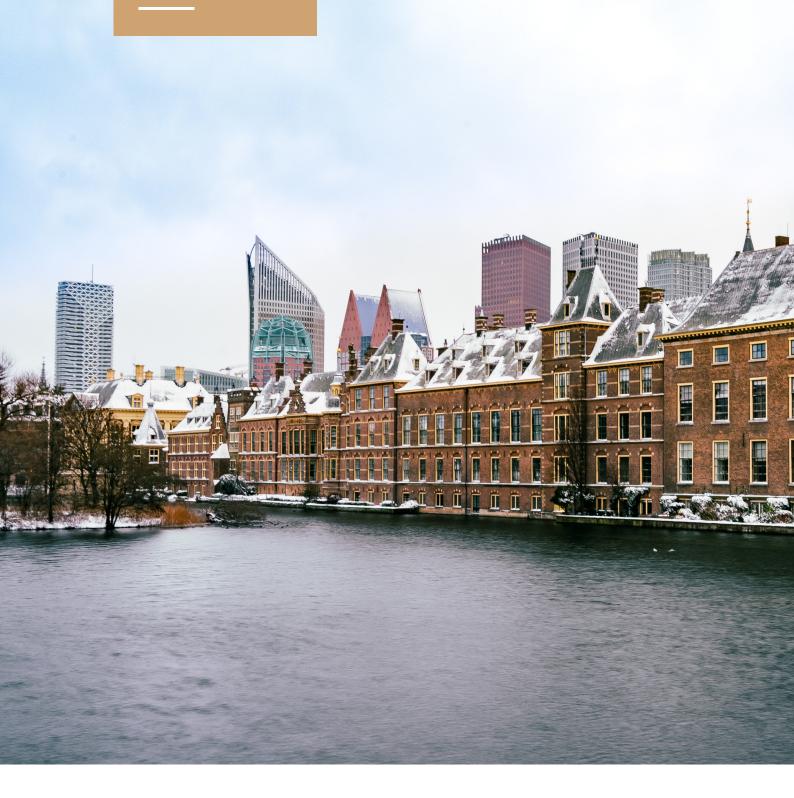


ANNUAL REVIEW 2022



Our work in 2022, and our plans for 2023 The Hague, January 2023

CONTENT

Background and context	1
2022: A tumultuous year full of challenges but also characterised by strong expressions of solidarity	2
Our plans for 2023 and beyond	8
Our outreach	10
Our partners	11
Our visitors to Lange Voorhout 43 in 2022	12
Our team	13
Our publications	14
Spotlight on some of our work in 2019-2021	16
Captions	20

MESSAGE FROM LINKS EUROPE DIRECTOR

I am pleased to present our annual review of the year 2022 and our plans for 2023. At a time of great upheavals in the conduct of international relations LINKS Europe remains committed to contribute to a better future by increasing understanding of complex foreign policy issues, by promoting dialogue and confidence-building as tools for helping to resolve conflict, and by engaging citizens in the process of building peace and security on the basis of solidarity and mutual respect.

Dennis Sammut



LINKS Europe Stichting was set up in February 2019 to provide for and consolidate a European base for a number of initiatives and projects related to European peace and security, and the European Union's relations with neighbouring regions to the East and to the South, some of which have been the hallmark of the work of the LINKS network since its founding in 1997.

From its offices in The Hague, the City of Peace and Justice, LINKS Europe uses a mix of tools in pursuit of its objectives. These range from traditional methodologies for dialogue, to innovative confidence-building measures, to the latest tools for research, analysis, outreach, and communication.

We continue to develop our thinking on confidence-building measures as an important tool for working towards, establishing, and sustaining peace in different contexts.

We work to create greater awareness of ongoing issues in international relations. Better informed citizens are less likely to fall victim of disinformation or populism. Where appropriate we also seek to offer a safe space where different opinions can be aired and discussed.

After a promising start in 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic hit us at the end of our first year. Although this disrupted our momentum, it was not able to suffocate our work. Our team maintained its resolve, operating through windows between the various lockdowns that affected the whole world. In 2022, we bounced back with enthusiasm and determination.

