Mediation Start-up

GUIDELINES

2011

While much guidance has been written on the art of mediation itself, very little attention has been paid to operational aspects. These Guidelines seek to fill this gap by providing guidance to managers, desk officers and field staff of the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) on the start-up and establishment of mediation initiatives led, co-led or supported by the United Nations. Their purpose is to consolidate DPA's institutional knowledge on strategy development, planning, support and coordination aspects of mediation initiatives.

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UN/DPA Mediation Start-up Guidelines

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A.   RATIONALE AND PURPOSE

These Guidelines provide guidance to managers, desk officers and field staff of the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) on the start-up and establishment of mediation initiatives led, co-led or supported by the United Nations. Their purpose is to consolidate DPA's institutional knowledge on strategy development, planning, support and coordination aspects of mediation initiatives.

Since 2007, DPA has increased its efforts to become more pro-active, operational and professional in the areas of conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding (see *DPA Progress Report 2009*). In support of this objective, DPA has established a small Mediation Support Unit (MSU), rapid funding mechanisms, a standby team of experts, a mediation roster and partnerships with specialized institutions. It has also developed a number of guidance and best practices products on various aspects of mediation. The development of the present Guidelines on the start-up of mediation initiatives is an integral part of this agenda, and is consistent with a wider trend towards doctrine development across the field of peace and security within and outside the UN (see *Secretary-General's report on enhancing mediation and its support activities*).

The landscape of international mediation has at the same time evolved with the increasing involvement of regional organizations and other major actors in the field of peacemaking including Member States, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and eminent international personalities. The opportunities resulting from the growing number of mediation actors calls for a clearer articulation of how the UN chooses its mediation

engagements and starts its own processes in relation to other mediation actors.

Finally, experience has shown that mediation engagements have unique support requirements. These require a tailored approach, particularly in terms of speed. Mediators have relied on various support arrangements involving complex procedures and decision-making, which highlight the need for further guidance in this area. While much guidance has been written on the art of mediation itself, very little attention has been paid to operational aspects. The present Guidelines seek to fill this gap.

In conjunction with the Mediation Start-up Resource Package and the Mediation Start-up Training Module, and building on the guidance contained in the Special Envoy Briefing Package and the *UN Mediator's Manual*, these Guidelines seek to enable DPA to engage in mediation:

» More **consistently**, by providing guidance on the appropriateness of using mediation as a conflict management and resolution tool in relation to other types of peacemaking initiatives

» **Faster**, by reducing the "transaction costs" linked to the renegotiation of internal procedures, educating staff on operational start-up and by providing a base of templates that can be recycled and adapted to each operation

» More **effectively**, by avoiding mistakes made in the past and leveraging lessons learned

B.   SCOPE

The Mediation Start-up Guidelines are focused on the start-up of mediation operations led, co-led or supported by the UN Department of Political Affairs. More specifically, the Guidelines address assessment and strategic planning, roles and functions of various UN components and external actors, operational planning, key coordination and communication systems and transition out of the start-up phase. For the purpose of these Guidelines, "mediation" is defined as a form of good offices whereby a third party, upon request, seeks to assist parties to a dispute to reach an agreement voluntarily through a formal dialogue process. The Guidelines provide advice on start-up processes up to the point where a mediation team has been established and operational issues have been sufficiently addressed to allow a team to begin and sustain its activities. The Guidelines do not address mediation methods, procedures and best practices as these are covered in other guidance materials such as the *UN Mediator's Manual*.

Given the diversity of mediation processes undertaken by the UN, not all aspects of these Guidelines will apply to each operation. Peacekeeping operations and special political missions (SPMs), for example, have good offices and mediation functions, but these missions have specific requirements in terms of funding and staffing. Certain aspects related to the development of mediation strategies or design of coordination architecture outlined in these Guidelines may, however, apply. Some engagements tend to be managed through the deployment of small teams for which some support aspects will obviously not

apply. As such, these Guidelines are designed to be flexible and offer guidance as applicable to each situation.

While the principles and approaches contained in these Guidelines should be applied only as appropriate for each operation, conformity with the spirit of the suggested approaches — which reflect best practices, lessons learned and institutional experience — is recommended.

C.   GUIDELINES

1.   Introduction: overview of the start-up phase and specific objectives

The start-up phase of mediation engagements covers the period between the moment when a decision is made for the UN to consider active involvement in the resolution of a particular conflict or situation and the time when an operational response has been established. It includes the conflict assessment, the determination of a mode of engagement (which may or may not include mediation), the development of a strategy, operational planning and mobilization of staff and resources as well as the establishment of support and coordination systems.

The start-up process can be divided in four groups of activities:

» **Strategic planning**, which comprises:

› Assessment and decision-making, during which a conflict is assessed and a decision on whether, how and with whom to engage is made. *The outcome of this group of activities is a recommendation to the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.*

› Strategy development, during which an engagement strategy is developed to achieve objectives. *If the chosen mode of engagement is mediation, the outcome of this activity is a mediation strategy.*

» **Operational planning**, during which resources, systems and partnerships to support the strategy are

identified and mobilized. The outcome of this group of activities is an operational plan.

» **Establishment of coordination and communication systems**, where a coordination architecture is set up and reporting and communication protocols are defined.

» **Thinking beyond the start-up phase**, during which longer-term options for continued engagement (if appropriate) are identified and initial lessons learning activities are undertaken.

Given the pace of operations and the frequent urgency to launch an initiative even before some critical details have been worked out, it may not always be possible to follow these steps in strict order; in most cases, they will occur simultaneously or even retroactively. *The key principle, however, is that operations should be launched on the basis of a sound assessment of the situation, clear objectives, a defined strategy, tailored support systems and solid coordination with partners.*

Figure 1
At a glance: overview of the
start-up process

Strategic Planning

Assessment & Decision-making	Strategy Development
» Conflict analysis	» Development of mediation strategy
» Strategic coordination with other actors	
» Decision on mode of third-party involvement	
» Decision on mode of UN engagement	
Outcome: recommendation to the USG for Political Affairs	Outcome: mediation strategy

Operational Planning

» Definition of roles and responsibilities
» Budgeting and identification of sources of funding
» Recruitment and deployment of staff, incl. Envoys or mediators
» Establishment of support structures

Outcome: operational plan

Communications Systems

» Establishment of a coordination architecture
» Establishment of reporting protocols
» Communications and media management

Beyond the Start-up Phase

» Long-term funding
» Lessons learning

2. Sequencing priorities in the short and medium term

Different priorities should guide start-up managers as the process unfolds.

In the immediate short term, priorities should be to (1) understand the conflict and recommend a way forward that is coherent with the strategic objectives of the UN as well as with the actions of partners, and (2) to identify and mobilize staff and funding that will enable further strategic and operational planning.

Once immediate priorities have been addressed, other short-term priorities are to conduct detailed operational planning, mobilize supporting staff and establish coordination and communication systems.

As the operation settles in, the priority will shift to planning for medium-term engagement, including assessing whether the effort should continue and exploring longer-term funding options.

Part I.
Strategic planning for mediation engagements

Since one of the most promising approaches to the peaceful settlement of disputes is skilful third-party mediation, we, the United Nations, have a responsibility to "we the peoples" to professionalize our efforts to resolve conflicts constructively rather than destructively and to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".

— Report of the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities, 2009

Part I.
Strategic planning for mediation engagements

3. Assessment and decision-making

3.1. Understanding a conflict and opportunities for resolution: conflict analysis

All UN engagements should start with the conduct of a thorough conflict analysis seeking to identify the conflict dynamics, history, main actors, root causes and opportunities and risks for resolution, including a mapping of other organizations which may already be involved in peacemaking efforts. Regardless of the mode of subsequent engagement — whether the deployment of one staff member on a short visit or the launch of an integrated planning process for the establishment of a Security Council-mandated SPM — it is imperative that all forms of engagement be grounded in a sound analysis of the conflict.

Conflict analyses should be conducted by a team from Headquarters composed of relevant desk officers and managers, together with representatives of relevant UN agencies, funds and programmes (from respective Headquarters or based in-country) and other Secretariat departments, when appropriate. A number of internal and external sources of information should

be consulted when conducting a conflict analysis, especially the United Nations Resident Coordinator's office and other locally based UN staff, civil society organizations and representatives of Member States.

The official *DPA Framework for Political Analysis* and the system-wide *Guidelines on UN Strategic Assessments* provide additional guidance in this area.

3.2. Mediation vs. other forms of third-party intervention

The conflict analysis will form the basis for the selection of a mode of engagement, of which mediation is just one option among other forms of good offices. In armed conflict, mediation is defined as "a political process in which the two or more parties to a violent conflict agree to the appointment of a third party to work impartially with the parties to help them talk through options and voluntarily reach an agreement to end the armed conflict and secure a just and sustainable peace."[1] Specifically, mediation is helpful to:

- » Help parties in a dispute communicate and understand one another
- » Encourage parties to try and find common ground
- » Focus on the underlying or real interests of parties
- » Focus on both the future and the past
- » Help parties find creative solutions
- » Place the responsibility on the parties to decide the outcome
- » Assist parties to reach mutually satisfying agreements

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[1] Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, *A Guide to Mediation*, 2007.

Based on the above definition, the criteria to assess the suitability of mediation as a mode of engagement include:

» The expressed willingness of the parties to explore a negotiated settlement

» The ripeness of the conflict for resolution

» Reasons for success or failure of ongoing or previous mediation engagements

» The intent and interests of current and potential spoilers

» The interests and influence of external players on a possible mediation process

Although mediation can be an excellent way to resolve a dispute, it is certainly not the only way. Mediation offers a number of advantages, but it also has its drawbacks. *In all cases, mediation requires a genuine willingness of parties to reach an agreement through dialogue.* Mediation may not be appropriate in cases where:

» Parties are not genuinely committed to a resolution through dialogue or are only seeking to "buy time"

» Parties are seeking third-party validation of their grievances and are looking to instrumentalize the mediation for other ends

» Conflicts are "frozen", i.e., where the fundamental strategic factors that caused the conflict in the first place have not changed

If the conflict analysis suggests that mediation has few chances of success, other forms of international engagement or good offices (ranging from diplomatic action to sanctions to commissions of enquiry) should be considered until minimal success conditions are

established. A mediator should not hesitate to walk away if parties are not committed to a mediated process. Ultimately, this ensures that the mediation is not used as a pretext to prolong the conflict.

The United Nations Secretariat may not always have the flexibility required to follow these best practices in the selection of mediation engagements. In some cases, Member States may mandate the United Nations Secretariat to establish a mediation process as a way of "managing" a situation rather than in the hope of "resolving" it. In these settings, mediation is useful to prevent further escalation as well as to address some of the consequences of the conflict, such as humanitarian needs. It is critical, however, to take this nuance into account when developing a mediation strategy.

3.3. The importance of strategic coordination with other actors

Peacemaking experience of the last decade has revealed the importance of strategic coordination among peacemaking actors in a particular conflict as well as, more generally, through established, long term partnerships. The UN is rarely the only international actor to get involved in a mediation process and should therefore pay particular attention to building a common vision and strategy with other players. At best, failure to align the UN strategy with the approaches of other actors could prevent the mediation initiative from benefiting from the respective comparative advantages of different actors. At worst, it could lead to the establishment of multiple and competing mediation tracks and open the door to "forum shopping", whereby different parties chose the mediation process they believe will best suit their interests. The absence of coordination also prevents the emergence of

a clear vision for the resolution of a conflict, which is necessary for the rest of the international community and other stakeholders to support a process.

At the international level, relevant actors include the UN, regional organizations, subregional organizations, Member States, international NGOs and others. Regardless of the respective roles of the UN and other international organizations, the support and backing of relevant regional or subregional organizations will be essential to the success of any mediation process. In preparation for such partnerships, it is important to remain abreast of existing agreements between organizations, the evolving body of international norms developed by partners as well as the specific intervention procedures and structures used by partners.

> Overall, the inability of the various organizations to agree on and implement a sound mediation strategy is the main cause of failure of the Malagasy process. Sanctions are now being considered: it is Madagascar who will pay the price for the failure of the process, sacrificed on the altar of inter-institutional disagreements.
>
> — Tiébilé Dramé, Senior Political Adviser for Madagascar, End of Assignment Report, March 2010

At the local level, actors include the parties to a conflict as well as civil society organizations, including women's groups, traditional leaders, religious groups, private sector partners and other representatives of the population. A careful assessment will allow the identification of important local actors and their perspective and role in the conflict. Establishing and maintaining links with civil society during a mediation process will both help ensure the

buy-in of the population and create communication channels, which will facilitate the sharing of ideas and information.

In specific terms, strategic coordination with other actors implies:

» Development of a joint vision of desirable outcomes of a mediation effort

» Division of labour based on comparative advantages

» Agreement on a set of key principles that need to be adhered to in the resolution, including a clear understanding of what outcomes would be acceptable to external actors

» Agreement on basic modalities for the mediation effort, such as which organization will take the lead, broad process design, role of other actors in support of the mediation effort and desirable time frame

» A vision of implementation requirements and potential supporting actors

» Success criteria and exit strategy

Since conditions on the ground will change over time and the selected strategy might prove to be ineffective, it will be necessary to periodically revise the agreed approach.

The *AU-UN Mediation Partnerships Guidelines* provide an example of an agreed procedure for inter-institutional coordination in mediation.

