This is why IOB always welcomes new expert ideas and critical reflection.

Interview

In the ensuing short interview, Brandt and Asbeek Brusse discussed the importance of safeguarding IOB's independence, not only procedurally but also in practice. Furthermore, they elaborated on IOB's recent Dutch name change, from *Inspectie Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Beleidsevaluatie* to *directie Internationaal Onderzoek en Beleidsevaluatie*. The new name, which encompasses the organisation's new, broader mandate into all foreign policy. Former minister of development cooperation Jan Pronk indicated that this had always been the objective, since the conception of the organisation. Finally, the discussion focused on the importance of dialogue with the outside world in order to develop integrated strategies and policies.

Keynote Speech: Challenges and choices for the Netherlands in a divergent world

By: Constanze Stelzenmüller, Robert Bosch Senior Fellow, Center on the United States and Europe, Brookings Institution

Stelzenmüller started her speech by congratulating IOB on its 40th anniversary and stated that IOB is a key capability in the Netherlands' foreign policy apparatus.

The speech focused on three central themes:

1. *The shift in the global landscape.*

The current global landscape does not reflect 'the end of history', as described by Fukuyama, but rather resembles a rollercoaster. The geopolitical story in recent years has been the dissolution of global consensus and the emergence of international conflict on several levels. In addition, domestic politics (in liberal democracies) has become increasingly unpredictable.

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Donald Trump is the first American president to question the liberal order as such. In contrast to the US, however, Europe – and especially the Netherlands – is unable to detach itself from globalisation. In fact, Europe faces enormous challenges and can no longer 'rely on others'. European leaders such as Macron and Merkel are investing heavily in the European project.

We should be aware of the fact that the Western European liberal democracy is not necessarily the ultimate goal for the rest of the world, and maintaining a peaceful and international order is of great existential interest for Europe.

2. *An analysis of the current German debates.*

It is very difficult to interpret current developments in Germany. The main debate is about the potential consequences of the volatile state of international security for Germany. Stelzenmüller believes that Germany may currently find itself in what is called an 'in between-eras time'. She recommends reading Sigmar Gabriel's [speech](#) at the Korber Forum.

3. Implications for the Netherlands.

Stelzenmüller also mentioned a number of implications (and recommendations) from the above for the Netherlands. One important point, especially for an extremely globalised country such as the Netherlands, is to reinforce resilience at home. This includes mitigating the unequal distribution of both the benefits and burdens of globalisation and managing its effects, such as immigration.

The full [speech](#) of Stelzenmüller can be found on the website of IOB's lustrum symposium.





Morning sessions

On the path towards a world free of nuclear weapons?

The status of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in 2017

Speakers

- Janneke Vrijland, Security Policy Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Tytti Erästö, researcher, Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-proliferation, SIPRI
- Susi Snyder, programme manager Nuclear Disarmament at PAX & Steering Committee member of ICAN, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
- Sico van der Meer, research fellow, Clingendael
- Moderator: Paul de Nooijer, senior policy research officer, IOB, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Introduction

By the end of the *UN Conference to Negotiate a Legally Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons, Leading Towards their Total Elimination* in July this year, 122 countries had voted in favour of the so-called Ban Treaty. The Netherlands was present at the conference, but for various reasons it voted against the treaty text. On the basis of two sets of statements, the panel discussed the future of nuclear disarmament and the role the Netherlands could play in this process.

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Management summary

A lively discussion took place that focused mainly on the Ban Treaty. The four panel members agreed that when it comes to nuclear disarmament there is work to be done, but they were unable to reach consensus on how to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons (global zero).

The discussion made it clear that the Ban Treaty reflects the dissatisfaction of most UN states about the pace of nuclear disarmament and that the framework of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is not functioning sufficiently to achieve disarmament. The fact that nuclear weapon states and their allies, with the exception of the Netherlands, did not participate in the Treaty negotiations is further evidence of the heightened geopolitical polarisation that the world is facing at present. At the same time, session participants expressed concern about the implications the Ban Treaty could have for key provisions of the NPT, for example, in terms of safeguards and verification.

Although the panel was unable to agree entirely on the best way for the Netherlands to go forward, there was consensus that it should at least try to be a ‘bridge builder’. Some people consequently remarked that we need to define ‘bridge building’ and indicate who are on the different sides of this bridge. But the gist of it was that the Netherlands should bring both nuclear weapon and non-nuclear weapon states together and try to prevent this polarisation from widening further. It was also agreed that the Netherlands should actively monitor this dossier, since there is enough work to be done in this field.

Statement 1

NPT and recent ban treaty can live side by side as the ban treaty reinforces the disarmament pillar of the NPT.

Counter statement 1: NPT and recent ban treaty are mutually exclusive as the ban treaty undermines key elements/achievements under the NPT.



