

Mediation Support Unit Annual Report 2014

The purpose of this note is to provide a snapshot of mediation support activities and initiatives of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) Mediation Support Unit (MSU). It focuses on the work of MSU as a service provider and does not reflect the full spectrum of the mediation initiatives supported and led by the regional divisions in DPA. The work of MSU is focused on *operational support* to current and future peace processes, *strengthening institutional mediation capacity* of the United Nations as well as regional and sub-regional organizations, and *knowledge management* through a framework of technical expertise, policy and guidance, lessons learned and mediation best practices.



Staffan de Mistura, UN Special Envoy for Syria, Photo @JulietteTouma



Christina Murray (second from left), Standby Team of Mediation Expert, working with the Constitution Drafting Committee in Yemen

COUNTRY/REGION-SPECIFIC OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

AFRICA

Burkina Faso

In the context of the negotiations towards a political transition in Burkina Faso, Mr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa, conducted good offices in Burkina Faso in cooperation with the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). An MSU staff member was deployed to Ouagadougou in November 2014 to assist the team of Mr. Chambas.

Central African Republic (CAR)

At the request of Mr. Babacar Gaye, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for the Central African Republic and Head of the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the CAR (BINUCA), subsequently the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA), two Standby Team members and two MSU staffers were deployed during different periods from March to June 2014 to assist the CAR transitional authorities in developing a national reconciliation strategy and action plan. In July, a Standby Team member was deployed to assist MINUSCA in supporting the International Mediation in the Central African crisis, led by the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and which includes the UN, represented by Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily, SRSG for Central Africa and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa. The SBT member provided expertise

before and during the Inter-Central African Forum for National Reconciliation that was held in Brazzaville in July 2014 and led to the signing of a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. In October-November, a Standby Team member and an MSU staff member deployed to Bangui to assist MINUSCA in supporting the preparations for a national dialogue process initiated in Brazzaville. In particular, they helped design, and participated in, a 2-day Preparatory Workshop for the Bangui Forum for National Reconciliation and Reconstruction, slated for early 2015. MSU staff also provided advice to the Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and MINUSCA on considerations for developing a ceasefire monitoring and verification mechanism.

Lesotho

In response to growing political tension in the country, MSU deployed a Standby Team member in May 2014 to support the Resident Coordinator in Lesotho with scenario-building and planning.

Libya

During the last quarter, MSU provided a series of short analytical papers to the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) with comparative experiences and best practices related to (i) ceasefires and monitoring mechanisms;

(ii) qualified voting majorities in parliaments; and (iii) governance options in political transitions. MSU understand that the papers were translated in Arabic and shared with key Libyan interlocutors, including parliamentarians and representatives from civil society.

Malawi

MSU deployed a Standby Team member in early February to support a mediation skills workshop organized by the Resident Coordinator in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (UNDP/BCPR). The aim of the workshop was to prepare the Public Affairs Committee, a group of religious leaders, to play an insider mediation role in their country.

Mali

Two Standby Team members supported the mediation team of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) through multiple deployments, including during the four phases of the Algerian-led talks held between the Government of Mali and the armed movements from northern regions of the country in July, September, October and November 2014, respectively. The talks, which are ongoing, led to the signing of the Roadmap of Negotiations and the Declaration of Cessation of Hostilities on 24 July 2014, and to the development of a Draft Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, slated to be discussed during a 5th round of the inter-Malian peace talks in early 2015.

Somalia

Following a series of deployments to Mogadishu in the previous year, a Standby Team member deployed to Mogadishu in March, May, July, October and again in December 2014 to continue UN support to the Speaker of the Somali Parliament on a range of issues, including the parliamentary legislative programme and preparing for constitutional review. Another Standby Team member deployed to Somalia for ten days in November 2014 to help the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) map current and anticipated requirements for mediation support and to identify capacity gaps and how these could be addressed. Additionally, a DPA Mediation Roster expert supported UNSOM, both remotely and through field deployments, on, inter alia, boundaries issues.