This report discusses our activities in 2022. This was a tumultuous year which saw war in Europe, increased global tensions, a far-reaching energy crisis, and changing geopolitics, but also a new sense of solidarity and increased recognition of the importance of working towards peace and security at local, regional and global levels. Despite its modest means, thanks to the vibrance of its network, the flexibility and versatility of its approach, and the input of its enthusiastic team, LINKS Europe has been able to make contributions to some of the ongoing debates and processes in a way that punches far above its weight.



2022: A TUMULTUOUS YEAR FULL OF CHALLENGES BUT ALSO CHARA-CTERISED BY STRONG EXPRESSIONS OF SOLIDARITY

2022 has been a tumultuous year. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 triggered a war and a crisis on a scale not seen in Europe since WWII. Although the war continues, and it remains difficult to predict what its conclusion will look like, the predicted swift Russian victory failed to materialise thanks mainly to the heroic resistance and resilience of the Ukrainian people. This enabled the international community to muster and deliver political, military, economic and other forms of support, and on an unprecedented scale too. But already the basis on which European peace and security had been built in the last decades has been destroyed. Some institutions, such as NATO, were re-invigorated. Others, such as the OSCE, appeared no longer fit for purpose in their present format.

For the EU the war in Ukraine presented a challenge not seen before, and many questioned the EU's ability to rise to the occasion. But rise to the occasion it did. Throughout 2022 we have seen extraordinary support and generosity; solidarity on a scale not previously thought possible, and a unity and a sense of purpose that many did not believe the EU had within its capacity. The end of the war is not yet in sight, and there are still those who think that this solidarity cannot be sustained, but the start has already been promising and way beyond expectations.



On 22 February 2022 we hosted the book launch of the study of Dr Walter Kemp "Security through Cooperation: To the Same End" with opening remarks by Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.



The war in Ukraine came at a time when the EU was going through a period of reflection in a process called "The Conference on the Future of Europe", an initiative led by the three core European Union bodies: the European Parliament, the European Commission and the European Council. This process included a debate on the future of Europe in the world. LINKS Europe engaged with this process through a series of activities implemented with the support and co-operation of the City of The Hague.

From September 2021 to February 2022, we hosted various clusters of activities attended by a diverse group of concerned citizens, experts, academics and practitioners to discuss various aspects of EU foreign policy. Each event was properly documented, and ideas fed through the formal "Conference on the Future of Europe" process. The activities were also supported by a podcast series prepared by LINKS Europe.

On 22 February, at The Hague Humanity Hub, we welcomed the Mayor of The Hague, Mayor Jan van Zanen, and the Deputy Head of Cabinet to European Commission Vice-President Dubravka Šuica, Ivo Belet. During this event we formally presented the findings of our meetings in a report entitled "The Hague in Europe, Europe in the World."

This took place only two days before Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and the spectre of war overshadowed the meeting. But practically all of the recommendations in the report remain valid, and should be pursued.

You can find the full reports from each event within this series on:

<u>www.commonspace.eu/theme/conference-future-europe</u>









Our work in support of peace in the Caucasus region has been at the centre of LINKS' activity ever since the network was established in 1997. From 2021 LINKS Europe has been one of the implementing partners of an EU-supported programme called EU-4Peace, aimed at promoting the peaceful resolution of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

In this framework, after a period of consultations with Armenian and Azerbaijani stakeholders, in September 2021 we convened Armenian and Azerbaijani experts at a meeting in Kachreti, Georgia, to discuss how confidence-building measures can support the process of peace between the two countries. Working diligently over a six-month period, the group – known as the "Joint Liaison Group on Confidence-building measures in support of lasting peace in the South Caucasus", or JOLIG, for short – prepared a joint report published on 6 April 2022. The report, entitled "The South Caucasus from war to peace: 30 measures between now and 2030", includes tangible and practical ideas on future initiatives that can help build confidence

between the sides and support the establishment of peace and its consolidation.

The report was presented to EU stakeholders and to other interested sides at meetings held in Brussels in April 2022, and to audiences in the South Caucasus at meetings in Baku, Tbilisi and Yerevan soon after.

The JOLIG report received a very positive response both in the region and from the wider international community. The group therefore decided to remain constituted in order to further develop the thoughts on these issues, and to help promote the 30 ideas with local governments, the international community, and other relevant stakeholders.