Local solutions to local problems? Reconstruction in fragile states

A panel discussion on local peace committees

Speakers

- Corita Corbijn, sector specialist, ZOA
- Diana Goff, research fellow in the Conflict Research Unit, Clingendael
- Dion van den Berg, senior policy adviser, PAX for Peace
- Mathijs van Leeuwen, assistant professor, CICAM, Radboud University
- *Moderator:* Ted Kliest, former senior policy research officer, IOB, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Introduction

IOB is currently evaluating the Reconstruction Tender and the Strategic Partnership for Chronic Crises. These financing structures jointly funded 36 projects in 25 countries. Many interventions included setting up or rehabilitating local peace committees (LPCs). This panel discussion addressed some of the main issues related to the fact that there is little systematic evidence pointing to the effectiveness of these committees.

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Management summary

Before the discussion started, there was an explanation of the generic term ‘local peace committee’, the various types of LPCs and the different intervention practices.

The panel discussion focused on three positions:

1. *The formation of local peace committees creates parallel and competing structures of governance.*
There was consensus among participants that fragile states imply fragile institutions, especially at the local level. Supporting local initiatives that challenge those structures that do exist or fill the gap created by a lack of institutions may generate positive change.
2. *Local peace committees do not survive the projects for which they are established.*
The issue of sustainability is an important one. The sustainability of LPCs depends on the context and the role that the committees play in their communities. In general, however, peace is a long-term process that is not always conducive to donors’ short-term and efficiency-driven wishes.

Morning sessions

3. *There is only anecdotal but no rigorous evidence that local peace committees make a positive and enduring contribution to the peaceful resolution of local conflicts.*

Indeed, there is little (systematic) evidence in the academic world as there is no clear definition of (local) peace-building. ZOA has developed a toolbox for LPCs, but it is clear that a one-size-fits-all approach to local peace-building is undesirable. The available evidence on (the success factors of) LPCs shows that effectiveness is for the most part defined by the context.



The Foreign Affairs travel advice

Safe travels!

Speakers

- Jan Willem Beaujean, director, Directorate for Consular Affairs and Visa Policy (DCV), Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Angelique Nijmeijer, head of Health & Safety and Crisis Management for TUI Benelux, TUI
- Frank Oostdam, chair, Dutch Association of Travel Agents and Tour Operators (ANVR)
- Remco van Wijngaarden, head, Department of Consular Affairs, DCV, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Moderator: Meie Kiel, senior policy research officer, IOB, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Introduction

What does the travel advice issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs mean for travel agents and tour operators, NGOs, insurance companies, international businesses, and other stakeholders that use this travel advice in their daily work? And what can the ministry do to further improve its travel advice? These are the questions that were discussed in this interactive session, which brought together speakers and participants from diverse backgrounds.

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Management summary

This interactive session was kicked off by Jan Willem Beaujean, director of DCV, which is the department responsible for issuing travel advice. Beaujean shed light on the goal, relevance, and process of issuing travel advice and emphasised the need to create effective stakeholder cooperation in this process. The panel members underlined the need for such cooperation and simultaneously applauded the ministry's openness to cooperate in recent years. In their contributions, Nijmeijer (TUI) and Oostdam (ANVR) also emphasised the importance of travel advice as a basis for company policy.

Cooperation and the importance of travel advice were recurring themes during the discussion. Some of the terms stakeholders associated most with travel advice included 'safety' (travel advice as an important, though not the only, reference document to learn about safety in a country) and 'political' (the extent to which the travel advice is objective). The term 'detailed' was also mentioned (the more detailed the travel advice, the more useful it is according to stakeholders).

Morning sessions

When asked to suggest how the travel advice could be further improved, the audience mentioned the terms ‘timeliness’ (increasing it in order to lower the level of risk level associated with the safety situation in a country) and ‘EU travel advice’ (to remove current cross-country differences in safety evaluations). Also discussed was the desirability of receiving more frequent updates about the safety situation in a country and the desire to enhance cooperation between DCV and stakeholders on particular regions or themes. Van Wijngaarden, who played an active role during the session by addressing the audience’s questions, committed himself to initiating the above-mentioned form of cooperation.

The dialogue between the speakers and the audience provided useful input into IOB’s ongoing evaluation of consular services, of which the travel advice constitutes an important component.



Breakthrough in European defence cooperation?

An assessment of current initiatives

Speakers

- Daniel Fiott, editor and researcher, European Institute for Security Studies (EUISS)
- Hester Somsen, director, Department for Security Policy (DVB), Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ben Bekkering , vice admiral and military representative to the EU and NATO
- Dick Zandee , senior research fellow, Clingendael Institute
- *Moderator:* Arjan Schutthof, cluster manager policy research, IOB, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Introduction

There are many developments taking place in the field of European defence cooperation at the moment. Significant initiatives such as Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), a European Defence Fund (EDF) and a monitoring system named Coordinated Review on Defence (CARD) were recently launched. This raises the question: how should we view all of these developments? More specifically: are we witnessing a genuine breakthrough in European defence cooperation?

