

Group of Friends of Mediation
6th Ministerial Meeting
New York, Thursday, 1 October 2015

Co-Chairs' Summary

The Group of Friends of Mediation held its 6th Ministerial Meeting in the margins of the United Nations 70th General Assembly High-level week on Thursday, 1 October. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Mr Feridun H. Sinirlioğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey and H.E. Mr Timo Soini, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

The meeting started with opening remarks by the Co-Chairs, followed by Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman's introductory remarks on the Peace Operations Review Panel as well as Secretary General's implementation report. In his remarks, USG also made references to the UN's rapid preventive action concerning the recent coup d'État in Burkina Faso.

A keynote address delivered by H.E. Jose Ramos-Horta, Former President of Timor-Leste and the Chair of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO). He drew attention on key recommendations of the HIPPO report such as primacy of politics, the importance of preventive diplomacy and supporting the UN Secretariat and SPMs towards these goals. President Ramos-Horta also emphasized the need for ownership by member states in order to advance these recommendations into concrete actions.

Out of the 41 member states and 8 international organisations that form the Group of Friends of Mediation, 38 delegations actively participated in the meeting and delivered statements reflecting their stances regarding mediation and conflict prevention. Many urged concrete action for pushing mediation agenda further in the UN, consistent with the idea of bringing mediation and conflict prevention back to fore.

Some members underlined the importance of early warning mechanisms and to this end the need for enhanced cooperation with regional organisations as well as increased interest by the Security Council in emerging crises situations. The representatives of international organisations described how these bodies interact with the UN, especially how the principle of subsidiarity is being applied in Africa by the African Union and the sub-regional organisations. Similarly, the role of the OSCE in the crisis in Ukraine was discussed. The efficiency of the "Traditional and Religious Peacemakers Network" was also pointed out.

Other than the global-regional partnership, the issue of inclusivity was one of the themes that was addressed the most. The participation of women in peace processes was highlighted by a number of delegations and as well as the role of the civil society was discussed.

Preventing the relapse of the conflicts was another issue that has been touched upon, delegations gave concrete examples as 6 out of 10 brokered peace agreements collapsed over time. The need to devote resources to reconstruction of state institutions was emphasized.

Some group members raised the issue of providing SPMs with reliable, predictable financial support from the regular budget of the UN. With regard to supporting the UN Secretariat/DPA with adequate resources at least one new contributor was declared.

The Group of Friends discussed ways to put the Peace Operations Report's recommendations on mediation into practice. Tabling a new resolution on mediation was raised by several participants and The Group of Friends will start working on a resolution in due course.

The Co-Chairs also announced the formal application of Honduras to join the Group. The application will be treated in accordance with the usual procedures.