As a part of this process, in the period from December 2021 to December 2022, LINKS Europe facilitated the publication of four joint policy analysis papers by Armenian and Azerbaijani experts. The group held several meetings in the second half of 2022 and has taken steps to strengthen its organisational capacity through the addition of



some new members, the establishment of mirror archives, and other measures.

We continue to support our work for peace in the Caucasus through our fortnightly electronic newsletters Caucasus Concise and Karabakh Concise. The newsletters have a solid readership including among decision-makers and opinion-shapers in the region, and others interested in the region in Europe and worldwide.

Our long engagement with the Caucasus Region has enabled us to develop a strong network of organisations and individuals who we can work with around common themes and shared visions.







PUBLICATION: THE SOUTH CAUCASUS FROM WAR TO PEACE: 30 MEAS-URES BETWEEN NOW AND 2030

In their report, "The South Caucasus from war to peace: 30 measures between now and 2030", the members of the Liaison Group say that Armenia and Azerbaijan, and Armenians and Azerbaijanis, need to build the future based on mutual trust and confidence.

LANDMINE FREE SOUTH CAUCASUS

The South Caucasus is one of the regions most polluted by landmines and explosive remnants of war in the world. LINKS Europe has been at the forefront of the process to galvanise public opinion and international support for a landmine free South Caucasus by the end of the decade, or soon after. The campaign Landmine Free South Caucasus, co-ordinated by LINKS Europe, was successfully held in 2019 and 2021 through the participation of a broad coalition of organisations representing stakeholders across the region. After a series of preparatory meetings, the 2022 campaign was launched on 30 November with the marking of the first ever "Day of Solidarity with the victims of landmines and explosive remnants of war in the South Caucasus".

An important feature of the 2022 campaign, which will extend until the middle of 2023, has been and will continue to be the direct participation of landmine victims in some of the activities, who, through their testimonials, reflect the heavy toll that landmines and explosive remnants of war take on individuals and communities across the South Caucasus region.

LINKS Europe is committed to the objective of encouraging the three South Caucasus countries to adhere to the international treaty banning anti-personnel landmines, known as the Ottawa Convention, and other similar international instruments. In connection to this topic, LINKS Europe kept in contact with the governments of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia during the course of the year.

In 2022, in support of our work on landmines in the South Caucasus, we published four issues of the electronic newsletter, South Caucasus Landmine Observer, which goes out to thousands of stakeholders and other interested parties and individuals in the region and beyond.











In 2022, LINKS Europe launched a pilot programme focusing on the conflict in Yemen. We are motivated by the need to maintain international focus on the Yemen crisis, even whilst we are dealing with conflicts closer to home. The extent of the human tragedy in Yemen, the risk that the conflict may spill over into other countries, and the need to keep the young people of Yemen motivated and empowered, were some of the factors that we took into account when we launched the pilot project. On 28-29 May, and again on 10 September 2022, LINKS Europe held dialogue meetings with young Yemenis from the diaspora communities across Europe to discuss how young Yemenis at home and abroad can be empowered to help forge a future vision for their country and the wider region, and how to present this vision to decision-makers. Participants came from different parts of Yemen and represented different opinions, experiences and backgrounds.

A number of young Yemenis have also had the opportunity to publish op-eds and analyses on our website *commonspace.eu*. This work will continue in 2023.



The future of peace and security in Europe and beyond

LINKS Europe will continue to provide space for debate and dialogue on issues of future peace and security. Russian aggression in Ukraine has underlined the fragility of global peace, highlighted the risk of widespread war, including with the use of nuclear weapons, and underscored the importance of strong multilateral frameworks.

In 2023, through dedicated activities and publications, we will focus on the roles of NATO, the OSCE and the Non-Aligned Movement, and on how they can contribute to the future of peace and security in the world.

Europe in the world

Our work in 2021-22 on the future of Europe in the world, as part of the process of consultation known as the Conference on the Future of Europe, will be taken forward in 2023 as we continue to focus on how the European Union can play a full and positive role as a global actor and a force for good in an increasingly challenging international context. Our focus will remain on the EU's role in Europe's neighbouring regions.

- In 2023 we will focus on Central Asia and on GCC countries, including through dedicated workshops and our fortnightly electronic newsletters, Arabia Concise and Central Asia Concise, the latter of which we launched in November 2022.
- Connectivity is an important EU priority which compliments its global vision. In 2023 LINKS Europe will continue to shine a spotlight on this important sector through our media outlets and dedicated activities.