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Management summary

The session kicked off with a keynote address on the main security threats currently facing the EU: the arc of instability around Europe, the conventional threat in the East, the implications of Brexit, altering transatlantic relations, and the lack of cohesion within the EU. Threats and opportunities are alternating rapidly, and so it seems clear that Europe needs to boost defence cooperation. The question is: are current initiatives to foster closer cooperation sufficient, let alone 'groundbreaking'? The panellists and roughly half of the audience agreed that we are witnessing a genuine breakthrough. PESCO legally binds EU member states to their commitments, and the financial possibilities under EDF have increased significantly now that 20 to 30 per cent of a proposed project can be funded through the EU budget.

However, progress depends on the implementation of the plans and programmes. This is where the real questions pop up: how exactly will the different initiatives (PESCO, EDF and CARD) relate to each other in practice, and how will these arrangements affect the balance between member state priorities and the concerns of the European Commission? The EC has to get used to managing defence matters and start complementing NATO's efforts. In this context, the EU should be careful using terms such as 'strategic autonomy'. The Netherlands has to adapt its position, not least because of Brexit, and could act as a broker between the emerging French-German axis. It is not sufficient to only agree to intensify cooperation. Making a real difference in terms of boosting defence capabilities and military mobility takes political will, a common tactical vision, and huge national investments.



Development cooperation and migration

From demographic risk to demographic dividend

Speakers

- Ton Dietz, former director, African Studies Centre Leiden, and professor of the Study of African Development, Leiden University
- Moderator: Antonie de Kemp, coordinating policy research officer, IOB, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Introduction

Migration is a hot topic in the Netherlands and throughout Europe. It often has a negative connotation, but it is also fraught with misconception. In this session, Dietz shared his knowledge on migration, based on an info sheet on Africa's development and a thematic map on African migration. Dietz sees migration as resulting from a combination of increasing aspirations and capabilities. According to the migration hump theory, initially migration will not decrease but rather increase as a result of development. In combination with the demographic development in Africa, this has important implications for Dutch and European migration policies.

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Management summary

The session started with a persuasive appeal by Dietz, who engaged the audience with a few colourful handouts. According to Dietz, Dutch and European migration policies are based on five erroneous assumptions:

1. That development cooperation has the capacity to create many jobs in Africa. Although he acknowledges the value of aid, he is nonetheless critical about concepts such as 'development by design'.
2. Even if it were possible to create many jobs, the numbers would never suffice to meet the needs of the substantial number of people entering the African labour market in the coming years (due to the demographic development of the continent). Even now, there are 300 million people between the ages of 20 and 40 years in sub-Saharan Africa, and only one in six of these have a formal (wage) job.
3. The misconception that development will reduce migration. The opposite is true: development will lead to more migration.

4. The idea that the Turkey deal would be transferrable to African countries. Governments are too weak (Libya) and have an interest in the remittances that migrants send home.
5. The dangerous idea that it would be possible to use aid in Libya to prevent migrants from coming to Europe. In fact, it leads to deals with groups that are involved in human trafficking and involves the serious risk of radicalising young migrants.

Dietz linked migration rates to the Human Development Index (HDI) of countries. The more developed a country, he found, the higher the emigration numbers. This is also true for Africa. Fifteen years ago, about 0.8% of the African population lived on another continent. This has increased to 1.2% and will increase considerably in the coming years. Nevertheless, most people migrate within Africa, and there is also a massive shift from rural areas towards the cities and coasts. Both Africa and Europe are undergoing enormous demographic changes: Africa has a very young population, while Europe has an ageing population. In this respect, migration could bring economic benefits for Europe, not in the least because generally the migrants coming to Europe are relatively well educated.

The discussion focused on what kind of action Europe can take given the huge challenges in Africa, due to the enormous discrepancy between the growth of the working population and the demand for labour. According to Dietz, whose view was supported by the audience, donors should invest in education, including TVET, develop urban areas, support the private sector, and promote value chain development. Educating girls has proven to be very successful in reducing fertility rates. Europe should regulate and legalise (labour) migration. The Netherlands should also re-emphasise the role of civil society and NGOs. Moreover, governments should extend safety net programmes, which could be supported by donors.



The future of the Dutch evaluation system

Navigating between accountability and learning

Speakers

- Jedid-Jah Jonker, head, Bureau Strategic Analysis, Ministry of Finance
- Wendy Asbeek Brusse, director, IOB, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Leon Hendriks, assistant professor of policy analysis, TU Delft
- Jeroen Kerseboom, former director/secretary, Southern Court of Audit, since 15 December 2017 head of the Analysis and Research Service, Dutch House of Representatives
- Moderator: Peter van der Knaap, director, Institute for Road Safety Research (SWOV)

Introduction

Three key questions were addressed in this session: (i) Does the Dutch Order on Periodic Evaluation and Policy Information and its instrument of policy reviews offer enough room to strike the right balance between accountability and learning?; (ii) How can we still examine policy relevance and policy coherence in a meaningful way if policies are increasingly transcending the boundaries of ministries?; and (iii) How can parliamentarians make better use of policy evaluations?