3.4.   Leadership of the mediation effort

Establishing clarity on which organization will lead the mediation effort is an essential condition for the success of any mediation endeavour involving multiple actors. Reaching agreement on

which organization should lead the mediation effort is, however, often extremely difficult. While some actors have argued for the primacy of static principles of division of labour such as "subsidiarity" (i.e., the organization closest to the conflict should take the lead), others have argued for a more flexible approach based on the comparative advantages of different organizations in each given situation. In this approach, comparative advantages are assessed against the following criteria:

» Preferences of parties for a lead organization and perceptions of the population

» Availability of resources (managerial, financial, human, technical, etc.) to carry out a sustained mediation effort

» Unity of organizations' member States behind the proposed approach

» History of involvement, institutional knowledge of a situation and, if applicable, extent of existing presence on the ground

» Capacity to assist with the implementation of a negotiated settlement

Given the variable nature of these criteria, comparative advantages will therefore be assessed differently in each situation. The UN offers a unique range of characteristics as a mediation entity which has often contributed to positioning the Organization as an effective mediator. These include:

» Legitimacy, moral authority and credibility as an impartial actor derived from the Organization's universal membership

» Institutional experience in mediation and access to a pool of skilled mediators

» Capacity to remain engaged throughout different

phases of a peace process, e.g., in the negotiations phase as a mediator or in the implementation phase through the deployment of peace operations and delivery of technical support programmes (electoral assistance, governance support, DDR, etc.)

» Access to resources through the regular UN budget and extrabudgetary sources

As is the case for other international organizations, the UN also faces certain constraints. These include:

» Variable levels of commitment and consensus to support a peace process among the membership, which may affect the availability of financial resources

» Inability of a UN envoy to exercise leverage on her/his own, which can either reduce a UN mediator's credibility or boost her/his standing as an impartial actor

» Rules and regulations, which constrain the flexibility of the Secretariat in making certain managerial decisions

The decision on which organization should take the lead must be made jointly at the highest level of the organizations. The nature of the partnership should be formally elaborated, for example, through a memorandum of understanding. This will contribute to certainty and predictability of the partnership and help prevent misunderstandings and disputes.

3.5.   Deciding on a mode of engagement

Based on the results of the conflict analysis, the assessment of whether mediation is an appropriate form of intervention and the definition of the UN role in relation to other organizations, several options are available for engagement. These range from

an *indirect* (support) role assisting a process led by a local actor or another organization to *direct* (leading or co-leading) roles through the deployment of a UN mediation team.

The decision on a mode of engagement is made by the Secretary-General and/or head of department in consultation with regional divisions and partners — especially regional and subregional organizations — and can benefit from the expertise of technical support components such as the Mediation Support Unit (MSU).

The spectrum of options for engagement is broken down below. Although the subject of the present Guidelines is mediation engagements, other types of initiatives are included to ensure that all options are kept in mind when selecting a mode of engagement.

3.5.1. Indirect roles

Indirect, or support, roles can take many forms. In all cases, it is important to have a clear understanding of the value added of UN engagement and agree with partners on basic principles, strategy and parameters for international efforts in support of the resolution of a situation. It is also critical to define clearly what is expected in terms of support, and agree on modalities for its delivery.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR
MEDIATION ENGAGEMENTS

**UN teams deployed to support the efforts of
other mediators — the Madagascar example**

A political crisis broke out in Madagascar in early 2009 when a protest movement led by the then mayor of Antananarivo gained momentum and began to threaten the stability of the State. In response to a request from the authorities, the Secretary-General dispatched a small mediation support team composed of a Senior Political Adviser, one expert from the Mediation Standby Team and one Political Affairs Officer to assist a local mediation effort led by the Malagasy Council of Christian Churches. The role of the team was to advise the local mediators on strategy and process as well as to liaise with international actors. Through UNDP and under the guidance of the UN mediation support team, the UN also provided financial and clerical support for the process. When the crisis escalated and eventually led to what was described as an unconstitutional change of Government by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union (AU), an international mediator was appointed by SADC and the UN team changed its focus to supporting the international mediation.

Similar forms of indirect engagements took place in 2008-2009 in Comoros and Kenya, where technical mediation support teams were deployed by the UN to support efforts led by mediators appointed by the African Union.

3.5.1.1. Diplomatic support for a process led by another organization

Indirect support to a mediation process may take the form of engagement from Headquarters, for example, a phone call to parties from the Secretary-General to express support for a negotiated outcome. Heads of UN regional offices, such as the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), have also often provided such support by participating in joint visits with lead regional entities and other mediators.

3.5.1.2. Technical support for a process led by another organization

Another form of indirect support is the deployment of mediation staff to assist a process led by another organization, for example,

by providing thematic or technical support, or to provide training to another mediation team or parties themselves. These options are more likely to be used earlier in a conflict resolution process when receptiveness to a wider UN role may be low.

3.5.1.3.   Peace and development advisers and mediation advisers

An additional way to provide support to a local process is to deploy a peace and development adviser (PDA). PDAs are officers at the P4 or P5 level who are jointly deployed by DPA and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP within the framework of the UNDP-DPA Joint Programme for Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention. PDAs are most frequently dispatched where there is no UN political mission on the ground to assist resident coordinators and UN country teams in countries facing complex political challenges. Their role typically includes designing and implementing specific conflict prevention initiatives, supporting local dialogue and reconciliation processes and providing strategic analysis and advice to the Resident Coordinator and UN Headquarters.

In other cases, DPA has deployed Mediation Advisers to assist the efforts of another organization. These officers can be deployed in-country for short or longer periods.

Other deployments of this nature include the short-term deployment of Mediation Standby Team members to advise on the design, planning or conduct of partners' activities in support of a mediation effort.

3.5.2. Direct roles

The UN may be called to play a range of leading roles in conflict settings. Some may be initiated by the United Nations Secretariat under the general umbrella of the Secretary-General's good offices, while others are conducted under a specific mandate issued by UN legislative bodies.

3.5.2.1. Visits by UN envoys

In some cases, the UN chooses to play a modest, low-key role to assist the resolution of a conflict or help prevent escalation by sending a senior envoy on an official visit. Tasks may include informally consulting authorities and parties or even conducting shuttle diplomacy. This type of intervention is usually conducted by highly skilled senior diplomats, including the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs or Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSGs) of regional offices, accompanied by small teams with established contacts in the country.

3.5.2.2. Deployment of a UN mediation team led by a senior representative of the Secretary-General

In other cases, the UN is called upon to lead a mediation effort. To this end, the Secretary-General appoints a representative, an envoy or a special adviser and a small team who deploy in-country on a continuous or intermittent basis to facilitate a mediation process. Special envoys are required to coordinate their activities with the leadership of other UN components on the ground as well as the special envoys of other organizations, where applicable. In some cases, such as for Somalia, the SRSG carries out the UN mediation functions with the support of an SPM established for that purpose.

3.5.2.3. Deployment of joint mediation operations with another organization

The increasing number of actors in international mediation of disputes has seen a corresponding increase in joint initiatives. Joint operations can take many forms such as:

» "Multi-hatting", where a single envoy represents and reports to multiple organizations. This has been the case for the Darfur mediation, where a Joint Chief Mediator represented both the African Union (AU) and the UN

» Integrated teams, where staff and envoys from different organizations work together as a single team. This was the case in the early days of the Darfur mediation as well as in Madagascar where a "Joint Mediation Team" was established to coordinate the work of envoys from the UN, AU, the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC)

Joint mediation effort — the Darfur example

Mediation efforts for the Darfur conflict illustrate the various configuration options available for joint peacemaking endeavours. In a first phase, the African Union led a mediation effort culminating in the signature of the Darfur Peace Agreement in May 2006. Later that year, the mediation effort shifted to a co-mediation managed jointly by two Special Envoys appointed separately by the AU and the UN. The two mediators operated side by side as part of a joint team. In 2008, the mediation was reconfigured as a joint effort led by a single "Joint Chief Mediator" appointed by the UN and the AU and reporting to both organizations.

While these joint arrangements ensured that the support and experience of both organizations could be brought to bear positively on the peace process, the joint nature of the team also created additional reporting requirements and, at times, added pressure due to divergent views on the mediation strategy.

4.   Developing a mediation strategy

Regardless of the specific role of the UN in relation to other partners, a mediation strategy will need to be developed prior to any type of intervention. The strategy development process should be led by the lead mediator based on the mediation mandate (if any), strategic guidance from the Secretary-General and support from DPA. In joint mediation efforts, this process should include representatives from the headquarters of relevant organizations to ensure strategic coherence across all levels of the organizations.

A mediation strategy should outline the broad approach to the resolution of the conflict, principles of process design, the role of local and international actors, schematic coordination architecture and an indication of post-agreement requirements to enable advance planning and identify broad support requirements. The latter should include an indication of the type of support structure that will need to be established.

A mediation strategy should be designed with an informed understanding of the potential challenges to the mediation process as well as views and expectations of local actors (parties and other stakeholders). Strategies need to be flexible and adapt to changed circumstances or events (e.g., elections), which may alter the actors or their positions. The development of the strategy itself can be an iterative process that evolves through consultations with actors and, often, trial and error. However, the management of a strategy, including its evolution, is the only way to ensure that the mediation remains in control of the process rather than reactive to events.

Questions a mediator might consider when designing a mediation strategy include:

» Who are the parties and stakeholders in the conflict?

» What do the parties want to achieve?

» How does the mediation contact and remain in communication with parties?

» How will other stakeholders (e.g., civil society groups) be involved?

» How will spoilers be reached and managed?

» How cohesive are parties?

» What are parties' positions and real interests?

» How should the public be involved in the process?

» How can a gender perspective be incorporated in the mediation process and its substantive issues? What aspects of Security Council resolution 1325 can be promoted through the process?

» What do parties expect of the mediator?

» Is the mediation objective to manage, settle or resolve the conflict?

» What can be done to enhance "ripeness"?

» What are the minimum operating conditions for the mediation to proceed? Is a ceasefire needed?

» Which actors can provide leverage in case of stalemate?

» Is there a sanctions regime in place? What special challenges might the sanctions regime pose to the mediation effort? Do these challenges call for specific coordination with other UN bodies? If there is a targeted sanctions list, how do the criteria for listing and delisting intersect with the mediation effort?

» How should the negotiations be sequenced?

» What techniques and strategies are required for the consultation and negotiation phase of the mediation?

» In what order should substantive issues be approached?

» Is there a need for confidence-building measures?

» How should the agreement be implemented?

» How should the agreement be monitored at the political and operational level?

» Is there a need for specific expertise to generate options for compromise?

» What are the conditions of success for the mediation?

A complete *checklist* of key questions to consider in the development of a mediation strategy is available on the DPA Intranet.

4.1.   Resources for strategy development

Strategy development resources include MSU, the Standby Team of Mediation Experts and other partners such as the specialized mediation institutions regrouped in the Mediation Support Network. These resources can be used in a variety of ways, as appropriate to the situation and to the role of the UN. In cases of joint operations, a strategy development workshop (methodology available *here*) could be organized with the facilitation of a mediation expert. One-on-one strategic sessions have also been organized for UN special envoys leading a mediation effort, as well as coaching sessions to develop skills or brainstorm on strategic issues.

The conduct of mediation itself is outside the scope of the present Guidelines. More information, including best practices identified in previous processes, is available in the *Manual for UN Mediators*. Other guidance materials on managing negotiation processes are available on the *UN Peacemaker* website.

4.2.   Endorsement of a mediation strategy

Once developed, the mediation strategy should be communicated and endorsed at the highest level of the organizations involved. Some aspects of the strategy may need to remain confidential. The nature of the mediation is such that strategies may be highly personal and too sensitive for even the mediator to articulate fully, but it is important to share some sense of the strategy to enable other components of the organization to play their role in support of the process. This is necessary to facilitate "vertical" strategic coherence (within organizations) as well as "horizontal" coherence (among organizations). Coherence at all levels ensures

that all actors convey the same messages and complement each other's efforts at their various levels of intervention (e.g., leveraging the influence of allies at the local level as well as through diplomatic activity at Headquarters and in national capitals). A pragmatic approach should nonetheless be adopted to avoid overloading the endorsement process.

Within the UN, different situations may require the endorsement of a mediation strategy through different processes. If a mediation process is mostly of concern to DPA, the endorsement of the strategy by the relevant regional division, the head of department and, for high-profile cases, the Secretary-General's office, should suffice. If a mediation process has implications for other components of the UN system, the approach may call for endorsement at the level of the Secretary-General's Policy Committee or through the Executive Committee on Peace and Security (ECPS). More information is available in the *Policy Committee Instruction Manual*.

4.3. From strategy to operational plan

The mediation strategy provides the basis for conceptualizing the structure of a mediation team and corresponding substantive, administrative and logistical needs. This can be articulated in an operational plan, which focuses on *implementing* the strategy. While an overarching strategic plan provides overall direction and focus, with clearly formulated goals, objectives and strategies, the operational plan is a technical document that gives effect to the strategic plan. It must translate the strategic plan into activities, tasks and time frames, assign responsibility for action and identify what is required in terms of posts, expertise, logistics, equipment and funds.

Part II.
Roles and functions

Part II.
Roles and functions

5.   The shifting scale of field-Headquarters responsibilities

Mediation engagements are complex undertakings with operational implications at both field and Headquarters levels. Ultimately, authority for the conduct of all activities rests with the UN Secretary-General. In practice, the oversight of operations is delegated to the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. As such, UN mediators report *to* the Secretary-General *through* the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

In appointing a special envoy to represent the Organization in a mediation effort, the Secretary-General delegates a certain amount of authority to the field. On this basis, field managers and their teams are expected to lead in the development and management of engagement strategies while maintaining a constant dialogue with Headquarters, through DPA, as part of normal reporting practice.

The balance of responsibilities between Headquarters and the field shifts over time as operations are established. As detailed below, Headquarters is usually much more involved at the launch of operations. This involvement evolves as field capacity increases, until operations are sufficiently established to assume the strategic leadership. At all times, however, it is critical to

maintain a constant dialogue on strategy to ensure that all levels of the organization can play their role effectively in support of the process.