Trust and confidence-building in support of the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process

Building on the success of the Joint Liaison Group (JOLIG), LINKS Europe will continue to focus on the theme of confidence-building measures, including through the promotion of the ideas contained in the report "30 measures between now and 2030". Working with the Armenian and Azerbaijani members of the working group, and in close consultation with the governments of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia and other stakeholders, LINKS Europe will during the course of 2023 take forward some of the ideas contained in the report and start the process of implementing them. We will also provide a platform to support others engaged in the implementation of confidence-building measures across the region.

Our engagement with Central Asia and the Arabian Peninsula

Europe's neighbouring regions of Central Asia and the Arabian Peninsula are increasingly important for the European Union.

Our fortnightly newsletters Arabia Concise and Central Asia Concise will continue to focus on these regions, highlighting particularly the ongoing processes of change and reform, and the role of the two regions in Europe's ambitious connectivity agenda.

We will continue to give a voice to young Yemenis and help them articulate a future vision for their country through a number of small workshops and publications.

Resisting radicalisation through friendship and solidarity

Radicalisation, especially of young people and vulnerable communities, continues to fuel violence and violent conflicts all over the world. Solidarity between and within communities, regions, and countries is an important tool in combatting radicalisation and preventing it at the grassroots. In 2023 we will elaborate on this theme through two studies and one workshop.

Connectivity as a tool for peace and prosperity

In an increasingly interdependent world, isolation is not the solution. Developing proper connectivity that works well for all concerned is one of the biggest challenges of our time. Focusing primarily on the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Arabian Peninsula we will in 2023 continue to contribute to this topic through our research and analysis.

Landmine Free South Caucasus

In 2023 LINKS Europe will work with other partners to take forward the work of the Landmine Free South Caucasus campaign. This campaign, which focuses on the victims of landmines and began on 30 November 2022, will be continue until June 2023. A new campaign will be launched in the autumn of 2023.



OUR OUTREACH

LINKS Europe uses a number of tools to disseminate its research, and to give a voice to different opinions on issues related to our area of work.

These tools include our website commonspace.eu; its sister site Karabakh-Space.eu, four fortnightly electronic newsletters: Arabia Concise; Caucasus Concise; Central Asia Concise and

Karabakh Concise, as well as our quarterly newsletter, South Caucasus Landmine Observer. Our podcasts, under the theme Global Europe Unpacked, compliment this effort. We will strengthen our multimedia outputs in 2023.

CONCISE NEWSLETTERS SERIES









LINKS Europe is able to amplify its work through co-operation with a range of partners in the Netherlands, the EU, and globally. Our partnerships range from formal partnerships as part of consortia to implement specific projects, to looser and more informal ad hoc partnerships as a part of networks or specific activities, or simply to share knowledge and information.

In 2022, the European Union and the City of The Hague were strategic partners with whose support we implemented important projects, as already mentioned in this report.

On the side of the EU we worked closely on South Caucasus issues with the EU Special Representative Toivo Klaar, and his team; with the Cabinet of European Council President, Charles Michel; with the team of the IcSP, with the desk officers at the European Union External Action Service, and with the EU delegations in Armenia and Azerbaijan.

We are grateful to the staff of the international office of the City of The Hague for their support during the delivery of the activities in the project "The Hague in Europe, Europe in the World". Leiden University (Leiden), Conciliation Resources (London), and The Hague Humanity Hub (The Hague) were among the key partners in the delivery of our work.

Other partners and associates in 2022 included: International Alert (London); Kvinna till Kvinna (Stockholm); CMI - Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation (Helsinki); Harf and Fasela Foundation (Abu Dhabi); ELVA (The Hague); Caucasus Policy Analysis Center (Baku); Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training and Research Institute (Tbilisi); Center for Political and Economic Strategic Studies (Yerevan); Tbilisi School for Social Research (Tbilisi); Public Movement Multinational Georgia (Tbilisi); Radio GIPA (Tbilisi); The Ukrainian National Bar Association (Kyiv); and others.