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Management summary

Jonker observed that the current Dutch evaluation system has achieved a lot since its inception in 2006, but there is room for improvement with regard to the planning, timing, quality, and parliamentary impact of the policy examinations. Achieving this will depend on a concerted effort. He also observed a clear tension between accountability and learning. What can we do about this? The Ministry of Finance has launched the Insight into Quality Operation, which aims to:

1. Stimulate a learning culture;
2. Devote more attention to the (scientific) underpinning of policies;
3. Recognise that policy evaluation is a profession;
4. Promote learning across ministries;
5. Promote learning to improve policies; and
6. Take policy implementation into account.

Asbeek Brusse outlined IOB's experiences with policy evaluations. She recognised that there is still room for improvement with regard to developing a learning culture and stimulating the use of evaluations by policymakers and parliamentarians.

Hermans discussed adaptive policy analysis in response to the challenges of managing insecurity and multi-actor settings, for instance with regard to climate change or migration. This analysis focuses on developing a system with different so-called critical paths that lead to a variety of policy outcomes. Evaluating these adaptive policy interventions requires forms of adaptive learning that explicitly examines the main critical assumptions underlying these changing paths and filtering this information back to policymakers. The current Dutch evaluation system offers little room for such adaptive evaluation and learning. Kerseboom presented the new Analysis and Research Service of the Dutch House of Representatives. It will serve as a conduit that filters information for parliamentarians that is relevant to the parliamentary process. While this service will also use findings from policy evaluations, Kersenboom stressed that timing and personal contact are key factors when it comes to reaching out to parliament.



CSR in the Dutch polder

A collaborative approach to improving working conditions in the garment and textile industry

Speakers

- Jef Wintermans, coordinator of the sustainable garment and textile covenant, SER
- Dhyana van der Pols, CEO, Nash International/Havep
- Pauline Overeem, senior researcher, SOMO
- Alexander Otgaar, senior policy research officer, IOB, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- *Moderator:* Marjan de Bock-Smit, founder and owner, Supply Chain Information Management

Introduction

The aim of this session was to discuss the effectiveness of the Dutch international CSR policy, with particular focus on the garment and textile industry. After a short introduction by IOB on the upcoming ICSR evaluation, three speakers each made a five-minute speech resulting in three challenging statements about the progress of the covenant, and how to improve participation. The debate provided useful input for the evaluation of the Dutch CSR policy, scheduled for 2018.

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Management summary

Moderator De Bock-Smit briefly introduced the aim of the session, while Otgaar from IOB explained that the evaluation of the Dutch CSR policy will look at results on various levels: from output to outcome and impact. The Dutch multi-stakeholder covenant for the garment and textile sector also contains various commitments for the government, in the areas of international cooperation, regulation, and government procurement.

According to Wintermans, coordinator of the textile covenant, the covenant got off to a good start. The main result so far: an extensive list of production locations and six complaints of possible violations, one of which has already been solved. Some participants in the session wondered why it took so long to set up a covenant (the first initiative was taken in 2012) and whether the expected results will be sufficient.

Van der Pols looked at CSR policies from a business point of view. In commerce, transparency and competition are communicating vessels. CSR policy will be useless unless it is scaled up to the EU or the global level. Questions from the audience touched on topics such as how to avoid a race to the bottom and how to involve the consumer.

Overeem advocated a stronger involvement of local actors – representing employees – in the covenant. One of her arguments was that local factory workers have insufficient access to complaint and remedy mechanisms. Her appeal raised the question of how to achieve more effective involvement.

The discussion raised several questions. How can we verify results? What works better: ‘naming and shaming’ or ‘knowing and showing’? How can we make corporate behaviour more transparent, and how can we empower the consumer? How can we distribute the added value in global value chains more fairly? Why are national markets in the EU, the US, and Japan performing so differently in terms of fair pricing, purchasing behaviour, and distribution channels? Otgaar closed the meeting by inviting all participants to comment on the evaluation’s Terms of Reference.





Afternoon sessions

Dutch collaboration with the United Nations in fragile societies and conflict states

Meeting expectations and enhancing results

Speakers

- Rolph van der Hoeven, professor of Employment and Development Economics, Institute of Social Studies (ISS)
- Mariska van Beijnum, head of Conflict Research Unit, Clingendael Institute
- Erwin van Veen, senior research fellow, Clingendael Institute
- Ronald Wormgoor, policy officer, Multilateral Organisations and Human Rights Department (DMM), Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- *Moderator:* Hans van den Hoogen, senior humanitarian advisor, Department for Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid (DSH), Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Introduction

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The topics that were discussed during the session were: (i) whether the United Nations (UN) is meeting expectations as a channel for Dutch policy on development cooperation, particularly under the security and rule of law spearhead; and (ii) what the Netherlands can do to enhance understanding of the results of our financial contributions to the UN.