South Sudan

Working closely with UN partners such as the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU), DPKO and DPA Africa I Division, MSU has directly and indirectly supported the

Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)-led peace talks on South Sudan from June to December. The direct support comprised six Standby Team deployments and the deployment of an MSU staff member to advise the mediation during the talks in Addis Ababa and to bring their expertise to bear at related events, such as an IGAD-led Symposium in early June. The indirect support included the drafting of papers for both the IGAD mediation team and UN partners as well as the sharing of names of technical experts from the Mediation Roster who could support the process. Support initially focused on issues related to inclusion and transitional arrangements, but since August has focused on power-sharing and security issues, including the implementation of the existing Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and negotiations around a permanent ceasefire.

Sudan

Following a request from the African Union/UN Hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID), UNOAU and the African Union High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) in November, MSU deployed a Standby Team member to Addis Ababa and identified a consultant to help prepare the Darfur Armed Movements for talks with the Government of Sudan on ceasefire and related security arrangements. The aim of the training was to equip the Movements' representatives with the basic skills of negotiation. Following the training, the Standby Team member remained in Addis to give the AUHIP team leading the talks advice on ceasefire / cessation of hostilities issues.

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Philippines

A Standby Team member carried out three missions to the Philippines during 2014, upon request by UNDP Philippines and the Joint World Bank–UN Facility for Advisory Support for Transition Capacities (FASTRAC), which provides support for the peace process between the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). The expert provided technical advice to the hearings of the Bangsamoro Transition Commission and participated in brainstorming sessions focused on the strategy forward for the MILF's integration and transition to civilian governance.

Sri Lanka

In the first and second quarters of 2014 MSU, including through Standby Team members and staff, has provided technical advice to DPA's Asia and Pacific Division principally in relation

to preparations for the mission of Assistant-Secretary-General to Sri Lanka in June. MSU has also been involved in internal UN thinking follow up on the pending questions of accountability and reconciliation in the aftermath of the conflict in Sri Lanka.

MIDDLE EAST AND WEST ASIA

Palestine and Israel

In the aftermath of the conflict in Gaza in summer 2014, MSU deployed senior staff expertise to assist the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and his office in the negotiation of arrangements for the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip.

Syria

MSU staff, Standby Team members and Mediation Roster experts have been extensively involved in supporting mediation efforts on Syria in a range of ways. Expertise was provided on both substance and procedure to the Joint Special Representative for Syria, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, for the Geneva II talks in January and February of 2014. Standby Team members deployed on several occasions to engage key parties in capacity-building or track II/III exercises, and participated in key internal review exercises.

MSU worked with the Middle East and West Asia Division in supporting the Office of the Special Envoy, Staffan de Mistura to identify entry points for mediation and bring together experts for facilitated consideration of key issues. This included providing technical expertise from MSU Staff, the Standby Team and the Mediation Roster during the development of the 'freeze' concept for Aleppo.

Yemen

With the adoption of the National Dialogue Outcomes in January 2014, MSU provided extensive assistance to the Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary General (OSASG), Mr. Jamal Benomar, in supporting the Yemeni drafting of a new Constitution for a federal state. Drawing on its Constitution's Focal Point, Standby Team and networks of external expertise, MSU supported the OSASG in designing an initial workshop for the seventeen-member Yemeni Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC), which was established in March. During 2014 MSU deployed standby team expertise thirteen times for extended periods to work directly with CDC members and the Secretariat, in addition to providing remote assistance. Support ranged from advice on substantive issues, based on comparative analysis, to process design support on working procedures within the CDC in order to resolve political issues and assistance to the Secretariat in designing the public consultation and outreach strategy.

In addition, MSU's security arrangements standby team expert accompanied the Special Adviser on mission to develop options for UN Support to the implementation of the Peace and National Partnership Agreement to address the security situation in the country. This included technical expertise on central and regional implementation mechanisms for monitoring and verification of ceasefires, dispute resolution, disengagement of armed groups, and normalization of the local administrative, security and military authorities to achieve the re-establishment of state authority.

AMERICAS

Various engagements on the Americas

In the first half of 2014, MSU provided ad hoc informal advice and bespoke analytical products to headquarters offices focused on the Americas, and to regional field presences, which included the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the offices of Resident Coordinators. In addition, MSU supported the Americas Division on the Secretary-General's good offices process in relation to the Guyana-Venezuela border controversy.

EUROPE

Bosnia and Herzegovina

In mid-October, a former Standby Team member, now on the DPA Mediation Roster, was deployed to Sarajevo to provide a training on best practices in participatory constitutional review and reform processes. The training was provided to parliamentarians and representatives of civil society.

