



## Civil Society Dialogue Network Member State Meeting

# Strengthening inclusion and participation in EU peace mediation support: Role of insider mediators

### CONCEPT NOTE

**Meliá Madrid Serrano**

Calle Claudio Coello 139, 28006 Madrid

**5 December 2023**

### Background

The Treaty of the European Union establishes that its aim is to promote, preserve and contribute to peace. The role of EU peace mediation and dialogue is central as the method of choice to prevent and solve crises and conflicts. Over the years, the EU has become better equipped to exercise its role on these matters through a new policy framework, a reinforced institutional setting and a toolset adapted to new conflict realities, implemented in partnership and close consultation with Member States and the wider peacebuilding community.

As a result, the EU has made strong commitments to strengthening support to peace mediation initiatives around the world and its capacity as a leading peace mediation actor. With the adoption of the [Concept on EU Peace Mediation](#) and the [EEAS Peace Mediation Guidelines](#) in December 2020, the EU has set out the policy foundation for EU mediation, and outlined the specific features, principles, and instruments to support the implementation of EU mediation initiatives. The Guidelines were updated in 2023 through a consultative process and include a new chapter specifically focused on insider mediators

Insider Mediators (IM) play a vital role in preventing conflict and sustaining peace. IMs possess networks that enable them to work at various levels, which includes support to broader and/or high-level mediation processes, and constitute an example of collaborative capacities of societies for peacebuilding and conflict prevention. IMs present critical assets for impactful and sustainable conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Through their outreach capacity, influence, legitimacy, religious or cultural proximity to parties, courage and unique skills, insider mediators are well-placed to mediate differences before tensions erupt into violence.

According to the EEAS Peace Mediation Guidelines, inclusion in mediation applies to women leaders and women's groups, social, demographic, religious, ethnic and regional minority groups as well as to civil society and professional organisations. Furthermore, traditional and religious leaders are potentially important allies as they can play a critical role in increasing the legitimacy of a peace process. Particular attention needs to be given to the meaningful inclusion and participation of women, children and youth, considering the long-term impact of the decisions made and the creative peacebuilding roles that young people often take on.

In the framework of the Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN), the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) and the EU have organised four Policy Meetings, which contributed to shaping EU policy on mediation on a variety of aspects, including:

- [EU support to women mediators](#) (March 2019)
- [Strengthening the EU's role on mediation](#) – gathering input in view of the drafting of the Concept on EU Peace Mediation (February 2020)

- [The EEAS Peace Mediation Guidelines](#) (November 2020)
- [Revision of the EEAS Peace Mediation Guidelines](#) – gathering input from experts (May 2023)

EPLO has also produced a statement on '[Strengthening EU support to peace mediation](#)', papers on [women mediators](#) and on [developments and challenges](#) of EU support to peace mediation, and organised meetings with the EU presidency of the EU Council in the context of the [EU Community of Practice on Peace Mediation](#), to which EPLO also contributes as a steering committee member.

EU Member States play a key role in shaping EU foreign policy and implementing EU commitments.

In this context, this meeting will provide a platform for dialogue between policy-makers, insider peace mediators, and civil society experts to reflect on how to translate policy into implementation and shape future EU support to mediation.

### **Objectives**

The overall objective of this meeting is to gather analysis and recommendations on the challenges connected to inclusion and meaningful participation in peace processes and EU peace mediation initiatives.

Possible specific areas of focus:

- Connection between informal/discreet dialogues and formal negotiations (connecting tracks I, II and III)
- Meaningful inclusion of women insider mediators
- Safety and security of insider mediators
- Connecting insider mediators across conflicts and regions
- Role of the EU and EU Member States in supporting meaningful inclusion for sustainable peacemaking
- Making full use of EU mediation tools in the EU decision-making processes

### **Participants**

The meeting will bring together civil society insider mediators with experience in diverse processes (Latin America, the Mediterranean, Africa, etc...), officials of the European Union and the Spanish government.

### **Format**

The meeting will take the form of a one-day facilitated round-table discussion. The discussion will take place under the Chatham House Rule<sup>1</sup>. Simultaneous interpretation will be available.

### **Output**

A meeting report including the key recommendations of the discussions will be published.

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<sup>1</sup> Participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed (see: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/chatham-house-rule>)

## AGENDA

5 December 2023 (9:00 – 16:00)

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8:30 – 9:00	<b>Registration and coffee</b>
9:00 – 9:15	<b>Keynote speech</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Ángeles Moreno Bau</b>, State Secretary for Foreign and Global Affairs</li></ul>
9:15 – 9:30	<b>Welcome and introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Guillem Riutord Sampol</b>, Head of Division, Peace, Partnerships and Crisis Management Directorate, Peace, Security and Defence Partnerships (PCM.2) Division, European External Action Service (EEAS)</li><li>• <b>Kristian Herbolzheimer</b>, European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) Steering Committee</li></ul>
9:30 – 11:15	<b>Session 1 – Supporting insider mediators</b> <p>Possible guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What added value do insider mediators bring to peace processes?</li><li>• What practical and technical challenges do insider mediators face in accessing and participating in different processes, including aspects related to gender and age?</li><li>• How can the safety and security of insider mediators engaging in peace processes be ensured?</li></ul> <p>Moderator: Jonathan Cohen, Chair, EPLO Steering Committee</p>
11:15 – 11:45	<b>Coffee break</b>
11:45 – 13:00	<b>Session 2 – Connecting tracks, processes and experiences</b> <p>Potential guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What can be done to connect Track III, Track II, and Track I processes (multi-track mediation)?</li><li>• What are practical and technical challenges in connecting informal dialogues and formal negotiations?</li><li>• What insights can be drawn from experiences across different contexts to maximise external support to insider mediators in the future?</li><li>• What are some successes and failures of engagement in multi-track processes?</li></ul>

	Moderator: Jonathan Cohen, Chair, EPLO Steering Committee
13:00 – 14:00	<b>Lunch break</b>
14:00 – 15:45	<p><b>Session 3 – Recommendations to the EU and Member States</b></p> <p>Possible guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to ensure the Concept on EU Peace mediation is implemented effectively?</li> <li>• How to increase relevance and enhance mediation practice in EU external action?</li> <li>• What is the role of the EU and Member States in supporting the meaningful engagement and participation of insider mediators in peace processes?</li> <li>• What can the EU and Members States do in addressing the challenges identified throughout the day?</li> </ul> <p>Moderator: Jonathan Cohen, Chair, EPLO Steering Committee</p>
15:45 – 16:00	<p><b>Closing remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs</b></li> <li>• <b>Guillem Riutord Sampol, EEAS</b></li> <li>• <b>Kristian Herbolzheimer, EPLO</b></li> </ul>