Management summary

One of the questions addressed was *Why support the United Nations?*. Van der Hoeven argued that globalisation demands more multilateral development cooperation. According to the Quality of Aid Index, multilateral institutions appear to be much more effective in tackling international challenges, compared to bilateral aid. In general, the advantages of bilateral aid are limited. Moreover, it is receiving increasingly less support from recipient governments. Other advantages of multilateral aid are economies of scale, less sensitivity with regard to national interests, and ample opportunity to benefit from a variety of national experiences.

According to Wormgoor, the Netherlands is appreciated for its constructive role – in particular because its position is not mainly driven by geopolitical interests and/or financial contributions. Dutch priorities and interests have become more central in the Netherlands' relationship with the UN. Dutch non-earmarked funding to the UN, and particularly UNICEF and UNDP, have declined significantly. Expectations of the UN have grown considerably. Dutch financial contributions to the UN are still substantial. According to Van Beijnum, the Netherlands has always held a strong position on the rule of law. UNDP's activities in this area were assessed as being effective, though mostly in terms of output; the main

Afternoon sessions

remaining challenge is how to achieve longer-term results and a greater impact in fragile and conflict-affected settings. In many cases, there is no viable alternative to the UN.

Van Veen argued that when it comes to results, we have to realise that peace building is a long-term process that does not lead to immediate results. The key question is: what does it mean to speak in terms of 'results' with regard to peace, security, and the rule of law in fragile societies? We should move towards evaluating impact in a more realistic way. Focusing on pre-set outputs and quantitative indicators is useless in fragile contexts, since there are no clear cause-effect relations between socio-political phenomena. It is particularly important to integrate the broader context into our evaluation of interventions. We have to move towards a situation in which we understand the political and economic dynamics in fragile societies, how our interventions relate to those dynamics, and what results we might expect. The key question is how to know when a result is a good result in a specific context. Adaptive programming may be a solution, in which we do not rely on predefined objectives at the output level, but allow programmes to make adjustments in anticipation of a changing environment and to learn from experiences.



Countering terrorism in a fragmented world

Addressing an evolving threat: effective responses to terrorism

Speakers

- Fulco van Deventer, associate fellow, International Centre for Counter-terrorism, and co-founder and deputy director, Human Security Collective
- Bibi van Ginkel, research fellow, International Centre for Counter-terrorism, and coordinator of the Security Cluster, Clingendael Institute
- Liesbeth van der Heide, researcher and lecturer, Institute for Security and Global Affairs, and research fellow, International Centre for Counter-terrorism
- Maurits ter Kuile, deputy head of Counter Terrorism and National Security, Security Policy Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- *Moderator:* Arjan Schuthof, cluster manager policy research, IOB, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Introduction

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Countering violent extremism and terrorism is a policy priority for many governments. The questions are: how do we coordinate responses to terrorism in an international arena? What works? How can we prove that it works? We asked four panel members to prepare statements, which we discussed during the session.

Management summary

The session on counterterrorism started by outlining the policy shift that has taken place since 2011: from counterterrorism (CT) to countering violent extremism (CVE) to preventing violent extremism (PVE). After the attacks of 9/11, the United Nations Security Council took the lead by implementing resolutions that focused primarily on the ‘counter’ (security) part. At that time, it was politically incorrect to discuss the underlying principles and implications of radicalisation. Gradually, the arena shifted towards devoting more attention to addressing the root causes and human rights issues. Furthermore, the previous approach, which was almost exclusively a state-to-state approach, was broadened to include non-state actors as well. As the discussion compared this global development in CT policy to Dutch policy development, it was observed that the Netherlands would benefit from a more explicit profile on CT in the international arena.

Afternoon sessions

Since not all (fragile) states have effective regimes, it might be an opportune moment to move beyond traditional diplomatic pathways. Working in fragile environments means that you cannot always work exclusively with governments and that new avenues and ways of working need to be identified in order to establish contact with key groups and informal organisations. A proper analysis of the ‘appeal’ of terrorist groups is lacking. Human rights violations, marginalisation, and a lack of political space are increasingly considered to be a ‘tipping point’ for recruitment, and these issues warrant more attention. As there are few evaluations in the field of CT, there is an urgent need for more evidence-based research on what works in CT. This also explains why there is limited feedback available on the effects and implications of CT actions.



Rising temperatures, heated debates, cool evaluations

Climate adaptation in development and evaluation

Speakers

- Gernot Laganda, chief of the Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction Programme, World Food Programme
- Roelof Buffinga, director of the climate cluster, Inclusive Green Growth Department (IGG), Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- *Moderator:* Ferko Bodnár, coordinating policy research officer, IOB, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Introduction

The COP 21 agreement in Paris (2015) stresses that climate policies should increasingly aim for adaptation – targeting how people and places can adapt to the effects of a changing climate. The session addressed two questions: (i) how should we mainstream climate adaptation in existing development interventions, and (ii) what strategies should be used to evaluate adaptation interventions in support of policy development.