6.   The Secretary-General

The Secretary-General can play a key role in UN-led or UN-supported mediation endeavours. "Equal parts diplomat, advocate, civil servant and CEO",[2] the Secretary-General is a central figure who can bring particular situations to the attention of the United Nations Security Council on any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security (Article 99 of the United Nations Charter). He may also engage the broader UN membership, conflict parties and other stakeholders directly or through "telephone diplomacy" and visits. As the Chief Administrative Officer of the UN, the Secretary-General also oversees the appointment of special envoys and the establishment of UN presences in the field. The Secretary-General's moral authority carries great weight and should be leveraged, when appropriate, in support of a peace process.

7.   The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and the Assistant Secretaries-General for Political Affairs[3]

7.1.   The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs

The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, who is accountable to the Secretary-General, is responsible for all the activities

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[2]   See http://www.un.org/sg/sgrole.shtml.

[3]   See ST/SGB/2009/13 on the organization of the Department of Political Affairs.

of the Department of Political Affairs as well as its administration.

In the area of mediation, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs:

- » Provides the Secretary-General with political advice
- » Oversees and provides political guidance and instructions to special envoys/representatives of the Secretary-General and other field representatives
- » Directs and manages, on behalf of the Secretary-General, goodwill, fact-finding and other missions
- » Undertakes, on behalf of the Secretary-General, diplomatic activities relating to the prevention, control and resolution of disputes, including preventive diplomacy, political mediation, peacemaking and post-conflict peacebuilding

The Under-Secretary-General is assisted by an office whose core functions, in the area of mediation, are as follows:

- » Advising the Under-Secretary-General on departmental policies and guidelines and dealing with specific substantive and administrative policy and management issues
- » Consulting, negotiating and coordinating with other departments, offices, funds and programmes
- » Coordinating and overseeing the Department's biennial budget and the annual budgets of missions
- » Liaising with the various divisions in resource mobilization for extrabudgetary activities
- » Managing media relations in coordination with the Office of the Spokesperson of the Secretary-General and the Department of Public Information
- » Advising on the availability of funds

7.2.   Assistant Secretaries-General

The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, in the performance of his or her activities, is assisted by two Assistant Secretaries-General. The Assistant Secretaries-General are accountable to the Under-Secretary-General and support the Under-Secretary-General in guiding and supervising the work of the Department.

In the area of mediation, the two Assistant Secretaries-General, with the support of their respective offices, have the following main responsibilities:

» Providing leadership for the Department's conflict prevention and conflict management efforts, in particular through the development and implementation of integrated conflict prevention and conflict management strategies

» Identifying opportunities for utilizing the Department's mediation and mediation support role

» Developing effective working relationships with other UN departments, agencies, offices, funds and programmes on all issues relevant to the work of the Department

» Providing leadership for maintaining strategic partnerships with international regional and subregional organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions and think tanks

8.   A departmental team effort: the respective roles of DPA components in mediation

The start-up phase of a mediation operation typically involves several components within DPA whose role may phase out or scale down as the operation is further established. Below is a general overview of the functions of different components during the start-up phase.

8.1.   Regional divisions

Under the guidance and supervision of the Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-Generals, the country desks in the DPA regional divisions coordinate the start-up of operations in the initial phase and scale back to a support role as senior leaders are appointed and deployed to the field. Country desks are the main interlocutors for field managers. Their role is to direct operations and coordinate support functions of all types. As an operation is established, the desk's role evolves from that of an initiator, organizer and coordinator to that of a monitor and support coordinator.

Prior to the establishment of an operation, desks are responsible for monitoring potential sources of conflicts in all parts of the world and proposing, under the guidance of the two Assistant Secretaries-General and the regional divisions' leadership, possible UN interventions to prevent, contain or resolve conflicts. A mediation initiative is often initiated by the action of a desk on the basis of routine country monitoring.

At the beginning of a planning phase for a mediation operation, desks are responsible for the conduct of a conflict analysis and strategic coordination with other international actors.

Drawing on the support of specialized components such as the Mediation Support Unit (MSU) or the Electoral Assistance Division, desks are responsible for proposing a mode of engagement for the UN and seeking endorsement by senior UN leadership for the suggested approach.

During the planning phase, desk officers are responsible for engaging field teams or partners in the design of a mediation strategy and coordinating all aspects of implementation planning, including key decisions on support structures, recruitment and deployment of the mediation team.

During the latter parts of the start-up phase, desks are responsible for providing guidance to field teams on the establishment of critical systems related to reporting, coordination and support functions. At Headquarters level, desks are responsible for establishing coordination structures such as ITFs as well as to engage, when appropriate, with the Secretary-General's Policy Committee. Before agreements are signed, desks are also responsible for coordinating with the Office of Legal Affairs to ensure that agreements bearing the stamp of the UN are consistent with the core principles and obligations of the Organization, as well as with any other UN component that may be called upon to support provisions of an agreement (e.g., the Electoral Assistance Division).

8.2.   The Policy and Mediation Division and the Mediation Support Unit

In the area of mediation, the Policy and Mediation Division (PMD) provides specialized services to meet the growing demand for professional, cross-cutting support to "good offices" activities, including preventive diplomacy and the formal mediation of

disputes. This includes expert advice, best practices and knowledge management on mediation-related activities worldwide. It also assists ongoing mediation efforts with country/region-specific operational support as well as institutional and capacity-building activities. PMD provides these services to the UN as a whole as well as to regional organizations and other peacemaking bodies.

To this end, a number of mediation resources have been mobilized and are available to mediation teams. These include:

» An MSU, which provides mediation support services to the rest of the UN system and partner organizations

» A Standby Team of Mediation Experts who can be deployed anywhere within 72 hours

» Rosters of mediation and thematic experts for long-term deployments to advise on peace processes, provide training, assist with the drafting of peace agreements and provide other mediation support services as required

» Body of guidance and lessons learned materials to inform decision-making

» A team of specialized analysts to provide strategic and process-design advice during and after the start-up phase, and to collect and analyse lessons learned from operations

» A wide range of partnerships with specialized mediation institutions whose expertise can be called upon as needed

As a service provider, MSU *responds* to requests from desks and mediation teams. It is the responsibility of desks and mediation teams, as the leadership of operations, to draw on this

support. Requests can be transmitted through the office of the Director of the Division.

8.3.   The Electoral Assistance Division

The Electoral Assistance Division serves as the lead unit for UN electoral assistance. In the area of mediation, the Electoral Assistance Division plays a central role in assessing needs for electoral assistance that may result from peace agreements and in the coordination of support during the implementation phase. In particular, the Electoral Assistance Division is responsible for:

» Advising and assisting the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs in his or her capacity as the focal point for UN electoral assistance activities

» Reviewing requests for electoral assistance programmes and advising on their implementation

» Assisting the focal point with coordination within and outside the UN system and ensuring system-wide coherence and consistency in responding to requests from Member States for electoral assistance

» Providing support and coordination for the activities of international observers

» Undertaking needs-assessment missions to determine the specific needs of a country requesting electoral assistance

» Developing and disseminating, jointly or in close cooperation with UNDP and others, UN electoral policies

» Developing and maintaining a roster of international experts who could provide technical assistance, as well as assistance in the verification of electoral processes

» Building and maintaining the UN system's electoral institutional memory

» Maintaining contact with regional and other inter-governmental organizations to ensure appropriate working arrangements with them

8.4. The Executive Office

The Executive Office is the administrative and financial arm of DPA. Once an operation is authorized by the head of the Department and upon request from regional divisions, the Executive Office is responsible for processing travel arrangements, hiring staff and administering operational funding for requirements such as transport or rental of meeting rooms and office equipment. For longer-term field deployments, the Executive Office may rely on the administrative support of UNDP or the Department of Field Support (DFS) as detailed in *section 12* on administrative, financial and logistical support structures.

For mediation operations, the Executive Office can offer the following services:

Finance and budget:
» Provide advice on financial rules, policies and procedures

» Review project proposals

» Provide or assist with the preparation of cost estimates

» Request allotment and redeployment of funds

» Monitor expenditures and make necessary adjustments

» Provide information on contributions and expenditures to the donor relationship focal point, senior management and project managers

» Process requests for travel, travel claims, contracts for consultants, financial authorizations, requests for payment and follow-up actions

» Prepare budget for DPA, DPA-administered SPMs and activities funded under the Secretary-General's unforeseen and extraordinary expenses account

» Brief mediators on procedures

Human resources:

» Provide advice on staff rules and policies

» Issue Temporary Vacancy Announcements or Job Openings in Inspira

» Administer recruitment processes

» Administer staff recruited at Headquarters and a limited number of staff in certain field locations from appointment, deployment to separation and repatriation

» Process extension of contracts

Administration and information technology:

» Assist with or issue grounds pass and travel document (UN laissez-passer, Travel Certificate, visa application)

» Clear and submit requests for mobile phones, Blackberry devices and Citrix licences

» Keep a record of equipment issued and cost recovery

» Keep a record of DPA, SPMs and DPA field offices' inventories

Figure 2
At a glance: lead and support components

PHASE		TASK	LEAD COMPONENT	SUPPORT COMPONENT
STRATEGIC PLANNING	Assessment and decision-making	Monitoring of conflicts	RD	PPU
		Conflict analysis	RD	
		Assessment of engagement options	EOSG, USG, ASG	RD, MSU
		Liaison and coor-dination with other international actors, including selection of lead mediator	EOSG, USG, ASG	RD
		Determination of mode of UN engagement	EOSG, USG, ASG	RD, MSU
	Strategy development	Development of mediation strategy	Lead mediator, RD	MSU, Partners
		Endorsement of media-tion strategy	EOSG, USG, ASG	RD
OPERATIONAL PLANNING		Identification of resources required to support strategy (staff functions, operational needs, security)	Lead mediator, RD, MSU	EO, DSS
		Cost estimates and budgeting	EO	RD
		Identification of sources of funding	EO/FP for donor relations	
		Decision on support structure	Mediation team, EO, RD	
		Identification of suitable candidates, including envoys	EOSG, OUSG, RD	MSU
		Selection of candi-dates, including envoys	EOSG, OUSG, RD	MSU
		Issuance of contracts	EO	
		In-briefing of staff	RD	MSU
(continues)		Travel arrangements	EO	RD

Figure 2
At a glance: lead and support components

OPERATIONAL PLANNING (continued)	Local transport, communications and IT equipment, office facilities and other operational requirements	Support structure	EO
	Arrival in-country with authorities and partners	RD	
COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS	Design and establishment of coordination architecture at local and regional level	Mediation team	RD, MSU
	Establishment of reporting system	Mediation team, RD	
	Communications strategy	Mediation team, OUSG, RD	MSU
	Monitoring of development and liaison with OUSG/EOSG	RD	
	Strategic guidance, including revision of mediation strategy	EOSG, OUSG, RD	MSU
	Liaison with Member States	EOSG, OUSG, RD	
BEYOND THE START-UP PHASE	Planning for the long term and initiating a shift to long-term funding system	EOSG, OUSG, RD	PMD, EO
	Lesson learning and capture of institutional experience	RD, PMD	

RD = regional division

9.   Other UN partners

9.1.   The Department of Peacekeeping Operations

The mission of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) is to plan, prepare, manage and direct UN peacekeeping operations so that they can effectively fulfil their mandates under the overall authority of the Security Council and the General Assembly, and under the command vested in the Secretary-General.

As UN peacekeeping operations are often established to help implement the provisions of a peace agreement mediated by DPA, it is of critical importance that DPKO be involved as early as possible in any peace agreement whose implementation may require the deployment of a peacekeeping operation. In these cases, DPKO can advise on the feasibility of commitments and provide expert inputs into draft agreements in order to facilitate implementation down the line.

If a mediation operation is launched in a country with a peacekeeping operation, DPKO may become the lead entity for the mediation process, as is the case for Darfur.

DPKO is also a lead entity for the UN system in a number of thematic areas, such as military expertise and policing, and can be a resource for DPA-led mediation operations.

9.2.   The Department of Field Support

The Department of Field Support (DFS) provides dedicated support to *peacekeeping field missions* and *political field missions* in the areas of finance, logistics, information and communications technology (ICT), human resources and general administration.

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It does this, for example, through:

» Supporting leadership appointments, including generating lists of candidates

» Helping field missions prepare their budgets and representing the interests of missions in front of UN intergovernmental committees

» Providing guidance and policies for recruiting staff to field missions

» Ensuring field missions have the necessary technology and communication tools to operate on the ground

» Enabling the provision of transport, rations and other supplies essential to field operations

» Working with Member States and the intergovernmental process of the UN to represent the interests of the field as well as coordinate reimbursements to troop and police contributors for equipment and self-sustainment

In special political missions (SPMs) and other DPA-led operations supported by DFS, the services provided by DFS are covered by the forthcoming "service level agreement" between DPA and DFS. The principles governing accountability and responsibility for support services in DPA-led operations supported by DFS are articulated in the *Policy on Delegated Authority in UN Field Missions led by DPA and supported by DFS*.

9.3. The Office of Legal Affairs

The Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) provides a unified central legal service for the Secretariat and the principal and other organs of the UN. OLA has often been involved in supporting field

operations — including mediation endeavours — with legal expertise. For example, mediators have sought OLA assistance for the review of draft peace agreements to ensure consistency with core UN principles and obligations. It has become standard practice for UN envoys to cross-check draft agreements with OLA before signing as witnesses or on behalf of the UN.

9.4.   The Department of Management

The Department of Management (DM), composed of, among others, the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) and the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts (OPPBA), provides services to backstop the day-to-day operations of the global United Nations Secretariat. Its mission is to formulate policies and procedures — for implementation by individual departments' Executive Offices — and provide strategic guidance, direction and support in three broad management areas:

» Human resources

» Finance and budget

» Central support services

In the area of mediation, the Department of Management is involved in the recruitment of consultants and staff and the approval of funding for operations. The Executive Office is the DPA interface with the Department of Management.

