

# OSLOFORUM2019

## Rebooting mediation

Connecting tracks, processes and people



Meeting  
**report**

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Humanitarian  
Dialogue



Norwegian Ministry  
of Foreign Affairs

# Improving the mediation of armed conflict

## A global series of mediation retreats

The Oslo Forum is widely acknowledged as the leading international network of conflict mediation practitioners. Co-hosted by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD) and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Oslo Forum regularly convenes conflict mediators, high-level decision-makers and key peace process actors in a series of informal and discreet retreats.

The Oslo Forum features an annual global event in Oslo and is complemented by regional retreats in Africa and Asia. The aim is to improve the practice of conflict mediation through facilitating open exchange and reflection across institutional and conceptual divides, providing informal networking opportunities that encourage coordination and cooperation when needed and allowing space for conflict parties to advance their negotiations.

## Sharing experiences and insights

Mediation is increasingly seen as an effective means of resolving armed conflicts and the growing number of actors involved in its practice testifies to its emergence as a distinct field of international diplomacy. The pressured working environment of mediation rarely provides opportunities for reflection. Given the immense challenges of bringing about sustainable negotiated solutions to violent conflicts, mediators benefit from looking beyond their own particular experiences for inspiration, lessons and support.

The uniquely informal and discreet retreats of the Oslo Forum series facilitate a frank and open exchange of insights by those working to bring warring parties together. By convening key actors from the United Nations, regional organisations and governments, as well as private organisations and prominent peacemakers, the retreats also provide a unique networking opportunity.

## Where politics meets practice

Participation is by invitation only. Sessions take the form of closed-door discussions and adhere to the Chatham House Rule of non-attribution. Sessions are designed to stimulate informed exchanges with provocative inputs from a range of different speakers, including conflict party representatives, war correspondents, outstanding analysts, thinkers and experts on specific issues.

Participants have included **Jimmy Carter**, former President of the United States; **Federica Mogherini**, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy; **Juan Manuel Santos**, former President of Colombia; **António Guterres**, Secretary-General of the United Nations; **Kofi Annan**, former Secretary-General of the United Nations; **Fatou Bensouda**, Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court; **Catherine Samba-Panza**, former President of the Central African Republic; **Martti Ahtisaari**, former President of Finland; **Thabo Mbeki**, former President of South Africa and **John Kerry**, former Secretary of State of the United States. The Oslo Forum is proud to have hosted several Nobel Peace Prize laureates.

The retreats refrain from making public recommendations, aiming instead to advance the practice of conflict mediation.

OSLOFORUM2019

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# Rebooting mediation

## Connecting tracks, processes and people



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The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD) is a private diplomacy organisation founded on the principles of humanity, impartiality and independence. Its mission is to help prevent, mitigate and resolve armed conflict through dialogue and mediation.

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## Oslo Forum

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*Smail Chergui and Mohamed Al Hassan*



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## The Oslo Forum 2019: an overview

The seventeenth Oslo Forum brought together about 120 of the world's leading peacemakers, decision-makers, conflict actors and academics, gathering people of 48 nationalities. Participants included: Ahmed Isse Awad, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia; Anwar bin Mohammed Gargash, Cabinet Member and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates; Markos Tekle Rike, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia; Annika Söder, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden; Sodiq Safoev, First Deputy Chairman of the Senate of Parliament of Uzbekistan; Roman Vassilenko, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan; Smail Chergui, African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security; David M. Beasley, Executive Director of the World Food Programme; Hanna S. Tetteh, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union; and Ine Eriksen Søreide, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway.

This year's overarching theme was **Rebooting mediation: connecting tracks, processes and people**. Participants explored how mediators can navigate a changing mediation landscape in which comprehensive agreements have become scarce. Given today's fragmentation of conflict parties, participants were asked how mediators can better connect different peacemaking tracks to ensure coherence among them. They also reflected on how bottom-up initiatives can contribute to elite negotiations, and how peace processes can accommodate multiple armed groups. Throughout the event, participants reflected on the importance of the voices of women and young people becoming integral to high-level processes.