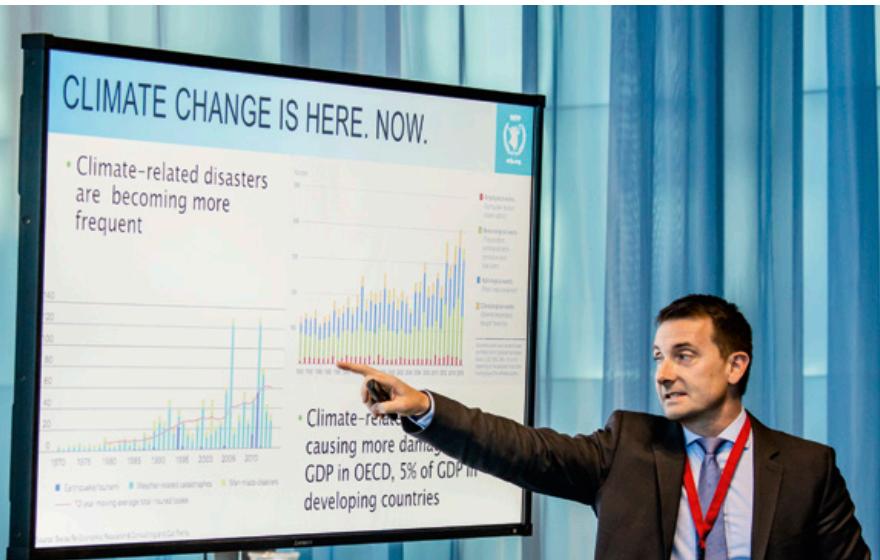
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Management summary

Laganda shared his experiences from the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Food Programme by discussing the ingredients needed to successfully mainstream food programmes. Laganda perceives climate change as a risk multiplier. He observed that mainstreaming often occurs in generic ways, comparing it to fairy dust sprinkled over development programmes without explicitly targeting the climate as a risk factor for specific development targets. To reverse this, the entire food system – a value chain that includes production, processing, distribution, and consumption – requires explicit adaptation measures. By using various development projects as examples, Laganda defined effective adaptation as a function of 1) financial incentives, with additional financing for climate adaptation; 2) technical expertise for systematic analysis and scaling innovation; 3) business processes with agencies introducing climate focal points; and 4) leadership, since mainstreaming requires a decisive approach. One requirement for resilience to be sustainable is the diversification of food systems, including crop varieties, diversified markets, diets, and processing technologies.

In his policy response, Buffinga stressed the nexus between climate change and migration as a major cause of the world's human insecurity. The Dutch climate response passes through three prisms: peace, profit, and principle to combat climate-induced migration, to enhance economic opportunities through energy transition, and to reduce inequality and promote inclusion in order to build resilience among the poorest. Buffinga used a variety of examples to illustrate how the Sustainable Development Goals underpin the course of action needed to achieve inclusive green growth.

Following the Q&A and discussion, it became clear that adapting monitoring & evaluation requires *ex durante*/real-time evaluations to transform lessons into appropriate best-fit action, for which the local context is the starting point (e.g. a landscape approach). It was recommended to take more time to understand local processes and to build awareness on climate as a risk factor for making policy choices; and to ensure that policy directions are adjusted in a timely manner. As for impact evaluations, monitoring & evaluation should address rural-urban migration patterns and emphasise the unintended, sometimes negative effects of policy interventions, which increase the learning function of evaluations for policy choices.



The preaching merchant or the commercial vicar

The aid and trade agenda

Speakers

- Paul Hoebink, professor, Radboud University Nijmegen
- Christiaan Rebergen, director-general, Directorate General International Cooperation (DGIS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Daniëlle Hirsch, director, Both Ends
- Hans Peter van der Woude, deputy director, Department of International Trade Policy and Economic Governance (IMH), Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Linda van Beek, deputy director of International Affairs, VNO-NCW
- Nico Roozen, executive director, Solidaridad
- Eric Smaling, professor, Wageningen University
- Marcel Vernooij, strategic policy advisor, Sustainable Economic Development Department (DDE), Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- *Moderator:* Jan Bade, senior policy research officer, IOB, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Introduction

Central to the discussion about the ‘aid, trade, and investment agenda’ is the question of how to assess synergy within the three main components of the policy (i) The trade and investment policy; (ii) Economic diplomacy; and (iii) Private sector development. Does the sum of the parts yield more now that the policy responsibilities have been subsumed under a single portfolio of the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation?

Management summary

The session consisted of four premises about the ‘aid and trade agenda’. For each premise, two speakers defended their position in the debate.

1. *Combining aid, trade, and investment has convincingly led to synergy and poverty reduction.*

Hoebink argued that the current policy is not innovative and that, according to the 2017 DAC peer review, the Netherlands is struggling with how to shape policy coherence for development. Rebergen admits that the trade and development policies are not entirely new. He is convinced that subsuming these two policies under one department leads to synergy and potentially contribute to poverty reduction on a large scale, even though it is too early to tell for some instruments.