9.5.   UN agencies, funds and programmes and the UN resident coordinator system

UN agencies, funds and programmes are important local and global actors who are often critical partners in the success of a mediation effort. Leveraging their presence in many countries where DPA has

no foothold, UN agencies, funds and programmes — organized as country teams whose activities are harmonized and coordinated by resident coordinators — can support mediation processes by providing useful information on the situation on the ground and offering ad hoc logistics support. Coordination with UN agencies, funds and programmes is discussed in further detail in *section 14* below.

UNDP often plays a key role in the implementation of mediated agreements, for example, by supporting electoral operations or governance reforms. UNDP is also the partner of DPA for the deployment of peace and development advisers, who, as discussed above, are one option for UN engagement. Finally, UN mediation operations have also benefited from the support services of UNDP country offices, as explained in *section 12* below.

10. Non-UN partners
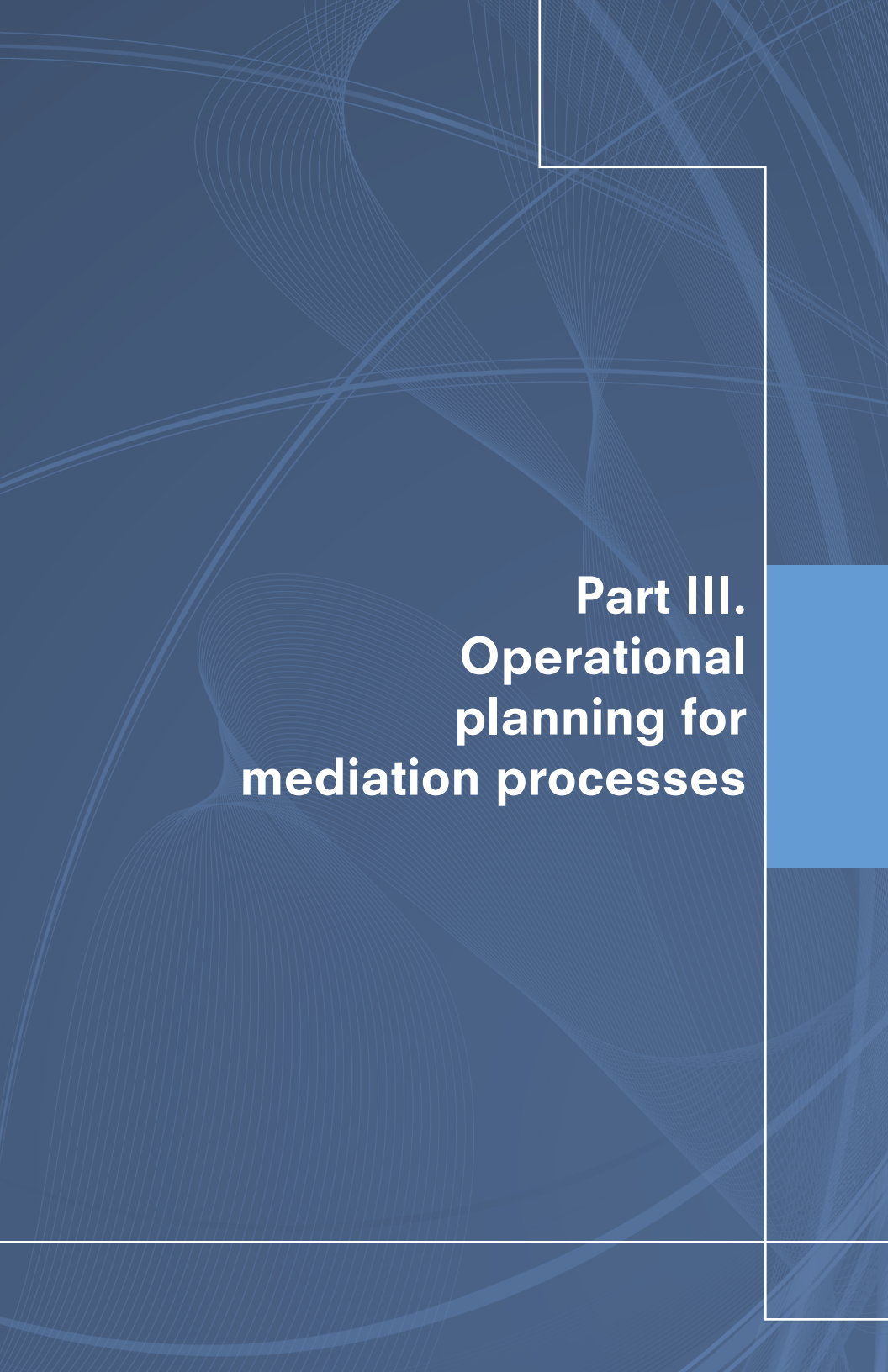
Non-UN partners in the area of mediation include subregional and regional organizations, Member States, specialized institutions, local actors and prominent individuals.

In recent years, regional and subregional organizations have been playing an increasingly important role in conflict prevention, mediation and conflict management more generally. Some have begun to establish specialized mediation support structures, such as groups of elders.

Although Member States always play a central role in UN activities, some are particularly active in the area of mediation. These Member States have both provided support and led mediation efforts in various parts of the world.

Specialized institutions include mediation-focused NGOs and think tanks. While some concentrate on research and training, others are also involved in mediation and mediation support activities.

Finally, local partners are also key actors in any mediation process. Some act as local mediators (with or without support from the international community), or can contribute through the provision of local knowledge and transmission of messages to the wider population. Interacting with local partners is essential to ensure that a mediation process remains connected to the concerns of stakeholders who may not be directly represented at the negotiation table.

ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

Part III.
Operational planning for mediation processes

Part III.
Operational planning for mediation processes

"The bottom line for effective mediation is logistics. Credibility and momentum are key: if you act tomorrow, it's too late."

— Said Djinnit, Special Representative
of the Secretary-General for West Africa,
Vision for UNOWA, 2010

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11. Financial resources available for start-up

A number of options are available to finance mediation start-up. The Executive Office, MSU and the DPA Donor Relations Focal Point can advise on the most appropriate sources of funding for each situation. This section provides an overview of the various options.

11.1. Extrabudgetary funding

In recent years, most mediation and crisis response efforts have been funded through extrabudgetary resources (voluntary contributions from Member States) obtained through the Department's annual funding appeal. Emergency windows have been established, including fast-track procedures, which facilitate access to

funding for operational start-up. Other contributions earmarked for specific projects or regions can also be used for mediation efforts. Requests for rapid response funding are reviewed and approved by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and do not require the approval of the extrabudgetary committee.

Rapid response funding — the DRC example

The signing of the Goma Acte d'Engagement in early 2008 between the Government of the DRC and armed groups in the Kivus raised hopes that the long-running conflict might finally be ending. Drift and delays in implementation, however, soon led to disenchantment and a resumption of hostilities in July 2008. By October 2008, in addition to a deep humanitarian crisis, regional animosities were growing to dangerous heights. It was with this sense of urgency that the Secretary-General appointed the former President of Nigeria H.E. General Olusegun Obasanjo as his Special Envoy (SESG) for the Great Lakes, on 7 November 2008. Start-up costs for the implementation of the mandate of the SESG (e.g., travel budget or deployment of a senior political affairs officer to act as the Special Assistant of the SESG) were funded through the DPA extrabudgetary rapid response account ($330,000). Throughout the arc of his engagement, the SESG was able to draw on the expertise and facilities provided by this funding structure.

11.2. Secretary-General's unforeseen and extraordinary expenses account

Resources may also be available through the Secretary-General's unforeseen and extraordinary expenses account. This is a more formal form of funding and its approval is subject to the authorization of the Secretary-General. Requests for access to this source of funding can be coordinated by the DPA Executive Office.

11.3. The Peacebuilding Fund

The Secretary-General's PBF was established by Member States in 2005 at the same time as the Peacebuilding Commission. The fund is managed by the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO). The PBF was designed to fund activities that could have a catalytic impact on a peace process or to prevent a lapse or relapse into conflict. It can fill strategic peacebuilding funding gaps when needed. The PBF supports, *inter alia*, "activities designed to respond to imminent threats to [a] peace process, support for the implementation of peace agreements and political dialogue".

The PBF offers two types of funding: an Immediate Response Facility, designed for smaller amounts and rapid decision-making and dispersal, and the Peacebuilding Response Facility, for longer-term and more comprehensive funding portfolios. While DPA and its political missions are not currently eligible for PBF funding, many UN institutional partners are and can manage funds on behalf of Governments or non-government actors implementing peacebuilding projects. SESGs/SRSGs (in mission settings) and resident coordinators (in non-mission settings) co-chair with the Government an inclusive Joint Steering Committee empowered to decide how to spend the funds. Political dialogue and mediation funding has been utilized, for example, to finance the Economic Community of West African States' (ECOWAS) mediation activities in Guinea-Conakry and Côte d'Ivoire, and a Government-led national dialogue process in the Central African Republic. Requests for PBF funding should be submitted through UN leaders in the field. Further guidance is available on the PBF website (*www.unpbf.org*).

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11.4. Regular budget

If and when a Special Political Mission (SPM) is authorized, funding will be provided through the established SPM budgetary process based on legislative approval. While this ensures the sustainability of operations, this facility is rarely available at start-up. When a crisis occurs in a context where there is a UN mission, however, both logistical and financial support from the mission can be authorized directly to cover needs until additional legislative approval is secured.

**Funding through the regular budget —
the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) example**

The UN Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) was established as a political mission in 1995 to advance the cause of peace and reconciliation in Somalia through contacts with local and national leaders, civic organizations and the States and organizations involved in the resolution of the Somali conflict. Supported and overseen by DPA, the Office is headed by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) who closely monitors the situation and provides the Secretary-General with periodic briefings and written reports for the Security Council. UNPOS also provides political guidance to the UN agencies, funds and programmes that constitute the United Nations Country Team for Somalia. UNPOS is also supporting initiatives by countries in the region to promote peace and national reconciliation in Somalia, including efforts by the Government of Djibouti that led to the formation of the Transitional National Government (TNG) of Somalia in 2000. From 2002 to 2004, UNPOS supported the Somali National Reconciliation Conference under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which resulted in the formation of the current Transitional Federal Government (TFG). Since then, UNPOS has continued to accompany the Somali transition through a range of political activities including support to the constitutional review process.

As a special political mission (SPM), UNPOS is funded through the regular UN budget per existing regulations. Most SPMs have extensive good offices and mediation functions, and as such constitute another model for the management of UN mediation and mediation support activities. While the establishment of an SPM can be a long process due to the necessity to obtain a mandate from the United Nations Security Council and the lengthy funding approval cycle of UN budgetary bodies, SPMs also offer more robust support arrangements and a longer-term horizon than operations funded through extrabudgetary sources.

11.5. Overview of procedures to secure funding

11.5.1. Budgeting

A common challenge in past operations has been the finalization of operational budgets. This has at times caused delays in obtaining funding despite the urgent need to initiate activities. Budgets are based on assumptions about the evolution of the political situation and the mediation strategy and operational plan, which outline the *needs* of the engagement in terms of support. Budget decisions should be made on the basis of available information and take into account the myriad of support needs for a mediation operation. As outlined in the mediation *start-up budget template*, the main categories of expenses are the following:

» Staffing (international and national)

» Travel & DSA

» Office facilities

» Operational expenses (meeting rooms, hospitality, etc.)

» Communications & IT

» Local transport

Examples of operational budgets for mediation start-up are available on the DPA Intranet.

11.5.2. Identifying a source of funding and funding management

To identify the most appropriate source of funding, regional divisions can consult the Executive Office and the DPA Donor Relations Focal Point.

The basic procedure to secure funding for mediation start-up involves the following steps:

1. Project formulation;

2. Preparation of a project budget or cost estimate;

3. Submission of the project proposal and funding request to the Under-Secretary-General, if using extrabudgetary rapid response funding. In these cases, requesters should use the *Rapid Response Template for Cluster I* which is processed by the Donor Relations Focal Point.

4. Approval by the Under-Secretary-General; and

5. Request (by EO) for approval of allotment from OPPBA.

Guidance, procedures and templates for requesting funding from the DPA Extrabudgetary Trust Fund are available in the following documents:

I. Policy Directive: DPA Extrabudgetary Resources Management (overview)

II. DPA Resource Mobilization Guideline (fundraising)

III. DPA Trust Fund Management Guideline (financial)

IV. DPA Project Management Guideline (operational)

Rapid response funding — the Kyrgyzstan example

In April 2010, violent protests in Kyrgyzstan led to the resignation of the President, dissolution of the Parliament and establishment of a transitional Government. In June 2010, inter-ethnic violence broke out in the south of the country resulting in the death of hundreds of civilians. At the request of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, MSU put together a rapid response package using the DPA extrabudgetary rapid response funds. The package included the deployment of a Senior Reconciliation Adviser for three months, and the deployment of a two-member DPA team, together with a Mediation Standby Team expert, to Bishkek for a week to work with the United Nations Country Team to develop a strategy in support of the reconciliation process.

12. Staffing mediation teams

12.1. Defining staff requirements

The human resource requirements of a mediation process are first and foremost driven by the situation on the ground, the adopted strategy and the particular needs of the operation, such as seniority of representatives or support requirements. The size and composition of a team is also likely to change over time in response to the evolution of the process. In the initial stages, a small team to support high-paced shuttle consultations with parties and plan for future engagement may be all that is required. When negotiations begin or when a presence must be established in different locations, staff requirements may change to include additional representational, analytical and support staff.

