



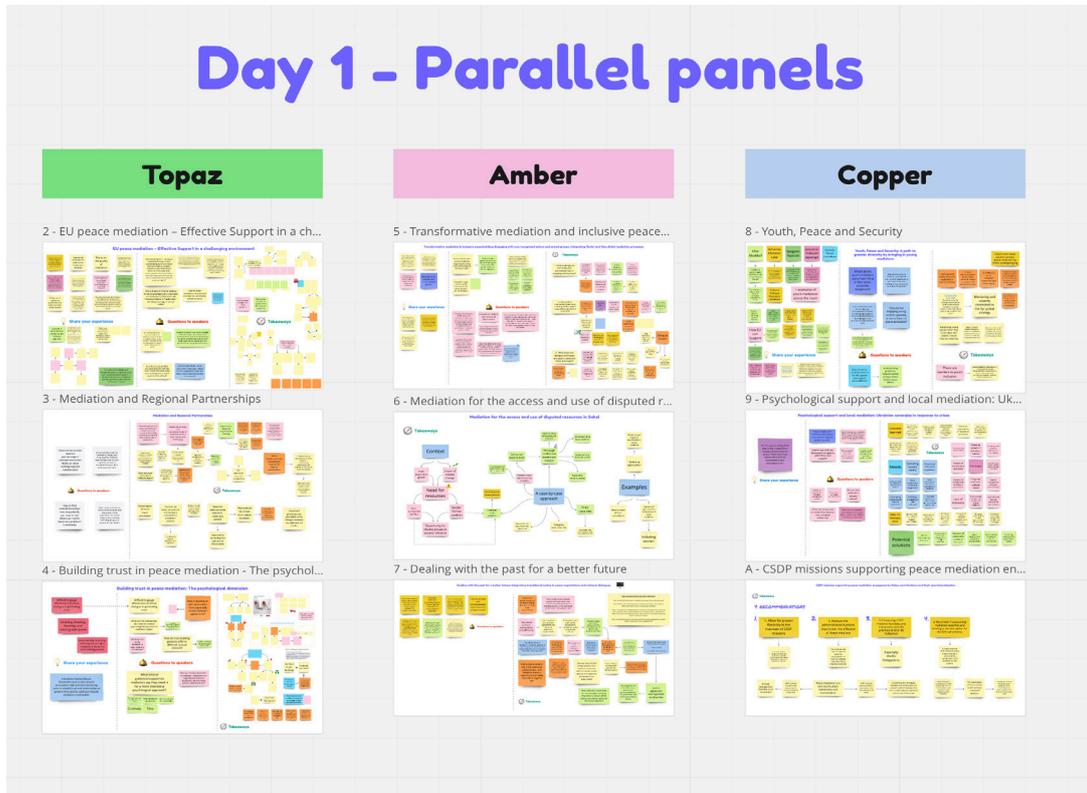
COMMUNITY
OF PRACTICE

Report on the 2022 EU Community of Practice on Peace Mediation

**“Mediation in a challenging international environment:
Building partnerships for sustainable peace”**

Brussels and online
26-27 October 2022

The report is accompanied by virtual whiteboards from each of the sessions, as well as a summary of the take-aways across all session. The virtual whiteboards allow you to dive into the content that is most relevant to you.



Scan the QR code or click on the link to access the boards
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Foreword

The fourth EU Community of Practice on Peace Mediation (CoP) meeting titled 'Mediation in a challenging international environment: Building partnerships for sustainable peace', organised in a hybrid format, confirmed the place of the EU CoP as a key convener of mediation practitioners, experts, academics and representatives from civil society as well as international and regional organisations from around the world.

We sincerely thank all the participants – those attending online and in person – for their active engagement and valuable insights. We hope that the rich interventions and discussions contributed to widened perspectives, new ideas, deepened knowledge, networking contacts and inspiration for everyone involved. The renewal of our joint commitment is fundamentally important against the complex reality in which mediation takes place. Reinforcement of partnerships between different mediation actors with their respective expertise and strengths is more important than ever.

The present report seeks to capture the main ideas and recommendations from the event. In synthesising the key issues that came out of the various panel discussions, we have sought to generate thematic clusters and we hope that we have done justice to the nuanced and wide-ranging conversations and debates.

There are important, upcoming entry points to enhance EU peace mediation, including the review of the CSDP Civilian Compact and the EEAS Peace Mediation Guidelines. The recommendations of the Community of Practice will feed into these processes and confirm the central place of mediation in the EU's conflict prevention and resolution toolbox.

We look forward to meeting again in 2023!

ISP.2, European External Action Service (EEAS) and the 2022 EU Community of Practice on Peace Mediation Steering Committee including CMI - Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation, Conciliation Resources EU/MediatEUr, European Institute of Peace (EIP), European Peace-building Liaison Office (EPLO), ERMES III - European Resources for Mediation Support (ERMES), and Particip.



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Executive summary

The EU Community of Practice on Peace Mediation (CoP) convened on 26-27 October 2022 in Brussels and online on the theme **'building partnerships for sustainable peace'**.

This **fourth CoP** was organised by the EEAS and a Steering Committee comprising peacebuilding partners¹. **More than 600 mediation practitioners and professionals** from EU institutions and other regional organisations, and civil society representatives from around the world participated in 18 thematic panels, which covered an extensive range of mediation-related topics.

Exchanges took place on **mediation as a tool that stretches beyond peace negotiations** and on the links between mediation and **transitional justice, elections and ceasefires**. Participants also discussed **new types of agreements**, from comprehensive settlements to partial agreements, and the potential complementarity of **formal and informal processes**.

The **psychological implications** for local mediators and populations and the **linkages between social cohesion and trans-generational trauma** were also discussed. The need to enhance training and resources for **inclusive trust-building** as a long-term commitment was reiterated in terms of avoiding new cycles of violence. In particular, practitioners suggested that there should be **more accessible EU funding** for local actors.

The potential and limitations of **digital tools** for engaging with new actors or specific groups was discussed, as well as the complementary role of **media** in accessing information and bringing groups together. Challenges related to **engaging with non-state armed actors and extremist groups** received specific attention, and building **strategic partnerships with civil society, local mediators and insider mediators** was the subject of several exchanges.

The **complex nature of current and emerging conflicts and crises** and their intricate webs of stakeholders make the coordination and complementarity of mediation actions both crucial and challenging. Mediation is witnessing an **increase of actors**, so it is important to identify the actors and activities in place at a very early stage to obviate lack of clarity on who does what on the ground. **Regular dialogue and exchange platforms are key** to identifying potential partners and entry points. Women mediator networks are a very important example of building partnerships.

A recurring topic was the importance of **inclusivity**, notably the meaningful participation of women and youth as insider mediators and as actors at 'the peace table'. At the wake of the 22nd anniversary of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security, it will be necessary to keep developing **more efficient approaches to the meaningful inclusion of women** in peacemaking.

Hybrid and cyber threats require new skillsets. The **"weaponisation of everything"** (even food and water) calls for new approaches and, in particular, for breaking silos. These approaches should open spaces for new peacemakers, including groups without leaders that might be shaping the future of their countries, in particular youth and protest movements.

The CoP participants concluded that the **EU plays an increasingly important role in conflict resolution around the world**. This role could be further strengthened by enhancing partnerships and coordination to ensure complementarity between layers of mediation and actors. Civil society, in particular, contributes significantly to the EU's efforts, allowing it to **adapt mediation actions and tools** to new realities, **facilitating access and providing information**, especially in areas where the EU enjoys less margin of manoeuvre.

¹ CMI - Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation, Conciliation Resources EU/MediatEUr, European Institute of Peace (EIP), European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), ERMES III - European Resources for Mediation Support (ERMES), and Particip.