2. *The Netherlands is developing balanced relationships with partner countries by i) Creating mutually beneficial open markets; ii) Introducing CSR into Dutch companies; iii) Promoting private sector development in developing countries; and iv) Promoting policy coherence for development.*

Hirsch stated that our trade policy prevents developing countries from developing. Balanced relationships firmly entrench incumbent elites on both sides and do not help the poor. The pivotal role played by the Netherlands in aggressive international tax planning is obstructing developing countries from raising tax revenues. Van der Woude reacted by stating that trade is all about allowing countries to exploit their comparative advantages and mitigating negative effects with flanking government policies and companies' CSR policies.

3. *Economic diplomacy is putting too much emphasis on promoting Dutch export and too little on direct investments in developing countries.*

Van Beek argued that the Netherlands needs to do more to promote export, which will eventually lead to direct investments. Roozen suggested that the ODA budget should be used to aid the poor and not companies. He regards cooperation and partnerships between government, NGOs, companies, and research institutes – the ‘Dutch diamond approach’ – as the best way to work on sustainable development and global value chains for the poor.

4. *Private sector development by the Netherlands cannot be conducted outside the government of the recipient country in order to achieve development goals.*

Smaling stated that private companies need to engage with recipient country governments to achieve development goals. Vernooij argued that private sector development is actually possible without engaging the government, but the government does need to ensure that a viable business climate and good governance is in place, for example.



Data-informed policy development

Policy evaluation in a new light

Speakers

- Jelte van Wieren, director, Department for Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid (DSH), Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Stefania Giodini, team leader of the 510 Initiative, Netherlands Red Cross
- Arvid Halma, data analyst, Humanity X (Centre for Innovation, Leiden University)
- Jochem Tissink, project fellow, Consular Affairs and Visa Policy Department (DCV), Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Harmen van Pelt, front-end developer, Maxim EMG
- Antonie de Kemp, coordinating policy research officer, IOB, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- *Moderator:* Thomas Baar, project manager, Humanity X (Centre for Innovation, Leiden University)

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Introduction

This session was about the opportunities and challenges of using ‘big data’ for the development and evaluation of foreign policy. Several speakers presented and discussed examples of how large data files can inform rather than drive foreign policy and its evaluation, arguing that data is essentially complementary to knowledge. They discussed under what conditions continuous flows of data make policies more effective and efficient.

Management summary

After a short introduction by moderator Baar, Van Wieren discussed the concept of big data and briefly presented three cases that illustrate the use of big data for foreign policy:

1. Transponders in commercial vessels generate early warning signals for rescue operations in the Mediterranean Sea.
2. Digitised radio conversations provide up-to-date information on the spread of diseases in Uganda.
3. Credit card payments by beneficiaries inform aid organisations in Lebanon about regional migration patterns.

The second speaker was Giodini. She illustrated how the 510 Initiative of Netherlands Red Cross made effective use of big data to provide humanitarian assistance to Sint Maarten after hurricane Irma hit the island. Satellite images were used to develop better maps and to estimate the extent of the damage and the need for repair.

Afternoon sessions

Halma, the third speaker, explained how his organisation assisted the World Food Programme by developing an interactive dashboard for monitoring the programme's progress. This dashboard uses data generated by credit card payments.

Van Pelt and Tissink informed the audience about BAO: a decision-support system that enables decision-makers to assess applications for short-stay visas more efficiently. This system combines numerous sources of data to generate carefully validated profiles and watch lists.

Next, Baar moderated an interesting discussion between the invited speakers. Some examples of statements made by these speakers include: 'big data can be a conversation stopper', 'too often data comes first', and 'be aware of potential misuse'.

At the end of session, Baar gave the floor to De Kemp. His main point was that real-time data will not take away the need for evaluation. IOB has a duty to build trust and common understanding regarding the use of big data for policy evaluation within the ministry. It does so by informing the design of evaluation practices and providing the relevant tools and capacities to this end.



The Dutch position in an EU with 27 members

In search of new partners

Speakers

- Christel Zunneberg, research associate, European Council on Foreign Relations Berlin
- Monika Sie Dhian Ho, director, Clingendael Institute
- Hanno Wurzner, deputy director, European Integration Department (DIE), Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Moderator: Bas Limonard, coordinating policy research officer, IOB, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Introduction

Several developments affect the Dutch negotiating position within the EU. With Brexit, the Netherlands is losing one of its closest and strongest allies in EU decision-making, and it is simultaneously shifting relative voting power to the larger member states. The election of Macron as French president has revitalised Franco-German cooperation and may create momentum for deepening EU cooperation, which may not always be in accordance with Dutch preferences. How should the Netherlands respond to this situation?

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Management summary

Brexit is negatively affecting the Dutch negotiation position in the EU. There is going to be less support for the Netherlands' position on many important issues (e.g. the EU budget, trade, regulation, services, and foreign policy orientation). Just as alarming is the shift in voting power towards larger member states: in the case of the Franco-German agreement, it will be effectively impossible for the Netherlands to form a blocking minority. Southern member states are in a more favourable position. Changing the voting rules, however, would require changing the treaty, which does not seem feasible.



