



crisis action

ANNUAL REPORT (2010-2011)

with Accounts

CHAIR'S REPORT



CRISIS ACTION OPENED ITS FIRST INTERNATIONAL OFFICE IN 2006. ITS BUDGET THEN WAS JUST UNDER \$300,000. TODAY, SOME FIVE YEARS LATER, CRISIS ACTION EMPLOYS 20 PEOPLE IN SEVEN OFFICES ACROSS THREE CONTINENTS, WITH A BUDGET OF NEARLY \$2 MILLION.

Not surprisingly, it's been an eventful 12 months for Crisis Action. We helped our partners influence governments' policies on Sudan, Congo, Gaza, Afghanistan, Ivory Coast, Egypt, Libya and Syria. In this report we detail how Crisis Action's team, always working behind the scenes, has brought together hundreds of organisations to take part in coordinated campaigns that have made a tangible difference to international policy and for civilians caught up in conflict. Once again, Crisis Action's staff in Berlin, Brussels, Cairo, London, Nairobi, New York and Paris have had a big impact, and I congratulate them for their dedication and effectiveness.

Our newest office opened in Nairobi late last year, and has been tasked to coordinate work on behalf of partners towards the African Union. Crisis Action's rapid expansion has been accompanied by a strong focus on getting its internal systems right. With the Board's backing, the organisation has upgraded and improved its infrastructure to underpin continued growth and high impact, while ensuring the organisation maintains its high standards of professionalism and responsiveness. The finance team, in particular, has worked above and beyond the call of duty to upgrade systems that were never designed for the organisation Crisis Action has become.

Crisis Action is now ready to move to the next phase of development: strengthening its presence in sub-Saharan Africa, increasing its core campaign capacity and assessing how best to engage with emerging powers such as Brazil, India and South Africa. This is a strategic imperative in the face of increasingly diffuse global power structures and an area in which Crisis Action has a vital role to play.

Over the past year, Crisis Action has benefited greatly from committed philanthropic partners who have provided fundamental, long-term support to build the institution and invest in its core staff. We are hugely grateful to them for recognising the enormous potential of Crisis Action and encouraging its hard-working team to fulfil it. We look forward to a rewarding partnership over the next phase of the organisation's development, and to working together to improve the lives of thousands of civilians trapped in conflict or persecuted by those in power.

It is remarkable how much Crisis Action has achieved in the short time it has existed, and especially over the last five years. In our experience, the more partners and funders see of the organisation in action, the stronger their support and the greater their demands for our engagement. This is a testament to Crisis Action's model of change, and to the quality and effectiveness of its staff, led by an outstanding Executive Director in Gemma Mortensen. It is a big challenge to manage these expectations and continue to deliver high-quality outputs, but one in which I'm confident Crisis Action and its staff will continue to excel.

Nick Grono

Chair, Crisis Action

Deputy President & Chief Operating Officer, International Crisis Group

“Crisis Action magnifies the diverse strengths of its partners around the world by helping them forge common, and strategic, advocacy campaigns. When NGOs work together, international policymakers are more likely to take note – and to take action.”

Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch

WHO WE WORK WITH

Core Partners

Action Contre la Faim (ACF)
 Aegis Trust
 Africa Peace Forum
 African Research and Resources Forum
 Amnesty International
 Arab Alternative Forum
 Arab Programme for Human Rights Activists
 Arabic Network for Human Rights Information
 Bonn International Centre for Conversion
 British American Security Information Council (BASIC)
 Broederlijk Delen
 Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)
 CARE International France
 CARE International UK
 Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD)
 Christian Aid
 Concordis International
 Cordaid
 Damascus Centre for Human Rights Studies
 Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect
 Global Witness
 Human Rights Watch
 Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust
 ICCO (Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation)
 Institute for Security Studies (ISS)
 International Alert
 International Crisis Group
 International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
 International Medical Corps UK
 International Refugee Rights Initiative
 International Rescue Committee
 MEDACT
 Media in Cooperation and Transition
 medica mondiale
 medico international
 Mercy Corps

Muslim Aid
 Nobel Women's Initiative
 Norwegian Refugee Council
 Oxfam International
 Oxford Research Group
 Permanent Peace Movement
 Refugees International
 Resolve
 Saferworld
 Save the Children UK
 Stichting Vluchteling (Netherlands Refugee Foundation)
 Tearfund
 The Elders
 Trócaire
 Waging Peace
 War Child
 World Vision International

Network Members

Amicus/Unite section
 Anti-Slavery International
 Arab Coalition for Darfur
 Arab Reform Initiative
 Baptist Union
 Britain's General Union
 British Humanist Association
 British Muslim Forum
 British Refugee Council
 Burma Campaign UK
 Burma Initiative Asienhaus
 Chatham House
 Christian Solidarity Worldwide
 Church of England International Office
 Council for Arab British Understanding
 Darfur Consortium
 Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights
 European Council on Foreign Relations
 Foreign Policy Centre

Friends of the Earth UK
 Greenpeace
 Hindu Council UK
 Human Rights & Democracy Media Centre "SHAMS"/Palestine
 Human Rights First Society (Saudi Arabia)
 Institute of Public Policy Research
 International Action Network for Small Arms
 International Centre for Policy and Conflict (ICPC)
 International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)
 Iraq Body Count
 Medical Aid for Palestinians
 Methodist Church
 Methodist Relief and Development Fund
 Mothers Union
 Muslim Council of Britain
 National Union of Students
 National Union of Teachers
 New Israel Fund
 Pan-African Lawyers Union
 Parliamentarians Network for Conflict Prevention
 Peace Direct
 People & Planet
 Quaker Council for European Affairs
 Quaker Peace and Social Witness
 René Cassin
 Responding to Conflict
 Three Faiths Forum
 Trade Union Congress
 UNISON
 United Nations Association (UK)
 United Reform Church
 Verification Research, Training and Information Centre (VERTIC)
 War on Want
 Welfare Association
 Women's Institute
 Zimbabwe Europe Network

YEAR OVERVIEW



OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS, ON HEARING I WORK FOR CRISIS ACTION PEOPLE HAVE OFTEN REMARKED THAT WE MUST HAVE BEEN BUSY. SADLY, WE HAVEN'T BEEN SHORT OF CRISES.

Our capacity was stretched to the limits as we sustained long-running activities, launched a campaign on Afghanistan and mounted multiple emergency responses, including fighting to keep pace with the scale and speed of the Arab uprisings. Time and again, our team has pulled together to help our partners influence the decisions of the world's most powerful people.

As we have seen over the past 12 months from Syria to Ivory Coast, it takes a great deal to shift the vested interests that underpin governments' responses to conflict. We have seen tidal waves of mass action sweep away dictators. We have also witnessed the limitations of protest in the face of rulers bent on the persecution of their populations and the elimination of all dissent. Though the gains of the Arab uprisings are still fragile, the last six months have been testimony to the power of collective action and the need for strategic collaboration if permanent progress is to be made.

In 2009, when we opened our office in Cairo, I confess that we did not see seismic events on the horizon. But over the past two years, our team of two in Cairo demonstrated Crisis Action's value and earned the trust of hundreds of civil society organisations across the region. This meant that in January 2011, as detailed in this report, we were well-placed to mobilise our international networks to support the incredible human rights activists driving the mass movements for political reform.

As widespread protests ripped across the Middle East and North Africa, the threat of ethnic cleansing emerged in Ivory Coast following a contested election. Crisis Action supported a collective NGO response that helped persuade the UN to authorise stronger peacekeeping measures and prevent further atrocities.

Despite the tumultuous times, we also kept up intensive work across our three existing international campaigns, which were bolstered by the opening of an office in Nairobi, bringing greater engagement with the African Union. Crisis Action's coordinated global campaigning was credited with helping sustain international engagement on Sudan, ensuring a peaceful referendum on Southern independence. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, Crisis Action helped secure an investigation into the mass rape of more than 300 women and children and ensure that those responsible were prosecuted. Our coordinated advocacy also convinced the UN Security Council to address the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army and increase UN peacekeeping patrols where attacks had occurred.

We have also had to make tough choices. We have not been able to respond to every situation in which violence was deployed against civilians. We have sought to direct our energies and involvement to those crises where we believe we can make the biggest difference. It has been hard to say no but we cannot deliver quality work for partners unless we remain disciplined.

As ever, our partners have been our best advisers. It has been a privilege to support their work and I am excited about what we can continue to achieve together to prevent gross human rights violations around the world.

Finally, I have benefited greatly from the astute and generous advice of our Board, partners and donors who have offered many invaluable insights into how to build Crisis Action in ways that retain our effectiveness and worth to others. Thank you.