Opening panel



Benedikta von Seherr-Thoss, Managing Director, CSDP and Crisis Response, EEAS, outlined the current, profound shifts in the global peace and security environment and the importance of the CoP to help adapt the EU's mediation efforts accordingly. She stressed the **key role of mediation in the EU's toolbox for conflict prevention and resolution** and

shared examples of the EU as a peace actor, including the facilitation of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue (Track I), supporting the ceasefire agreement in Yemen (Track II), and working with independent non-governmental organisations (Track III). She emphasised the need to do more to ensure the inclusivity of peace processes, notably of women and youth, but also other groups who might be marginalised in mediation and peace processes.

Peter Wagner, Head of Service, Foreign Policy Instruments, EU, stressed the importance of mediation and dialogue as tools for conflict prevention and the need to build local and national capacity. It is necessary to be more forward looking and draw lessons from different contexts. While supporting the process towards a post-war Ukraine is crucial, it is equally important to **look beyond the European neighbourhood**. The EU needs to ensure transparency and accountability. Mr Wagner called for support from partners, civil society in particular, to help keep the EU connected and up-to-date on emerging conflicts around the world, and emphasised the need to engage more with non-state and informal actors in complex contexts.

Sonya Reines-Djivanides, Executive Director, European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), highlighted the role of the EU as a value-based global actor. Through its diverse tools, the EU is well positioned to

adopt a multi-track approach, which is needed to ensure effective mediation throughout the conflict cycle. It is important to connect local mediation to more formal efforts. Civil society constitutes a central asset in bridging knowledge and situational awareness gaps, and in building new partnerships. It will be key to mainstream mediation more effectively across all conflict-related concepts, practices and among EU staff, and address challenges such as misinformation and disinformation.

Miroslav Lajčák, EU Special Representative for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue and Western Balkan Regional Issues, said that while disagreements will always be part of human nature, parties must be prevented from feeling that the only option is to take up arms. As one of the most successful peace projects, the EU has to be a leader in these efforts. Rather than new tools, the more effective and appropriate use of the available ones is needed, with a particular focus on technology, inclusivity and regional organisations. Mr Lajčák presented '**10 commandments for successful mediation**', which included respecting the local environment and context, realistic analysis, attention to the composition of the mediation team that should be accepted by all parties, the allocation of sufficient time, building trust, and ensuring long-term support by the international community.

Fatima Maiga, Founding Member and President of the Coalition des Femmes Leaders Nord, Sud et Centre du Mali (NSC), recalled examples that show how and why mediation works and stressed the centrality of local solutions. She **emphasised the need for more investment and trust in community level mediation actors and activities**, in particular women, to properly seize the capacity that exists at the local level for EU peacemaking. She also underlined that "mediation requires minimal resources but brings stability." The EU should use its important convening power strategically and support mediation pragmatically, with less complicated procedures that at times discourage organisations from applying for EU funding.

Katariina Leinonen, Deputy Head of ISP.2, Conflict Prevention and Mediation Support Division, EEAS, closed the session by encouraging participants to come up with concrete recommendations on how to further consolidate and develop EU mediation. In particular, ISP.2 was keen on gathering ideas to inform the revision of the 2020 EEAS Mediation Guidelines. Ideally, the EU Community of Practice on Peace Mediation would constitute a **permanent platform for exchanges** of best practices and expertise, beyond individual events. She welcomed the participants' ideas on ensuring continuity of exchanges between the CoP meetings.

Consolidating EU peace mediation: Policies, partnerships and shaping approaches in a challenging environment²

The **EU has become a global peace mediation actor**, with clear benefits for specific peace processes as well as for the overall practice. At the same time, the relevant EU policy developments are still being developed into comprehensive structures. The EU's 'Integrated Approach to Security and Peace' should be

² CoP Panels on: *EU peace mediation: Effective support in a challenging environment (EEAS)*; *CSDP missions supporting peace mediation engagements: Roles, contributions and their operationalization (Center on International Peace Operations – ZIF)*; *Mediation and regional partnerships (EEAS)*.

further enhanced. This can be done by drawing on all EU tools and instruments and reinforcing strategic partnerships at different levels. It is less about the mediation space shrinking than it is about it changing. The deepening geopolitical divides and the resulting increase in inter-state, proxy and hybrid wars require that **EU mediation continues to (re)adapt**. The EU is not considered just as a mediator, but also as a potential negotiator in an increasingly complex international system.

International mediation tends to overly focus on reaching agreements rather than on their follow-up and on building sustainable peace. This leads to three major recurring deficits in peace processes: legitimacy, inclusion, and transformative effect. Four fundamental shifts were proposed to reverse this trend: i) Extending the **timeframes and scope** of mediation engagements and being more engaged “in between”, including through shuttle diplomacy; ii) Rebalancing local and international relations; iii) Redefining **state-society relations** in favour of rebuilding the social contract; and iv) Refocusing on **inclusive and pluralistic** outcomes. Ensuring **effective and sustainable outcomes** requires dignity, solidarity, humility, legitimacy, accountability and pluralism.

The EU has intensified efforts to improve the **sequencing of short-term crisis response and long-term development funding**. As an example, the European Resources for Mediation Support (ERMES) allows for responding quickly to immediate needs for technical expertise to the benefit of third parties. In this context, acknowledging the importance of local knowledge for ensuring effective responses, the EU prioritises work with civil society, in particular local actors and insider mediators.

The role of **the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations** in EU mediation and dialogue support is yet to be operationalised more widely, based on the 2020 Concept on EU Peace Mediation. There are several interesting experiences. For example, EUMM Georgia established in 2009 a structured dialogue between the central government and breakaway regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia. EUCAP Sahel Mali supports local dialogues between civil society actors. EUCAP Somalia plays a preventive role as the only EU actor in Somaliland. More flexible mission mandates and an even closer alignment with other instruments might further enhance EU mediation work.

The EU is further **enhancing its partnership with the United Nations** through regular dialogue on mediation, strong support to UN mediation efforts on the ground and in headquarters and joint work on insider mediation. The EU is also actively developing a mediation partnership with the **African Union** and reinforcing contacts with other regional organisations. In addition, the EU and the UN co-organise **regular meetings between regional organisations** to share good practices on mediation and to improve coherence and **coordination** between international mediation actors. The latter is in particular important to prevent so called ‘forum shopping’ where conflict parties instrumentalise international mediation support efforts. In each mediation context, priorities have to be agreed between the actors present and donors engaged. Actors have to understand each other’s mandates, resources and limitations to ensure complementarity and enhance synergies. In this context, the EU was encouraged to engage more with civil society actors to jointly reflect on current developments and priorities.

The EU supports efforts to bring stability to the **Horn of Africa**, working closely with the African Union in an increasingly structured partnership with complementarity and respect for regional ownership at its centre.

Needs and opportunities vary according to contexts. Whereas in Ethiopia and Somalia trust in mediation has been more limited, in Sudan a culture of dialogue and a wide network of local mediators have allowed the EU to support an inherently consensus-oriented, locally based approach. The EU is to reinforce its engagement with and support to youth movements to strengthen their role as agents for peace.

Learning from insider mediators and informal processes³

The **current geopolitical context is not conducive to conventional mediation**. The legitimacy of high-level peacemakers is being increasingly undermined. The growing complexity of conflict dynamics and multiplicity of actors that characterise current conflicts require more focus on the local level, exploring informal dialogue options and working with insider mediators.

Informal dialogues can play a key role in complementing a formal dialogue process in what would ideally constitute a multi-track approach. Peacemaking is a collective, multi-level endeavour where communities discuss problems and seek solutions and politicians bring forward policy solutions to address them.

The role of **informal dialogues** is of particular importance in contexts where conflicting parties have little appetite for mediation and when groups are considered illegitimate or are operating under a sanction regime. Acting discretely by bringing parties together in informal settings may be more effective and eventually lead to rapprochements in a more formal negotiation process. Informal dialogue is also more flexible and can take place without a mediator, but with facilitation and logistical support to bring the parties together.