Following summits on the **Korean Peninsula** in 2018 and 2019, participants discussed the rapprochement between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America. Despite positive steps, participants cautioned that a significant

trust deficit remains. They therefore underlined the need for a clear road map with buy-in from both parties and other relevant regional players that helps to align priorities and expectations. To enable progress, participants encouraged a change in approach to negotiations and advocated for moving from an all-or-nothing model to an iterative action-for-action one.

Exploring **cyber conflicts**, participants noted the rapid growth in the number of countries developing offensive cyber capabilities. In order to prevent tensions in cyberspace from leading to kinetic confrontation, experts underlined the important role that discreet diplomacy and mediation can play. Participants concluded on the need for cyber-diplomats and mediators to work on strengthening norms to improve definitions of acceptable cyber conduct and unacceptable targets.

In a session on **climate change** and mediation, experts reminded the audience that, while climate change affects conflict in many ways, the key cause of conflict is the poor management of climate change issues rather than climate change itself. While participants recognised the importance of encouraging local communities to take ownership of climate change efforts, they noted the importance of global responsibility and cooperation to address the issue in the long term.

During a session on **Nigeria**, participants reflected on the challenge posed by vigilante groups, which have emerged to fill the security void left by the government. While such groups have in some cases contributed positively to reducing insecurity in the country, they have also been accused of committing atrocities. To address this issue, participants advocated for a multi-pronged approach – including short-term responses to matters such as reintegration, disarmament and dialogue, and long-term policies to address structural problems such as underdevelopment, insecurity and limited access to education and employment opportunities.

“  
 In the absence of good  
 governance and truly  
 inclusive processes,  
 peace would not  
 be sustainable.  
 ”



Jeffrey Feltman

Following confidence-building measures agreed to in Stockholm in December 2018 to address the conflict in **Yemen**, participants regretted the lack of clarity and mechanisms to ensure the successful implementation of the agreement. While all concurred on the need for the next round of negotiations to be more inclusive,

participants could not agree on which actors, domestic and regional, should be represented at the negotiation table.

As the humanitarian situation in **Venezuela** is among the worst in the world, participants acknowledged that international actors, and in particular the United States, Russia and China, will play a key role in untangling the political crisis in the country. All feared, however, that the opposition might collapse before an agreement can be reached and agreed that the window for exiting the crisis peacefully is slowly closing.

Participants also urged governments in the **Horn of Africa** to consolidate the gains from recent improvements of relations between themselves, before delving into political or economic commitments with the Gulf states. Meanwhile, discussing the situation in **Somalia**, participants noted that many factors are preventing the emergence of stability in the country: from the interference of regional actors to the failure of self-governance of member states or the radical ideology and violent actions of Al-Shabaab.

In other sessions, participants reflected on the role mediation can play in **political crises** to prevent the situation from deteriorating further, while ensuring ownership of the process and agreement by the parties. They also discussed what can be learned from the **breakdown of peace talks** and how mediators can build on the progress achieved despite the lack of an agreement. Other sessions focused on the nexus between peacemaking and **constitution-drafting** processes, or efforts for peace in **Afghanistan, Syria** and **Libya**, while some participants also took stock of the developments in **Myanmar** and **Central Asia**.

As mediators face ever-more complex conflicts, intertwined with geopolitical interests and increasingly fragmented conflict parties, this year's Oslo Forum placed peacemaking practitioners centre-stage to identify concrete and creative ways to address today's most pressing challenges. Participants insisted on the importance of global cooperation for successful peace processes and repeated that, in the absence of good governance and truly inclusive processes, peace would not be sustainable.

# Peace for the People

*Extract from the keynote address by H.E. Mr Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea, on 12 June 2019*

Recently, the peace process on the Korean Peninsula is under way to bring fundamental changes in the security situation of the Peninsula with the determination of the leaders of the two Koreas as well as the United States.

In Berlin in 2017, I proposed a new peace initiative for the Korean Peninsula, and North Korea positively responded in a New Year's address in January of last year. The 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympic Games turned out to be a successful "Peace Olympics" with the North's participation and international support.