Cyprus

In June, the Standby Team Gender and Social Inclusion expert was deployed to Cyprus to advise on options to mainstream gender issues in the Cyprus process. In December, a member of the Mediation Roster participated in the retreat of the Good Offices chaired by the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Cyprus.

Ukraine

In February, a Standby Team member was deployed to support the UN Deputy Secretary-General during his visit to Ukraine. In May, an MSU staff member participated in a brainstorming meeting on promoting national dialogues in Ukraine and then accompanied the Under-Secretary-General's visit to Kiev. In June, two Standby Team members were deployed to provide technical advice to the Organization for Security and Co-

operation in Europe (OSCE) Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. They provided advice on ways to promote an inclusive and broadly participatory dialogue process. In July, an MSU staff member accompanied the Director of the DPA Europe Division to Kiev to explore possible ways the UN could provide greater strategic support to the OSCE and other key partners. In November, a Standby Team member was deployed to Vienna to participate in a brainstorming workshop on promoting national dialogue in Ukraine.

STRENGTHENING MEDIATION CAPACITY

Standby Team of Mediation Experts

In 2014, the deployment rate for the Standby Team remained high with over 100 missions. In many instances, the experts were deployed repeatedly to the same countries to provide sustained support to mediators, including the Central African Republic, Libya, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen. The experts have also been responding to the growing demand from Resident Coordinators and other mediation actors to support their conflict prevention and conflict resolution efforts. On 17-18 November, the Government of Norway hosted a stocktaking event on the Standby Team mechanism in Oslo. The event brought together representatives from the UN, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and current donor countries to discuss lessons learned and ways to strengthen the mechanism. In addition, the Standby Team recruitment drive for the 2015-16 Team was conducted from June to September with over 400 applicants. Candidates who were shortlisted were interviewed in Oslo in November. Team members will begin their contracts on 1 March 2015.

Mediation Roster

The Mediation Roster consists of over 300 experts from close to 80 nationalities, over 40% of whom are women and 34% from the Global South. In 2014, the MSU Mediation Roster received 45 requests from counterparts within the UN System as well as external partners. The roster met service demands ranging from issues concerning mediation and training, security arrangements, reconciliation and national dialogue in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the Middle East.

Group of Friends of Mediation

In 2014, the Group of Friends of Mediation led negotiations on a General Assembly (GA) resolution on “Strengthening the role

of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution” with a specific emphasis on the role of cooperation among the United Nations, regional and sub-regional organisations. MSU accompanied the negotiations with the Group of Friends and the broader GA membership, which resulted in a resolution adopted by consensus on 31 July 2014. On the margins of the high-level segment of the 69th Session of the General Assembly, the Fifth Ministerial Breakfast of the Group of Friends of Mediation was held, inter alia, to highlight the opportunities and challenges faced by regional and sub-regional organizations in their mediation initiatives and to have an informal exchange on how the Group of Friends can best support mediation processes. MSU also engaged with the Moroccan and Spanish joint initiative for Mediation in the Mediterranean “Med/Med”.

Mediation Needs Assessment

At the request of the Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of Mediation in 2013, DPA commissioned an assessment of present and future needs of the Department in the areas of mediation, good offices and conflict prevention. This study was carried out by a team of external consultants working with the close support of DPA staff, and made specific recommendations for consideration by DPA as well as the Group of Friends of Mediation, building on the DPA strategic plan. The assessment is under the consideration of the Group of Friends of Mediation. It highlighted the critical gaps in how mediation and preventive diplomacy are resourced. Inadequate funding has impacted the Department’s response to crisis situations, and its ability to patiently develop the relations upon which successful mediation rests; the Mediation Needs Assessment suggests that an increase in mediation-related activities funded by the regular budget would bring greater stability, predictability, efficiency, and transparency.

High-Level Mediation Course

Following successful pilot courses in 2012 in New York and 2013 in Istanbul, MSU rolled out the UN High-Level Mediation Course, aimed at current senior mediators and their senior advisers and at the next generation of potential mediators, in Glen Cove, NY on 7-12 December. The 20 participants of the course included senior UN officials from DPA HQ and field, DPKO missions, resident coordinators, members of the DPA Mediation Roster and senior government officials. The agenda for the course covered a wide range of topics related to UN mediation, including the mediator’s mandate, coordination of mediation actors, gender and inclusiveness, and implementation of peace agreements. It also included

several skills sessions on conflict analysis, strategizing and process design, designing a communication strategy, getting parties to the table, advanced mediation techniques and facilitating constructive dialogue and agreements. Thus far, a total of 65 senior officials have been trained on mediation theory and practice through this Course.