Working within a multi-track approach suggests **a shift from aiming at comprehensive settlements to partial agreements**. These are likely to be more realistic and avoid the risks of backlash due to failed expectations. Partial agreements can help to break down highly complex negotiations into more manageable pieces according to a continuously reassessed logic of what is feasible at that moment in time. They can prevent dialogue fatigue with incremental small achievements and help build trust. However, partial agreements are less likely to resolve the underlying causes of conflict and to ensure accountability for implementation. They risk being instrumentalised by conflict parties and fragmenting mediation efforts.

Informal dialogue initiatives are increasingly led by insider mediators, supported by international organisations such as the EU and the UN, in partnership with civil society. While insider mediators know the context well and are well placed to ensure inclusivity and identify enablers and spoilers, they are also inevitably linked to the conflict dynamics. It is therefore important that they consider their own role within a particular conflict setting and are transparent about it. Insider mediators can develop partnerships that extend beyond the peace process and advocate reforms that favour sustainable peace. The EU and other international actors should ensure the **safety and security of insider mediators** and provide technical as well as logistical support for **connecting insider mediators across conflicts and regions**.

There is a need to **strengthen the connection between informal (insider) mediation and formal ne-**

³ CoP Panels on: *Sharing lessons learned and good practices on support for insider mediators* (United States Institute of Peace and Think Peace); *Limited-focus deals on limited-focus issues: An alternative approach to comprehensive settlements* (Institute for Integrated Transitions (IFIT)); *Formal and informal dialogue in a regional setting in Africa: Complementarity, coordination and cooperation* (CMI - Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation).

gotiations. The former informs and can influence the latter and ensure the sustainability of results. More attention needs to be paid to **connecting tracks I, II and III** or to revising the **concept of tracks** to allow for more flexibility in view of the increasingly complex reality. Building strategic partnerships is essential. Some argued that insider mediation cannot succeed without the support of an externally recognised actor and that the international community should do more to link insider mediators to official peace processes. Any engagement from an external actor such as the EU needs to be conflict sensitive and adhere to the ‘do no harm’ principle. As the international mediation field is becoming increasingly complex and at times crowded, it is important to **enhance coordination** to ensure complementarity between the different actors, layers and levels of mediation. Different actors can do different things at different times. The EU should further ensure that there are clear links between mediation tracks and consider systematically including insider mediators as part of any mediation effort.

Engaging with all stakeholders: Inclusivity and stumbling blocks⁴

Based on clear evidence of the advantages of inclusive peace processes, the **importance of ensuring equal representation and engaging with all stakeholders and groups is widely recognised.** However, the realisation of inclusivity faces several challenges. Local knowledge, flexibility, partnerships and a multi-cultural perspective are central to addressing these needs.

As work on **the inclusion of women** has progressed, the limitations of current approaches are becoming increasingly clear. Women may have become more politically active and more aware of their rights, but this has not necessarily been translated into concrete changes in political power structures. Whereas there may be less opposition to involving women in peace processes, resistance often resurfaces when women become a coherent and well-organised force. Moreover, it is important to recognise and to address the logistical, societal and economic obstacles women face.

Twenty years after the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, **women are still not fully accepted as high-level mediators**, and talking about ‘gender’ is becoming more problematic. Women who have developed their mediation skills over the past 20 years have to be allowed to play a central role in peace processes. To achieve this, the profile of women must be promoted, drawing in particular on regional and national women mediator networks. Strategic partnerships and alliances need to be built with those in power and thematic expertise by women needs to be considered with regard to issues such as climate change, food security and cyber security.

While the narrative about **youth as a central group to securing a peaceful future** is increasingly being consolidated, young people remain largely under-represented in decision-making. Many of them have lost faith in democracy and seek alternative ways to influence society. Practice shows that including youth is likely to improve the quality of dialogue by introducing new ideas for resolving longstanding conflicts, by

⁴ CoP Panels on: *Taking forward women’s meaningful inclusion in peacemaking: Reflections and action-oriented strategies* (Mediterranean Women Mediators Network and the Global Alliance of Women Mediator Networks); *Youth, Peace and Security: A path to greater diversity by bringing in young mediators* (Search for Common Ground); *The experience of non-state armed actors in peace/political processes in Mali and Yemen* (Independent Diplomat); *Transformative mediation & inclusive peacebuilding: Engaging with non-recognised actors and armed groups. Integrating ‘state’ and ‘non-state’ mediation processes* (Conciliation Resources EU and European Institute of Peace (EIP)).

bringing a longer-term perspective and by enhancing situational awareness. Yet a certain stigmatisation remains and youth are considered as potential spoilers, or simply not as capable of playing a constructive role. Other challenges include the instrumentalisation of youth by leaders in the face of increasing demands for inclusivity and an over-representation of young men compared to young women.

Technology and online tools, including social media, can help increase youth engagement in peace processes. By creating platforms for youth to interact with, comment on and advise politicians and policy-makers, **awareness can be raised of the potential of young people** in building a peaceful future. Technical and advocacy support to youth organisations is important, including networking, capacity-building and training. Another way of ensuring youth engagement is working with consortia to help integrate youth organisations into mediation and peacebuilding projects.

Engaging with non-state armed groups and terrorist groups constitutes a particularly challenging question in peace processes. While dialogue with these groups may be a part of everyday life and a question of survival for communities affected by conflict, these groups are often not included in formal peace negotiations or agreements. Experiences from Mali, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo suggest that peacemakers who interact with non-state armed groups face specific risks. While women (insider) mediators can be well placed to engage in such exchanges, they are particularly vulnerable. They require more support and protection from both reputational and physical risks and threats and could, for example, be granted a specific protection status comparable to that of human rights defenders. Funding pyramids need to be inverted to benefit local mediators, and timelines need to be extended. Overall, transparency and realism from the outset are key, and engaging with these groups on conflict sensitivities (such as on religious, gender and socio-cultural matters) can be helpful. Over-simplifying complex and multi-layered challenges can lead to interventions on the proclaimed reasons for conflicts rather than on the carefully identified and analysed structural causes of conflict.

Another grouping requiring specific attention concerns **protest movements**, which often lack clear leadership. However, leaving such key groups out of a peace process risks further destabilising societies and even empowering and contributing to causing such groups to become more violent and extreme, whereas involvement in a peace process can have an important neutralising function.

Psychology, trust and ownership in mediation processes⁵

During and after violent conflict or authoritarian rule marked by human rights violations, the traumatic experiences of survivors are often not sufficiently addressed due a lack of mental health support capacities and cultural barriers. Individuals, families, communities and entire societies suffer continued and intergenerational trauma. **Mental health and psychosocial matters need to be given structural attention throughout peacebuilding, including in the deliberation on and implementation of peace agreements.** Peace negotiations cannot only be left to politicians or armed groups; psychosocial support and trauma professionals need to be involved.

⁵ CoP Panels on: *Building trust in peace mediation: The psychological dimension* (Conciliation Resources EU); *Psychological support and local mediation: Ukrainian synergies in responses to crises* (CMI - Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation).

The creation of safe spaces during peace negotiations is important. Issues related to Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) are particularly sensitive in this regard. Additionally, protection and support to mediators is important as they are frequently exposed to traumatic experiences and events. **Building trust allows mediators to work better with conflict parties and communities.** Identity markers can help mediators to build trust and manage bias. Examples from the Somali region in Ethiopia demonstrate that coming from the diaspora of a certain context can make it easier to connect with the people who share the same experience and having a multi-clan identity can help building connections across clans.