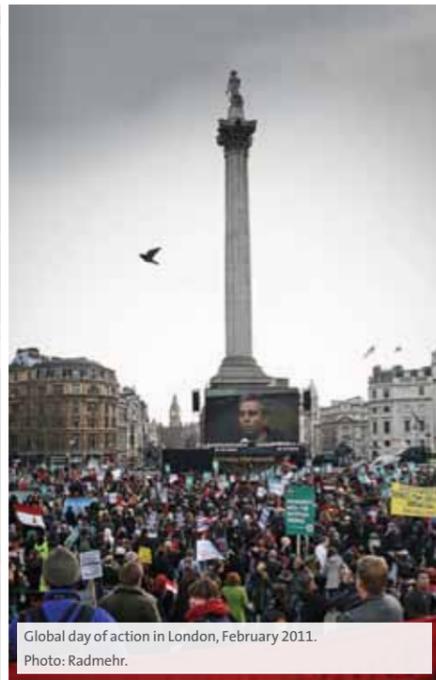
Gemma Mortensen

Executive Director, Crisis Action

THE ARAB UPRISINGS



Protestors gather in Tahrir Square, Cairo, February 2011. Photo: Omar Kamel / http://omarkamel.com.



Global day of action in London, February 2011. Photo: Radmehr.



Media coverage of emergency response work.

AT THE START OF 2011, FEW PREDICTED THAT EVENTS IN TUNISIA WOULD INSPIRE A WAVE OF MASS UPRISINGS ACROSS THE ARAB WORLD.

The ousting of President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali after more than two decades of rule triggered the so-called ‘Arab Spring’, a series of large-scale protests across Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Yemen, Syria and other states in which millions of ordinary people took to the streets calling for basic freedoms and democracy.

While each of these rebellions was borne of the same surge of unrest, the demands of protestors, the response of the authorities and the degree to which the public protests evolved into a fully-fledged revolution have differed markedly in each state. Sadly, common to all has been the governments’ deliberate and illegitimate use of violence against their own civilians.

Crisis Action supported partners by initiating emergency responses to events in Egypt, Libya and Syria.

Egypt

Shortly after the Tunisian uprising, thousands of Egyptians began congregating in Tahrir Square, to call for President Hosni Mubarak to step down. In the space of just a few days, and under the full glare of the international media, government snipers left 850 demonstrators dead.

In February 2011, as tensions intensified, Crisis Action’s Cairo office worked with civil society groups in the region to monitor the situation, and insist that the international community demand an end to the violent crackdown against protesters. Our activities included:

- Drawing together a coalition of more than 20 international and Egyptian organisations for the ‘Stop the Crackdown’ campaign, a series of joint ads published in the UK’s Guardian and Observer newspapers and in Le Monde in France, ahead of an EU summit to discuss the Egyptian crisis.

“At the start of the Egyptian uprising, Crisis Action came to us immediately to ask how they could help. At a time when we were stretched to our limits, we could rely on Crisis Action to help get media coverage for our investigations into human rights violations against protesters and the support of prominent individuals to back the agenda for reform.”

Hossam Bahgat, Founder and Director, Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights



Joint press advertisement as part of the ‘Stop the Crackdown’ campaign, February 2011.

- Organising an opportunity for Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights to brief international media with evidence of human rights abuses against protestors and recommendations for change. This generated coverage by CNN, Le Figaro, Libération and others.
- Facilitating an opinion piece by the ‘Committee of Wise Men’ in the Washington Post setting out an agenda for reform on the eve of Mubarak’s fall. The group comprised prominent Egyptians including Dr Nabil Al Arabi who went on to become Egyptian Foreign Minister, Amr Moussa, Secretary General of the Arab League and Nabil Fahmy, former Egyptian Ambassador to the US.
- Supporting Amnesty International to organise a global day of action on Egypt on 12 February. Falling the day after Mubarak’s defeat, the demonstrations demanded that commitments to reform be upheld, and received widespread global media coverage.

In the wake of Mubarak’s fall and in the context of a transitional military government, Crisis Action has continued to support partners pushing for reform of the Egyptian security services, and for those who committed abuses against protestors to be held to account.

Libya

In February 2011, reports emerged that the Libyan regime was using lethal force to put down demonstrations across several Libyan cities. In a defiant speech, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi threatened to wipe out the protests and to fight to the “last drop of blood”.

As violence escalated, it became increasingly clear that civilians in the opposition stronghold of Benghazi were at risk of being massacred by the regime’s forces. World leaders condemned the spiralling aggression and discussed measures to end the bloodshed. However, despite strong condemnation by several UN Security Council members, the Council refused to put in place targeted measures against the Libyan regime without a clear mandate from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

“Only with clear and serious guarantees will the hundreds of thousands of people who have protested peacefully for a democratic government be convinced ...that those responsible for the violence, human rights abuses and bloodshed... are to be brought to account.”

Extract from op-ed in the Washington Post

“Crisis Action has an impressive ability to bring Arab intellectuals and activists together to make timely and strategic interventions when it matters most. They make sure that there is powerful engagement between civil society actors in the region and the world’s most important policymakers.”

Dr Amr Hamzawy, Activist and Professor of Political Science, Cairo University

THE ARAB UPRISINGS



Al Jazeera TV news on the Arab League's backing of a no-fly zone over Libya, March 2011.



Protesters attending a rally in Benghazi, Libya, May 2011. Photo: REUTERS / Mohammed Salem.

As our Arab partners called for leaders in the region to back international sanctions, Crisis Action supported:

- 200 Arab organisations from 18 countries across the MENA region to call on the Arab League, African Union (AU), EU, UN Security Council and regional governments to take action to prevent a massacre in Libya, back the UN Human Rights Council's investigation into alleged crimes and hold those responsible to account.
- 35 prominent Arab figures, including well-known Egyptian novelist Ahdaf Soweif, Palestinian filmmaker and philanthropist Omar Al Qattan and Jordanian Senator Laila Sharaf, to join a public letter calling for the Arab League and regional governments to prevent widespread attacks on civilians.

Crisis Action helped partners communicate their messages to the media and key officials, and both initiatives secured widespread coverage across the Middle East, US and Europe.

The Arab League took heed of civil society's calls, and in an emergency meeting of the Arab Ministerial Committee, Secretary General Amr Moussa cited public support for a stronger Arab position. The meeting concluded with landmark resolution 7360, in which the League of Arab States made a unanimous and unprecedented request for the UN Security Council to authorise measures to safeguard civilians in Libya. A similar call from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) showed that the Arab world was virtually unanimous in urging the international community to prevent further carnage.

As international and regional support for taking action on Libya grew:

- Our Nairobi office coordinated a letter from partners in sub-Saharan Africa to the chair of the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC), requesting strong condemnation of Gaddafi's use of force against civilians as a violation of the Constitutive Act of the AU. The AUPSC subsequently issued a statement on Libya, echoed by the Chair of the AU Commission, which denounced the atrocities against civilians and authorised an investigative mission to Libya.
- We coordinated joint media work with Amnesty International, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and others, calling on the EU to implement an asset freeze and arms embargo against the Gaddafi regime and to provide relief and assistance to those fleeing the violence. These measures were agreed by the EU.

In Resolution 1970, the Security Council subsequently adopted targeted economic sanctions against Gaddafi and his inner circle, and in Resolution 1973 it agreed to impose a no-fly zone and, to tighten restrictions to prevent the regime from receiving oil revenues.

“By working across sectors, through an unprecedented international network of human rights organisations, humanitarian agencies and policy groups, Crisis Action is creating a new momentum for global campaigning and advocacy on armed conflict.”

Antoine Bernard, Chief Executive Officer, International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



A man looks out below the shutter of a burnt-out building in a city some 350 km northwest of Damascus, Syria, March 2011. Photo: AFP / Anwar Amro.

Syria

Inspired by the popular movements in Egypt and Tunisia, protestors in Syria also came out in force. The regime's response was brutal yet a communications blackout prevented Syrians from calling for help. Alongside large-scale arbitrary arrest and detention, military artillery was used to quell the uprising and to punish unarmed civilians. Between mid-March and mid-May 2011, over 800 peaceful demonstrators were killed and 9,000 arrested in 16 Syrian cities.

As the crisis escalated, the EU and the US passed sanctions against leading figures in the Syrian regime. However, the UN Security Council and the League of Arab States refused to take action, claiming they feared another Libyan-style military intervention. This inactivity sent a dangerous signal to Syrian security forces that it could act against protestors without censure.

In June 2011, Crisis Action learned that UN Security Council members the UK, France, Portugal and Germany were considering tabling a resolution calling for an end to the crackdown in Syria, but that other powers on the Council, most notably Russia, remained opposed. In an effort to build momentum in support of a resolution, we coordinated a strong appeal to member states from civil society across the MENA region. This included supporting:

- Arab NGOs to make a massive joint call to every UN Security Council member, urging them to break their silence and pass a resolution demanding an immediate end to the use of lethal force.
- 100 Arab NGOs calling on the Arab League – ahead of its summit on 15 May 2011 – to condemn the unfolding atrocities. Their efforts secured coverage in leading Egyptian newspaper, Al Shorouk.
- 25 prominent Egyptian figures in a joint petition calling for Egypt's new Foreign Minister, Dr Nabil Al Araby (a key figure in the Egyptian uprising), not to desert the principles he defended in Tahrir Square and for Egypt to press for stronger Arab criticism of Syria during the Arab League meeting.
- An editorial by Dr Radwan Ziadeh, Director of the Damascus Centre for Human Rights Studies, calling for a UN resolution to stop the violence. The article was featured across French, German, US and Arabic press, including Le Figaro, Süddeutsche, the New York Daily News and Asharq Alawsat.
- The organisation of meetings for Dr Ziadeh with Security Council members, including key swing states Russia and Brazil. Diplomats from several nations commended the timing of this initiative, saying that a powerful call from the region was needed to help shift the dynamics in the Council.

