



The United Nations peacekeeping chief has highlighted the growing level of cooperation between the UN and the European Union in tackling problems springing from many of the world's hotspots.

Commenting on the breadth of issues discussed at the latest meeting of a key UN-EU committee on international crisis management, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, signalled that the two international organizations shared many common interests.

“The EU is a key partner for us in virtually all major operations, often with its own missions deployed alongside ours,” Mr. Ladsous told the UN News Centre.

The 13th meeting of the UN-EU Steering Committee on Crisis Management took place in New York on Monday. Established in 2003, the Committee serves as the main forum for senior-level talks on global crisis management between the UN and EU. It emerged as a working-level focus point for advancing the goals of the 2003 Joint Declaration on EU-UN co-operation in Crisis Management.

“This was our second Steering Committee meeting this year, and it’s clear that our partnership with the EU in the peacekeeping and crisis management areas keeps getting stronger,” Mr. Ladsous said. “I look forward to our meetings in 2013, when we will mark the 10th anniversary of the Joint Declaration.”

Mr. Ladsous had opened Monday’s meeting, which was subsequently co-chaired by the Assistant-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Edmund Mulet, and the Deputy

Secretary-General of the European External Action Service, Maciej Popowski.

The peacekeeping chief's comments were echoed by a senior political official today.

“From the perspective of the UN Department of Political Affairs, this meeting provided an important opportunity to further explore with the EU some of the challenges that our Department has been dedicating great energy to, particularly, Somalia and Mali/Sahel,” said the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Tayé-Brook Zerihoun. “Our discussions pointed to concrete areas where the UN and the EU could work more closely together to make a difference on the ground.”

He added that the Steering Committee has “added value” by establishing more systematic contacts between the staff of the world body and the EU organization, including at senior level.

“This should increasingly translate into stronger and more effective cooperation on the key conflict management issues where the UN and the EU have concerns and active operations,” he said.

Crises discussed at the latest meeting included ongoing violence and other critical developments in Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and both Mali and the wider Sahel region in West Africa.

“The country items discussed... provide a clear picture of how closely linked the strategic interests of the UN and the EU are,” according to information provided by the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operation (DPKO).

“Regardless of the specifics of each situation,” it added, “one thing seems to be emerging as a trend: there is an increasing deployment of UN and EU operations alongside each other, within the same political contexts, but with separate mandates.”

DPKO said the Committee meetings play a key role in ensuring that the efforts of all international personnel engaged on the ground were “complementary and effective.”

“Each of these (situations) is on the top of the agenda of both organizations – at the political and operational level,” DPKO stated. “Participants focused on developing measures for efficient operation coordination.”

Among other issues discussed, the Committee called for new UN-EU planning-cooperation guidelines, while also participants exchanged experiences and ‘lessons learned’ on how to improve the effectiveness of crisis management operations by integrating human rights and gender considerations.

**Source:** [UN News Centre](#)