Not all mediation practitioners fully understand the psychological dimensions of trust building, which does not receive sufficient attention, time and resources in mediation processes and their strategic planning. There is a **need for mediators to deepen their understanding of psychology** – both their own and that of the people they engage with. A long-term investment is necessary, as consistency over time is required to achieve impact. There should be **more capacity-building on trauma sensitive approaches for mediators, media and civil society actors.** This is important to prevent transgenerational trauma and new cycles of violence due to unresolved issues and can help strengthen social cohesion.

For example in Ukraine, the conflict will have a very long-term impact on social relations between different groups of people. Shortly after Russia's invasion, the Ukrainian community of mediators and psychologists began **addressing the linkages between social cohesion and trauma using an integrated approach,** working across and with different sectors of society. Local mediators have been traumatised and many have had to reconsider their professional status, also due to forced displacement. The relations between refugees and host communities are an additional layer of complexity.

New approaches to peace mediation: Media and digital peacemaking⁶

The media can enhance polarisation and create distrust but also help bring society together and generate awareness and support for transitional justice and peace. It can raise public awareness and spread positive stories. **Mapping relevant media actors is necessary and should be a part of any mediation effort.** Toolkits and guidance on the integration of the media throughout a mediation process exist. But mediators and journalists need joint training to align strategies and create a mutual understanding of each other's limitations. Mediators need training to understand how to communicate to ensure necessary transparency while respecting confidentiality.

Online platforms can help ensuring broader inclusion and engaging with new actors and specific groups. In Yemen, Zoom and WhatsApp enabled reaching out to women in remote areas to get their insights on the current conflict and high-level peace talks. In Ukraine, before Russia's invasion of 24 February 2022, WhatsApp was used to carry out an intra-Ukrainian dialogue, which enhanced access to physical safety and confidentiality. When working with community online trust-building, inclusion should be carried

6 CoP Panels on: *Media, civil society actors and mediation specialists: A gathering of actors for peace yet to be put together* (Fondation Hirondelle in cooperation with the Institute for Research and Education on Negotiation (ESSEC IRENE), *Swisspeace and the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)*); *Dealing with the past for a better future: Integrating transitional justice in peace negotiations and national dialogues* (Facility on Justice in Conflict and Transition); *Methods of digital inclusion in peacemaking: Case-studies on digital dialogues from Eurasia, the Middle East and North Africa* (CMI - Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation).

out with good intention and the security of online platforms should be carefully investigated to ensure the security of the participants and mitigate malicious behaviour, for example.

Mediators today work in the online as well as the offline space and they have to take into consideration new security aspects and new stakeholders. Examples from Nigeria, Bosnia and the Philippines demonstrate that **online social media presence, including the role of influencers, can have direct effects on conflicts and on peace processes**. Online platforms and media can enhance the inclusivity and transparency of peace processes before, during and after conflict. It is therefore important to raise awareness of the role that they can play.

Mediation as a complementary support tool⁷

Mediation can support efforts to resolve social and political disputes in all phases of a peace process. Such efforts may relate to diverse issues such as transitional justice, ceasefires, electoral processes or access to natural resources.

Transitional Justice

Integrating transitional justice in peace processes and agreements is often complex, highly political and demanding. Conflict parties often raise justice at the negotiating table. However, it is important not only to consider the needs of conflict parties, but also those of victims of conflict-related atrocities and of local communities. Transitional justice processes need to be shaped and owned by the people affected and not result in localised, one-sided and potentially politicised judicial processes (winner's justice). A mediator's role is to support finding the common ground needed to reach positive and inclusive compromises on the way forward.

"Transitional justice is not a ticking-the-box-exercise". The Aceh peace process was mentioned as an example of a context in which transitional justice has been insufficiently implemented and where "societal wounds are still open" almost 20 years after the peace agreement. The Colombian peace process by contrast might provide a counter example, with a transitional justice model agreed by the conflict parties, international advice, the meaningful participation of victims and the impact of the International Criminal Court regarding the exclusion of amnesties for serious conflict-related atrocities.

The EU and the broader international community can support transitional justice efforts with expertise, ideas, strategising and resources. Drawing on experiences from other contexts can be helpful, as can the support by transitional justice advisers during and after peace negotiations, as the notion of justice is likely to change over time. Media and digital tools can be used to enhance access to information, securing broader buy-in and bringing different groups together.

⁷ CoP Panels on: *Mediation support in electoral processes or crises* (European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES)); *Mediation for the access and use of disputed resources in Sahel* (Humanitarian Dialogue and Concordis International); Trends in ceasefire mediation (EEAS).

Mediation in electoral processes or crises

Unlike mediation processes, which are open-ended without strict timelines, elections take place on a particular day with legal frameworks that define all steps. As elections can become a source of conflict, it is important to build mechanisms that can generate trust and confidence amongst the electorates. **Electoral authorities are often well placed to integrate mediation** as a working method at different stages of an election process.

Work carried out by the African Union in Zambia, Gambia, Kenya and Lesotho together with sub-regional bodies demonstrate positive examples of **merging election observation with mediation mission to create better conditions for credible elections**. To clarify issues and mitigate tensions, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission in Kenya holds meetings at different levels with electoral candidates. In Ghana, the Inter-Party Advisory Committee uses transparency and accountability mechanisms to ensure acceptance of the elections and inclusivity and ownership of the process.

Addressing hate speech is important in mitigating tensions in electoral processes. The Kenyan National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) launched an 'Election without violence' campaign in the context of the 2022 presidential vote. The NCIC also collaborated with the Electoral and the Boundaries Commission, the police, and other government agencies in addition to technology companies such as TikTok and Twitter to tackle hate speech. Local observers and civil society are key players in the mitigation of electoral tensions and need support, including through capacity-building and mediation skills.

Ceasefire mediation

There is an increasing demand for guidance and a growing realisation that **ceasefires are an important part of a peace process that needs to be better integrated in political processes**. This has led to an increased need for mediation teams to have at least a basic understanding of ceasefire mediation.

As with other parts of a peace process, **ceasefires are increasingly linked to regional and global realities and power plays** (conflict parties assess the costs of entering into a ceasefire by evaluating positions of global or regional players, not only local realities). Often, ceasefires are broken and need to be renegotiated. There is a growing focus on digital aspects, and the role of social media is important. Examples from Yemen demonstrate how local mediators can play a major role in ceasefire mediation. Initiating a ceasefire can be a crucial early step. At the same time, the Colombian peace process and the case of El Salvador demonstrate that this is not always necessary.

The link between ceasefires and political agreements is becoming weaker. National level ceasefires are hard to obtain because it is difficult to put them into the context of political processes. Libya is a case in point, where the Berlin process allowed the parties to link the ceasefire to a larger, political process. On the other hand, Libya also demonstrates how political obstacles can weaken the ceasefires in the long run. There is now **more of a focus on local ceasefires**, possibly due to the difficulty of achieving national ones. These can play a very important role for example in allowing for humanitarian access.

Ceasefires do not automatically end all violence, as shown by the cases of Northern Ireland, Angola, Guatemala and Myanmar. Many of them are signed with a view to enabling preparation for further hostilities. To decrease the number of failed ceasefires, there is a need for **more efficient monitoring mechanisms and funding** that reflects the long-term aim to get people back into negotiations in case of failure.

Disputed natural resources in the Sahel

The high population growth in the Sahel is leading to more resource needs, while the impact of climate change is damaging harvests and geopolitical dynamics are increasing the prices of imported goods. As a result, the region is witnessing a **rising numbers of intra-community and inter-group, including herder-farmer, conflicts**. Multiple measures can be taken to mitigate them and to prevent related violence. A case-by-case approach and analysis are necessary to understand the structural causes of each conflict. It is important to avoid the stigmatisation of any specific community. Capacity-building, community organisation and the management of peace dividends are essential. Efficient coordination between implementing organisations and local actors is an important precondition for success.