The League's Secretary General Amr Moussa spoke in a news conference of the region's concern about the situation in a number of Syrian cities, and later expressed the Arab League's outrage at the turn of events in the UK's Guardian newspaper. However, at the time of this report's publication, China, Russia, India, Brazil and South Africa were blocking the efforts of EU member states to support a UN resolution on Syria. Crisis Action continues to work towards an end to state-sponsored violence in Syria.

“By bringing together NGOs from 18 countries across the Arab world to do joint advocacy and media work, Crisis Action's work on Syria made a real difference. They helped me to gain access to the highest level policymakers on the Security Council right as they were considering a resolution on Syria. With Crisis Action's support, we were able to directly influence key states at the right moment.”

Dr Radwan Ziadeh, Founder and Director of Damascus Centre for Human Rights Studies

THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY



Survivor of LRA atrocities in the Makombo area of Haut-Uélé district, DRC, September 2010.
Photo: Oxfam / Pierre Peron.

IN 2008 AND 2009, THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY (LRA), ONE OF THE MOST BRUTAL REBEL GROUPS IN AFRICA, KILLED AND ABDUCTED HUNDREDS OF CIVILIANS AROUND CHRISTMAS TIME.

Working with allies: deterring another Christmas massacre

In the lead up to Christmas 2010, Crisis Action and partners ran a global campaign to urge greater international political action against the LRA and prevent another Christmas massacre.

While the UN Security Council had been failing to respond seriously to these atrocities, there were signs of diplomatic commitment from the US and the African Union (AU). With the UK and US presiding over the Council in late 2010, we lobbied for action on the LRA by:

- Bringing together Human Rights Watch, Oxfam, Resolve, Refugees International and the International Crisis Group to compel the UN to launch an urgent regional response to the LRA.
- Working with 19 humanitarian and advocacy groups to collate a report entitled 'Ghosts of Christmas Past: Protecting Civilians from the LRA', which called for action to prevent another bloodbath in 2010. This was launched to coincide with the anniversary of previous LRA massacres, and achieved significant impact:
 - The report's conclusions were publicly referenced by the UN Secretary General's spokesperson (see adjacent quote).
 - It achieved international media coverage in outlets including Al Jazeera, BBC News, Voice of America, France 24 and the African Herald Express.
 - We enabled Human Rights Watch, Oxfam and World Vision to present the report and its recommendations to the UN Security Council at a briefing held by the UK diplomatic mission to the UN. The Council eventually issued a presidential statement on the LRA incorporating a number of our collective NGO proposals.
- Facilitating an opinion piece in the Guardian newspaper from Oscar-winning UK actress Helen Mirren on 27 December 2010, calling on both the UK and the UN to ensure steps were taken to avert the threat of further carnage.



Joint report calling for action to prevent a repeat of Christmas time massacres by the LRA, December 2010.

"MONUSCO shares the concerns of aid groups about the possibility of renewed attacks on civilians by the Lord's Resistance Army."

The Secretary General's Spokesperson speaking at a UN press conference, 14 December 2010, referring to the joint report

- Coordinating a joint media response to the US government's announcement of its first ever strategy on the LRA, made in late November 2010. We supported organisations including Refugees International, Human Rights Watch and Enough to welcome the strategy, push for its prompt implementation and call for more resources to address the LRA threat.

A major objective of our collective advocacy had been to push for a more responsive UN presence in LRA-affected areas, and in December 2010, our campaign began to bear fruit when the UN deployed Operation Rudia Umbrella. The initiative was tasked with increasing patrols by MONUSCO, the UN peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with the aim of preventing LRA attacks in the DRC before Christmas. This helped to ensure that there were no LRA massacres around Christmas 2010, and a similar strategy was followed again with Operation Easter Shield in May 2011.

Time for coordinated action on the LRA

In January 2011, the UN announced it would establish a strategy on the LRA, as our coalition had advocated for many months. At the request of UN officials, Crisis Action worked with partners to submit a joint memo outlining recommendations for a UN policy on the LRA, and organised off-the-record meetings with officials to brainstorm ideas.

To increase pressure on the UN, we secured frequent meetings for our partners with senior UN policymakers, including the new head of MONUSCO, Roger Meece and other members of the mission's leadership team. We also held regular meetings with senior UN secretariat figures including Baroness Valerie Amos, UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs. Following the NGO briefing on the LRA, organised by Crisis Action, Baroness Amos responded to partners' requests to visit LRA-affected areas in DRC. During her trip in March 2011, she issued a strong statement that was clearly influenced by the evidence presented to her in the briefing, which garnered considerable press attention for the LRA issue.

Crisis Action also worked to reinforce support in the UK and at the EU level for bolder measures to deal with the LRA. Working with UK NGOs, we engaged EU diplomats and British parliamentarians who could influence the new coalition government by:

- Helping facilitate a briefing by Oxfam and Christian Aid on the regional threat posed by the LRA for an exclusive audience of British MPs and civil servants.
- Bringing together a panel of high-profile speakers, including former UN Under-Secretary General Sir John Holmes and the UK's Minister for Africa, Henry Bellingham, to discuss Britain's role in formulating a coherent regional LRA strategy.
- Obtaining a rare briefing for partners to diverse international policymakers within the International Contact Group on the Great Lakes.

In May 2011, in response to months of collective advocacy, the UN dispatched a senior team to LRA-affected areas tasked with developing a comprehensive regional policy on the LRA. This had been a longstanding recommendation of our LRA coalition, and Crisis Action ensured that partners briefed the mission before it left in order to significantly influence its recommendations.

At the time of writing this report, the UN was on the cusp of defining a comprehensive policy on the LRA and the Security Council was poised to hold a formal meeting on the topic. Crisis Action helped create the advocacy opportunities that led to these outcomes, and enabled partners to shape the UN's LRA agenda.

Finally, the AU convened a ministerial meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to adopt a set of recommendations on how the AU should deal with the LRA threat. Crisis Action's Nairobi office organised briefings with leading AU officials who were participating in the talks. The AU adopted an ambitious set of recommendations, including the establishment of a Regional Task Force, the creation of a joint operations centre and the appointment of an LRA Special Envoy.

We will continue to work with partners and policymakers to push for the full and proper implementation of international policies and strategies on the LRA, to ensure that civilians no longer suffer at the hands of this brutal rebel group.

