EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Opportunities for peace and risk scenarios for 2015
"Opportunities for peace and risk scenarios" is an annual publication linked to the yearbook Alert! Report on Conflicts, Human Rights and Peacebuilding, which identifies and analyses scenarios and issues on the international agenda that may enable peacebuilding or lead to an increase in violence and instability in the short or medium term. For more information on the contexts studied, see the ECP Database on Conflict and Peacebuilding.

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Executive summary: Opportunities for Peace in 2015

Gender agenda: In 2015, the review of the Beijing Platform for Action, Resolution 1325 and the Millennium Development Goals may provide an opportunity for moving towards stronger and more substantive engagement with genuine sustainable development in which gender equality, the empowerment of women and peacebuilding are key elements.

Child recruits: The current confluence of efforts at multiple levels to prevent and reduce the recruitment and use of boy and girl soldiers through arranged mechanisms like action plans with governments and armed opposition groups and global awareness initiatives, among other aspects, could mean progress in 2015 and the years to come, despite the many obstacles.

Post-2015 violence: A consensus has been forged in recent years on the need to include the reduction of armed violence in the new development agenda that will replace the Millennium Development Goals, which the states will begin to discuss in 2015. This is a historic opportunity that places this issue at the centre of debate in the international community and forces the states to mobilise resources and take concrete and quantifiable measures.

Nuclear negotiations: Iran and the P5+1 countries (the USA, China, Russia, the UK, France and Germany) have until mid-2015 to reach an agreement on the Islamic Republic’s nuclear programme. The negotiations in 2014 showed important differences between the parties, but also yielded significant progress. The dialogue could lead to a historic agreement, but it must first surmount many obstacles, including the fears of power groups in the USA and Iran.

Sudan: Different steps were taken throughout 2014 to assemble a national dialogue involving various social, political and military players to comprehensively address the internal problems and conflicts affecting the country. This could be one of the main chances for peacebuilding in the complex Sudanese arena in recent years.
Risk Scenarios for 2015

- **Libya**: Three years after the fall of Muammar Gaddafi, the situation in the country is characterised by severe polarisation, the formation of parallel governments, the influence of regional rivalries and the intensification of clashes between armed groups of various stripes, with a serious impact on the civilian population. These dynamics and the difficulty in promoting opportunities for dialogue suggest that the country will remain a source of instability in 2015.

- **ISIS**: The jihadist group is seen as a major threat to stability in the Middle East after a rapid rise in 2014 that has had grave consequences for the civilian population and has called the territorial integrity of Iraq and Syria into question. ISIS is forcing regional and international powers to make new strategic calculations amidst dilemmas on how to address a complex phenomenon that goes beyond military challenges.

- **Pakistan**: Provincial capitals, and especially Peshawar, Quetta and Karachi, are being seriously affected by violence and run the risk of turning into a scenario of increasingly serious and fatal attacks, including militarisation, with serious consequences for the civilian population.

- **Kenya**: Launched in 2011 to curb the threat of the Islamist Somali group al-Shabaab and prevent its activities from expanding, Kenya’s military operation in Somalia has prompted increasing attacks by al-Shabaab and allied groups in Kenya, a controversial antiterrorism policy in Nairobi and worsening intercommunal tensions —issues that may have even more serious consequences in the near future.

- **Haiti**: Both the protests and the political and institutional crisis that struck Haiti in 2014 could worsen in early 2015 as the term of the bicameral Parliament expires on 12 January, opening the door for Martelly to govern by decree. Given the situation, the opposition has announced its intention to call massive and continuous protests and the international community has expressed its fear of outbreaks of violence.

- **Ukraine**: The reinforcement of armed groups in 2014, the antagonism between the parties, the ambivalence concerning implementation of the agreements reached, Russia’s support for the insurgency and the serious international crisis between Russia and the West, among other factors, presage worrying scenarios in 2015, with the continuation of armed violence and even a worsening and extension of the conflict and its battlefronts.

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The Escola de Cultura de Pau (School for a Culture of Peace, hereinafter ECP) is an academic peace research institution located at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. It was created in 1999 and it is directed by Vicenç Fisas, who is also the UNESCO Chair on Peace and Human Rights at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

The fields of action of the Escola de Cultura de Pau are:

- Research. Its main areas of research include armed conflicts and socio-political crises, peace processes, human rights and transitional justice, the gender dimension in conflict and peacebuilding, and peace education.

- Second track diplomacy. The ECP promotes dialogue and conflict-transformation through second track initiatives, including facilitation tasks with armed actors.

- Consultancy services. The ECP carries out a variety of consultancy services for national and international institutions.

- Teaching and training. ECP staff gives lectures in postgraduate and graduate courses in several universities, including its own Graduate Diploma on Culture of Peace at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. It also provides training sessions on specific issues, including conflict sensitivity and peace education.

- Advocacy and awareness-raising. Initiatives include activities addressed to the Spanish and Catalan society, including contributions to the media.

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