With regard to peace dividends, **the focus should be on joined-up approaches to mediation and long-term investments**. Agro-pastoral mediation in an EU-supported regional project is an interesting example that connects agro-pastoral mediators, including women, in Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad. It uses traditional dialogue mechanisms to reduce conflict within and between agro-pastoral communities and along Sahelian transhumance routes. Inclusive local-level mediation between herders and farmers that supports traditional mechanisms for conflict resolution can contribute to overall de-escalation of conflict and reinforce social cohesion – while an economic perspective via peace dividends can prevent the outbreak of new conflicts.

Closing panel: The way forward for EU Peace Mediation

Guillem Riutord Sampol, Head of ISP.2, Conflict Prevention and Mediation Support Division, EEAS, as facilitator of the closing session, said that this fourth CoP meeting had confirmed the importance of the Community of Practice. The hybrid format had allowed connecting hundreds of people across different countries to exchange on their experiences to discuss current challenges of peace mediation. On the one hand, the tools at our disposal already work, but they need to be properly implemented while, at the same time, the changing geopolitics beg for new tools and skills. He recalled the importance of the meaningful participation of women, the importance of youth, and that transitional justice needs to be better included in new approaches. The need for humility and subsidiarity, particularly by international actors, had come across in the panels prominently, as had the importance of creating horizontal partnerships, including with humanitarian and development actors.

Loredana Teodorescu, Head of the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network (MWMN) and Global Alliance's Secretariat Coordinator, stated that inclusivity is more than only an issue of gender equality. It needs to become a top priority. While women's participation at formal peace tables remains low, the number of women contributing actively to peace and stability in their societies is high. Women are powerful resources across mediation efforts, locally and globally, and there is a need to change the narrative of how women are perceived. She emphasised the importance of long-term investment and partnerships, including between men and women. Women, Peace and Security should be seen as a political agenda, and the regional women mediator networks should be considered a strategic tool, including on current and new security challenges, such as climate change, food security and access to natural resources.

Jonathan Cohen, Executive Director, Conciliation Resources, observed that with more actors involved in mediation, including foreign ministries now developing their own mediation centres, there is a stronger commitment to the use of mediation to resolve conflict. However, mediation at the political level is usually insufficient. Instead, creative, and sustainable support should be given to local civil society and the communities where women so often play a dynamic role. Related to this, it is important to look at the ways in which negative masculinities inhibit progressive engagement in peace processes. Moreover, he stated that mediating the end of a conflict is a long-term process and, to carry out this work, funding structures need to change. One way of securing more support for investments in peace mediation is to tell the story of what we do in a way that communicates more effectively to a wider public. There is a need to rebalance idealism and pragmatism and tackle the double-standards by different states. This is especially important now with new governments in place in Europe and considering how important trust and alliances between Europe, Africa and Asia, for instance, will be.

Jibecke Joensson, Head of Brussels Office, CMI-Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation, stressed that while the EU should continue to push the peace agenda, the Community of Practice should reflect on what can be done more and better in these so-called new realities, and at a time when arms seem to be the preferred way to end conflicts. To support the EU, the Community could coordinate better and more regularly in delivering information and data about the important work that is ongoing in spaces where the EU's ability to act and knowledge are less evident. She encouraged more effective and constant messaging about mediation in practice and suggested that the Community of Practice feed into also other processes, such as the UN New Agenda for Peace or World Bank Pathways for Peace. This will require transparency, goodwill and trust, allowing the Community to draw on each other's respective strengths and address weaknesses to achieve shared goals.

Main Recommendations

Revised mediation tools and approaches:

- Shift the focus **from reaching peace agreements (quick fixes) to building sustainable peace**, exploring also informal dialogue options and partial agreements.
- Better **linkage of mediation** with processes that present other key building blocks for sustainable peace (and vice versa, cross-fertilising), including:
 - o **Transitional justice**, to generate ideas, strategies and resources, and include transitional justice advisors in mediation.
 - o **Elections**, by encouraging the integration of mediation tools and initiatives at different levels of an election process, for example to address polarising hate speech.
 - o **Ceasefires**, to better integrate these within broader peace processes, engaging peace actors (in particular local ones) from the outset, creating efficient monitoring mechanisms and ensuring sustainable funding and peace dividends.
 - o **Natural resource management**, to prevent intra- and inter-community conflicts exacerbated by climate change, in particular between herders and farmers.

Partnerships:

- **Strengthen existing and building new strategic partnerships – horizontal and vertical –** across institutions, structures and organisations, enhancing complementarity and synergies. Ensure efficient coordination between partners, to prevent ‘forum shopping’.
- Support **regular dialogue and exchange platforms**, including between women mediator networks that can support each other across the continents.
- Consider making the **EU Community of Practice a permanent forum** for exchange and learning.
- Continue **strong EU support to the UN’s mediation efforts** on the ground and at HQ level.
- Create and nurture **partnerships between the peace mediation community and humanitarian and development actors**.

Inclusivity:

- Engage with **youth movements** to ensure they become agents for peace and are included in decision-making processes. Use technology and online tools and provide technical and advocacy support/awareness-raising.
- **Strengthen the role of women in peace processes**, shifting from a supply to demand driven approach proactively raising the profile of women, for example by co-mediation. Make Women, Peace and Security a truly political agenda. Draw upon women mediator networks as a strategic tool. Support partnerships between women mediator networks and key actors and leaders.

- **Review funding mechanisms** to ensure that they support inclusivity more strategically, with a particular focus on women and youth.
- Explore ways to **engage more with non-state and informal actors**, including with armed (including extremist) groups when necessary and relevant. This requires enhanced situational awareness and local knowledge, flexibility and adaptability, and cultural sensitivity.

Connected and supported local and regional mediation:

- Provide **technical and logistical support to protect and connect insider mediators** across conflicts and regions.
- Strengthen **connections between informal and insider mediation, and formal negotiation and peace processes** – connecting the dots between mediation tracks through a coordination mechanism across different levels (local, regional and international) and layers (formal and informal).
- **Trust in local solutions and investing in community level mediation** actors and activities in a pragmatic manner.