MSU also organized a follow-up meeting of alumni of the two 2013 pilots of the High Level Mediation Course on 29 January, focused on the role of regional organizations in mediation.

Mediation Training for DPA staff

Drawing on the experts and curriculum used for the High Level Mediation Course, MSU organized a pilot mediation skills training course for DPA staff on 29 April-3 May at UNHQ, attended by 24 staff.

MSU in collaboration with the Guidance and Learning Unit and the Folke-Bernadotte Academy (FBA) organized the DPA-FBA Course on Designing and Supporting Dialogue and Mediation processes on 8 to 15 November 2014 in Sandö, Sweden. 24 participants attended this 9th iteration of the Course. DPA HQ and Special Political Missions staff as well as staff from DPKO and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) were joined by staff from the African Union, the Organization of American States (OAS), the League of Arab States (LAS) and ECOWAS. Participants had the opportunity to apply skills learned in the training to the case of Mali.

Mediator-in-Residence Programme

In November and December 2014, Mr. Francesc Vendrell, a former senior official of the United Nations, served as the Mediator-in-Residence of DPA. The Mediator-in-Residence Programme aims to capture the valuable practical knowledge of experienced mediators, from both within the UN system and outside, in order to be able to apply their lessons and insights to future mediation engagements. Mr. Vendrell served as a resource to DPA, in particular its regional divisions, on specific cases and issues, as required, and spent time writing, analysing and reflecting upon the lessons learned in the course of his duties in collaboration with staff members. He delivered reflective lessons and discussions to DPA staff on advanced mediation techniques, the good offices of the Secretary-General, and the relationship between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations in mediation. He was a senior resource person during the High-Level Mediation Course, along with other prominent current and former envoys and mediators.

High-Level Seminar on Gender and Inclusive Mediation Processes

During the reporting period, DPA continued its efforts to strengthen gender expertise at all levels of UN peacemaking. The fifth High-level Seminar on Gender and Inclusive Mediation Processes took place in May 2014 in Helsinki, in partnership with the Government of Finland and its implementing partner the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI), followed by a sixth Seminar in Oslo in November 2014, organized in partnership with the Government of Norway and the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO). So far, 124 envoys, senior mediators and mediation experts have been introduced to the Seminar's practical strategies and tools for more inclusive peace process design as well as language for gender-relevant provisions in the different thematic areas of peace agreements. A new DPA guidance paper was also piloted as part of the seminar entitled *Tips for Drafting Gender-relevant Provisions in Peace Agreements*. Two more seminars are planned for 2015.

Workshop on Conflict-related Sexual Violence

Following the launch of the Guidance for Mediators on Addressing Conflict-related Sexual Violence (CRSV) in Ceasefire and Peace Agreements in 2012, DPA has worked consistently to implement the Guidance in country specific contexts. To further this work DPA, together with DPKO, OHCHR, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (OSRSG-SVC), and the UN Action Network Against SVC, organized and conducted the first ever workshop for Women Protection Advisors, a new cadre of UN professionals tasked with preventing and addressing CRSV in mission settings, in Entebbe, Uganda on 3-5 February 2014. A similar workshop is scheduled to take place in early 2015.

Gender/Women, Peace and Security Training

In March and December 2014 DPA/MSU organized the sixth and seventh DPA-specific Gender/Women, Peace and Security training for staff. So far, 172 Political Affairs Officers, representing all Headquarters divisions and field missions have been trained, ensuring the incorporation of a stronger gender dimension into DPA's conflict analysis, mediation and preventive diplomacy work. A new Gender-sensitive Political/Conflict Analysis Framework developed by the Gender team in response to SCR 2122, was also introduced during the training in March and was later also circulated to all DPA staff.