12.2. Functions in a mediation team

Regardless of the specific institutional arrangements underpinning the composition and leadership of a mediation effort,

a mediation team will need to be established during the start-up phase to perform the range of tasks required in a mediation effort. While in the past high-profile mediators have often been deployed on their own or with the assistance of one or two officers, experience has shown that the complexity of contemporary conflicts, including the number of actors, depth of issues to be resolved, extent of consultation requirements and coordination and support needs, warrant the mobilization of a multi-disciplinary team combining a range of specialized capabilities, including support specialists in the areas of administration, finance and logistics.

The team will play coordinating, monitoring, analytical, advisory and liaison roles and will support the lead mediator in mediating and facilitating dialogue. The team members must have mediation, diplomatic and organizational expertise to be able to provide support in all areas where a mediator is called upon to play a role. This includes the management of the mediation process, which requires expertise in areas such as process design, mediation strategy development, public information and relevant thematic subjects, as well as managing interactions with the international community, which requires experience with diplomacy and international coordination.

> "The maxim remains that one is only as good as one's team."
>
> — Staffan de Mistura,
> UNAMI End of Assignment Report, 2009

The following is an indicative list of functions that are often required. The size of the team will depend on the situation. There is no standard configuration for a mediation team: the key decision-making principle is that *form should follow function.*

12.2.1. Leadership and management

Exercised by the lead mediator, leadership involves providing strategic direction to a mediation effort, high-level representation and strategic coordination with other actors.

The following criteria should be used to select the lead mediator:

» A high level of experience and competence in mediation

» Credibility with the parties in conflict

» Knowledge of the country, region and parties in conflict

» Proficiency in at least one of the languages spoken by the parties

» Availability for full-time deployment for at least six months

» Commitment to the values and principles of the lead organization, including respect for democratic norms, human rights and gender equity

» Personal attributes of a good peacemaker, including empathy, analytical ability, excellent communication and facilitation skills and excellent political judgement and problem-solving skills

» Ability to lead and manage a mediation team

In large teams, a lead mediator may be assisted by a deputy or chief-of-staff whose role is to coordinate the activities of the team and provide internal managerial oversight while the lead mediator is focused on directing the mediation effort.

In joint operations, the organization designated as the lead mediating body must appoint the lead mediator.

As detailed in the next section, mediators and senior leaders can be identified through the MSU Mediation Roster and the Department of Field Support (DFS) Senior Leadership Appointments Unit.

The terms of reference for the lead mediator should be put in writing and include reporting lines and modalities. *Sample terms of reference* for Lead Mediators, Chiefs-of-Staff, Chiefs-of-Operations and Mediation Support Officers are available on the DPA Intranet.

12.2.2.   Technical expertise

Experts are often called upon to provide advice to the lead mediator or to the parties on technical aspects of the mediation process. Typical areas of expertise include process design, power-sharing, wealth-sharing (natural resources, fiscal, etc.), transitional justice, security, constitution-making electoral systems and gender.[4] Technical experts can advise on options for resolution using comparative experience from other countries as well as a deep understanding of different approaches in their areas of expertise. They can also provide training when appropriate.

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[4]   Gender, being a "cross-cutting" issue, should be addressed within all other areas of expertise. Often gender expertise is requested to develop processes and structures which are aimed at facilitating women's engagement in a mediation process and better integration of gender analysis.

The role of thematic experts — contribution of a gender adviser to the northern Uganda peace talks

During the 2008 negotiations on northern Uganda mediated by Riek Machar, Vice-President of Southern Sudan, with the support of Joaquim Chissano, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General, a gender adviser was deployed by UNIFEM to promote gender sensitivity in this effort. The Adviser's contribution helped ensure that adequate attention was paid to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325, especially in the areas of DDR, justice and accountability mechanisms and monitoring of the ceasefire. While Special Envoy Chissano met with women peace activists from the start of his tenure as facilitator, the arrival of the Gender Adviser gave the women's groups a dedicated focal point to work with and someone who was able to assist them in formulating their concerns into a comprehensive agenda. Women were granted observer status and also an opportunity to make their views known to the parties. These views were published in what became known as the "Women's Protocol". Most of their concerns were reflected in the draft agreements, which are among the most gender-sensitive peace agreements to date.

12.2.3. Process coordination and drafting

In some cases, a mediation strategy will rely on labour-intensive processes involving consultations with large groups of stakeholders or the establishment of parallel negotiation tracks using thematic subcommittees. Process coordination involves managing the practical and substantive aspects of such processes, from reserving meeting rooms to consolidating various texts. These functions are often performed by Political Affairs Officers.

12.2.4. Outreach

A discreet but important function of the mediation team is to generate political support for the process. This requires extensive contacts with international partners as well as national actors such as Government officials or civil society actors. In some cases, the mediation team might also seek to cultivate support for the process among diaspora groups.

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12.2.5.   Reporting

Organizations expect teams deployed to the field to report regu-
larly on progress. This is necessary to allow headquarters to com-
plement field-level efforts with initiatives at the headquarters
level ("vertical" strategic coherence) as well as to report to donors
and other global stakeholders. There is no standard reporting fre-
quency: it is generally accepted that reporting should take place
as needed. More information on reporting to headquarters is
available in section 15 on reporting.

12.2.6.   Information gathering and analysis

The successful practice of mediation requires the maintenance
of constant situational awareness, including developments on
the ground, shifting positions in the balance of power, evolving
popular perceptions, emergence of new actors and knowledge of
actors' backgrounds. Information about these issues is available
through various means, such as contacts with local and regional
actors, media monitoring and direct observation. In some cases,
Member States can provide additional information. The manage-
ment of information designed for the purposes of the mediation
is, however, a responsibility of the mediation team. In addition
to gathering information, teams must also ensure that data is
assessed, interpreted, analysed and converted into useful infor-
mation that can help the mediation team achieve its objectives.

12.2.7.   Media management

Mediation initiatives tend to attract extensive local and inter-
national media attention. In turn, media reporting on progress
in the mediation can have a serious impact (both positive and

negative) on the success of efforts by influencing the perceptions of parties and the population. Given the risks and opportunities involved, relations with the media should be managed carefully and on the basis of a communications strategy which mirrors the mediation strategy. A number of communication resources may also be required in different contexts, such as the appointment of a spokesperson. In all cases, a successful communication strategy will require a clear articulation of objectives, key messages and a targeted media monitoring system to assess — and respond to — the evolution of perceptions.

The management of public information systems is also helpful to understand the key interests and concerns of the population, for example, through public opinion polling. This ensures that issues being negotiated by the parties respond to the concerns of all stakeholders.

12.2.8. Support

Support is a critical aspect that is often overlooked when planning a mediation process. Support requirements will vary with the size of teams and the nature of the mediation process. Large teams and processes may require support in the areas of personnel management, finance, transport, logistics, facilities management, conferences services, protocol or secretarial assistance. In all cases, support requirements will be determined by the complexity of the process, local availability of resources and extent of needs.

12.3. Types of appointment in a mediation team

The type of contracts used in mediation start-up is often contingent on budgetary constraints and time pressures. Typically,

the categories of personnel summarized below are involved in a mediation operation:

12.3.1.   Special envoys, special advisers and special representatives

Senior staff and mediators are appointed directly by the Secretary-General either as regular staff or on a "When Actually Employed" (WAE) basis. The terms of appointment are made on the basis of consultations between DPA and the Office of the Secretary-General. Once a decision is made, the DPA Executive Office coordinates with OHRM and EOSG on the appointment of senior executives.

Experience has shown that the administrative status of mediators can have a serious impact on their effectiveness on the ground. Mediators hired as "consultants", for example, may not enjoy the credibility and weight of officials appointed formally as special envoys or representatives of the Secretary-General. They are also ineligible for some UN privileges, such as immunities and official travel documents, and can be subject to restrictions in their contacts with the media. Similarly, the official titles given to envoys can have serious political implications. These aspects should be factored into the decision-making process in line with the expected role of the UN officials.

The following table summarizes the types of senior appointments used in the past and includes examples. Senior appointments are made on the basis of a number of considerations which require flexibility in typologies to adapt to all circumstances. While the categories and definitions outlined in the table do reflect existing practice, they should nonetheless be considered only as indicative and subject to change based on circumstances.

Figure 3
At a glance: type of senior appointments
in mediation engagements

	Title	Role	Level	Remarks	Examples
REPRESENTATIVES	Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG)	» Head of peacekeeping/ political missions » Good offices	ASG/USG	» Resident in the region » Long-term appoint-ment	**Staffan de Mistura** SRSG for Afghanistan and Head of UNAMA 1 March 2010 [S/2010/48] [S/2010/47]
	Representative of the Secretary-General (RSG)	» Head of peacekeeping/ political missions » Good offices	Director	» Resident in the region » Long-term appoint-ment	**Karin Landgren** RSG in Nepal and Head of UNMIN 3 February 2009 [S/2009/58] [S/2009/57]
	Executive Representative of the Secretary-General (ERSG)	» Head of an UN Integrated Office » Representative of UNDP and UN Resident Coordi-nator and Humanitarian Coordinator » Ensure a cohesive and coordinated approach within the UN system	ASG/USG		**Michael von der Schulenburg** ERSG for the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone 8 January 2009 [S/2009/18] [S/2009/17]
	High Repre-sentative of the Secretary-General (HRSG)	» Lead a dialogue » Represent a group of countries » Verify and guide electoral processes » Monitor activities of organizations or agencies involved in civilian aspects of a peace settlement	ASG/USG		**Cheick Sidi Diarra** HRSG for the Least Developed Countries, Land-locked Develop-ing Countries and Small Island Developing States 22 January 2008
	Personal Representative of the Secretary-General (PRSG)	» Represent the Secretary-General in specific international conferences, meetings or negotiations	Any level		**Norman Girvan** PRSG on the Border Contro-versy between Guyana and Venezuela 20 April 2010

Figure 3
At a glance: type of senior appointments
in mediation engagements

	Title	Role	Level	Remarks	Examples
ENVOYS	Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General (PESG)	» Undertake a mission in pursuance of an initiative of the Secretary-General without a specific mandate of the Security Council or General Assembly	Any level		**Christopher Ross** PESG for Western Sahara 6 January 2009 [S/2009/19] [S/2009/20]
	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General (SESG)	» Undertake a mission in conjunction of peace-keeping, peace-building or peace-making efforts on matters of which the UNSC and UNGA are seized » Good offices	ASG/USG	» Shorter period than Special Representative » Not resident in the region in most cases	**Olusegun Obasanjo** SESG on the Great Lakes Region of Africa 9 December 2008
	Envoy of the Secretary-General (ESG)	» Undertake a mission in conjunction of peace-keeping, peace-building or peace-making efforts » Good offices	Director	» Shorter period than Special Representative » Not resident in the region in most cases	**Robert H. Serry** ESG for the Middle East Quartet 4 November 2007 [S/2007/690] [S/2007/691]

Source: UN Terminology and Definitions, Draft for DPA, PPU/MSU Guidance Note on
Special Political Missions.

12.3.2.   Existing Headquarters staff

DPA can deploy existing staff members from Headquarters to
initiate a rapid response to a crisis, including early preventive
action. Staff can also be called upon from other UN departments,
UN field missions or UN agencies, funds and programmes. They
can be deployed to provide immediate support for periods rang-
ing from a few days to a few months. For longer-term support

— funding permitting — consideration should be given to recruiting new staff members.

12.3.3. Recruitment of staff on temporary contracts

Temporary staff members are those recruited on contracts of less than one year. Given the nature of mediation operations and the funding arrangements of DPA, this is the most common type of contract. Recruitment for temporary positions requires the issuance of a Temporary Vacancy Announcement (TVA). The recruitment process is generally shorter than formal recruitment processes for regular budget posts. However, associated entitlements, as well as the short-term nature of contracts have, at times, discouraged qualified candidates from applying.

12.3.4. Recruitment of staff on regular contracts

When a position is expected to last for more than one year, a Job Opening (JO, formerly known as a Vacancy Announcement) can be issued in Inspira. For executive positions, an advertisement may also be placed in prominent publications. If the position is funded through extrabudgetary resources, regulations require that funding be secured for a minimum of 18 months before initiating a regular recruitment process. The recruitment process can take six months or more and is not suitable for rapid response.

12.3.5. Consultants

Consultants can be hired relatively quickly to provide a wide range of support services. Consultants are recruited at different levels. However, consultants are not considered UN staff and cannot perform certain functions, among them, supervisory and

representational functions. Consultants, once engaged, are not provided with most benefits that are available to staff members. Consultants are also not eligible for UN positions at a professional or equivalent level in field services for a period of six months after their consultancy. *Tips for hiring external consultants and experts* are available on the DPA Intranet.

12.3.6.   National staff and national consultants or individual contractors

National staff, consultants and individual contractors are rarely hired outside the framework of a team led by international staff. They are usually hired to provide support to other project personnel dispatched by DPA. National staff in mediation operations includes, for example, administrative assistants, translators and drivers.

12.3.7.   Standby Team experts

The Mediation Support Unit (MSU), in cooperation with the Norwegian Refugee Council, maintains a team of seven standby experts in various fields of expertise that can be deployed at short notice. They are often called upon to provide short-term, specialized support to a mediation process. They cannot be deployed for periods exceeding 30 days. The areas of expertise available on the Standby Team include:

- » Process design
- » Power-sharing
- » Wealth-sharing (land, water, oil/gas, mineral, etc.)
- » Constitutional issues
- » Security (DDR, SSR, ceasefires, interim security arrangements)
- » Gender

**Using the Mediation Standby Team and other experts
— the Doha negotiations on Darfur**

A round of negotiations between parties to the Darfur conflict took place in Doha, Qatar, throughout 2010. In support of this process, the Joint Chief Mediator asked for technical assistance from mediation experts to train parties on process and thematic issues as well as to advise the mediation and the parties during the negotiations themselves. In response, DPA deployed a range of experts drawn from the Mediation Standby Team and partner organizations or as individual consultants. The Standby Team expert on power-sharing, for example, was assigned to advise the Chair of the Working Group on Power-sharing and contribute to the drafting of relevant portions of the peace agreement. The Standby Team expert on security issues was assigned to advise one of the negotiating parties on security issues such as DDR and ceasefire management. Other experts were deployed to perform similar functions in areas where the mediation required specialized assistance, such as wealth-sharing/fiscal decentralization, transitional justice and refugee/IDP issues.