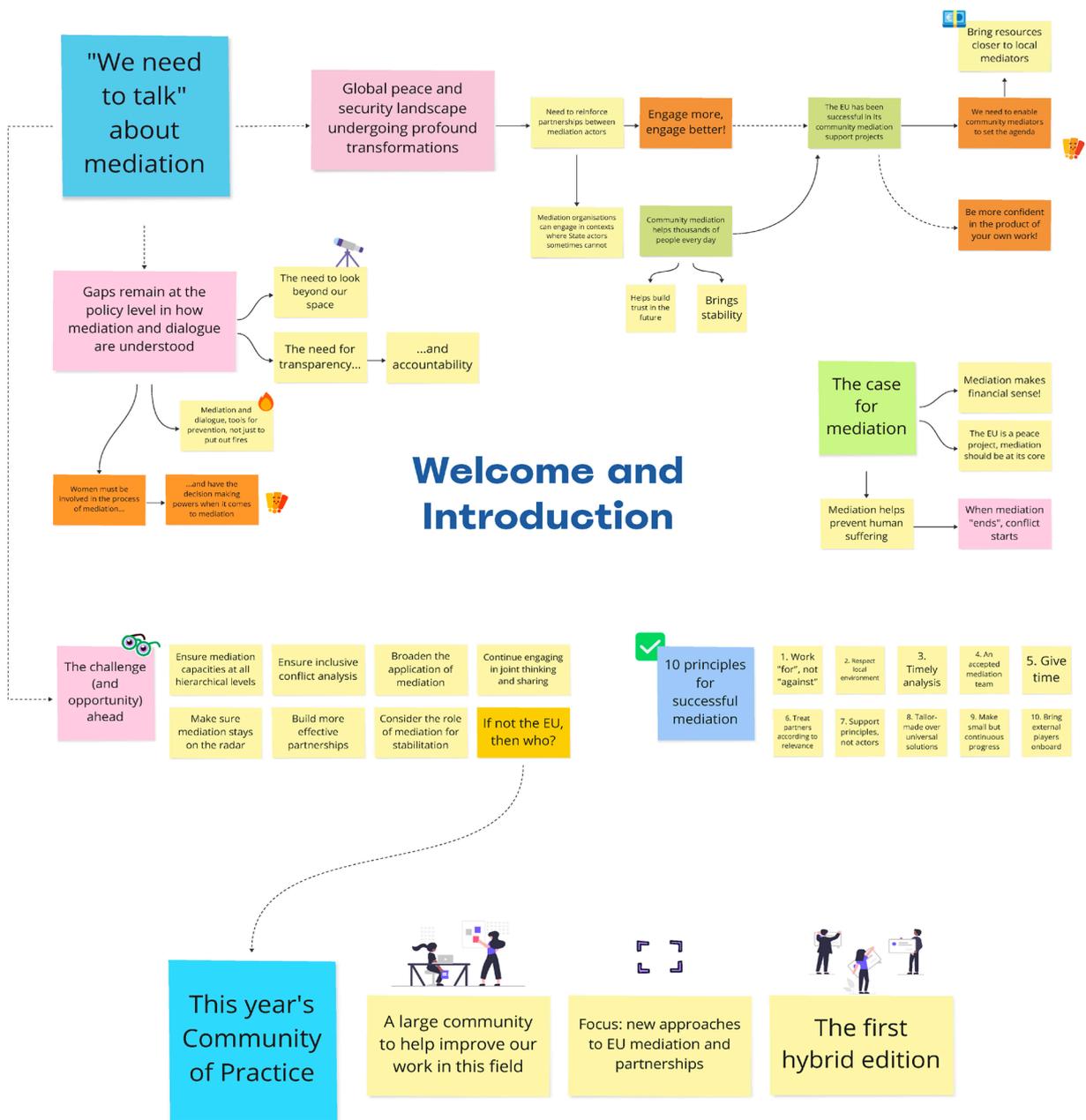
An integrated approach for sustainable peace:

- Make **better use of the CSDP missions and operations to support dialogue and play a preventive role**. This might require mandates that are more flexible and a closer alignment with other EU instruments and priorities.
- Better **linkage of short- and long-term actions** to ensure that funding cycles reflect long-term needs of mediation efforts, their broad scope and need for flexibility. Complement mediation with shuttle diplomacy in between mediation opportunities.

New mediation tools and approaches:

- Ensure capacity building on **psychology and trauma sensitive approaches** for mediation, and on the link between social cohesion and trauma, enhancing mediators' ability to build trust, as well as cope with the task at hand.
- Draw on **digital peace making tools to advance / influence peace processes** and ensure broader inclusion and engaging with new actors and specific groups. This requires increased capacity building, including on security aspects, and further integration of digital aspects into mediation practices and guidelines.
- Make better **use of media to enhance inclusivity and broader buy-in of peace processes**, and improve strategic communication, in particular on mediation in practice (including story telling). Map media actors and conduct joint trainings for mediators and journalists on different mediation aspects.

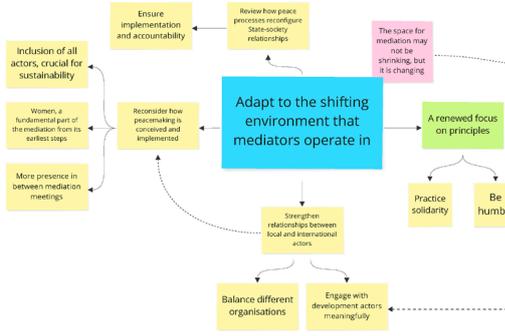
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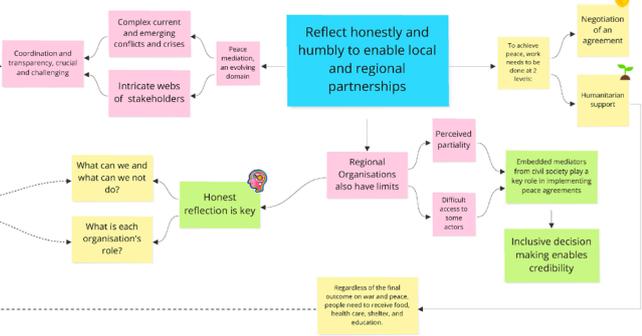


Day 1 – Panel Highlights

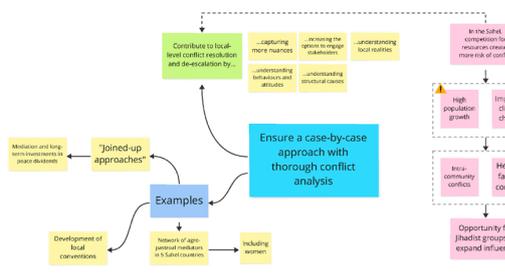
EU peace mediation – Effective Support in a challenging environment



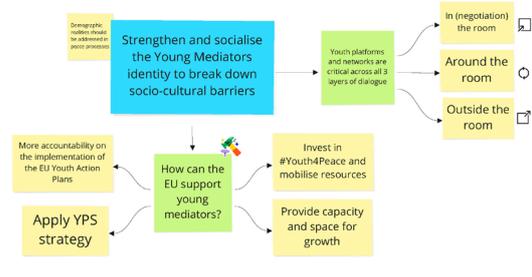
Mediation and Regional Partnerships



Mediation for the access and use of disputed resources in Sahel



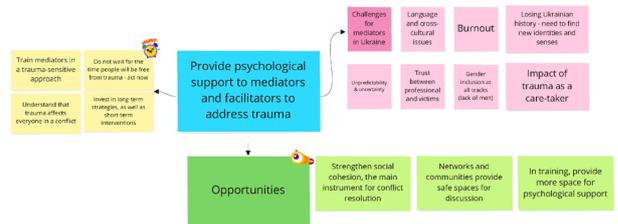
Youth, Peace and Security: A path to greater diversity by bringing in young mediators



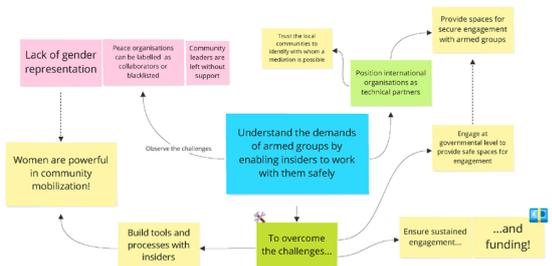
Dealing with the past for a better future: Integrating transitional justice in peace negotiations and national dialogues



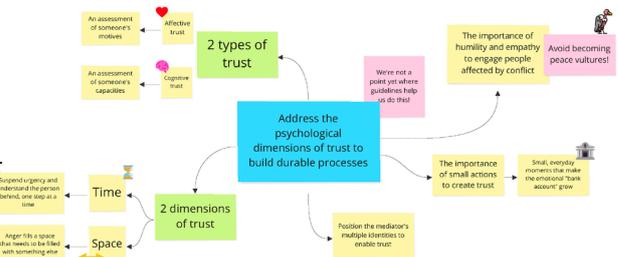
Psychological support and local mediation: Ukrainian synergies in response to crises



Transformative mediation & inclusive peacemaking: Engaging with non-recognised actors and armed groups. Integrating 'State' and 'Non-State' mediation processes



Building trust in peace mediation: The psychological dimension



CSDP missions supporting peace mediation engagements: Roles, contributions and their operationalization