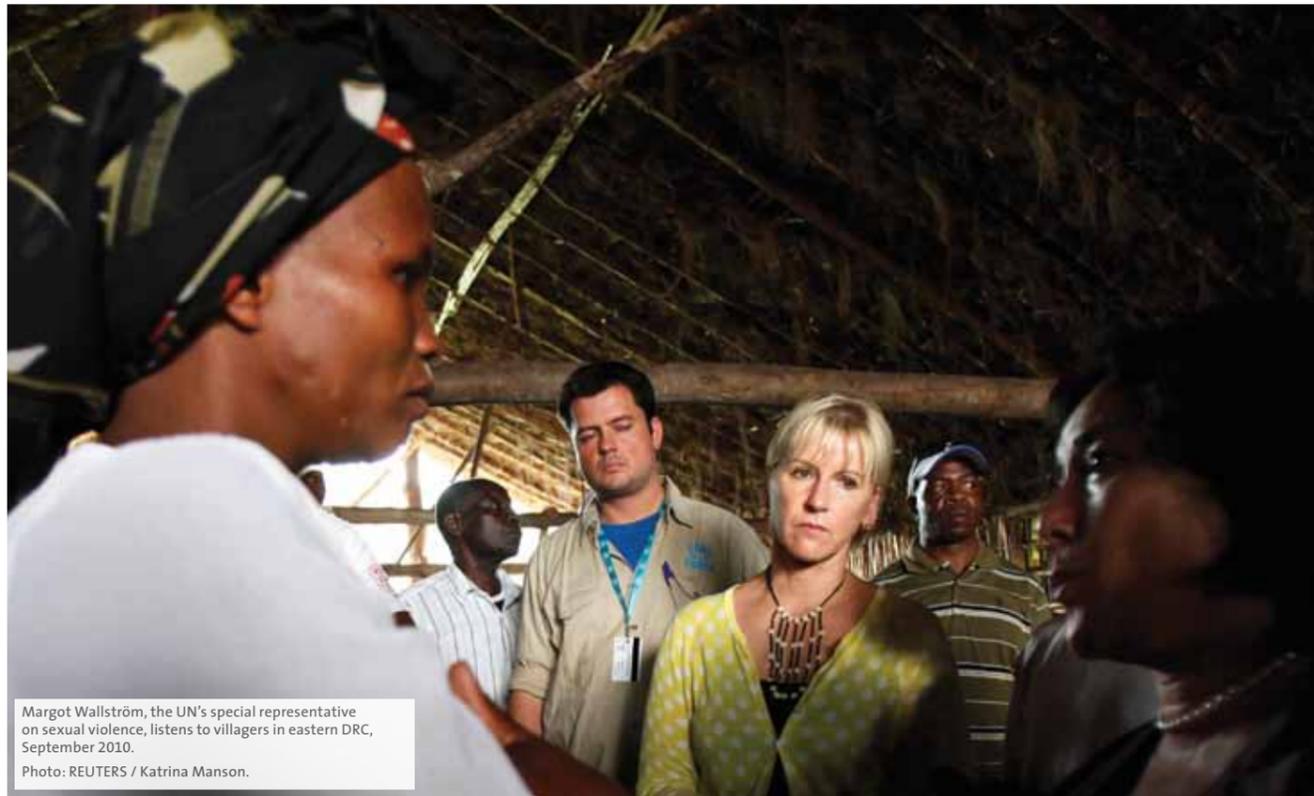


Op-ed in the Guardian by actress Helen Mirren, December 2010.

"Since Crisis Action arrived on the scene it's been night and day in terms of coordinated advocacy, at the UN and globally, to combat the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army. Crisis Action has anticipated and created unique advocacy moments on the LRA at the AU, UN, EU and key capitals."

Paul Ronan, Director of Advocacy, Resolve

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO



Margot Wallström, the UN's special representative on sexual violence, listens to villagers in eastern DRC, September 2010.
Photo: REUTERS / Katrina Manson.

IN THE LAST DECADE, CIVILIANS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC) HAVE BEEN SUBJECT TO SOME OF THE MOST SAVAGE BRUTALITY IN THE WORLD.

Millions have been killed, injured or displaced in a country that has exceptionally high rates of sexual violence, a proliferation of illegal armed groups and a government which is both unwilling and unable to protect its population.

Demanding accountability for sexual violence

In August 2010, the mass rape of more than 300 women and children in Walikale, Eastern DRC, highlighted grave shortcomings in the ability of the DRC authorities and MONUSCO (the UN peacekeeping force) to protect civilians from grave human rights abuses.

Crisis Action drew together a coalition of 17 high-profile NGOs from around the world, including Oxfam, the International Crisis Group, Save the Children, World Vision, the International Rescue Committee, Global Witness and Refugees International to urge the UN Security Council to authorise an urgent public investigation into the incident and to ensure that the perpetrators were brought to account.

Within three weeks, the Security Council responded by authorising such an investigation, and in an exceptional move, made the findings public. As a result, a key commander was prosecuted for ordering the mass rape, while others suspected of instigating sexual violence had targeted sanctions imposed upon them by the Security Council. As requested by the coalition, MONUSCO stepped up its patrols in vulnerable areas and appointed community liaison officers to ensure peacekeepers were more responsive when civilians were attacked.

The UN's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict, Margot Wallström, was a crucial voice for the victims and visited the DRC numerous times. To influence her trip in September 2010, Crisis Action organised a meeting for her with partners in New York.

“Crisis Action provides invaluable expertise in building coalitions, enabling us to deliver precise, joint messaging to regional intergovernmental organisations in Africa. This helps us mount pressure on regional actors to respond to situations in which civilians are at risk.”

George Omondi, Executive Director, Africa Research and Resources Forum

Ensuring a robust mandate for the UN's peacekeeping mission

In mid-2010, following pressure from Crisis Action and partners, the UN had approved a mandate for a new peacekeeping mission in the DRC. This set out clear benchmarks for success, including minimising the threat of armed groups and improving the ability of Congolese forces to protect the country's population.

In late 2010, Crisis Action was informed by local partners that the UN process to assess MONUSCO's effectiveness had been rushed, had not involved consultation with local communities, and that assessors were being coerced by the DRC government to change the results.

In response to a joint call coordinated by Crisis Action from a strong coalition of NGOs from the DRC and around the world, the UN agreed to uphold its previous commitment. By ensuring subsequent rounds of assessment were performed to a much higher standard, this improved process should help demonstrate the continuing need for and value of a peacekeeping presence in the DRC.

Looking ahead: protecting civilians during the DRC elections

With Congolese elections approaching at the end of 2011, and the renewal date of MONUSCO's mandate looming, we reconvened the NGO coalition on the DRC. Led by Crisis Action, the alliance engaged in a range of activities to push for the retention of a strong MONUSCO mandate, including:

- A joint memo to key UN decision-makers outlining partners' concerns and demands for MONUSCO.
- Joint media work to raise the profile of the issue ahead of the mandate's renewal.
- A series of high-level meetings with ambassadors in New York, as well as the head of MONUSCO and senior UN officials.
- A seminar at the French National Assembly and a meeting with the UK, French and German Ministries of Foreign Affairs to assess what role their countries could play on the Security Council, and within the EU, to increase the effectiveness of the DRC peacekeeping force ahead of the elections.

The MONUSCO mandate was renewed with a strong role to play in monitoring any election-related abuses, and with a bolstered responsibility to protect civilians from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) – two central recommendations of our collective advocacy.

Maintaining the profile of the DRC at the EU level

At the EU, Crisis Action ensured that the DRC was high on the diplomatic agenda. Ahead of an African, Caribbean and Pacific-EU joint parliamentary assembly in Kinshasa, we organised a DRC briefing for EU parliamentarians. We also facilitated extensive advocacy to ensure that the EU continued to take a regional approach to the problems in the DRC, as the vital role of EU Special Representative for the Great Lakes stood to be terminated. This role had a crucial part to play in relation to major regional issues, such as the illegal exploitation of natural resources, and the activity of rebel groups including the LRA and the Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR), so Crisis Action made swift moves to attempt to secure its future.

We quickly coordinated a series of joint letters, briefings and media work, culminating in a front page story in the largest online daily EU news outlet, the EU Observer. Sadly, despite some member states publicly backing our calls, the Special Representative position was terminated. However, in response to opposition from NGOs and member states, at the time of writing this report a Brussels-based Coordinator for the Great Lakes was to be appointed.



A teenage mother and baby in their shelter in Kalinga Camp, Masisi district. The girl gave birth after she was raped by armed men, November 2010.
Photo: UNHCR / S Shulman.

“Crisis Action is extremely effective at mobilising leading NGOs in New York to present coordinated recommendations to the UN. Their ability to bring together key experts to provide on the ground perspectives and realistic high-level policy suggestions has been incredibly useful.”

Jack Christofides, Great Lakes Team Leader, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations

“Crisis Action has played an invaluable role in bringing together Congolese and international organisations to convince MONUSCO to do more to protect civilians in DRC. In the lead up to elections in 2011, Crisis Action ensured that our concerns about the UN's role were heard loud and clear at headquarters and around the world, thanks to their effective media outreach.”

Jerome Bonso, Head of the Coalition for Peaceful and Transparent Elections (AETA), DRC

SUDAN



Celebrity music video released in September 2010.

"I have been delighted to contribute to Crisis Action's well-timed efforts to reduce conflict in Sudan and increase awareness of its consequences. Their brand of organised parliamentary and media events has struck me as very professional – and the collaborative model much more effective than voices in isolation."

Sir John Holmes, former UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs

THE PAST 12 MONTHS IN SUDAN HAVE BEEN CHARACTERISED BY THE COUNTDOWN TO TWO HISTORIC EVENTS: THE REFERENDUM ON INDEPENDENCE FOR SOUTH SUDAN, ON 9 JANUARY 2011, AND 9 JULY 2011, THE DATE ON WHICH INDEPENDENCE TOOK EFFECT.

The latter marks an end to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) which had ensured a fragile peace in Sudan since 2005. This high-stakes process brought with it risks of renewed conflict in both the north and south.

Crisis Action's intensive ongoing advocacy work on Sudan, including the Sudan365 campaign, contributed to a heightened level of international vigilance which ensured the referendum passed peacefully.

However, following a resounding vote for independence, the international community shifted its attention to the crises unfolding in the Middle East and North Africa. Within months, the cycle of turbulence that had for so long afflicted the region resumed once again. South Sudan quickly came to witness one of its bloodiest years since 2005, with many thousands being killed and injured in hostilities that engulfed the fledgling nation, leaving 4.27 million people displaced across the country.

Crisis Action met these events with an extensive and coordinated media and global advocacy campaign to work for peace and demand protection for Sudanese civilians.

Global campaigning: Sudan365

The Sudan365 campaign was launched on 9 January 2010 to countdown 365 days to the referendum on independence. It encompassed joint advocacy and global civil society campaigning to bring about strengthened and coordinated engagement by international players to prevent a return to conflict in Sudan.