Afternoon sessions

In terms of coalition formation with other member states, the Netherlands could invest in relations with both current and new partners. The Netherlands derives a lot of networking power from its central position among the Benelux and Nordic member states and from its special relation with pivotal player Germany. Whether the special Dutch-German relationship could function as a bridge between both groups remains to be seen, however. Germany is not always like-minded, takes a more lenient role towards southern coalitions, and seems to take the Dutch position for granted. A key challenge is thus how to exert influence on Germany. The Netherlands could invest more in relations with three categories of ‘new’ partners: those who stand to lose most from Brexit, strategic hinges (e.g. Poland and Spain), and unused potential, i.e. member states interested in cooperating with the Netherlands.

Interestingly, with Brexit, other member states are starting to look to the Netherlands for political leadership (after Merkel and Macron, they look to ‘Mark’). In order to assume such a role, the Netherlands should develop a positive vision on what kind of EU it wants. Given the Eurosceptic tone of the political debate, however, it remains to be seen whether the Netherlands is domestically prepared for such a role. Here lies a huge political challenge. The answer is not to be found in education and information, but in critical (self-)reflection regarding the origins of this Eurosceptic sentiment.



Support to civil society in a changing world

What next?

Speakers

- Helga van Kampen, independent partnership broker, social innovator and partnership review specialist, Partnership Learning Loop
- Floris Blankenberg, former policy research officer, IOB, currently programme manager, Work in Progress Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Moderator: Rita Dieleman, independent evaluator and partnership broker, Partnership Learning Loop

Introduction

This interactive session was kicked off by a presentation of the main findings of the IOB policy review on civil society development, followed by a summary of the webinar debate (November 2017) between CSOs and NGOs discussing four topics: breaking financial independency; brave donors; local ownership; and true and equal partnerships. What is needed to change the role of Southern CSOs and INGOs to enhance civil society development?

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Management summary

Statements presented by means of Kahoot were fed into the discussion. Most participants believed that there is competition between local CSOs and INGOs.

However, it is a sensitive topic of discussion. There was some support for changing the role of INGOs in the future from being a grantmaker to a watchdog. INGOs used to be grantmakers but their role is increasingly becoming that of

a watchdog. However, in fragile states it is the other way around. Once a country moves to the development stage, INGOs start putting more emphasis on grantmaking as opposed to their role as watchdog. It is not so much the number of Dutch NGOs active in certain countries that should be reduced in the future, but rather the coordination of these actors needs to be



Afternoon sessions

improved, as well as complementarity between NGOs and embassies. Policy synergy between NGOs and embassies can create opportunities, but this should not be enforced as such. Fragmentation in aid flows and funding instruments is a concern, but this problem has been partly created by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well.

The majority of the audience argued that there should be more direct funding to local CSOs. CSOs need more unrestricted institutional support, and stronger support from their own constituency and government. One needs to look for and diversify local funding sources, support global networks, and move away from the conventional chain of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs → NGO NL → local CSO.

A strong and vocal constituency is needed to enhance NGOs' potential to influence (e.g. trade unions). Dutch NGOs rely too much on their funding relationship with donors. They need to change this and assume a different role in the future if they want to contribute to the development of civil society. This funding relationship also complicates the responsibility of NGOs to hold their government accountable (e.g. debate on the Dutch role in tax treaties). To what extent is the constituency of Dutch NGOs in favour of international support?





Concluding plenary session

Speakers

- Pieter Jan Kleiweg de Zwaan, deputy director-general, Directorate General Political Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Wendy Asbeek Brusse, director, IOB, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- De Speld Live, news satire show
- *Moderator:* Joep Bremmers, partner and co-founder, Public Partners and Shared Business NL

Introduction

In this concluding plenary session, IOB and the conference participants looked back at what was widely perceived to be a successful event.

Management summary

The concluding plenary session was kicked off by moderator Bremmers, who, together with Kleiweg de Zwaan, sought the active engagement of the audience to evaluate the day.

Asbeek Brusse took the floor to thank the conference participants for their presence and interventions during the fourteen workshops that had taken place in tandem over the course of the day. She reiterated that today was not only a celebration of IOB's 40th anniversary and an occasion to demonstrate what IOB stands for, but the conference was also meant to provide an interactive forum allowing stakeholders from different backgrounds to meet and to share their knowledge, experiences, and feedback with each other and with IOB. Asbeek Brusse welcomed the recommendations regarding IOB's future work given by conference participants, ranging from 'keep up the good work!' to 'ensure adequate communication of evaluations', and 'keep seeking cooperation with external parties'.

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Stakeholder involvement was a recurring issue during the sessions. Asked to evaluate the conference, one of the words mentioned most often by conference participants was 'listening' – in the sense that conference participants indicated that IOB had listened to them. For IOB, the conference confirmed that stakeholder consultation is an essential element of policy evaluation. Listening is something that IOB not only intended to do today, but will continue to do in future – including in policy evaluation processes.

De Speld Live, a news satire show, added a light touch to the plenary session, after which participants were given the opportunity to continue their conversations during the informal networking get-together that concluded the day.





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