Ceasefire Mediation and Management Training

The third UN Ceasefire Mediation and Management (UNCMM) training course organized jointly by MSU, the Norwegian Defence International Centre (NODEFIC), and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) took place from 10 to 21 March 2014 in Oslo, Norway. A total of 30 people attended the course, including representatives from DPA, special political missions, peacekeeping operations, regional organizations, and member states. In June and November, MSU met with representatives from NODEFIC and the FDFA to review and refine the course with a view to continuing our partnership into next year. The course has been streamlined to a one-week programme, and re-titled the “United Nations Ceasefire Mediation Course”. It is expected to next take place in March 2015.

Mediation Workshop with the Organization of American States (OAS) and UNDP

Within the framework of the 2013-2015 Joint Mediation Partnership between the OAS and the UN, MSU teamed up with the OAS Department of Sustainable Democracy and Special Missions and with the UNDP Regional Service Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean to organize a workshop on mediation, facilitation and dialogue for OAS and UNDP field-based representatives. Held from 18 to 20 March 2014, this workshop served, inter alia, to enhance operational cooperation between the two organizations as well as between their headquarters and field offices. A follow-on event focused on OAS representatives in the Caribbean took place in May, at which DPA was invited to participate. In the framework of the annual Desk-to-Desk Dialogue between the two organizations, participants discussed the phenomena of social conflict in the Americas.

Strengthening Mediation Capacities of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

DPA considered the establishment of OIC’s Peace, Security and Mediation Unit (PSMU) in March 2013 as an important step in strengthening OIC’s capacity in mediation and expressed its readiness to continue supporting the development of PSMU’s capacity and expertise in conflict prevention and mediation. OIC and MSU are currently in contact in order to finalize their 2014-2015 programme of work.

Mediation Training for the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

In August, MSU partnered with the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) and IGAD to deliver a course to enhance the mediation skills of a selected group of prospective high-level mediators from the IGAD region, including ex-heads of state, ex-ministers, and serving Ambassadors. The course was a modified version of the UN High-Level Mediation Course (HLMC), tailored to suit IGAD’s needs. 28 participants from all seven member states of IGAD attended the course and have gone on to form the IGAD Roster of Mediators which is expected to be formally endorsed by the IGAD Council of Foreign Ministers in the near future.

Mediation Training for the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)

From 5 to 7 November 2014, the UN Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), MSU and DPA’s Africa II Division jointly organized a mediation training course for staff members of the ECCAS Secretariat in Libreville, Gabon. UNOCA staffers also participated. The workshop was facilitated by a SBT member as well as an expert from the Crisis Management Initiative. The curriculum focused primarily on mediation principles, process design and skills, and included a session on mediation in the context of electoral tensions. During a session with Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA, participants had the opportunity to apply the tools learnt during the training to the situation in the Central African Republic.

League of Arab States (LAS) Staff Placement

As part of a project by the Middle East and West Asia Division, MSU/Policy and Mediation Division (PMD) hosted a staff member from the LAS to familiarize them with the work of the Unit as the LAS intends to develop a mediation support component. The LAS staff member spent a second week with the Electoral Assistance Division and two other LAS staff members undertook placements with DPA regional divisions and the UN Department of Public Information.

Engaging with Mediation Networks

MSU convened a meeting of the Academic Advisory Council in New York in January and co-organized a meeting of regional and sub-regional organizations with the OSCE, the OIC and LAS, in Cairo in February. Both meetings aimed at assisting the co-chairs of the Group of Friends of Mediation, Finland and Turkey, develop ideas for the General Assembly resolution on mediation and regional and sub-regional organizations.

MSU attended the Mediation Support Network meeting hosted by ACCORD in Durban, South Africa in March, which explored how transformative mediation initiatives could and should be. The Americas Division represented DPA at the meeting hosted by Serapaz in Chiapas, Mexico, which examined different approaches to inclusion in peace processes and also engaged with local actors in the internal conflict in Chiapas and the characteristics and challenges of the peace and reconciliation process. During both meetings, members shared lessons learnt and identified area for operational and policy collaboration.

During 2014, MSU worked closely with Finn Church Aid (FCA), Religions for Peace, the UN Alliance of Civilizations, and the OIC in developing the network of organizations working with religious and traditional leaders on mediation. During a meeting organized by FCA in March in Helsinki, Finland, organizations discussed youth and extremists groups and shared information on projects and areas for possible partnership.