The campaign pulled together over 100 organisations in 20 countries across Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the US. It targeted the states and institutions that acted as 'Guarantors' of the 2005 CPA and had pledged to help ensure that North and South Sudan negotiated a lasting peace. High-level officials have confirmed that Sudan365 contributed to an intensification of their efforts to prevent a return to conflict ahead of the referendum.



Sudan365 global day of action in New York and Sydney, September 2010.

Influencing high-level negotiations

Ahead of the UN General Assembly and an influential meeting on Sudan attended by Ban Ki-moon and President Obama in September 2010, Crisis Action worked intensively with partners to push for a commitment among world leaders to ensuring peace in the country. We advocated for this by:

- Devising and drafting a joint NGO report 'Renewing the Pledge', which brought together 26 Sudanese, European, Middle Eastern and American organisations to set out policy recommendations for key international players on Sudan. These proposals covered the right of the South Sudanese to self-determination, the importance of maintaining international human rights standards in both the north and south, and the commitment of Guarantors to safeguarding democratic transformation in Sudan. Crisis Action coordinated the report's delivery, ahead of the UN meeting, to the CPA Guarantors, as well as a launch which garnered significant global media coverage.
- Organising a Sudanese civil society delegation to Addis Ababa to present the 'Renewing the Pledge' report and its findings to key African Union (AU) states. Crisis Action helped coordinate meetings for the delegation with representatives from Rwanda, Nigeria and Kenya and the head of the AU Peace and Security Council Secretariat.
- Arranging a Sudanese civil society delegation to Washington DC and New York, including securing meetings at the highest levels in the White House, Congress and the State Department, as well as with Ban Ki-moon's top advisors, former South African President Thabo Mbeki, the UN Secretary General's Special Representative to Sudan, and with UN Security Council members.
- Mobilising the Sudan365 network to take part in a global day of action on 19 September 2010. Events across Guarantor states called on leaders to uphold their promises to Sudan.
- Coordinating the release of a celebrity music video to increase public pressure on Guarantor states and the UN. The film, which involved musicians including Coldplay, Angélique Kidjo and South African jazz legend Hugh Masekela, was presented to senior Sudanese and UN officials and was featured across global media and online.
- Placing a joint opinion piece by two negotiators of the CPA - retired Lieutenant General Lazaro Sumbeiywo, former Chief of Staff of the Kenyan army and chief mediator in the Sudan peace talks, and John Danforth, former US Senator and Ambassador to the UN – in key publications in the US, the Middle East and Africa.

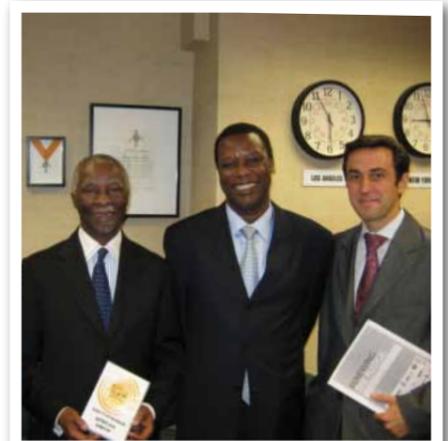
These coordinated efforts helped ensure that the communiqué from the September meeting on Sudan reflected many of the recommendations made by Crisis Action's partners.

Highlighting the economic costs of a return to war

In late 2010, as the risk of brinkmanship ahead of the referendum increased, Crisis Action worked with partners in the UK and Africa to present a hard-headed economic analysis of the cost of a return to war in Sudan, demonstrating how much Sudanese leaders, regional governments and the international community had to lose.

'The Cost of Future Conflict in Sudan', a joint report by Frontier Economics, the Aegis Trust, the Society for International Development and the Institute for Security Studies, analysed the potential GDP loss for Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Egypt, should war return to Sudan. It also presented the cost to the international community with respect to increased humanitarian and peacekeeping expenditure. The report estimated the overall price of resumed conflict in Sudan as \$100 billion. Crisis Action maximised the impact of the report by:

- Harnessing the influence of prominent economists in an op-ed which challenged regional leaders to ask themselves: "Are we doing everything in our power to prevent a war that could cost over US \$100 billion and hundreds and thousands of lives?"
- Coordinating a global media launch for the report, which was covered internationally by outlets including the Guardian, the Financial Times, Voice of America, Al Jazeera, Radio France Internationale, Kenya's Daily Nation and Sudanese Online.
- Arranging advocacy meetings for the report authors with senior officials from the Arab League; Egyptian, Kenyan and UK governments; and the EU to highlight the report's findings.



'Beat for Peace' video and 'Renewing the Pledge' report delivered to former President Mbeki, September 2010.

"We met with policymakers at the highest levels at the UN and in the US government, from the White House to Congress. The trip was perfectly timed with Sudan in the headlines and the US government eager to hear our solutions for peace as it stepped up its diplomatic efforts in Sudan."

Sudanese civil society delegation, Edmund Yakani, Salih Osman, Albaqir Mukhtar



Joint report estimating the cost of resumed conflict in Sudan, November 2010.



UNAMID peacekeeper provides security at a camp of nearly 2,000 displaced Sudanese in Khor Abeche, South Darfur after they fled violence in their native Darfur villages, January 2011. Photo: UN / Albert Gonzalez Farran.

Keeping Sudan on the political radar

In the months preceding the referendum, Crisis Action sustained pressure through regular engagement with influential officials in the AU, Arab League, EU and UN Security Council. We called on governments to ensure protection was put in place for both southerners in the north and northerners in the south who might come under attack if the referendum ended in a vote for independence. We also established regular meetings for partners with the new EU Special Representative for Sudan, and a briefing for New York partners with UK Foreign Secretary, William Hague, before he chaired a ministerial meeting of the UN Security Council on Sudan.

Preventing the neglect of Darfur

With the international community absorbed in preparations for the referendum, Crisis Action worked to ensure that the ongoing conflict in Darfur between Sudanese government forces and Sudan Liberation Army rebels, remained on the agenda. To this end, we:

- Documented the deteriorating situation, including through a joint press release by a coalition of partners urging the UN Security Council to insist on regular public reports on the humanitarian situation in Darfur, and throughout Sudan, in order to adequately monitor the situation on the ground in the lead up to the referendum.
- Set up meetings for partners with the head of the UN Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), Ibrahim Gambari, to push UNAMID to adopt a stronger position with the Sudanese government and demand access to areas where civilians were in need of assistance.
- Arranged an expert briefing for UN journalists with key partners preceding a UN Security Council briefing on Sudan in mid-January 2011.

In January, responding to NGOs' requests, Baroness Amos committed to strengthening the UN's public reporting of the humanitarian situation. However, though there has been some improvement, the UN's reporting continues to fall short of our partners' demands, particularly with regard to the human rights situation at grassroots level, and we continue to press for better information.

Crisis Action also focused on governments which refuted reports of a worsening humanitarian situation in Darfur, in particular Germany, which was due to take up a seat on the UN Security Council at the beginning of 2011. Having successfully lobbied the German government to sustain their financial contribution to UNAMID in June 2010, we again coordinated German NGOs to lobby the government, providing up-to-date information on the situation on Darfur to counter its negative position.

“Crisis Action enables organisations in the region to speak collectively and incisively on issues pertaining to peace and security in the region. They have helped us get access to decision-makers and linked us up to a powerful international network of NGOs so that we can be part of global campaigning and make a bigger impact.”

Ambassador Ochieng Adala, Africa Peace Forum



Sudan365 global day of action, London, September 2010.



Violence renewed in disputed town of Abyei, Sudan, which uprooted tens of thousands of civilians, May 2011. Photo: UN / Stuart Price.

Engaging the AU and Sudan's neighbours

Throughout the campaign, our partners pushed for clearer leadership and stronger coordination of international efforts on Sudan by key regional players. Over the course of the past year this has materialised and the AU has played an increasingly important role in Sudan following the decision by the international community to unite behind the AU High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), led by former South African President, Thabo Mbeki.

In early 2011, in consultation with partners, Crisis Action devised a strategy to increase engagement with the AU, particularly member state representatives in Addis Ababa who collectively form the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) from which the Peace and Security Council (PSC) draws its membership. This has included:

- Organising a delegation of Sudanese civil society leaders and partners to Addis Ababa around the AU Summit in January 2011, to convey the need for a unified AU voice on Sudan. The delegation met with officials from Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda, Rwanda, Zambia, Botswana and the DRC, who pledged to push for a strong AU position. A special session on Sudan was convened at the summit and a Solemn Declaration issued by the AU pledging to help enhance civilian protection.
- Arranging a follow-up delegation to Addis Ababa ahead of the deadline for independence which provided Sudanese civil society activists access to senior decision-makers at a critical moment.
- Coordinating a series of background briefings in Nairobi between partners and key international media correspondents on Sudan, to outline the changing local situation and provide analysis of political developments at the AU and in the negotiations.