The use of the Standby Team provided advantages in terms of deployment speed as well as administrative simplicity since no new funding arrangements were required for their deployment. This allowed DPA to focus its resources on identifying and on-boarding consultants for areas not covered by the Standby Team or where the mediation requested specific advisers.

12.4 Identifying mediation staff: the Mediation Support Roster and Partnerships

A number of resources are available to identify suitable candidates to lead, manage and support a mediation operation. In the initial stages, DPA typically uses existing resources and staff members (e.g., DPA Political Affairs Officers or Mediation Standby Team experts). If a decision is made to establish a mediation team, medium to long-term staffing arrangements should be made.

A key resource to identify specialized staff is the *DPA Mediation Roster*, a database of 200 candidates with various levels of seniority and expertise. The roster includes candidates in the following categories:

» Senior mediators

» Operational mediators

» Thematic mediation experts

Requests for candidates for various posts in a mediation team can be submitted to MSU. On the basis of a request, MSU would provide a shortlist of candidates for review and selection by the requesting entity.

In addition, MSU also maintains an extensive network of specialized mediation partners from which expertise can be mobilized.

Areas of expertise covered by the DPA Mediation Roster, partners and the Mediation Standby Team include:

» Power-sharing

» Constitution-making

» Rule of law

» Refugees & IDPs

» Security, ceasefires and transitional measures (DDR, SSR)

» Wealth-sharing (fiscal, natural resources)

» Transitional justice

» Process design and mediation strategy development

» Drafting

» National dialogues

» Gender (sexual and gender-based violence, strategies for women's effective participation, etc.)

12.5. In-briefings

The importance of briefing staff before their deployment to the field cannot be over-emphasized, particularly for senior managers. A UN Mediator's Manual and a Special Envoy Briefing Package, containing a range of mediation guidance products, UN rules and regulations and country-specific information, have been compiled specifically for this purpose (see *contents checklist*). The package, which is constantly being updated, is available at MSU. It does not, however, provide a substitute for face-to-face in-briefings and meetings with senior DPA managers, including the head of the Department, the directors of concerned regional divisions, the Executive Office and the Head of Public Communications. One-on-one coaching, strategy development and training sessions can also be arranged through MSU.

Desk officers are responsible for arranging briefings for incoming staff on certain administrative regulations by the Executive Office.

Coaching and skills development — the Nepal example

Sound mediation and negotiation skills are important for UN staff to fulfil the mandate of a particular UN mission in the field. To this end, the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) requested the support of the Mediation Support Unit (MSU) for the organization of a tailored training in early 2009. The training included a one-on-one coaching programme for the Representative of the Secretary-General on negotiation and mediation skills, as well as specific training sessions for Political Affairs Officers and Arms Monitors. Two partner organizations and the Mediation Standby Team expert on security arrangements travelled to Nepal to deliver the training. The training event offered UNMIN staff an opportunity to reflect on the theory and practice of negotiation and mediation processes and to apply it to their specific operating environment.

13. Operational support needs

13.1. Travel

Seldom is a mediation project launched without intensive travel, be it of staff members or consultants. Travel requirements for mediation operations, especially in crisis situations, are distinct in many aspects from normal official travel. Such travel is difficult to plan in advance. Coordination and scheduling often leads to rush travel requirements that are often amended shortly afterwards. These challenges are even more acute when travel occurs in the field or during weekends or holidays. Adding to this stress are complex rules governing entitlements for official travel, such as class of tickets, self-ticketing, ad hoc and special Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) rates and miscellaneous expenses, that can be hard to understand and follow by staff unfamiliar with UN rules and regulations. It is important to manage expectations and inform new staff of the rules and implications of UN travel entitlements. More information is available on the *International Civil Service Website*.

In DPA, all travel authorizations are managed by the Executive Office. Requests for travel should be submitted using existing procedures as explained in the *DPA Travel Guide*.

Desk officers are, however, responsible for coordinating the travel of UN staff members with field teams and host authorities, including issuance of credentials or letters of introduction.

Other travel requirements include:

» Issuance of entry visas, if required

» Security clearance

» Medical clearance

A "*travel checklist*" is available on the DPA Intranet.

13.2. Operational support requirements

Mediation operations have particular support needs which should be budgeted during the planning phase. In some cases, existing UN entities on the ground may be able to provide some support services to DPA staff on the basis of a prior agreement; at other times, mediation teams may need to resort to local vendors directly. Options in this regard should be assessed early in the planning process and factored into the operational budget. For this reason, it is of critical importance that representatives of the DPA Executive Office be involved as early as possible in the planning process as well as in field planning missions.

In addition to staffing, operational support requirements include:

» Local transport: vehicles, fuel facilities and drivers

» Facilities: office space, meeting rooms of appropriate sizes for the mediation process as well as conference management services (interpretation, catering, protocol, etc.)

» Communications and IT: mobile phones, computers, printers, scanners and secure internet connections

» Hospitality accounts for the hosting of meetings

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14. Financial and administrative support structures

One of the most important aspects of starting up a mediation operation is the establishment of a functional and responsive support structure to manage administrative and financial issues as well as to coordinate other support functions, such as transport, logistics, communications and facilities. This aspect has often been overlooked in the past, resulting in considerable staff time being spent on coordinating support issues rather than focusing on the substantive aspects of the mediation process. As an immediate but short-term measure, it is recommended that support staff (such as representatives of the Executive Office) be included in rapidly deployed teams to handle support issues until a permanent support structure can be identified.

Options in terms of support systems include direct support from Headquarters through the Executive Office, support through the Department of Field Support (DFS) and support through a UN country team. A decision on the most appropriate support structure should be made early on in the planning process and should be based on the support requirements of the operation. The Executive Office can advise on the optimal support structure for each type of operation.

14.1. Support through the DPA Executive Office

Relying on the services of the EO is appropriate in the early phases of start-up or, subsequently, for small teams requiring basic personnel and travel support. Since it relies on existing support systems for DPA, this approach has the advantage of not requiring any special arrangements and is therefore the most immediately responsive. It is difficult, however, for the EO to support

administrative needs at the local level such as the recruitment of local staff or the administration of operational expenses like local transport, information technology or meeting facilities.

The deployment of an administrative/finance officer from the DPA Executive Office at the initial phase of the project can be helpful in order to reduce the need for political staff to focus on support aspects.

14.2   Support through the Department of Field Support

DFS can provide support services to DPA-led SPMs and other types of operations in the areas of (1) finance, funding, budgeting and liquidation (2) personnel management including recruiting (3) information technology and (4) logistics, including transport and property management.

More information on the services available from DFS, including the distribution of responsibilities and accountability between DPA and DFS in operations supported by DFS, are provided in the forthcoming service level agreement between the two departments.

14.3.   Support through a UN country team

Finally, field support services can also be provided by a UN country team, usually through UNDP. In these cases, the Executive Office issues a financial authorization to the responsible entity — often the local UNDP office — who then manages all support requirements locally, including disbursements and accounting. Financial authorizations are issued on the basis of an operational budget which is approved by DPA at Headquarters level. As a general rule, as many support functions as possible should

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be covered by this arrangement, including regional travel. This approach has the advantage of allowing local requirements, such as the recruitment of local staff or the administration of local operational expenses, to be met locally. Its disadvantage is that it requires more planning and is considerably less flexible since any deviation from the budget requires approval from Headquarters.

For larger and long-term projects, a memorandum of understanding between DPA and UNDP may be required. In all cases, early contact with the local UNDP office can considerably facilitate the establishment of responsive support systems.

If a mission is expected to last for a longer period, an administrative officer should be recruited as soon as possible to support the team on the ground. The Executive Office can play an active role in briefing and training national staff in order to improve service standards and ensure compliance with administrative regulations.

15. Safety and security

15.1. Security umbrella for mediation staff

Staff safety and security remain a top priority of the UN at all times and should therefore feature prominently in planning and budgeting for any type of field deployment. The safety and security of a mediation team in a field mission will fall under the umbrella of the local UN security management system headed by the designated official (DO). The DO is a senior UN staff member (usually the SRSG or resident coordinator) residing in-country who has been assigned by the Secretary-General to oversee all staff safety and security issues. He or she is assisted by the security

management team (SMT), comprising the country representatives of the UN agencies present in the country, as well as by at least one security adviser who coordinates the day-to-day aspects of security management, such as the monitoring of incidents and maintenance of security systems and protocols.

Staff members deployed as part of mediation teams are required to comply with all security rules, including attendance at security briefings, respect of restrictions on staff movements and compliance with all established security protocols.

15.2. Meeting the safety and security needs of mediation teams
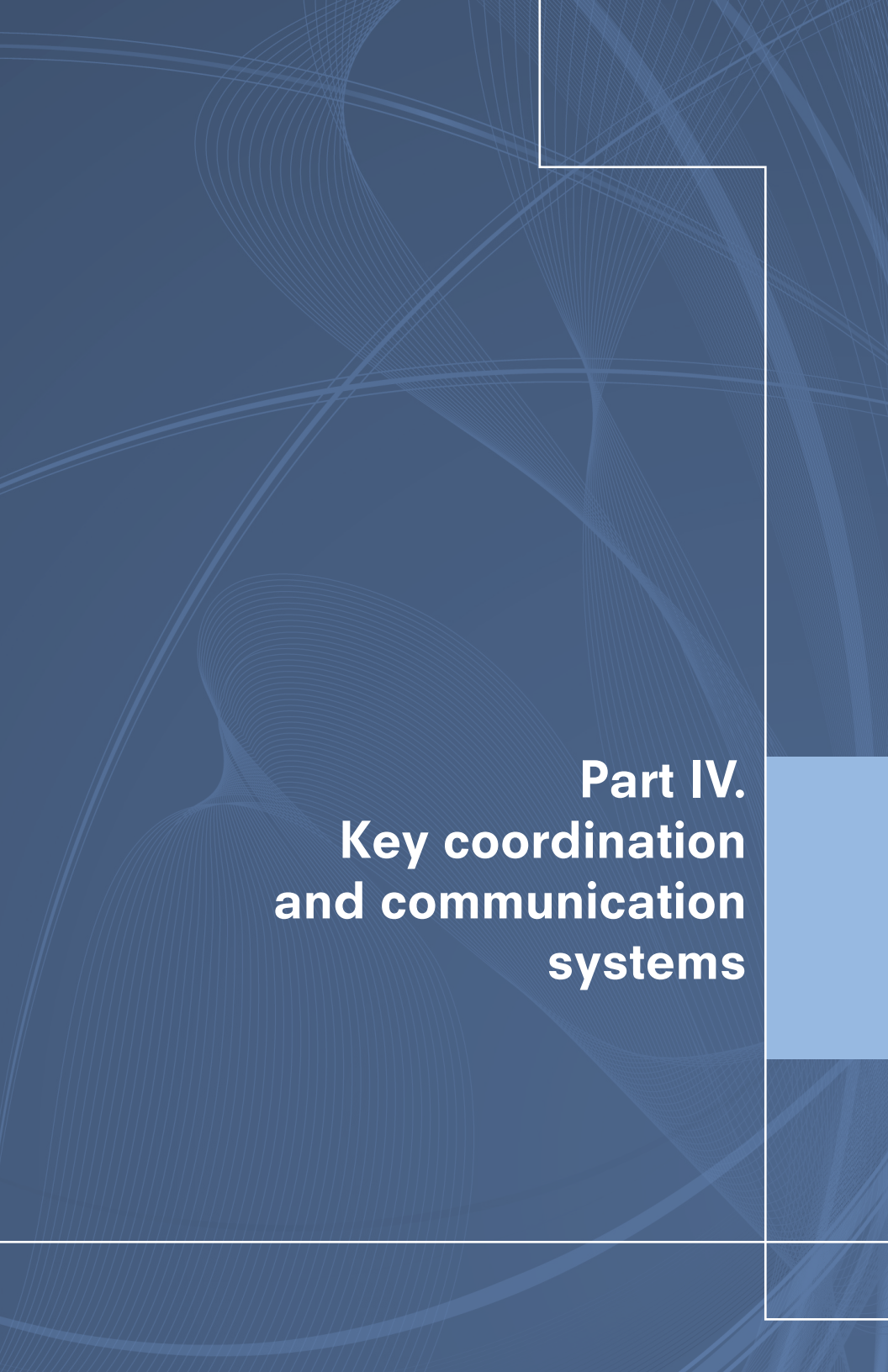
Given the high-profile nature of some mediation initiatives, as well as the stature of some high-level mediators, special security arrangements may be required, such as close protection or installation of particular security systems in facilities and offices. Local security management staff can assist with security risk assessments and make recommendations on how to adapt security systems to the particular operational requirements of mediation teams.

To ensure that adequate security arrangements are in place, the Department of Safety and Security (DSS) should be involved early on in the planning phase, for example, by being included in the Integrated Task Force and, if required, participating in assessment missions. During the implementation phase, mediation teams are expected to liaise closely with DSS staff on the ground.