In the framework of the campaign Landmine Free South Caucasus, we were pleased to cooperate with the national demining agencies of Armenia (CHDE), Azerbaijan (ANAMA) and Georgia (DELTA), as well as non-governmental organisations such as The HALO Trust and the Azerbaijan Campaign to Ban Landmines. In pursuit of its objectives LINKS Europe also keeps in contact with a number of governments, parliaments, inter-governmental organisations and international institutions.









OUR VISITORS TO LANGE VOORHOUT 43 IN 2022

We are pleased to have welcomed many visitors to our offices at Lange Voorhout 43 in 2022. They included guests for our podcast series, interviewees for our website commonspace.eu, and visitors from the political and diplomatic world, as well as think tanks and civil society who joined us for formal and informal exchanges of views.



In March we were particularly pleased to welcome guests from the think tank community in Uzbekistan who were in The Hague as part of a study visit to Europe.

In June we welcomed representatives from Ukrainian civil society organisations who informed us about developments in their country following the Russian invasion.





In May we welcomed Ambassador Dren Doli of Kosovo to our office and were pleased to interview him later for our website commonspace.eu.

In November we welcomed Nikoloz Samkharadze, the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, who was visiting The Hague and who came into our Lange Voorhout office to be interviewed for <u>commonspace.eu</u>.



OUR TEAM

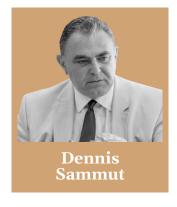
LINKS Europe delivers its work through a small core team of professionals based in The Hague, and a network of associates, partners and supporters spread across the world. A lot of LINKS Europe work is contributed through unpaid voluntary work by people who share our aims and vision. We are grateful for all our staff and associates, all of whom contribute to the organisation way above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Supporting our Director, Dennis Sammut, our team in The Hague consists of Maximiliaan van Lange, Project Co-ordinator and Senior Research Associate; Patrick Norén, Deputy Editor and Research Associate; and five Junior Research Associates: Alexandra Dumistrescu, Alfred Stranne, David van Veenendaal, Kushagrata Goel, and Lara Akande.

We are grateful to George Simonishvili for his role as local co-ordinator in Tbilisi over many years. We are pleased to welcome Jonathan van Varik as Strategic Adviser with effect from January 2023.

We are grateful to our accountants Messrs Visser & Visser for their professional support throughout the year.

In 2022 we bid farewell to William Murray, Noman Ahmed, Anton Macfadyen, and Camille Victor, who in different ways contributed enormously to the work of the organisation.

















PUBLICATIONS: THE HAGUE CONVERSATIONS ON CONFLICT

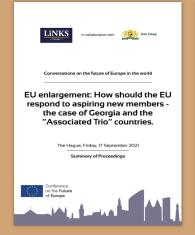








PUBLICATIONS: THE FUTURE OF EUROPE IN THE WORLD

















PUBLICATIONS: JOINT ARMENIAN-AZERBAIJANI LIAISON GROUP





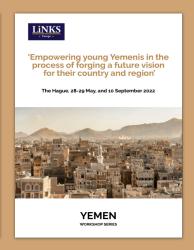




OUR ACTIVITIES







OUR MAIN REPORTS IN 2022













CAPTIONS

Page 16-17

- a) Secretary-General of the Intergovernmental Commission TRACECA, Asset Assavbayev, addresses a round table on Europe-Caucasus-Central Asia connectivity in Brussels on 29 June 2021.
- b) Participants in the Round Table Discussion on the theme "Radicalisation and the Spread of Violent Conflicts" held in The Hague on 28 November 2019
- c) The 2021 "Landmine Free South Caucasus" campaign was launched at a school in Tbilisi on 21 May 2021.
- d) Participants at a conference in the framework of the campaign Landmine Free South Caucasus held in Yerevan, Armenia, on 4 November 2021.
- e) Experts from Armenia and Azerbaijan met in Kachreti, Georgia, on 30 September 2021 to discuss how confidence-building measures can contribute to lasting peace in the South Caucasus.
- f) A round table meeting with diaspora communities in The Hague was held on 22 February 2022 as part of the series "Conversations on the Future of Europe in the world".