I met Chairman Kim Jong Un at Panmunjeom in April of last year. This was a historic moment, when the supreme leader of the North has stepped foot on the soil of the South for the first time since the division of the Korean Peninsula. Later, we agreed to cease hostile military activities against each other, to withdraw guard-posts and to recover the remains of the deceased during the Korean War in the Demilitarized Zone.

Now, the two Koreas maintain a joint liaison office in Gaeseong, where representatives from both sides can meet and communicate at any time. Firearms have been withdrawn from the Joint Security Area of the DMZ, where the soldiers of both Koreas as well as the United Nations Command are on guard together, and the southern part of the JSA has already been opened to general tourists. A "Peace Trail" has been established inside the DMZ, which had been a tragic symbol of Korean division, thus the public can walk along the trail.

Norway has never faltered on the journey for peace, as evidenced by the peace that exists today. Likewise, the Korean government will stride forward unwaveringly, to achieve peace without fail.

Today happens to be the first anniversary of the first North Korea-United States summit, which is attributable to bold commitment and leadership of President Donald J. Trump and Chairman Kim Jong Un. One year ago, the leaders of the two sides met face to

face, for the first time ever, in Singapore. They reached an agreement on the overriding principles of the complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, new North Korea-US relations, and a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula.

Now that agreement is moving forward. Talks appear in a stalemate since the second North Korea-United States summit, but that is because we need some time to understand each other thoroughly. It is the process of thawing out hostile feelings that have persisted for the last 70 years.

What we need now is not a new vision or proclamation, but the deepening of mutual understanding and trust. With this as a foundation, we have to strengthen the will for dialogue further.

Even after the second North Korea-United States summit, President Trump and Chairman Kim are still expressing the trust on each other and their firm resolve towards further dialogue. The international community is providing consistent support for the realisation of peace through dialogue, and this serves as great strength for overcoming the current impasse.

Albert Einstein said, "Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding." I sincerely wish his insight to be engraved in our mind. [...]

The quest for peace on the Korean Peninsula is in no way easy. The time needed will not be short. However, when mutual understanding allows enmity to dissolve, like the snow that melts and flows to the ocean, peace on the Korean Peninsula will also reach its goal.

Norway and Korea are partners for peace. I hope that Norway will continue to share its wisdom and strength until peace on the Korean Peninsula firmly takes root.

The Republic of Korea will always remain with Norway on its noble journey toward peace and prosperity for all of humanity.

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What we need now is  
[ . . . ] the deepening of  
mutual understanding  
and trust.

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*Orzala A. Nemat, Maha Yahya and Ghassan Salamé*

## Venezuela: on the edge

Following the failure of a coup d'état led by the president of the National Assembly and self-declared President Juan Guaidó, Venezuela is experiencing a deep political crisis. The humanitarian situation in the country is arguably among the worst in the world, its economy has experienced an unprecedented decline for a non-war period, and millions of refugees have started to destabilise the entire region. While tensions currently remain mostly in the political realm, the situation could quickly escalate into anarchy or even widespread civil war.

Norway was described by participants as being well placed to facilitate discussions between the government and the opposition due to its access to the conflict parties and its lack of stake in the conflict. However, a leak in May 2019 that revealed ongoing negotiations in Oslo has put pressure on the negotiating parties and opened up space for spoilers. In addition, it seems that the window of opportunity for the parties to find an agreement is slowly closing.

In terms of the most pressing issues to be discussed, participants mentioned the importance of free, fair and internationally monitored elections and the lifting of sanctions. It was also underlined that sequencing of issues to be addressed will be critical to the process. Meanwhile, issues such as transitional justice, being particularly sensitive, might need to be tackled at a later stage of the negotiations.

