EU Mediation in Nutshell

Since the adoption of the 2009 ‘EU Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities’, the EU has taken an increasingly coordinated and focused approach to peace mediation and dialogue, and assumed a more active role in peace process support.

The EU Concept emphasises the effectiveness and cost efficiency of mediation, calls on the EU to be systematic and strategic in its approach and defines the levels, actors and types of engagement. It calls for systematic risk and opportunity assessment and coordination with other international actors. It highlights the need to pay specific attention to the role of women and to act in accordance with human rights and international humanitarian law.

To match new realities, the EEAS is updating the EU Mediation Concept in 2020, and developing guidelines to support EU mediators and implementing partners.

EU Mediation Roles and Tools

The EU engages in a range of mediation roles to support peace processes:

- **Leading mediation**: Acting as a third party at the track I level, engaging the leadership of a country and the representatives of conflict parties.
- **Facilitating mediation and dialogue spaces**: Opening up and facilitating spaces for dialogue.
- **Accompanying mediation**: Accompany a peace process by creating ground for talks, promoting an inclusive process or witnessing proceedings, assuming guarantor roles.
- **Coordinating mediation**: Contributing to a cohesive and inclusive process.
- **Supporting mediation efforts of others**: Capacity building, training, logistical support and expertise.
- **Leveraging mediation**: Through diplomatic actions and/or economic credence.
- **Supporting mediation outcomes**: Using political, diplomatic, trade, cooperation and civilian and military crisis management to support parties in implementing agreements.
- **Funding mediation**: Financial support to formal, informal and grassroots mediation processes and to the extended mediation community.
- **Promoting mediation** and good practices in peace processes.

The EEAS Mediation Support Team (MST), within the ISP2 Division, is operational since 2011. It provides advice on mediation process design and technical expertise on the key aspects of mediation and dialogue. The EEAS geographic divisions, EUSRs and EU Delegations can draw on the MST for advice and support with regard to assessing mediation opportunities, supporting existing mediation efforts or building mediation capacity.

In June 2020, the EEAS established an in-house Pool of EU Mediators to strengthen the EU’s mediation outreach and operational capacity. Its members nominated jointly by the EEAS geographic Managing Directorates and ISPD, combine geographic and thematic expertise. An EEAS Mediation Task Force at Managing Director level is furthermore foreseen to exercise political oversight of EU mediation opportunities and assignments.

Other EU mediation support capacities include external mediation experts that ISP2 can draw from, and the European Resources for Mediation Support-project (ERMES) III, funded through the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP). ERMES contributes with capacity building for third parties, actors and organisations in need of mediation expertise.

Mediation Support Team in Action

The MST supports EU institutions, actors and partners upon request. It provides training, coaching, mediation opportunities assessments and options for engagements. The MST can also offer tailored support to existing
mediation processes through strategic or process design advice and accompaniment to a process. For example:

1. **Operational Support and Expert Deployments:** the MST can be deployed at short notice to provide mediation support to EU Delegations, EUSR offices, CSDP missions or other relevant EU actors. It can also draw on a facility that has access to over 70 specialised external experts.

2. **Coaching and training:** tailored to the recipient’s needs, the MST can propose one-to-one, team and group coaching and training across a range of topics related to peace processes and mediation.

3. **Knowledge management:** effective EU mediation and dialogue work relies on critical and constructive lesson-learning from past engagements and thematic specialist papers such as power sharing, or ceasefire mechanisms.

4. **Partnerships and outreach:** the EEAS has standing partnerships on mediation support with the EU Member States, regional organisations (including OSCE, AU and ASEAN), NGOs and academic institutions. The EU collaborates closely with the UN on mediation, co-financing the UN Standby Team of Mediation Experts and drawing on UN Mediation Experts for specific assignments. Working together on specific processes, such as the UN Special Envoy for Syria or the Special Envoy for Syria, or the Special Envoy for Libya, is an added value to peace processes.

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**EU Mediation Support Examples**

The following provides some past and current examples of EU mediation support:

- **Afghanistan:** In 2019 the EU launched the Afghanistan Peace Support Mechanism together with its implementing partner Sida. The mechanism contributes to the preparation and implementation of an inclusive Afghan-led and -owned peace process, informed by and responsive to the needs of all Afghans, including women, youth and other important stakeholders, both in Afghanistan and abroad. It focuses on confidence-building measures, connecting stakeholders, peace education and technical, thematic and logistical support to peace efforts.

- **Central African Republic:** The EU provided mediation support from the technical preparation and the pre-negotiation phase to the negotiations of the peace agreement signed on 6 February 2019. It advised on the coordination of the post agreement mediation support and closely follows up of the peace agreement implementation including the gender perspective of the peace process and community level mediation efforts.

- **Georgia:** The EU is a mediator of the Six Point Plan between Russia and Georgia and co-facilitator of the Geneva International Discussions. The MST has supported this process through training and coaching and organisation of workshops with the UN and OSCE, as well as with the EUMM.

- **Kosovo and Serbia:** The Belgrade-Pristina dialogue is a clear case of direct “at the table” mediation by the EU. The EEAS led the first, so-called technical phase, from March 2011 to February 2012. Nine agreements were brokered during this phase and working groups were created for every issue to follow implementation.

- **Mali:** The EU had a double presence in the Algiers peace negotiations (2014-2015), acting as co-mediator through the EUSR for the Sahel leading EU representation, while the EUDEL provided technical expertise. The EU has acted as guarantor of the Algiers agreement, and supports its implementation through political facilitation and monitoring, and financial assistance.

- **Nigeria:** The EU Delegation mobilised the IcSP-funded European Resources for Mediation Support (ERMES) facility to convene and support a local mediators’ group to help address conflicts in the Niger Delta, is addressing the farmer herder crisis, and provides for special mechanisms regarding critical DDR processes.

- **Philippines:** The EU worked to enhance its engagement in Mindano by supporting the peace process with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, including capacity building in the transition to the future Bangsamoro administration as well as continued support to inter-Bangsamoro dialogue.

- **Sudan:** The EU undertook a diplomatic push to support the 2019 mediation process led by the AU. The EU advocated and leveraged a negotiated settlement leading to a civilian-led transitional authority.

- **Syria:** The EU works to ensure the continuation of the peace process through the Syria Peace Initiative. It contributes to enhancing the Syrian moderate opposition’s capacity and opportunities to engage in the UN-led peace process, including by enhancing the role of Syrian women, i.a. through the Gaziantep Women Platform.

- **Yemen:** Since 2015, the EU supports the Yemen Peace Process, including the UN efforts. The MST supports multitrack coordination with the UN, advises on economic peace process issues and has provided substantial advice on ceasefire and de-escalation mechanisms. The EU provides a digital ceasefire monitoring tool and co-facilitates a technical ceasefire working group. It promotes inclusive approaches to peace-making through the steering of several Track II initiatives in the country.