GUIDANCE, BEST PRACTICES, LESSONS LEARNED, KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

United Nations Peacemaker (www.peacemaker.un.org)

United Nations Peacemaker was re-launched in 2012 and is the online mediation support tool of the Department of Political Affairs. Intended for peacemaking professionals, it includes an extensive database of close to 800 peace agreements, guidance material and information on the UN's mediation support services. In 2014, close to 30,000 users from over 200 countries actively engaged with the website in close to 53,000 sessions. A video library has been developed with interviews with DPA senior leadership and mediation experts, focusing on strategies and tactics in effectively managing peace process and mediation initiatives. This is an ongoing project, please visit <http://peacemaker.un.org/mediation-interviews>.

United Nations Constitutionmaker

In November, MSU did a test launch of "UN Constitutionmaker", the UN's dedicated web site of newly developed and detailed resources and tools concerning the process and substance of constitution making and constitutional assistance. UN Constitutionmaker also contains a repository of the UN's

experiences providing constitutional support. A full launch of UN Constitutionmaker throughout the entire UN system is expected in early 2015.

Guide on Mediating Natural Resources Conflicts

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and DPA have partnered since 2011 to produce a Guide on Mediating Natural Resources Conflicts. The Guide will provide mediators with best practices and strategies for mediating natural resources conflicts set within the broader contexts of violence, political instability or peace negotiations. The initial draft of the Guide was the outcome document of a two-day retreat at the Greentree Foundation in New York organized by DPA and UNEP in 2011, which brought together 30 mediators and experts dealing with different types of natural resources conflicts at local, national, and transnational levels to share lessons and case studies. It received funding from the Governments of Finland and Italy, as well as the support of the European Union and the Greentree Foundation. Since then, the document has been the subject of several rounds of review by experts in DPA and UNEP. MSU and UNEP have now finalized the text and will have the Guide published and launched in January 2014. Following the publication of the Guide in early 2015 to be launched by the Deputy Secretary-General, MSU, in partnership with UNEP, intends to develop training material on the basis of the Guide and conduct a pilot training in the course of 2015.

Guidance on National Dialogues

MSU organized an expert reference group meeting on national dialogues in New York in December. This was the first stage in developing guidance for UN envoys, the process will include further consultations in 2015. MSU also held a meeting with the World Bank, UNDP and the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) to discuss collaboration on research and support to national dialogues in the field.

Global Study on Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

DPA/MSU has initiated an Internal Review into the relevance and effectiveness of the Department's Women, Peace and Security work to implement Security Council resolution 1325 over the past five years. This Review is conducted to feed into the Global Study on WPS, in preparation of the next Security Council High-level Review in October 2015. The purpose of the Internal Review, which is expected to be finalized in early 2015, is to document and showcase the progress made in fulfilling DPA's 15 WPS commitments and to assess the



appropriateness of the strategies and tools that have been developed to gender mainstream the Department's conflict prevention and resolution work.

Women, Peace and Security: Monitoring and Reporting DPA Efforts

The annual monitoring and reporting process on DPA's implementation of its commitments under Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) was finalized and submitted to UN Women in April 2014. The results, which were included in the 2014 Secretary-General's report on Women, Peace and Security, indicate that several important benchmarks were not only met, but surpassed in 2013 with regards to women's participation in UN peacemaking efforts. The outcome of some of these processes also saw an increase in the inclusion of gender-relevant provisions in ceasefire and peace agreements signed during 2013. The quality of these provisions also improved, most notably in the area of addressing conflict-related sexual violence. This trend was also seen in the regular reporting of Special Political Missions to the Council where

there was an increase in the quantity of text dedicated to Women, Peace and Security and in the quality of the analysis.

Lessons Learned Exercise on the Maldives

During the first and the second quarters of 2014, MSU and the Asia and Pacific Division (APD) conducted a lessons learned exercise on DPA's engagement in the Maldives in 2012 and 2013, and involved interviews with individuals from DPA, UNDP, OHCHR, the UN Country Team, and the Commonwealth. The exercise aimed at identifying good practices and lessons learned regarding DPA's efforts to foster and facilitate political dialogue since 2012. It also made recommendations for future similar engagements. The final report of the exercise was shared with the participants and officials in DPA. In an internal brownbag seminar, MSU and APD briefed on the conclusions and recommendations of the exercise.

For more information,
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