Despite the peaceful passing of the referendum period, in May 2011 conflict erupted along the volatile border between North and South Sudan. In Abyei, a military invasion and aerial bombing by Khartoum's forces led to a mass exodus, as 100,000 people were forced to flee. Crisis Action mobilised partners to call on the international community to immediately condemn the use of force and to agree and enforce a demilitarised zone along the border. The UN Security Council responded rapidly, putting these measures in place.

Tensions along the border areas have continued to increase. Accordingly, Crisis Action is working with partners to persuade the international community to increase the robustness of their relationships with both North and South Sudan, using the levers at their disposal – from debt relief to the normalisation of diplomatic relations – to hold both governments to account and to prevent further violations against the civilian population.

“Joining Crisis Action's coalitions has enabled us to better coordinate our messages with key like-minded organisations and to influence policymakers outside our traditional US sphere of influence. Crisis Action has helped to amplify advocacy messages on conflict issues in Sudan and DRC.”

Michel Gabaudan, President, Refugees International

ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY



Young boy collecting gravel from destroyed building in Gaza, June 2011.
Photo: I. El Baba.

“Crisis Action knows how to help NGOs find common ground, identify the most strategic angles for joint work and bring on board the organisations and individuals that can make a real difference to policy and ultimately to communities affected by conflict. NRC is a firm-believer in the importance of collaboration – from the Ivory Coast to Israel/Palestine, Crisis Action has added real value to our work.”

Elisabeth Rasmussen, Secretary General, Norwegian Refugee Council

SINCE 2007, THE CIVILIAN POPULATION OF THE GAZA STRIP HAS BEEN SUBJECTED TO A CRIPPLING BLOCKADE IMPOSED BY THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE HAMAS TAKEOVER OF GAZA.

The policy condemns Palestinians in Gaza, half of whom are children, to poverty and dependency on international aid and undermines hopes for a just and durable resolution of the wider Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In June 2010, in the wake of the violent incident on the Free Gaza Flotilla, international anxiety pushed Israel to announce limited measures to ease the blockade. However, despite appeasing the international community, in reality these concessions offered little genuine improvement for the people of Gaza. Fearing that global leaders would wrongly perceive these limited measures as satisfactory progress, Crisis Action mobilised partners to gather evidence of the continued suffering in Gaza, and insist that the international community continue to demand a full lifting of the blockade.

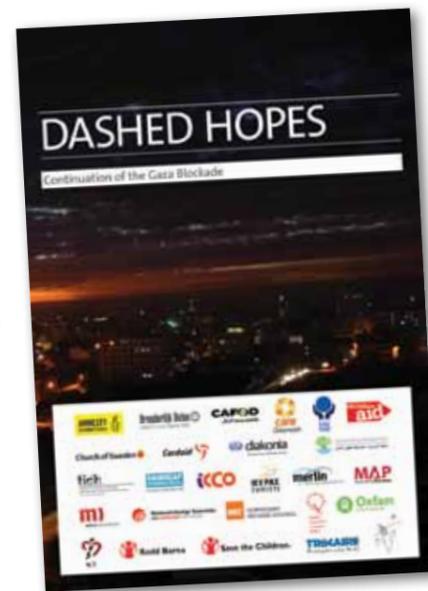
Ahead of the Foreign Affairs Council meeting in July 2010, and the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton’s visit to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, including Gaza, Crisis Action organised joint petitions providing key information about the situation in Gaza to EU foreign ministers and the Representative of the Middle East Quartet, Tony Blair.

To bolster this strategy, we coordinated the report ‘Dashed Hopes: Continuation of the Gaza Blockade’, backed by 26 major European humanitarian and human rights groups. The report reviewed the steps Israel had taken to ease the blockade, concluding that the foundations of the blockade policy remained intact, while even the limited measures it had announced to relax the closure had only been partially implemented.

Representing a strong challenge to the official Israeli government position, ‘Dashed Hopes’ was covered by major media outlets across Europe and the Middle East, including in CNN, the Washington Post, Voice of America and Israel’s Channel 10, as well as Germany’s Deutsche Welle and France’s RFI.

Ahead of the report’s release, the findings were shared with Tony Blair’s office in his role as Quartet Representative. Blair went on to publicly call on the Israeli government to do more to allow exports from Gaza. In February 2011, Crisis Action organised a meeting with Tony Blair to follow up on developments since the publication of the report.

While the Israeli government rejected the report’s conclusions, just a few days later it announced an easing of the ban on exports for certain goods. However, at the time of writing, this commitment remained unimplemented.



Joint report reviewing the steps Israel had taken to ease the Gaza blockade, November 2010.

“If Palestinian reconciliation is undermined, it will throw the Israeli-Palestinian conflict into an even deeper impasse, with dramatic consequences for all parties and the international community at large.”

Extract from open letter urging support for Palestinian unity, June 2011

Leveraging EU influence

In the absence of strong and consistent leadership by the US on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Crisis Action worked with partners to call for more proactive and independent EU policy firmly based on international law.

In 2010, both Israeli and Palestinian human rights organisations raised alarms over a worrying increase in German companies investing in the construction of illegal settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. To address this, Crisis Action coordinated a joint advocacy and media campaign among German NGOs, targeting the German government and the companies involved. As a result, one of the two main investors was ordered by the government to withdraw from the illegal activity, while the other agreed not to continue future contracts.

At the Brussels level, Crisis Action coordinated several influential roundtables and meetings with policymakers and civil society groups:

- In November 2010, our Brussels office organised a well-attended roundtable for EU diplomats with Israeli, Palestinian and European civil society representatives, to explore what the EU could do to drive both parties to resolve the underlying factors driving the conflict.
- Ahead of the EU-Israel Association Council meeting in February 2011, Crisis Action coordinated an intense round of joint meetings with senior member state diplomats and EU officials. The Council’s subsequent statement addressed most of the issues raised in these meetings, and, as called for by our partners, the EU continued to suspend the proposed upgrade of EU-Israel relations due to a lack of substantial improvement.
- In February 2011, Crisis Action Brussels hosted a roundtable on settlement trade, agreeing a possible strategy for advocacy in Europe.
- In March 2011, we hosted Daniel Levy, Director of the Middle East Task Force at the New America Foundation, for a discussion with member state diplomats during an official session of the Council of the EU and for a roundtable with civil society partners in Brussels.

Securing EU support for a new unity government

On 27 April 2011, a surprise Palestinian reconciliation deal was announced in which Hamas and Fatah agreed to form a transitional government ahead of elections in 2012. The agreement reflected a strong desire among Palestinians to overcome their four-year internal rift, and provided a vital opportunity to create a more representative leadership able to negotiate peace with Israel on behalf of all Palestinians, as well as to consolidate a ceasefire between Gaza and Israel.

However, securing a supportive response for reconciliation from the international community was crucial. Following Hamas’ 2006 election victory, moves by the EU and US to boycott the new Palestinian government had led to the factional split, with devastating consequences. This time around, Crisis Action and partners campaigned urgently to persuade international leaders not to repeat the same mistakes.

Crisis Action coordinated an open letter from 27 prominent former statesmen, urging the US and EU leaders to “support Palestinian unity and avoid any steps that could jeopardise the fragile reconciliation process”. Signatories included four former EU Commissioners including Benita Ferrero-Waldner, former Israeli foreign minister, Shlomo Ben Ami, former Palestinian negotiator Hanan Ashrawi, former prime ministers of Italy, Denmark and the Netherlands and a number of former foreign ministers including Gareth Evans (Australia).

Addressed to US State Secretary Hillary Clinton, EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and EU foreign ministers, the letter was covered exclusively in the Financial Times, published in Der Spiegel and Le Monde, and covered by a wide range of other international media.

The mid-term results are mixed. The initial signs are that most European governments would be willing to work with a new transitional Palestinian government. However, the US stance is less positive and Palestinian reconciliation efforts have stalled again amid continued disputes. Crisis Action continues to follow this critical issue as part of the quest to help secure peace in the region.



Underground illegal tunnel used to smuggle goods into Gaza, June 2011.
Photo: I. El Baba.



Media coverage of letter by former statesmen.

AFGHANISTAN



Disabled Afghan man walking past MRAP (Mine Resistant Ambush Protected) convoy in Wardak Province, March 2009. Photo: David Gill / shot2bits@mac.com.

NEARLY TEN YEARS INTO THE UN-MANDATED MILITARY INTERVENTION IN AFGHANISTAN, PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN A POSITIVE OUTCOME FROM THE CONFLICT HAD SUNK TO A NEW LOW.

While official policy continued to focus on a military-led strategy, faced with mounting public concern over the numbers of battlefield casualties, many NATO governments announced timetables for troop withdrawal. Against this complex and politically-charged backdrop, Crisis Action was asked by partners to assess options for a new coalition campaign on Afghanistan. The aim was to challenge the current policy and press for a new approach to international engagement, with a focus on long-term solutions that would genuinely benefit and respond to the needs of the Afghan people.