To support the ongoing process, one participant underlined the need to put in place three baskets of confidence-building measures (CBMs). A first round of CBMs could involve the government releasing political prisoners, restoring the rights of the members of the National Assembly and dissolving the Constituent Assembly; and the opposition could call on the United States to lift sanctions currently in place. For the elections, CBMs could

include changing the composition of the electoral commission and the Supreme Court, and allowing opposition members to compete freely. Post-election, CBMs could include proportional representation, creating a senate and providing guarantees to the Chavistas that their movement will be able to run in future elections. It was noted that both the military and the Chavistas will need to be directly included in the process for real change to take place in Venezuela.

Regarding the role of international actors, one participant noted the very positive support received by Venezuelans from the Inter-

national Contact Group, the Lima Group and countries such as Norway. The less positive contribution of Cuba and others supporting the Maduro regime was also mentioned, although Cuba's exact role was debated among participants. The over-simplification of the conflict by the United States, notably accusing Chavismo of being responsible for all ills in the country and adopting a hardline approach towards the regime, was described as complicating the resolution of the political crisis. All agreed however that the lifting of US sanctions will be key to improving the situation in Venezuela, and that the US will need to guarantee that it will recognise the result of elections regardless of who wins. Finally, participants noted that

both China and Russia were expected to play important roles in the resolution of the current tensions.

While one participant concluded that a Venezuelan-owned and internally driven process would be absolutely critical, all agreed that the main danger was for the opposition to collapse before an agreement can be reached.

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The window of opportunity for the parties to find an agreement is slowly closing.

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## Reconciliation in Somalia: building peace from the ground up?

Somalia has been on a long journey towards peace and stability. Multiple efforts have now led to the creation of a National Reconciliation Framework (NRF), approved by the National Council of Ministers in 2019. The NRF aims to provide a reconciliation platform that will help Somalis build trust in their communities and the states' governments, as well as bridge the gap between local and national peace efforts. The failure of self-governance of states and a breakdown of relationships between the federal government and federal member states are some of the obstacles that the NRF has to tackle.

The NRF, although a Somali process, is impacted by a range of regional and international actors such as the UN, AU, IGAD, Norway, Finland and Gulf countries. Some participants noted that the involvement of these actors, while beneficial in providing technical and financial assistance, can also complicate the process. In addition, the duplication of efforts and underestimation of the time required for reconciliation and state-building processes can provide needless hurdles for Somali stakeholders. More broadly, participants noted that some foreign actors are also directly involved in the conflict, which one participant described as a 'global war'.

As a result, while some actors enable the process, others act as spoilers, including by playing out proxy wars in Somalia. Irrespective of their role, each actor has interests that they bring to the reconciliation process. Some, like Ethiopia, are enablers and play a positive role in the region. On the other hand, participants noted during the session that some actors from the Gulf complicate the reconciliation process as they oppose the goals of the federal government and support competing objectives of some federal member states.

Another obstacle to reconciliation efforts is the prospect of engaging Al-Shabaab. The radical ideology and violent actions

of this group make it challenging to include it in talks, participants noted, although some members could potentially be engaged. One participant described three factions within Al-Shabaab: the ideological, which is not interested in dialogue; and the opportunists and foot soldiers, both of whom can be engaged. A multi-layered approach is therefore needed to address the role of these factions. Such a method could comprise enabling political and ideological debates, promoting dialogue across social and ideological divides, providing education and job opportunities, and creating stronger Somali security forces.

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There are  
numerous hurdles  
in the way of  
reconciliation efforts  
in Somalia.

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In addition, participants underlined the need to rebuild state institutions through consensus, and to ensure that these institutions are responsive and accountable. It will also be important to revive the economy, which will require financial and human resources, and for the diaspora to play a significant role through remittances and creative business ideas. To achieve these goals sustainably, the perspectives of all segments of Somali society will need to be incorporated.

More broadly, as part of the NRF, the focus on consensus-building has allowed for the meaningful inclusion of women, youth and marginalised groups. Including these groups has not gone unopposed, as this approach is in stark contrast to traditional reconciliation processes, which are often patriarchal. However, including marginalised groups is a way of hearing their grievances and preventing the emergence of spoilers.

Realistically, there are numerous hurdles in the way of reconciliation efforts in Somalia, and solutions will take time, effort and technical and financial investment. Nevertheless, there is certainly reason to hope for a brighter future for the country.