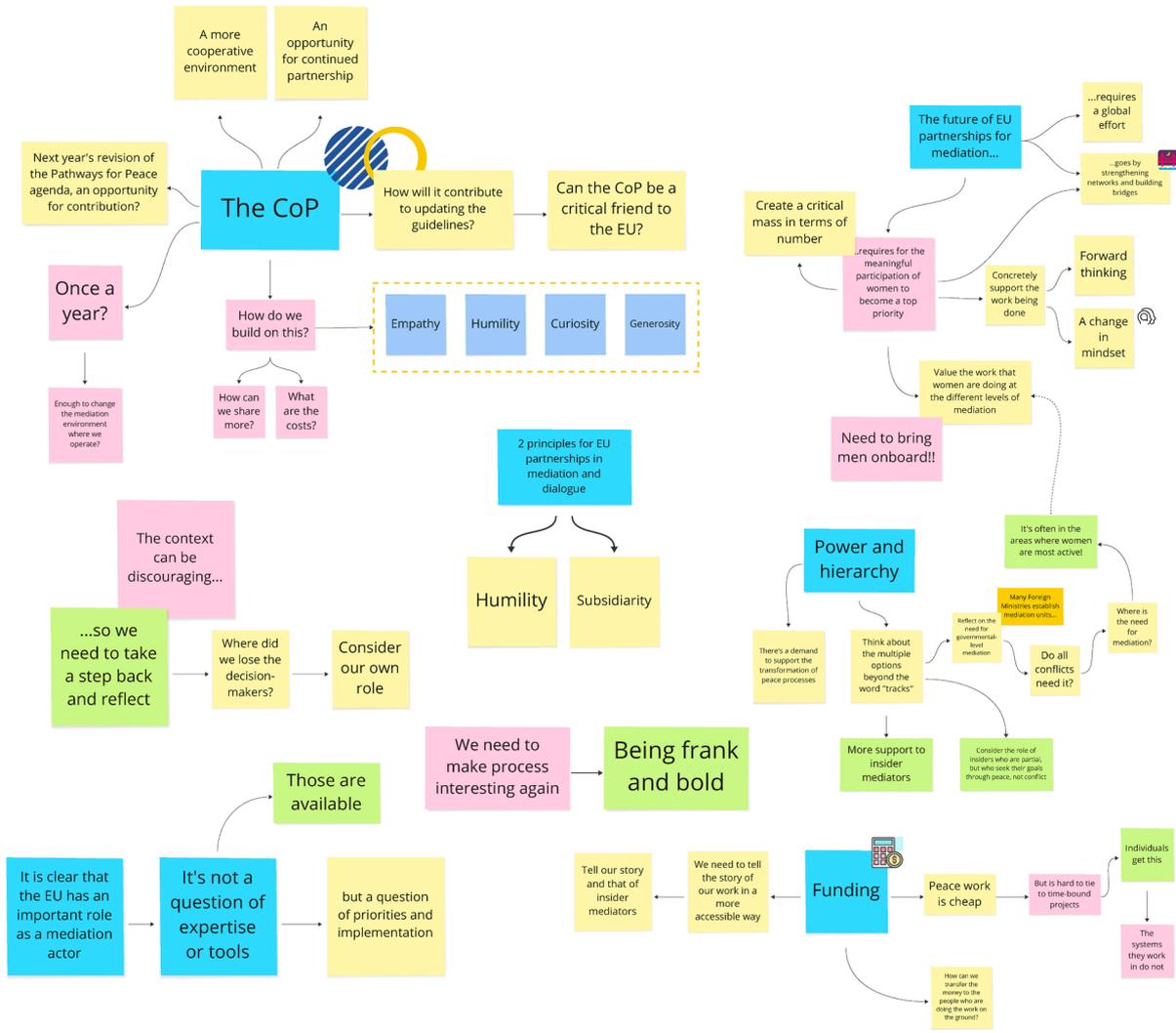
Legend:

- Blue represents a key message
- Green represents opportunities
- Red represents a challenge
- Yellow represents a recommendation or idea

Image credits: culture icon by Freepik - Flaticon



Closing comments and remaining challenges



💡 Your thoughts and comments



Well done EU for bringing us together!

Let's keep telling the story of how peace making works and coin a new epithet for this community the arc of the EU is long, but it bends towards peace

It's been two days full of inspiration. I am a community mediator working for an organization that is advocating for Mediation as a tool of conflict resolution for communities and families. Hopefully some day the EU will also consider strong support Track 2 mediations.

This board has been very helpful. Even for the sessions I missed, I have been able to catch up here.

This is an empowering platform

Rich exchanges, also frank opinions shared

we know all the problems for good and inclusive mediation we know all the solutions we need just implementation and will to do it

Inspiring examples and experiences

Thank you for hosting this once again... We are open to ongoing discussions and implementation of mediation practices and research. Thanks again...

Programme

26 October 2022

Welcome and Introduction

Katariina Leinonen, Deputy Head, Division for Conflict Prevention and Mediation (ISP.2), European External Action Service
Miguel Varela, Dialogue mapper

Opening panel: Lessons identified, trends and perspectives for EU peace mediation

Benedikta von Seherr-Thoss, Managing Director, CSDP and Crisis Response, European External Action Service
Peter M. Wagner, Head of Service, Foreign Policy Instruments, European Commission
Sonya Reines-Djivanides, Executive Director, European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO)
Miroslav Lajčák, EU Special Representative for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue and Western Balkan Regional Issues
Fatima Maiga, Founding Member and President, Coalition des Femmes Leaders Nord, Sud et Centre du Mali

EU peace mediation – effective support in a challenging environment

Guillem Riutord Sampol, Head, Division for Conflict Prevention and Mediation Support (ISP.2), European External Action Service
Annette Weber, EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa
Ville Brummer, Chief Programme Officer, CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation
Simon Bojsen-Moller, Deputy Head, Crisis Response, Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Unit, Foreign Policy Instruments, European Commission
Hiba Qasas, Director Principles for Peace Secretariat, Interpeace

Mediation for the access and use of disputed resources in Sahel

Catherine Hiltzer, Operations Coordinator for the Sahel and the Gulf of Guinea, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
Peter Marsden, Chief Executive, Concordis
Javier Ruiz Arteaga, Chef de Programme – PROJES, German Agency for International Cooperation, GIZ
Almoustapha Amadou, Coordinator, Agropastoral Mediation Program, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue

Youth, Peace and Security: A path to greater diversity by bringing in young mediators

Gizem Kilingç, Expert and Independent Consultant on Youth, Peace and Security
Achaleke Christian Leke, Executive Director, Local Youth Corner of Cameroon
Josephat Odiwuor Agwenge, Head, Nyumba Kumi, Kenya
Olla Alsakkaf, Chairwoman, Peace Environment Organization in Yemen
Spageon Ngabo, Chairman, Collective of the Yaga (bloggers) in Burundi
Candida Novak Hornakova, Division for Conflict Prevention and Mediation (ISP.2), European External Action Service

Mediation and regional partnerships

Martin Albani, Head, Mediation Support Sector, Division for Conflict Prevention and Mediation (ISP.2), European External Action Service
Sean Kane, Team Leader, Mediation Support Unit, Policy and Mediation Division, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, United Nations
Scott M. Weber, President, Interpeace
Christina Horvath-Stenner, Mediation Support Officer, Conflict Prevention Center, Organization for Security and Co-Operation (OSCE)
Abdel Aziz Abu Hamad Aluwaisheg, Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Negotiations, Gulf Cooperation Council

Psychological support and local mediation: Ukrainian synergies in response to crises

Vasyl Belmega, Project Manager Ukraine, CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation
 Mary Jo Harwood, Facilitator, Trauma-informed peace building for mediators in Ukraine, Mediators Beyond Borders International
 Halyna Yeromenko, CEO and Founder, Ukrainian Mediation Center
 Iryna Eihelson, Independent dialogue facilitator and researcher on identity-based conflicts

Transformative mediation & inclusive peacebuilding: Engaging with non-recognised actors and armed groups. Integrating ‘state’ and ‘non-state’ mediation processes

