

The Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers (SBT) is a service of the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) managed by the Mediation Support Unit (MSU) of the Policy and Mediation Division (PMD). It is a specialized resource that can be rapidly deployed on a temporary basis to provide technical advice to UN officials and others engaged in preventive diplomacy or mediation. The SBT's services are available to UN envoys, political and peacekeeping missions and country teams, as well as to regional organizations, Member States and other partners with whom the UN works closely in conflict mediation and good offices worldwide. SBT members can be deployed individually or in small groups, including with MSU staff.

The MSU is “an essential resource to support the good offices, mediation and facilitation work of the United Nations system and its partners. It seeks to get the right expertise to the right places at the right time, both by deploying personnel and providing remote analytical support.”

Report of the Secretary General on the United Nations and conflict prevention (S/2015/730 of 25 September 2015)

The principal operational role of the Standby Team is to provide expert advice to senior UN officials and partners upon request, either by deploying to the field or by providing advice remotely. This support is flexible and adapted to the needs of the situation. It can include providing technical expertise in a specific area; giving advice on procedural and agenda-setting issues; identifying entry points for dialogue and mediation; drafting the text of agreements; leading workshops for parties on substantive or process issues; and providing specialized mediation training and coaching.

SBT members are experienced in mediation situations and experts in a range of issues that arise frequently in peace negotiations, including the overall design and conduct of mediation, facilitation and dialogue processes (process design), security arrangements (ceasefires/DDR/SSR), constitution-making processes, gender and inclusion, power-sharing issues, and wealth-sharing/natural resources. When not deployed in the field, SBT members are on permanent standby, conducting research and comparative analysis of effective practices in their areas of expertise. Team members also support MSU in drafting operational guidance notes and related training materials.

Administration of the Standby Team

SBT support is provided in response to requests from UN officials and other partners at no cost to requesting entities; it is a resource fully-funded from voluntary contributions to DPPA. All logistical, travel, administrative and management arrangements for the SBT are handled by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

For further information please contact the MSU Team Leader, Mr. Sean Kane, at kanes@un.org or the MSU Standby Team Coordinator, Mr. David Mueller, at david.mueller@un.org

Composition of the Standby Team

BARNEY AFAKO (Uganda – Process Design) has long experience in supporting mediation, dialogue, and transitional justice processes in different contexts, globally. While on the SBT, he has supported African Union-led peace processes, including the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) led by former South African President Thabo Mbeki which has supported the negotiations and processes related to the secession of South Sudan, as well as the question of the status of the Abyei Area. He has also worked with the Office of the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, most recently in its role as an Observer to the AU-led process on Ethiopia. He has supported the UN efforts to facilitate dialogue between the Yemeni parties, including the negotiations in Kuwait, as well as UN efforts to assist in the facilitation of Afghanistan negotiations in Qatar. He served as a legal adviser to the SADC high-level mediation team of former African heads of state on the boundary dispute between Malawi and Tanzania; to the Government of Southern Sudan's Mediation for the Uganda/LRA negotiations; and to the AU Panel on Darfur. He speaks English.

CHRISTINA MURRAY (South Africa – Constitutionmaking / Power-sharing) has, while on the Standby Team, supported constitutional discussions in Libya and Yemen, and advised on the Bougainville Peace Agreement implementation in Papua New Guinea. She has provided constitutional expertise to the UN in Sudan and South Sudan and worked on constitutional matters with women from conflict-affected regions. She is Emeritus Professor of Human Rights and Constitutional Law at the University of Cape Town. From 1994-1996 she served on the panel advising the South African Constitutional Assembly; in 2009 and 2010 she was a member of the Committee of Experts that prepared the 2010 Constitution of Kenya; and, in 2012, she served on the Constitution Commission of Fiji. She has extensively advised on constitutional matters, including, inter alia, in Cyprus, Libya, Indonesia, Nepal, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Tuvalu, Yemen, and Zimbabwe. She speaks English.

EMMANUEL HABUKA BOMBANDE (Ghana – Process Design) has, while on the SBT, advised on the establishment of infrastructures for peace in Burkina Faso and the Sudan transition process. He has supported dialogue efforts in Montenegro and conflict prevention initiatives in São Tomé & Príncipe and the Comoros. Mr. Bombande also provided advice on the roles of Regional Organizations in conflict prevention including ECOWAS, ECCAS and EAC. Prior to his current role, he served as Senior Mediation Adviser to the Head of MINUSCA in the Central African Republic, and from 2016–2017 as Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana. He has previously served as Special Assistant to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS). Mr. Bombande co-founded the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) and has been a lead facilitator of the Folke Bernadotte Academy-UNDPPA dialogue and mediation course for the past fifteen years. He speaks English and French.