Page 18-19

- a) Georgia's First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lasha Darsalia, addresses a round table discussion on prospects for peace and co-operation in the South Caucasus organised by LINKS Europe, in association with the Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training and Research Institute in Kachreti, Georgia, on 1 October 2021.
- b) Participants at a conference in the framework of the campaign Landmine Free South Caucasus held in Baku, Azerbaijan, on 12 October 2021.
- c) The first event in the series "The Hague Conversations on Conflict", hosted by LINKS Europe and The Hague Humanity Hub, organised in June 2019, focused on the theme of track 2 diplomacy and its usefulness.
- d) Ambassadors and senior officials from Georgia, Turkey and Azerbaijan participated in a round table event organised by LINKS Europe in Brussels on 5 March 2020.
- e) The event, 'Meet the Ukrainians', co-hosted with the Embassy of Ukraine in the Netherlands and the Ukrainian National Bar Association on 23 November 2021.
- f) Radicalisation and the Spread of Violent Conflict was the theme of an event in the series "The Hague Conversations on Conflict" held at The Hague Humanity Hub on 28 November 2019.

THE HAGUE CONVERSATIONS ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE IN THE WORLD

Speakers and Moderators in the activities in the series "The Hague Conversations on the Future of Europe in the World", September 2021 - February 2022

Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov

OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

Dr Anar Ahmadov

Associate Professor, Leiden University

Janet Anderson

Justice Connection

Amit Arkhipov-Goyal

Program Manager at Elva Community Engagement

Noman Ahmed Ashraf

Research Associate, LINKS Europe

Dr Sylvia Bergh

Associate Professor, ISS, Erasmus University; Senior Researcher, THUAS

Dr Hans Bellaart

Senior Researcher, Verwey-Jonker Instituut

Lino Brosius

Senior Programme Manager, CILC

Ambassador Vsevolod Chentsov

Head of the Mission of Ukraine to the European Union

Dr Antoaneta Dimitrova

Professor of Comparative Governance, Leiden University

Ambassador Jaap Fredricks

Special Representative for Europe and the Eastern Partnership, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

Ivan Grechkivsky

Chair of the International Relations Committee, Ukrainian National Bar Association

Dr Valentyn Gvozdiy

Vice President, Ukrainian National Bar Association

Terhi Hakala

EU Special Representative for Central Asia

Dr Daniel S. Hamilton

Senior Non-Resident Fellow, The Brookings Institution

Didier Herbert

Head of the Representation of the European Commission in the Netherlands

Alexander Hug

Head of Mission Iraq, International Commission on Missing Persons; Former Principal Deputy Chief Monitor, OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine

Harry Hummel

Senior Policy Advisor, Netherlands Helsinki Committee

Lydia Izovitova

President, Ukrainian National Bar Association

Dr Wouter Jacobs

Academic Director of the Leadership in Commodity Trade and Supply Networks programme, Erasmus University; Senior Fellow, Erasmus UPT

Wim Jansen

Director of International Affairs, The City of The Hague

Dr Walter Kemp

Lecturer, The Diplomatic Academy Vienna

Ambassador Mika-Markus Leinonen

EU Liaison Officer to The Hague, the European External Action Service

Dr Awil Mohamoud

Director, African Diaspora Policy Centre

Brian Mefford

Non-resident Senior Fellow, The Atlantic Council; Founder and Director, Wooden Horse Strategies

William Murray

Senior Consultant, LINKS Europe

Giorgi Nakashidze

Charge d'Affaires a.i., the Embassy of Georgia in the Netherlands

Tristan Ober

Policy Officer for Radicalisation and Polarisation at The City of The Hague

Dr Maaike Okano-Heijmans

Senior Research Fellow, The Clingendael Institute

Alexander Petrosyan

Brussels-based independent analyst

Dr Dennis Sammut

Director, LINKS Europe

Ambassador (rtd) Robert Serry

The first Dutch Ambassador to independent Ukraine

HE David Solomonia

Ambassador of Georgia to the Netherlands

Tony van der Togt

Senior Research Associate, the Clingendael Institute

Jesse van Velzen

The City of The Hague

Dr Maja Vodopivec

Assistant Professor, Leiden University

Professor Rob de Wijk

Founder, The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies

Jill Wilkinson

Managing Director, The Hague Humanity Hub

Dick Zandee

Head of the Security Unit and Senior Research Fellow, The Clingendael Institute