Following intensive consultations, Crisis Action drew up a strategy bringing together humanitarian, human rights and peace-building organisations to call for international backing for a just and inclusive peace process; measures to protect civilians from casualties; and action to ensure aid is steered towards long-term, civilian-led development.

In November 2010, in the run-up to the NATO Summit in Lisbon, Crisis Action launched a joint paper 'Piecemeal or Peace Deal: NATO, Peace Talks and a Political Settlement in Afghanistan', by Christian Aid, the Open Society Foundations and the Oxford Research Group. The report argued that any settlement to end the war in Afghanistan must address the underlying causes of conflict and not simply represent a deal between power brokers, and that stronger international engagement and the involvement of a much wider spectrum of Afghan society, especially women, was paramount.

Increasing public engagement

To increase public engagement, Crisis Action and partners developed the umbrella campaign, 'Together Afghanistan', supported by ten organisations including Oxfam, Care International UK, Christian Aid and Afghanaid. Launched in March 2011 to coincide with the Afghan New Year and the UN's mandate renewal for its mission in Afghanistan, the campaign included:

- A campaign website setting out the coalition's call for a fresh approach, providing a platform for news on Afghanistan and giving the public the chance to pledge their support via a photo-based campaign. The website is supported by new media channels such as Facebook and Twitter to further awareness-raising and promote engagement.

"Crisis Action helps to amplify the voices of international NGOs and our partners in the global south and has a knack of getting the ear of senior policymakers. The current Together Afghanistan campaign is a fine example of how Crisis Action has bravely pushed the public discourse forward."

Loretta Minghella, Director, Christian Aid



Joint paper launched in the run up to the NATO summit, November 2010.



Young Afghan girl with her school book, June 2010. Photo: Oxfam / Elissa Bogos.

'Together Afghanistan' campaign website, launched March 2011.

- The media release of a UK opinion poll by YouGov, highlighting the public's lack of faith in the current military strategy; only one in four British people thought the Government's approach in Afghanistan was working, and 83% believed Afghanistan would still be at war in 2014, when troops are due to leave and the transfer of control to Afghan security forces should be complete.
- An open letter calling for an international peace process with human rights guarantees to end decades of abuse. The letter to the UN Secretary General was published in the Daily Telegraph in March 2011. The signatories included David Miliband (former British Foreign Secretary), Lord Robertson (former NATO Secretary General), Tom Koenigs (former UN Special Representative for Afghanistan), Sir Charles Guthrie (former Chief of the UK Defence Staff) Dr Robert P Finn (former US Ambassador to Afghanistan) and Francesc Vendrell (former EU Special Representative for Afghanistan).

Mobilising for Bonn

With the public campaign up and running, Crisis Action and partners worked to engage governments directly on key policy objectives and develop international support. In particular, the coalition focused on Germany which, as chair of the International Contact Group on Afghanistan, had prioritised the conflict during its two-year term on the UN Security Council. When the Contact Group met in Jeddah in April 2011, Crisis Action brought German and international NGOs together to make their case for greater international engagement on Afghanistan, centred on human rights and the meaningful participation of civil society. Crisis Action's Berlin office then facilitated lobbying meetings for partners with Michael Steiner, the Contact Group Chair and German Special Envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Crisis Action also coordinated an appeal from 11 European and US-based organisations to NATO defence ministers ahead of their meeting in Brussels on 9 June 2011, urging them to take further action to reduce harm to Afghan civilians; track civilian casualties; and ensure accountability and justice for civilians from the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). This came at a crucial juncture as NATO presented its strategy for 'transition' of security responsibilities into the hands of Afghan forces, ahead of President Obama's announcement, in June 2011, of the first major drawdown of US troops.

As Together Afghanistan gathered momentum and international scope, Crisis Action took a lead role in working with other networks in Europe, the US, Afghanistan and more widely to develop a coordinated, influential international campaign. With the tenth anniversary of the original international intervention approaching in October 2011, and a major summit on Afghanistan set to take place in Bonn in December, international political and public debate on the conflict entered a critical period. Crisis Action therefore worked closely with German NGO network VENRO as it staged an international NGO advocacy planning meeting in Berlin in June 2011, and helped coordinate follow-up to develop joint international campaign activities during this period.

"Some argue that the best the international community can do is to engineer an honourable exit. We disagree. We recognise the challenges to securing a settlement to end the conflict in Afghanistan. Yet the only road out of Afghanistan [is one] that promises a better future for Afghans, their neighbours and allies."

Extract from open letter from former senior diplomats, ministers and military leaders published in the Daily Telegraph

"We salute Crisis Action's ability to drive effective lobbying and lead on joint campaigns on armed conflict. Our collaboration with them on Afghanistan is highly valued - we benefit a lot from their important information, key contacts and efficiently led coalitions."

Jessica Mosbahi, Advocacy and Human Rights Officer, medica mondiale

EMERGENCY RESPONSE: IVORY COAST



Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, arrives in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, December 2010. Photo: UN / Basile Zoma.

IN THE WAKE OF THE CONTESTED PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN IVORY COAST IN NOVEMBER 2010, HIGH-LEVEL DIPLOMATS FAILED TO BROKER AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE NEWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT ALASSANE OUATTARA AND FORMER PRESIDENT LAURENT GBAGBO, WHO REFUSED TO RECOGNISE THE ELECTION VERDICT.

The stand-off between the two men and their respective forces intensified, eventually exploding in fierce clashes which involved summary executions and deliberate attacks against civilians. With the country in the grip of conflict, more than one million people were displaced from their homes and around 135,000 were forced to flee, seeking refuge in Liberia.

As the international community remained focused on events unfolding in the Middle East and North Africa, Crisis Action supported partners to draw attention to the atrocities being committed in Ivory Coast. Leading a coalition of over 30 international and West African civil society organisations, we urged local leaders and the international community to act.

Immediately after the elections, as Ouattara's supporters prepared to march onto the capital to oust the defeated Gbagbo from the presidential seat, Crisis Action coordinated a joint statement from partners urging Ivorian political leaders to call on their supporters to remain calm. This led to media coverage for partners in select regions including France and West Africa.

In January 2011, the Security Council adopted a resolution condemning the violence and allowing a 2,000-strong troop reinforcement of the UN peacekeeping mission in Ivory Coast (UNOCI). As the country descended into crisis despite international efforts, Crisis Action facilitated a new joint statement on 25 March, this time pushing the UN to ensure robust enforcement of its mandate to protect civilians, and to hold those responsible for crimes committed since the elections to account.

As the Security Council debated a resolution on Ivory Coast, Crisis Action secured meetings for partners with key UN missions, including the South African Ambassador as well as the French Presidency and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On 30 March, the UN passed a resolution which authorised measures to increase civilian protection and enforced targeted sanctions against Gbagbo and his close associates, as Crisis Action's partners had urged.

Faced with a still rapidly deteriorating emergency, Crisis Action facilitated an international media briefing on 8 April 2011, bringing together leading experts from Human Rights Watch, Action Against Hunger, Oxfam and the Open Society Foundations. At a time when travel inside Ivory Coast was prohibited, this provided key European, African and American journalists with vital insights into the evolving situation, generating important international media coverage.

With hundreds of thousands of civilians displaced by the conflict, Crisis Action coordinated a joint call from 13 partner aid agencies asking international donors to urgently step up and redistribute funds. At the time of writing, while aid for Liberia had almost doubled (since mid-April), overall funding for the crisis in both Ivory Coast and Liberia, was still insufficient.



Ivorian girl crying when arriving in Liberia after fleeing the violence in Ivory Coast, February 2011. Photo: UNHCR / G. Gordon.

“As the international community focused on events in the Arab world, Crisis Action played a vital role in driving policymakers’ attention to the humanitarian and human rights crisis in Ivory Coast and helped us to ensure that measures were taken to protect vulnerable civilians. Crisis Action’s support was crucial to enable us to deliver targeted, high-quality lobbying and media work in such a short and troubled period of time.”

François Danel, Executive Director, Action Against Hunger

“Crisis Action’s great added value is its ability to draw on the different strengths of its partner organisations and mould them into effective and strategic advocacy campaigns that make a difference on the ground. Crisis Action helps ensure coherent, targeted engagement between civil society and important decision-makers across the EU, UN, African Union and Arab League. The difference they make far exceeds their small size.”

Jeremy Hobbs, Executive Director, Oxfam International

WHAT WE DO

CRISIS ACTION IS AN INTERNATIONAL, NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATION WHICH AIMS TO HELP AVERT CONFLICTS, PREVENT HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES AND ENSURE GOVERNMENTS FULFIL THEIR OBLIGATIONS TO PROTECT CIVILIANS.

Crisis Action works behind the scenes to support a diverse range of partners who are all concerned with tackling the immediate effects or long-term consequences of conflict. We aim to help them increase the impact of their responses to current and emerging conflict-related crises.

Crisis Action has offices in Berlin, Brussels, Cairo, London, Nairobi, New York and Paris.