ESRA ÇUHADAR (Turkey – Process Design / Gender & Inclusion) has supported numerous dialogue and mediation initiatives including in South Caucasus, Ukraine, Cyprus, Israel-Palestine or Somalia. She has more than twenty years of experience in researching and practicing dialogue facilitation, mediation, and conflict assessment. She is a thought leader on designing inclusive peace processes and worked to advance the inclusion of civil society and women in places including Afghanistan, Cameroon, Turkey, and Venezuela. She contributed to women's capacity building in peacebuilding and co-founded the Turkey antenna of the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network. Prior to joining the SBT, Esra worked as a senior expert on dialogue and inclusion at the United States Institute of Peace, as a regional mediator for the World Bank, advisor to the OSCE mediation support unit, senior research fellow at Inclusive Peace, and associate professor at Bilkent University. Esra received numerous awards and fellowships and published extensively on inclusive peace processes. She speaks English and Turkish.

FLORENCE MPAAYEI (Kenya – Gender & Inclusion) has, while on the SBT, provided advice on gender and inclusion in Kenya, Sudan and Zambia. In South Sudan, she has supported UNMISS in strengthening the mediation capacity of religious leaders and mentored young women mediators in the Horn of Africa countries. Florence has long experience in mediation and dialogue facilitation. She has designed programmes to support women's participation in high-level mediation efforts including in the Great Lakes, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan under the auspices of, inter alia, the AU, IGAD, EAC, and UN Women. Florence has been a member of FEMWISE-Africa and the Women Mediators Across the Commonwealth, and also serves as a board member in several organizations. Prior to joining the SBT, she was a Senior Advisor on Peace Practice and a Visiting Lecturer at the

Hekima University College/Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations. She speaks English.

JUANITA MILLAN HERNANDEZ (Colombia – Security Arrangements) has, while on the SBT, supported the Sudan peace process, provided expertise in support of the Libyan-led ceasefire monitoring mechanism, and regarding the situations in El Salvador, Mozambique, Ukraine and Yemen. Prior to joining the SBT, she served as Adviser to the High Commissioner for Peace of Colombia during the Havana Peace Talks with the FARC. In 2014, she was appointed by former President Juan Manuel Santos to become a member of the Sub-Commission on Ending the Conflict, a technical working group responsible for the design of the Ceasefire and Disarmament process. The same year, she assumed a position in the Sub-Commission on Gender, advising on the gender-sensitivity of the agreement's provisions. After the signing of peace accords, she was part of the Tri-Partite Ceasefire Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, focusing on gender-sensitivity, security guarantees, as well as the reincorporation of FARC combatants. She also advised the Colombian Government on potential configurations of talks with the ELN. She speaks English and Spanish.

KENNY GLUCK (United States – Process Design) served as Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in the Central African Republic from 2017 until December 2019. Prior to this assignment he worked extensively on the Yemen peace process as Deputy to the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen in 2015–2017 and as Head of Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General for Yemen in 2013. He also served as Director and Deputy Head of the Peacebuilding Support Office and as Chief of Staff of the AU/UN Joint Mediation for Darfur. Before joining the United Nations, he served as Director of Operations for Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), and in MSF missions in Chechnya, Sudan, Somalia and elsewhere. He was also an adjunct professor of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University where he lectured on peace process design, peacekeeping and international conflict resolution. He speaks Arabic, English, French, Spanish, and Russian.

RICHARD SMITH (South Africa – Process Design) has, while on the SBT, supported senior UN officials in Yemen, Somalia and Syria, and in multiple countries in Africa, the Americas, Europe and the Pacific. Mr. Smith has expertise in gender-sensitive conflict analysis, the prevention of violent conflict, multi-track peace processes, electoral support, environmental mediation and inter-religious dialogue. He has extensive experience in inclusive mediation process design and the facilitation of multi-stakeholder dialogue and strategy development processes, including in the Middle East and South-East Asia. Mr. Smith has also been a rostered member of the African Standby Force, and supported SADC, the ECOWAS Commission and AU Peace Support Operations Division in strengthening the peace support capabilities of AU Regional Mechanisms. He speaks English.