Olivia Caeymaex, Director, Conciliation Resources EU
 Veronique Dudouet, Senior Advisor, Berghof Foundation
 Fatima Maiga, Founding Member and President, Coalition des Femmes Leaders Nord, Sud et Centre du Mali
 Mshelia Birma Wayuta, Researcher and peacebuilder, transitional justice and community engagement
 Jean Marc Mazio (representing the European Institute of Peace), Former Head of Programmes, Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan for Eastern DRC (STAREC), Ituri
 Steven Spittaels, Team Leader, Great Lakes Region, European Institute of Peace

Building trust in peace mediation: The psychological dimension

Jonathan Cohen, Executive Director, Conciliation Resources
 Irene Bruna Seu, Professor in psychosocial studies and critical psychology, Birkbeck, University of London
 Michelle Gehrig, Analyst, Athena Consortium
 Hudo Ahmed, Project Manager Ethiopia, Conciliation Resources

CSDP missions supporting peace mediation engagements: Roles, contributions and their operationalisation

Sebastian Dworack, Head, International Capacity Development Team, Center on International Peace Operations, ZIF
 Alischa Kugel, Deputy Head, International Capacity Development Team, Center on International Peace Operations, ZIF
 Marek Szczygieł, Head of Mission, EUMM Georgia
 Fabian Loewenberg, Deputy Head of Mission, EUCAP Somalia
 Maja Sverdrup, Deputy Head of Mission, EUCAP Sahel Mali

Dealing with the past for a better future: Integrating transitional justice in peace negotiations and national dialogues

Elisabeth Baumgartner, Key expert 1, Facility on Justice in Conflict and Transition of the EU
 Priscilla Hayner, Senior transitional justice expert, Member of the UN Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers
 Shadia Marhaban, International mediator, Member of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) peace negotiating team in Helsinki (2005)
 Maria Camila Moreno, Head of Office, Colombia, International Center for Transitional Justice

27 October 2022

Welcome and opening: Recapping day 1 and introducing day 2

Katariina Leinonen, Deputy Head, Division for Conflict Prevention and Mediation (ISP.2), European External Action Service
 Janna Greve, Policy Officer, Division for Conflict Prevention and Mediation (ISP.2), European External Action Service
 Miguel Varela, Dialogue mapper

Formal and informal dialogue in a regional setting in Africa: Complementarity, coordination and cooperation

Tiina Kukkamaa-Bah, Head, Sub-Saharan Africa, CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation
Abdeta Dribssa Beyene, Executive Director, Center for Dialogue, Research and Cooperation
Georg Charpentier, Senior Advisor, CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation
Sylvia Thompson, Senior Manager, CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation

The Experience of non-state armed groups in peace/political processes in Mali and Yemen

Bilal Ag Acherif, Secretary General and Founding Member, Movement for the Liberation of the Azawad
Amr Al Bidh, Member of Yemen's Southern Transitional Council's (STC) Presidential Council, and the Special Representative of the STC President for Foreign Affairs
Nabeel Bin Lasem, Political Officer, Office of the Special Representative of the STC President for Foreign Affairs
Aisling Schorderet, Senior Policy Adviser, Independent Diplomat
Cat Evans, Director, European Operations and African Outreach, Independent Diplomat

Trends in ceasefire mediation

Georg Albers, Division for Conflict Prevention and Mediation (ISP.2), European External Action Service
Katia Papagianni, Director for Policy and Mediation Support, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
Ajay Sethi, Department for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, United Nations
Mohammed Ali, Project Manager, Resonate! Yemen
Govinda Clayton, Senior Researcher, Centre for Security Studies, ETH Zurich

Mediation support in electoral processes or crises

Calixte Aristide Mbari, Head of Division, Democracy, Governance, Human Rights, and Elections, Department of Political Affairs, African Union
Filiberto C. Sebregondi, Vice President of the Strategic & Advisory Board, European Centre for Electoral Support
Erastus J.O. Mwencha, Chair, African Capacity Building Foundation Executive Board
Cristina Castagnoli, Head of the Elections Unit, European Parliament
Jean Adukwei Mensa, Chairperson, Electoral Commission of Ghana
Rindai Chipfunde-Vava, Preventing Electoral Violence Project Co-ordinator in Ethiopia, European Centre for Electoral Support
Wafula Chebukati, Chairman, Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, Kenya's Elections Regulatory Agency
Samuel Kobia, Chairman, National Cohesion and Integration Commission
Eldrige Adolfo, Senior Dialogue and Peace Mediation Adviser, Folke Bernadotte Academy

Methods of digital inclusion in peacemaking: Case-studies on digital dialogues from Eurasia, the Middle East and North Africa

Jibecke Joensson, Head, Brussel's Office, CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation
Tetiana Kyselova, Associate Professor and Director, Mediation and Dialogue Research Center, Kyiv-Mohyla Academy
Mira El Mawla, MENA lead, Build Up
Maude Morrison, Head, Social Media and Conflict Mediation, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue

Taking forward women's meaningful inclusion in peacemaking: Reflections and action-oriented strategies

Loredana Teodorescu, Head of the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network (MWMN); Coordinator, Global Alliance's Secretariat; and President, Women in International Security (WIIS) Italy
Anna Cervi, Humanitarian expert, qualified mediator, a member of the MWMN, IMI and ACAMS
Karma Ekmekji, Mediation Advisor, UN Women, Founder #Diplowomen and member of the MWMN
Elif Kalan, Member of the Turkey Antenna of the MWMN; and co-founder of the NGO CERA Europe
Magda Zenon, Podcaster and member of the Women Mediators Across the Commonwealth, MWMN, Women's

Alliance for Security Leadership and of Hands Across the Divide
Katriina Leinonen, Deputy Head, Division for Conflict Prevention and Mediation (ISP.2), European External Action Service

Limited-focus deals on limited-focus issues: An alternative approach to comprehensive settlements

Dhana Jiménez, Coordinator and Attorney, Venezuela Expert Group
Guillermo T. Aveledo Coll, Dean, School of Liberal Studies, Metropolitan University
Andrés García Trujillo, Associate, Institute of Integrated Transitions
Unopa Makanyanga, Director, Harambe Trust

Media, civil society actors and mediation specialists: A gathering of actors for peace yet to be put together

Nicolas Rougy, EU Senior Representative, Interpeace
Linda Benrais, Director, Governance and Conflict Resolution Department, Essec Business School
Brice Ndongou, Editor in Chief, Radio Ndeke Luka/Foundation Hirondelle, Central African Republic
Maria Camila Moreno Múnera, Head of Office, Colombia, International Center for Transitional Justice

Sharing lessons learned and good practices on support for insider mediators

Antti Pentikainen, Executive Chair, Mary Hoch Foundation
Laura Wenz, Policy Analyst, United Nations Development Programme, Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Team
Betty Bigombe, Chief Mediator between the Government and Lord's Resistance Army, Uganda
Natia Chankvetadze, PhD Researcher, Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution, George Mason University
Nyasha Naomi Kuture, Member, Zimbabwe Insider Mediators Network
Barbara Einhäuser, Foreign Policy Instruments, European Commission
Juan Diaz-Prince, Acting Team Lead and Senior Expert on Mediation and Dialogue, United States Institute of Peace
Chetan Kumar, Peacebuilding Advisor, United Nations Development Programme, Bangkok Regional Hub
Sanna Harto, Division for Conflict Prevention and Mediation (ISP.2), European External Action Service

Closing remarks: Key outputs and the way forward for EU peace mediation

Guillem Riutord Sampol, Head, Division for Conflict Prevention and Mediation Support (ISP.2), European External Action Service
Jonathan Cohen, Executive Director, Conciliation Resources
Jibecke Joensson, Head, Brussel's Office, CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation
Loredana Teodorescu, Head of the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network (MWMN); Coordinator, Global Alliance's Secretariat; and President, WIIS Italy

