



Mediation Support Unit

The Mediation Support Unit (MSU), based in the Policy and Mediation Division of the United Nations (UN) Department of Political Affairs (DPA), is a system-wide service provider that assists the mediation initiatives of the UN, Member States, regional/subregional organizations and other relevant partners. MSU is the UN focal point for mediation support, aimed at reinforcing and helping facilitate the work of mediators and their teams, and is the institutional repository of knowledge, lessons learned and best practices.

The services of MSU focus on three main areas:

1. Strategic and technical support: MSU provides support throughout the planning, implementation and evaluation phases of a mediation process. Available services include advice on strategy development and process design for mediation, facilitation and dialogue initiatives as well as advice on thematic issues from a mediation perspective. These thematic issues include *inter alia* security arrangements, constitution-making, power-sharing, natural resources and wealth-sharing, inclusion, transitional justice, reconciliation and gender.

MSU's deployable resources include its expert staff and the Standby Team of Mediation Experts, which can be deployed within 72 hours. For longer-term deployments, MSU also manages a Roster of Mediation Support Experts - a database of technical mediation experts with a wide range of thematic and process knowledge, language skills and regional expertise.

2. Capacity-building: MSU can provide tailored-made coaching for mediators and training for mediation teams and other actors on mediation techniques and skills, strategy

development, process design and thematic issues. To facilitate the effective engagement of conflict parties in a peace process, such coaching and training initiatives can be made available at request of the mediator. At the organizational level and with key partners, MSU also runs courses mainly targeting UN leadership and staff, such as the *High Level Mediation Course*, *UN Ceasefire Mediation Course* and the *Religion and Mediation Course*. MSU support is also available to regional organizations and Member States seeking to strengthen their mediation capacity.

3. Mediation guidance, lessons learned and best practices: MSU develops knowledge products to provide guidance for mediators and their teams. The *UN Guidance for Effective Mediation* identifies key fundamentals that should be considered in a mediation effort. In addition, MSU has developed thematic and targeted guidance, such as the *Guidance for Mediators Addressing Conflict-related Sexual Violence in Ceasefires and Peace Agreements*, a *Guide for Mediation Practitioners on Natural Resources and Conflict* and the *Guidance on Gender and Inclusive Mediation Strategies*. The Unit also provides tailored comparative analysis and option papers to assist on specific challenges as requested. MSU also hosts the UN Peacemaker website which includes a database of peace agreements and other relevant guidance material.

www.peacemaker.un.org

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