15.3. Specific security responsibilities of mediation teams

Mediation teams are, by nature, involved in often sensitive and emotionally charged political processes that may, at times,

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enflame local sentiments and create additional security risks for UN staff in a country, irrespective of their affiliation to a specific UN agency, fund or programme. This is particularly relevant at key junctures in a peace process. For this reason, it is of critical importance that mediation teams coordinate with those responsible for security management (both the DO locally and the Under-Secretary-General DSS globally) on developments — including the issuance of media statements at country or Headquarters level — that may cause additional security risks for UN staff.

Part IV.
Key coordination
and communication
systems

Part IV.
Key coordination
and communication systems

A number of supporting systems are common to all mediation processes. The most important of these are for coordination, reporting and communications. These should be established as early as possible in an intervention.

16. Establishing a coordination system

The number of actors involved in mediation endeavours requires the establishment of a sound coordination system. This maximizes unity of effort among all actors (local and international), whose different comparative advantages can be mobilized in support of a process. The UN is often uniquely positioned to manage the coordination system at all levels.

The establishment of coordination systems inevitably raises questions as to which actors should be included and how. While each situation is different, it is advisable to take into account the existing roles and capabilities of different actors to ensure that their networks and influence are adequately leveraged.

Similarly, involving local actors from the start has often proved to be critical to the success of an engagement by ensuring local inputs to strategy development as well as ownership — and therefore support — for the process in the long run.

16.1. Team-level coordination

If several organizations are directly involved in a mediation effort as part of a multi-organization team, a specific coordination forum structured around the lead mediator should be established. This forum is used to exchange information, jointly monitor progress with the mediation strategy and coordinate efforts in support of the lead mediator.

To ensure information-sharing, coordination and cooperation on the ground, a number of additional steps can be taken, such as: co-location of offices in the country in conflict; joint monitoring and analysis of the conflict; joint visits to the country in conflict by the leadership of the organizations; participation by the staff of each mission in the activities of the other mission; public action to demonstrate unity between the organizations, such as joint press conferences; establishment of mechanisms and processes for regular consultation; and joint fundraising for the peace process.

16.2. Country-level coordination

Country-level coordination structures are used to engage local actors other than parties as well as local representatives of international actors such as other Governments or international institutions.

Depending on the design of the mediation process, coordination structures can be established to bring other local stakeholders around a mediation process. If a mediation process includes only political actors, for example, a "consultative forum" of civil society organizations including women's organizations could be established to keep other local stakeholders informed of the process, seek their inputs and secure their buy-in for an eventual outcome.

For international actors, country-level coordination structures are often organized as local chapters of "contact groups" or "groups of friends", who also meet at other levels as discussed below. In other cases, resident coordinators, peace and development advisers and specific members of the diplomatic corps (such as the dean) can play a role in coordinating international action locally.

16.3. International-level coordination

The design of an international coordination structure should take into account existing mechanisms (for example, regional contact groups) as well as the risks and opportunities offered by different options.

In recent years, the establishment of contact groups and groups of friends has been a common feature of international crisis management. These structures usually bring together various Governments, regional organizations and, often, international financial institutions interested in a specific country. They are used to share information, keep diplomatic partners abreast of developments, seek international endorsement of strategies and leverage the influence — individually or collectively — of powerful diplomatic allies. One major advantage of contact groups is their ability to mobilize major foreign donors, which can offer a helpful source of leverage or financial support for the implementation of a peace agreement.

The establishment of such groups can also have drawbacks. Divisions among members, for example, can generate contradictory pressures on a peace process. Some members may be overtly or covertly involved in the conflict and seek to use their

participation in international groupings to promote particular
interests. For these reasons, relations with members should be
managed carefully to avoid accusations of partiality.

> "Friends of the mediator can be a useful device,
> but must be preceded by prior clarification of the
> cardinal rule, which is a commitment to work only
> — or at least principally — at the behest of who-
> ever is responsible for the mediating effort."
>
> — Alvaro De Soto, quoted by
>   Teresa Whitfield in External actors
>   in mediation, Centre for
>   Humanitarian Dialogue,
>   February 2010

Contact groups and groups of friends can meet at different
levels of representation and frequency. It is not uncommon for
contact groups to meet weekly in-country at the ambassadorial
level, quarterly at the ministerial level and yearly at the Head of
State level.

More *information and best practices* on the management of
contact groups and groups of friends as well as a *toolkit on work-
ing with groups of friends* is available on the Intranet.

In most cases, subregional and regional organizations provide
a forum for coordination among neighbouring countries on a spe-
cific mediation process. Typically, country cases are discussed as
part of regular meetings within these institutions or at summits
where Member States may be represented at different levels.

The evolution of dynamics in the international system since
the end of the Cold War suggests an ever-growing role for sub-
regional and regional organizations in the management and

resolution of conflicts. In Africa, for example, the African Union has taken the lead in setting norms and standards for the international community's response to unconstitutional changes of Government. Subregional organizations, whose Member States are also members of the AU, tend to play a very influential role in determining the positions taken by the continental body.

Given the proximity of regional countries to the conflict area, they tend to be in a position to significantly facilitate or undermine a mediation process. For these reasons, close liaison with regional and subregional coordination structures, and, through these efforts, the alignment of neighbouring States behind a mediation strategy, is one of the most important success factors in a mediation initiative.

KEY COORDINATION AND
COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Establishing an international contact group
— the Guinea example

In December 2008, a military junta led by Captain Moussa Dadis Camara took power in Guinea through a coup d'état. As part of efforts to coordinate international, regional and subregional support towards a return to constitutional order, the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with the support of the UN, established the International Contact Group (ICG) on Guinea on the margins of the AU summit held in Addis Ababa in January 2009. Chaired jointly by ECOWAS and the AU, the ICG brought together the country's external partners including, the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), the European Union, the Mano River Union, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), the UN, the Chair of the AU Peace and Security Council and the Chair of ECOWAS, as well as African and permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. The ICG met regularly in various locations (e.g., Conakry, ECOWAS headquarters in Abuja or United Nations Headquarters in New York) as part of its effort to encourage Guineans to establish transitional institutions, complete the transition through the holding of credible elections and mobilize international resources in support of these efforts.

Throughout the transition, the ICG acted as a forum for the harmonization of international positions and actions on Guinea and the pooling of resources in support of the transition. The Group was particularly successful at channelling international pressure, mobilizing financial and technical resources, facilitating dialogue among parties, encouraging the sharing of best practices and promoting the establishment of a conducive environment for the conduct of a peaceful and democratic transition.

16.4. UN system coordination

Field level

UN system coordination on mediation issues takes place at both field and Headquarters levels. At field level, engaging UN country teams consistently in a mediation process is important to ensure that the actions of all components of the UN are mutually reinforcing and jointly contribute to the achievement of the Organization's strategic objectives in the country. This is also

important in preparing for the role of the UN in the implementation of agreements and longer-term peacebuilding activities. UN country teams meet regularly to discuss common programming challenges and monitor the implementation of integrated UN plans. UN envoys and mediators — even roving envoys without a constant presence in a country — can use these regular meetings to keep UN country teams abreast of developments.

> "Having people who had been involved in previous efforts in Cyprus was helpful. They were able to provide institutional knowledge. In addition, it was very helpful to have tapped into UN staff on the ground, as they possessed the required knowledge and expertise. Having people with experience in other Special Political Missions or good offices processes was also useful."
>
> — Cyprus, After Action Review

Headquarters level

At Headquarters level, UN coordination takes place at the working level through integrated task forces (ITFs), integrated mission task forces (IMTFs) and interagency working groups, which bring together all relevant agencies, funds and programmes in a forum chaired by the lead department. ITFs are created for countries where the UN has an official political, peacekeeping or peacebuilding field presence. Their purpose is to exchange information, coordinate the actions of the various components of the UN and ensure that the different strands of activity are consistent with the political strategy of the UN in a conflict or post-conflict country. The leadership, organization and management of ITFs is the key responsibility of DPA desk officers. In 2009, the Secretary-General's

KEY COORDINATION AND
COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Policy Committee approved a new policy whereby an ITF should be created within 48 hours of any unconstitutional change of Government so as to ensure a coordinated UN response. More information on this policy as well as the management of ITFs is available in the *IMPP Guidelines on the Role of Headquarters*.

At the strategic, or principals', level, coordination takes place through the Secretary-General's Policy Committee and bodies such as the Executive Committee on Peace and Security (ECPS).[5] The Secretary-General's Policy Committee is the highest internal coordination body for the UN. Secretariat departments and agencies, funds and programmes are represented at the leadership level. Issues on the agenda of the Policy Committee are subject to extensive prior consultations, which are articulated in carefully negotiated discussion and decision papers. Policy Committee decisions are particularly helpful for coordinating a systemic response to a situation, for example, the launch of an integrated UN mission or the alignment of the actions of all UN components behind a political strategy. The process leading to a Policy Committee decision can, however, be time consuming.

More guidance on interacting with the Policy Committee, including how to seize it and add items to its agenda, is available in the *SOP on DPA Preparation for PC Meetings*.

The ECPS is an interdepartmental Executive Committee composed of 18 UN departments, offices, programmes and funds. Its mandate was broadly defined as "the highest policy development and management instrument within the United Nations Secretariat on critical, cross-cutting issues of peace and security". The ECPS meets once a month to delineate courses of action in

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5   See United Nations coordinating bodies.

situations of immediate security concern as well as in potential conflict situations.

Another resource available for Headquarters-level coordination is the Mediation Focal Points System, which is comprised of all members of the ECPS, including the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). It meets on a monthly basis. This system is the working-level mechanism for developing mediation support policy and guidance materials and sharing best practices across geographic and functional areas.

17. Reporting

Reporting protocols, including frequency, recipients, format and systems, should be established from the outset of any operation. The purposes of reporting are to allow Headquarters to remain abreast of developments on the ground, to engage in strategic dialogue with the team in the field and to contribute to supporting the team's efforts at other levels.

17.1. Subject of reporting

A key task in the start-up phase is to establish a regular reporting system between the field and Headquarters. The golden rule of reporting is that it should cover *all information that Headquarters needs to be able to support the mission.* Similarly, Headquarters should report to the field on developments at Headquarters level that may affect the conduct of the mission on the ground, such as debates in the Security Council.

Reports should be concise and factual, containing analytical comments, as required, for the reader to appreciate the significance

KEY COORDINATION AND
COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Figure 4
At a glance: coordination architecture
and levels of decision-making

UN coordination system	Levels of coordination	Function and type of decision-making
Policy Committee of the Secretary General Executive Committee on Peace and Security Integrated Task Force	**International level** UN Security Council Legislative bodies of international, regional and subregional organizations Contact groups/ groups of friends	**STRATEGIC** » Decision to engage in a mediation process and agreement on broad modalities and principles » Mobilization of resources including for mediation support » Political influence/ leverage
UN Country Team	**Country level** Stakeholders other than parties Representatives of contact groups (ambassador-level) Diplomatic corp UN country team	» Exchange of information » Engaging and securing of support of local actors for the mediation process
Department of Political Affairs HQ – Field Coordination	**Team level** Mediation team **Lead mediator**	» Exchange of information » Monitoring of progress with the mediation strategy » Division of tasks among actors in the mediation » Identification of mediation support needs **TACTICAL**

of developments contained in the reports. They should also contain recommendations for action by Headquarters when appropriate. A *template* for DPA reports is available on the DPA Intranet.

17.2. Recipients of reports

Reporting in mediation engagements is from the head of mission *to* the Secretary-General *through* the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. Typically, reports are sent to the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs with a copy to his advisers on the region concerned, the director of the relevant regional division, desk officers, country focal points in the Mediation Support Unit (MSU) and country focal points in the Electoral Assistance Division, as appropriate. In countries where a peacekeeping operation is deployed, reports may also be sent to the DPKO Situation Centre for dissemination to relevant officers in that Department. When appropriate, reports can also be shared with members of integrated task forces and working groups.

17.3. Management of information security

The distribution list may vary depending on the sensitivity of the information contained in the reports. In pursuance of ST/SGB/2007/6 on information sensitivity, classification and handling, the UN currently uses three levels of information security which affect access to documents:

» The designation "unclassified" shall apply to information or material whose unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected not to cause damage to the work of the UN

» The designation "confidential" shall apply to information or material whose unauthorized disclosure

could reasonably be expected to cause damage to the
work of the UN

» The designation "strictly confidential" shall apply to
information or material whose unauthorized disclo-
sure could reasonably be expected to cause excep-
tionally grave damage to or impede the conduct of
the work of the UN

More details on information security are available in *ST/
SGB/2007/6*.

17.4. Reporting frequency and types of reports

While some operations have fixed reporting cycles, it is generally
accepted that reporting should be on an "as needed" basis: several
times per day at times of crisis, or every few days in quieter peri-
ods. Mediation teams are typically small and reporting require-
ments should be adapted to the capacity of the team.

Types of reporting may include:

» Flash reports

» Daily situation reports

» Weekly reports

» Analytical/thematic reports

» Strategy updates and memos

17.5. Reporting systems and technologies

The UN uses different formats and channels for reporting. In
operations where encryption technology is available, the practice
has been to use the code cable format to transmit daily report-
ing as well as for routine exchanges on various matters between
Headquarters and the field. In 2010, a new system for integrated

reporting, the operations reports repository (ORR),[6] was introduced to rationalize reporting and distribution channels. Procedures for access and use of this system are available on the DPA Intranet.

Secure information can be sent from the field to Headquarters using the mobile office (through Citrix) ICT service. This technology allows staff members to connect from their local internet station into the protected Headquarters network, providing access to UN resources and applications. These include ORR, iSeek, the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) and Lotus Notes. More information on how to request a connection to the mobile office (Citrix) is available in the *UNHQ Mobile Office Standard User's Guide*.