*Barney Afako (top left), April Longley Alley and Christina Murray (top right), Meredith Preston McGhie (bottom right), Dag Halvor Nylander (bottom left)*

## Heating up: climate change and mediation

Climate change is redrawing the maps of the world: changing where rain falls, altering the extent of deserts and affecting where food can be grown. The scientific literature agrees that there are several ways in which climate change can indirectly feed conflict dynamics, by, among other things: exacerbating poverty and food insecurity, forcing people to leave their homes, and straining shared resources such as transboundary water. Although climate change affects conflict in many ways, participants in this session noted that the key cause of conflict is, in fact, the poor management of climate change issues rather than climate change itself.

Meanwhile, those areas that have suffered violent conflict tend to be highly vulnerable to climate change and less able to adapt to the speed and scale of changes. The most susceptible populations are those whose lives are affected by changes in the productivity of land or rising sea levels. In such areas, more should be done to predict and prepare for where climate change could act as a threat multiplier. However, in those most vulnerable

areas, the demands on governments are formidable, and budgets constrained, making it challenging for them to invest as they should in this issue. Therefore, empowering communities to deal with the problem could be beneficial, as they are directly affected by the situation and have a comprehensive knowledge of their local environment.

Encouraging communities to take ownership of climate change efforts is a practical solution to an urgent issue rather than a measure intended to absolve governments of their responsibility to act. When governments can act, they should focus on replenishing resources. Furthermore, governments have to realise that this is a transboundary issue which calls for regional collaboration. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with its work on the transhumance protocol, for example, has led a significant regional effort to support the lifestyle of those acutely affected by the changing environment. Notwithstanding the potential of the protocol, participants noted that many gov-



Zainab M. Hassan



Annika Söder

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Climate change can also constitute a creative entry point for mediators.

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”

ernments lacked the political will to implement it fully. More broadly, a lack of political will hinders rapid progress on mitigating climate change the world over.

Regardless, having such multi-stakeholder protocols is a positive step in climate change efforts and highlights the fact that the environment can be used as a point of dialogue to bring conflict parties together. Climate change can also constitute a creative entry point for mediators to find common ground among parties unwilling to address political matters. Additionally, it is a useful angle in negotiating peace agreements because shared natural resources and common environmental challenges like climate change, although becoming increasingly politicised, are generally seen as a politically neutral entry point that affects everyone.

Such challenges may therefore become a way of bringing conflictual parties together to address a shared concern.

For agreements to be sustainable, however, they need to be developed with flexibility and consideration for changing environmental patterns. Taking the changing environment into account in peacemaking is important as scientists may have underestimated the speed of climate change, and the context in which peace agreements are drafted could be affected much faster than anticipated. For these reasons, one participant underlined the need for technical experts on climate change to be consulted in peace efforts.

Ultimately, as mediators and conflict parties try to grapple with the impacts of climate change, there is a need to adopt a truly global perspective. Such a perspective necessitates global responsibility and cooperation, not leaving the burden of addressing this critical issue to those regions of the world that have contributed least to emissions and pollutants but are now the hardest hit.



*Christine Schraner-Burgener*



*Lori-Anne Théroux Bénoni*

## The Korean Peninsula summits: breakdown or breakthrough?

Throughout 2017, the threat of war loomed large between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the United States of America (US). Considerable advances in DPRK's nuclear weapons development, an increase in successful Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) testing and aggressive rhetoric by both governments brought the two countries to the brink. Since then, however, there has been a historic rapprochement between them, which culminated in 'Peace Olympics', two summits, letters exchanged and a very public, budding relationship between the respective nations' leaders. It had been a long time since observers last dared to imagine a peaceful Korean peninsula. As participants noted during the session, however, that prospect was then on hold, as failure of the February 2019 Hanoi Summit to reach an agreement had stalled the process without a clear re-start date.<sup>1</sup>

Despite important improvements in the relationship between the US and DPRK, participants agreed that a significant trust deficit remains. This may be why the Singapore Summit, focusing on key points of contention (security guarantees, ICBMs and complete and verifiable denuclearisation), has not gained traction in implementation. Exacerbating the trust issues are diverging objectives and expectations. Reflecting on the Hanoi Summit in particular, participants noted considerable differences in priorities, with the US focused on denuclearisation while the DPRK prioritised sanctions relief and security guarantees. For participants, it was clear that the lack of alignment on priorities meant that expectations for the Hanoi Summit were not met, leading to its abrupt end. Misaligned expectations remained an issue up to the time of the Oslo Forum.