Such choices involve not only the most secretive parts of government but also the most complicated multilateral structures.

In the face of powerful interests and entrenched positions, any organisation working alone will struggle to affect decisions and policy on armed conflict. Only by working together, drawing on the diverse expertise, campaigning strengths and political constituencies of a wide range of organisations, can we consistently have an impact. This is at the heart of Crisis Action’s approach.

There are few organisations that specialise solely on responding to specific armed conflicts. Most NGOs – whether development agencies, human rights organisations or peace groups – work on individual conflicts as one of a host of other issues. Few, if any, organisations have the capacity alone to launch the sustained, coordinated campaigns required to have an impact on particular conflicts around the world. Pooling knowledge and resources are vital first steps towards mobilising an effective strategy to which individual organisations can contribute without feeling they have to take on the whole campaign alone.

The risk of campaigning on armed conflict can be high for individual organisations, in particular if they have staff on the ground in the region concerned. Working collectively reduces the risk to individual

organisations and their staff, and can provide them with opportunities to contribute to campaign strategy in a way that would not otherwise be possible.

Of course, working in groups on such issues is not a new idea. However, coalitions often find it hard to have impact even when they have committed a great deal of time and resources. Crisis Action has pioneered a new approach of developing and coordinating ‘opt-in coalitions’ to develop specific, highly-focused campaigns. This model reduces transaction costs for coalition members, particularly on controversial issues, and ensures that strong positions and rapid action are part of any collective response.

Organisations have different mandates and agendas on individual conflicts and may struggle to bring together coalitions on their own. Crisis Action aims to be a neutral arbiter, helping diverse organisations with a wide range of perspectives to identify common ground and forge a shared agenda. By working solely behind the scenes, Crisis Action avoids replicating work or competing with partners, and can instead devote its energy to multiplying the impact of civil society organisations. This allows Crisis Action to add value far in excess of its size.

For more information visit us at:

www.crisisaction.org

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2010-11

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2011

	2011	2010	2011	2010
	£	£	\$	\$
INCOME				
Funders & Donations	1,050,695	853,170	1,750,836	1,237,643
Partners	71,702	60,797	119,482	88,195
Interest	1,872	1,023	3,119	1,484
TOTAL	1,124,269	914,990	1,873,437	1,327,322
Special Sudan Campaign Fund*	11,101	262,079	18,499	380,182
EXPENDITURE				
Salaries & Wages	735,829	548,251	1,226,157	795,315
Pension	23,004	16,857	38,333	24,453
Consultants	13,723	18,215	22,868	26,423
Rent, Rates & Insurance	67,513	58,545	112,500	84,928
Telephone & Office Expenses	44,739	46,521	74,551	67,485
Events	11,034	14,882	18,387	21,588
Reports & Publishing	8,278	3,747	13,794	5,436
Staff Training & Recruitment	9,621	7,973	16,031	11,566
IT Fees	18,045	9,384	30,070	13,613
General Expenses	5,064	7,832	8,438	11,361
Travel & Subsistence	50,901	34,224	84,819	49,647
Audit Fees	9,864	11,211	16,437	16,263
Bank Charges	4,643	3,738	7,737	5,422
Depreciation	8,346	5,564	13,908	8,071
Professional Fees	22,191	13,924	36,979	20,199
Foreign Exchange Loss	24,130	5,384	40,209	7,810
TOTAL	1,056,925	806,252	1,761,218	1,169,580
Special Sudan Campaign Fund*	153,347	94,304	255,531	136,801
Surplus for the Year (excluding Sudan)	67,344	108,738	112,219	157,742
(Deficit) / Surplus Special Sudan Campaign Fund*	(142,246)	167,775	(237,032)	243,381
(Deficit) / Surplus before Taxation	(74,902)	276,513	(124,813)	401,123
Taxation	(305)	(637)	(508)	(924)
(Deficit) / Surplus after Taxation	(75,207)	275,876	(125,321)	400,197
Accumulated Fund at the beginning of the Year	585,941	310,065	976,388	449,793
Accumulated Fund	510,734	585,941	851,067	849,990

“Crisis Action combines astute political judgement, good access to insiders around the world and a clear-sighted view of how to drive change. Their discreet facilitation enables organisations and individuals who might normally not work together to build effective partnerships. Crisis Action has demonstrated ability in forging effective campaigns. I am a strong supporter of their work.”

Mabel van Oranje, Chief Executive Officer, The Elders

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2010-11 (continued)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MAY 2011

	2011	2010	2011	2010
	£	£	\$	\$
Fixed Assets	8,346	16,693	13,908	24,216
Debtors	14,897	17,824	24,823	25,856
Cash at Bank	594,715	684,210	991,010	992,542
General Creditors	(107,221)	(132,783)	(178,668)	(192,620)
Net Assets	510,737	585,944	851,072	849,994
Share Capital	3	3	5	4
Profit & Loss	130,205	133,166	216,969	193,177
Operating Overhead Reserve	355,000	285,000	591,558	413,433
Sudan Special Campaign Fund*	25,529	167,775	42,541	243,381
Accumulated Fund	510,734	585,941	851,067	849,990
Total Funds	510,737	585,944	851,072	849,994

* The Sudan Special Campaign Fund was entrusted to Crisis Action by a donor and specifically designated to support joint NGO advocacy and campaign activities on Sudan. Use of the fund requires authorisation from the donor and, as such, does not form a standard part of Crisis Action's operations and is accounted for separately.

“Crisis Action enables NGOs to work effectively together, multiplying the efforts of individual NGOs, the investment of individual donors and the contribution of civil society to address conflict situations. Pears Foundation sees its partnership with Crisis Action as a model of cooperation between foundations and NGOs.”

Charles Keidan, Director, Pears Foundation

PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

Crisis Action would like to thank the following organisations and individuals for their generous support:

Bridgeway Foundation	Oxfam GB
Caipirinha Foundation	Pears Foundation**
Compton Foundation	Polden Puckham Charitable Foundation
Heinrich Böll Foundation	Roddick Foundation
Humanity United	Sigrid Rausing Trust**
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	Tinsley Foundation
MacArthur Foundation**	Mr B & Mrs HJ Cox
Network for Social Change	St Luke's Mission Church
Oak Foundation**	Tatiana Maxwell
Open Society Foundations**	

** Crisis Action is especially grateful to its core philanthropic partners for providing us with multi-year, general operating support.

BOARD

We have a board of independent, unpaid directors:

Nick Grono (Chair) is Deputy President at the International Crisis Group, based in Brussels. He is a lawyer by background and previously worked for the Australian government as chief of staff to the Attorney-General.

Fiona Napier (Treasurer) is the Associate Director of Campaigns at Global Witness. Prior to

joining Global Witness in April 2011, she was the International Advocacy Director with the Open Society Foundations. Fiona formerly served with Save the Children for 15 years as Global Adviser, Country Director in South Africa and Regional Adviser in southern Africa, where she was also on the Board of the AIDS Foundation of South Africa.

Nicola Reindorp is currently acting as an advisor to the international online campaigning organisation,

Avaaz. Prior to that, she was the Director of Advocacy for the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect. This followed five years as the head of Oxfam International's New York office, when she led Oxfam's global advocacy on conflict and humanitarian crises.

Lotte Leicht is EU Director of Human Rights Watch. She has worked extensively on conflict crises including Bosnia and Darfur.

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Blunck, Marissa Bell, Marianna Brungs, Marwa el-Ansary, Merel Wackwitz, Mohamed El Shewy, Moninuade Oladunni, Pia Dawson, Rachel Cummings, Razvan Isac, Rebecca Wood, Samantha Rennie, Sarah Mulley and Susan Muriungi.

Front and back cover:

Thousands of Egyptian demonstrators gathered in Tahrir Square calling for the demands of the uprising to be met after former president Hosni Mubarak was toppled from power, Cairo, April 2011.

Photo: REUTERS / Mohamed Abd El-Ghany

Design by Miriam Hempel | www.daretoknow.co.uk

Editing by Anna Emerson

Printed on FSC recycled paper using vegetable based inks



“Crisis Action harness the combined power of different NGOs, thus helping us at critical moments to be more than the sum of our parts. Whether speaking on the Middle East or other key crisis points around the world, decision-makers are more likely to listen to us if we act in unison.”

Salil Shetty, Secretary General, Amnesty International

“Crisis Action has demonstrated an impressive ability to strengthen the impact of civil society advocacy and campaigning on armed conflict. By coordinating information sharing and joint strategic activities, Crisis Action has increased the effectiveness of its partners and member organisations.”

Louise Arbour, President, International Crisis Group

“In recent months, Crisis Action has become known for swift, targeted action that enables civil society to have a much larger collective impact. We greatly appreciate our partnership with Crisis Action.”

Ziad Abdel Tawab, Deputy Director, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)

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A public charity and tax-exempt
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Crisis Action always welcomes enquiries from organisations that share our objectives and may wish to become Crisis Action partners.

To find out more about Crisis Action, please visit: www.crisisaction.org