A more informal way of reporting is to hold frequent video or teleconferences between field teams and regional divisions. While at times difficult to plan, this format allows a more personal transmission of information as well as more significant exchanges on strategy.

17.6   Reporting in joint operations

In joint operations, inter-institutional teams may consider issuing common reports to their respective headquarters. While this does not preclude the dispatch of individual reports, it ensures a common monitoring of progress in the implementation of a common strategy.

KEY COORDINATION AND
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[6]   ORR is an electronic tool designed by DFS for the collaborative drafting, sharing and electronic storage of DPKO and DPA mission reports.

17.7. Reporting to Member States

A number of channels are available to keep Member States informed of a mediation process. The choice of the most appropriate mechanisms often depends on the intent, which, for example, will affect whether formal or informal channels are used. Informally, reporting can take place routinely through contact group or group of friends meetings, through the establishment of direct lines of communication with particular Governments and the organization of informal briefings for UN legislative bodies. Official briefings for legislative bodies or the Security Council can be arranged for more formal purposes. Other options include the monthly luncheon of the Secretary-General with the Security Council and, for African issues, briefings to the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa.

18. Communications and media management

18.1. Development of a communications strategy

The management of a communications strategy is of critical importance in mediation endeavours. A mediation team's communications strategy should be closely linked to the mediation strategy to ensure that contacts with the public and the media remain focused on advancing the objectives of the mediation. Guidance on the drafting of a communications strategy is available on the DPA Intranet.

In the start-up phase, priorities in the areas of communications are to (1) establish public information management systems (websites, e-mail distribution list for press releases, a contact list

of journalists, linking with United Nations Information Centres (UNICs), etc.) and (2) explain the role of the UN in a country or in a peace process. In many contexts, such an initiative can draw on traditional communicators at the community levels to ensure broad outreach down to that level. The risks associated with the leveraging of local groups should, however, be taken into account and managed.

A Guidance Note on Public Information in Peace Processes and Agreements and a *toolkit on public information management in mediation processes* are available on the DPA Intranet.

18.2. Interactions with the media

Once a UN (or UN-supported) mediation role is publicly acknowledged, interacting with the media will be an unavoidable and indeed critically important part of the senior UN envoy's responsibilities. The UN policy on relations with the media (outlined in the *UN Media Guidelines*) clearly authorizes staff to engage with media on issues for which they are directly responsible, stressing that sensitive issues should be dealt with at the appropriate level of seniority. The challenge is to do so effectively so as to support the objectives of the peace process. In some cases, the mediator will be injecting an impartial UN perspective. In others, he or she may be tasked by common agreement of the parties to speak on behalf of the peace process as a whole.

In joint mediation endeavours with other organizations, it is important to agree on who will address the media to ensure that the team "speaks with one voice".

KEY COORDINATION AND
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18.3.   Communication tools for mediation teams

At Headquarters level, available communication tools include the publication of statements by the Secretary-General and her/his spokespersons, and direct engagement with the media in the form of press briefings and encounters in New York, which can be facilitated by the DPA Press Officer and the Office of the Spokesperson of the Secretary-General. A briefing by the Head of Public Communications to mediation teams can be very helpful. *The Standard Operating Procedure on Press Statements* provides additional information on these issues.

In the field, communications is conducted using a number of channels, including by:

» Engaging the local media, including through press encounters following high-level meetings and rounds of negotiation or the use of local press releases

» Using UN media outlets, including UN radios, UNICs and other means of outreach

» Engaging civil society groups (women's groups, religious leaders, etc.) and other information transmission channels

Field and Headquarters actors should coordinate closely on all interventions with the media to ensure consistency in messaging across all levels. This is becoming increasingly important as new technologies permit the instant dissemination of information across the world. In particular, statements issued by Headquarters should be closely coordinated with field staff as their content may have implications for the security of staff on the ground.

Part V.
Beyond the
start-up phase

Part V.
Beyond the
start-up phase

19. Shift to medium-term planning

The start-up phase comes to a close when a mode of engagement has been selected, a mediation strategy developed, startup funding has been secured, a mediation team has been staffed and mandate implementation has begun. At this point, the focus should shift to the identification of longer-term options for the sustainment of the mediation processes. As operations often rely on temporary resources in the start-up phase, such as staff deployed from Headquarters or temporary start-up funding, it is important to start considering longer-term options as soon as possible. These options range from making a temporary UN presence more permanent through the identification of longer-term funding and sustainment options to building local capacity for conflict resolution and management.

The shift to longer-term support may also have implications for staffing at Headquarters, an aspect which should be considered as early as possible given the time required to hire new staff.

Plans for the long-term management of operations should also include provisions for the periodic review of mediation strategies, including regular reflections on whether the mediation effort should continue. This should be assessed in relation to the

objectives identified at the launch of the operation as well as the impact of the mediation on the conflict.

20. Options for medium-term funding

A number of generic options are available for medium-term funding depending on the nature of the process, the role played by the UN and the forecast of upcoming requirements. These options include:

- » Establishment of a Special Political Mission (SPM) or revision of an existing SPM mandate, which requires a mandate from the Security Council

- » Creation of a special trust fund to finance the operation in the medium to long term

- » Handover to another UN component such as the Resident Coordinator's office or to another organization

The Policy and Mediation Division of DPA can provide advice on these options.

21. Lessons learning

21.1. Lessons learning as part of the strengthening agenda of DPA

As part of its institutional strengthening agenda, DPA has designed and approved a number of tools to facilitate lessons learning and the identification of best practices for replication from one operation to another other. These learning activities allow teams to improve their operations in real time by reflecting on positive

and negative aspects of their activities, and the Department to improve its effectiveness over time. More information on *knowledge management resources* available to DPA staff is available on the DPA Intranet.

21.2. When and how to conduct lessons-learning exercises

Although lessons learning can take place at any point in an operation, it usually coincides with the closure of a particular project or phase. An After Action Review could, for example, be conducted after the initial planning phase or at mid-point in a mediation process. DPA *lessons learning methodologies and templates* are available on the DPA Intranet.

All senior officials are required to submit *End of Assignment Reports* following the completion of their mandates. The Mediator-in-Residence Programme can also allow senior officials to spend some time at Headquarters reflecting on their assignments and providing recommendations for the future. Other staff and consultants should be debriefed immediately upon return from their assignment. The main objective of debriefing procedures is to build a departmental institutional memory on key challenges and good practices in mediation processes. The capture of such lessons will be used in the continuity of the mission or for future missions.

It is also important that key documents be archived on UN Peacemaker and the DPA Intranet for the reference of future teams.

D. REFERENCES

Related guidance materials:

- » Guidelines for Desk Officers on supporting SPMs
- » Progress Report: transforming DPA's Preventive Diplomacy, Mediation and Peacebuilding efforts
- » Secretary-General's report on enhancing mediation and its support activities
- » DPA Framework for Political Analysis
- » UN Guidelines for Strategic Assessment
- » AU-UN Mediation Partnerships Guidelines
- » Checklist of Key Questions when Designing Mediation Processes
- » Operational Guidance Note: pre-negotiation checklist
- » Joint Planning for Joint Mediations: Strategy Development Workshop
- » Instructions Manual: Policy Committee of the Secretary-General
- » A Manual for UN Mediators: Advice from UN Representatives and Envoys
- » Groups of Friends and their Uses
- » Working with Groups of Friends (USIP)
- » SOP: DPA Preparation for Policy Committee Meetings
- » IMPP Guidelines: Role of Headquarters — Integrated Planning for UN Field Presences
- » Policy Committee of the Secretary-General: Guidance, and Tips for Drafting Effective Recommendations

- » Policy Committee of the Secretary-General: Checklist for Desk Officers
- » Delegated Authority in UN Field Missions led by DPA and supported by DFS
- » Secretary-General's Bulletin on the organization of the Department of Political Affairs
- » Policy Directive: DPA Extrabudgetary Resources Management
- » DPA Resource Mobilization Guideline
- » DPA Trust Fund Management Guideline
- » DPA Project Management Guideline
- » Framework for the Engagement of PDAs in Support of Field-based Conflict Prevention Initiatives
- » Mediation Start-up Budget Template
- » Mediation Start-up Budget Sample
- » Cluster I XB Funding Request Template
- » Checklist of Special Envoy Briefing Package
- » DPA Mediation Roster Fact Sheet
- » General Tips for Hiring External Consultants
- » TOR for Lead Mediator: Sample
- » TOR for Mediation Team Chief of Staff: Sample
- » TOR Chief of Operations for Mediation Support
- » TOR Mediation Support Officer: Sample
- » DPA Official Travel Guide
- » Travel Checklist
- » Secretary-General's Bulletin on information sensitivity, classification and handling

- » User Guide for Operations Reports Repository
- » FAQ Guide for Operations Reports Repository
- » Policy Guidance: Public Information (DPI/DPKO)
- » DPI Media Guidelines
- » Addressing the media in peace processes and agreements
- » Public Information in Peace Processes Agreements
- » Peace Operations Missions Start-up Field Guide
- » After Action Reviews on mediation start-up and management in Cyprus, Kenya and Madagascar
- » Guidance and Templates: End of Assignment Reports
- » Guidance and Templates: Handover Notes
- » Guidance and Templates: Survey of Practice
- » DPA Report Template

E.   MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

The responsibility for compliance with these Guidelines lies with all components of DPA, as appropriate.

Monitoring of compliance is the responsibility of the Mediation Support Unit.

F.   CONTACT AND RESOURCES ON START-UP PROCESSES

The contact person for further information on mediation start-up is Sébastien Lapierre (*lapierre@un.org* or 917-367-5438) in the Mediation Support Unit of the Policy and Mediation Division.

G.   HISTORY

These Guidelines were approved on 8 June 2011 by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and should be reviewed no later than 30 June 2013.

Annex: Mediation start-up checklist

Key tasks	Specific considerations
I — Strategic planning for mediation engagements	
Assessment and decision-making	
❏ Conflict analysis	» The local UN team, civil society representatives and Member States can provide invaluable knowledge and information.
❏ Assessment of engagement options	» Is mediation the most suitable form of third-party engagement?
❏ Liaison and strategic coordination with other actors (local and international), including agreement on lead mediator	**Strategic coordination includes:** » Development of a joint vision » Agreement on a division of labour » Agreement on key principles and definition of what minimal outcome would be acceptable » Agreement on basic modalities, e.g., leadership of the initiative, time frames
❏ Determination of mode of UN engagement	» Direct (lead or co-lead) or indirect (support) engagement?
Developing a mediation strategy	
❏ Development of a mediation strategy	» Inclusion of views of local actors, including representatives of women **The strategy should include:** » A broad approach » International/local actors that must be included in the process » Schematic coordination architecture » A process that will be used to reach an agreement » Post-agreement requirements and support structure
❏ Endorsement of the strategy at appropriate levels	
II — Operational planning for mediation processes	
❏ Development of an operational plan	» To be developed in close collaboration with EO, the operational plan identifies the concrete resources required to implement the strategy.
❏ Identification of sources of funding	**Consider:** » Existing resources » Extrabudgetary funds » Funds from the Secretary-General's unforeseen and extraordinary expenses account » Peacebuilding Fund » SPMs provisions in the regular budget
❏ Finalization of operational budgets	**Consider expenses for:** » Staffing (international and national) » Travel and DSA » Office facilities » Operational expenses (meeting rooms, etc.) » Communication and IT » Local transport
❏ Drafting of TOR for envoys and staff	» ToRs should mention responsibilities and expectations, including reporting protocol between the field and Headquarters
❏ Identification of suitable candidates for the mediation team	**Consider:** » Existing staff » Temporary appointments » Consultants or experts » National staff, consultants or individual contractors » Standby team of experts and partners

❏ Issuance of contracts	» Political implications of staff titles and administrative status
❏ In-briefing of staff	» Personal briefings and meetings with senior DPA managers » Provision of guidance documents from Special Envoy Briefing Package, UN Mediator's Manual, Mediation Start-up Resource Package, etc.
❏ Travel arrangements	**In addition to air tickets and accommodation arrangements, considerations include:** » Issuance of visas » Security clearance » Medical clearance
❏ Mobilization of operational resources	**Including:** » Local transportation » Communications and IT equipment » Office facilities
❏ Decision on the financial and administrative support structure	**Consider support through:** » DPA/Headquarters through the Executive Office (EO) » The Department of Field Support (DFS) » The UN country team
❏ Safety and security requirements	» How will the safety and security of the team be managed? » How will the specific security needs of the team be taken into account? » How will the team share information on developments that may affect the security of other UN staff members in the country?

III — Establishment of coordination and communication systems

❏ Design and establishment of a coordination architecture	» At the team level » At the country level » At the international level » Within the UN system (Headquarters and field)
❏ Establishment of a reporting system	**Consider:** » Recipients of reports » Reporting frequency and types of reports » Common reporting in joint operations » Systems and technologies
❏ Liaison with Member States	» Different formats (formal or informal) for different objectives
❏ Communication and media management strategy	» The communications strategy in an extension of the mediation strategy **The strategy should include:** » Clear articulation of objectives, key messages, media monitoring system and outreach infrastructure » Field/Headquarters coordination of interventions with the media » Linkage with United Nation Information Centres (UNICs)

IV — Beyond the start-up phase

❏ Strategic guidance, including revision of mediation strategy	» Is the mediation effort helping to resolve the conflict, or merely "freezing" it?
❏ Planning for the medium term and initiating a shift to medium-term funding sources	**Including:** » Identification of medium-term funding options to sustain the operation
❏ Capturing lesson learned and institutional memory	**Including:** » After Action Reviews at different stages of the mediation process » End of Assignment reports for senior officials » "Mediator-in-residence" debriefing option

www.un.org/depts/dpa

www.un.org/peacemaker