

Roundtable on Mediation Support

Wednesday 23 July 2014 (09:30 . 14:00)

Permanent Representation of Finland to the EU, Avenue de Cortenberg / Kortenberglaan 80

With the evolution and professionalization of mediation over the last decade, a growing number of peacebuilding NGOs and regional and global institutions including the AU, EU and UN have developed capacities to provide direct and indirect support to mediators and their teams in peace processes. Mediation support is emerging as a distinct field of peacebuilding, with activities including specific training programmes, mediation support units, events and networks to allow those working in mediation support to share experiences and develop rosters of deployable experts.

The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) will host an informal roundtable in order to assess the state of play in mediation support and to highlight effective mediation support activities. It is open to all interested participants from the NGO sector, the EU institutions, EU member states and international organisations.

The objectives of the informal roundtable are:

- To assess the evolution and impact of the emerging field of mediation support in recent years;
- To share experiences of well-established and more recent efforts to provide technical support and capacity building to those involved in mediation;
- To discuss the value of an annual gathering of this nature in Brussels on a topic relevant to mediation practice, as happens in other locations.

09.30 . 09.45 Welcome and purpose of the roundtable

Catherine Woollard (EPLO) and Stine Lehmann-Larsen (HD Centre)

09.45 – 11.15 Assessing Mediation Support Mechanisms

Moderator: Sari Rautio, Permanent Representation of Finland to the EU

The session will cover the following topics:

- What have existing mediation support mechanisms contributed to date? Why are they useful? What are their limitations and what can be done to address them?
- To what extent do these initiatives complement each other? How can they be strengthened?
- What do mediators and peace process beneficiaries think they get out of these initiatives?
- Is the success or failure of an initiative context-dependent and what other factors are at play?
- Who is best placed to do mediation support?

Lessons from the following mechanisms will be briefly presented, *inter alia*:

- The Oslo Forum (Paul Dziaukowicz, HD Centre)
- Inclusivity and support to women in peace negotiations (Sanne Tielemans, Conciliation Resources)
- Track II Mediation Unit (Sonya Reines-Djivanides, Search for Common Ground)
- European Resources for Mediation Support (Catherine Guicherd, ERMES Team Leader)

11.15 – 11.45 Coffee break

11.45 – 13.00 The Future of Mediation Support: the Role of the EU

Moderator: Catherine Woollard, EPLO

The session will cover the following topics:

- What does this emerging trend mean for the EU and Member States?
- What capacity does the EU have for mediation support and how could it be improved?
- What lessons can be learned from the experience of EU Special Representatives (EUSRs) involved in dialogue and mediation? How can EUSRs better contribute to peace mediation and what kind of mediation support do they need?
- Is there a need to develop distinct mediation support for different EU actors (e.g. EU Special Representatives, CSDP missions, heads of EU delegations, European Parliament)?

Brief contributions:

- The role of the EU Special Representative (Ambassador Rosalind Marsden, Associate Fellow of Chatham House and former EU Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan)
- The Member States' role in supporting EU mediation (Ambassador Piritta Asunmaa, PSC Ambassador of Finland)
- EU mediation support after 2014 (Guy Banim, Mediation Support Team, EEAS)

13.00 – 14.00 Informal lunch