Additional issues impeding the process are the leaders' dispositions and the strategies currently employed by them in negotiations. For example, President Trump's shifting approach to

negotiations and withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Deal raise questions for the DPRK about the intentions of the United States. On the DPRK side, constant changes in personnel tasked with negotiations with the US make it difficult to determine how to establish working-level contacts that could ensure adequate preparation and avoid a repeat of the Hanoi-Summit walkout.

Participants agreed that kick-starting the process requires creative thinking to find solutions and facilitate new entry points. To that end, participants returned to the need for a clear road map with

buy-in from both parties and other relevant regional players that helps align priorities and expectations. They encouraged prioritising the DPRK's economic development, although participants agreed that the sanction regime makes this aspect difficult. Additionally, the DPRK's cyber-crime threat could help key actors, including China and the US, to find common ground and a place to put pressure on the DPRK. Lastly, encouraging a change in approach to negotiations, primarily through moving from an all-or-nothing model to an iterative action-for-action one, may be useful going forward, although deciding on the degree of iteration will be contentious.

Ultimately, participants agreed that more can and should be done to get the parties back to the negotiating table. Ironically, the same unpredictability that posed such a challenge to the stability of the process gives hope for its revival.

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Despite important improvements in the relationship between the US and DPRK [. . .] a significant trust deficit remains.

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1. Just after the Oslo Forum 2019, held on 18–19 June, the two leaders met officially for the first time, on 30 June, in the Demilitarised Zone. This was the first occasion on which a US president stepped into North Korea.



*Joëlle Jenny*



*Bisi Akande*

## Cyberspace: mediation's next frontier?

Participants identified several pertinent trends in the cyber domain. First, there is growing recognition that cyber conflict is not distinct from conventional conflict but constitutes a sub-dimension of it. Second, there is rapid growth in the number of countries that are developing offensive cyber capabilities, evidenced by a five-fold increase in a decade from six countries in 2009 to thirty countries today. Third, the discourse about cyber conflict has evolved: initial views were state-centric but there is now growing acceptance that the landscape is more complex – today, many private actors possess offensive cyber capabilities and the use of proxies in the cyber domain is common. Finally, it was noted that, as 5G technology allows everyday appliances to be connected to the internet, the available attack surface will grow, increasing the disruptive and destructive potential of cyber-attacks.

Questions about social media, fake news and cyber terrorism were raised by participants, but experts cautioned against expanding

the scope of cyber conflict to include all aspects of the use of technology in the conflict sphere. For the sake of clarity, they recommended that 'cyber conflict' should be used specifically for unauthorised hacking of and access to computer and infrastructure systems, and not as a catch-all term.

While discussing the legal dimensions of cyber conflict, participants noted that most countries have reached an agreement that international law applies in cyber conflict. However, there is still a lack of understanding about what this means in practical terms. Additionally, a lack of consequences for actors who are known to be violating the principles of international law in cyberspace emboldens others to also be increasingly aggressive.

The issue of attribution in cyberspace was discussed in depth. Experts noted that many governments and private industry actors are able to identify cyber-attackers with significant accuracy. However, state and private actors are still hesitant to discuss or



Yagana Bukar



Michael Anker Lollesgaard

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Many future conflicts are likely to include a cyber element.

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pool their capabilities as this would reveal sources and trade secrets. Participants also noted that, regardless of how accurately actors are able to identify cyber-attackers, public attribution remains a political decision as it can increase pressure to take retaliatory measures against the alleged offender.

Discreet diplomacy and mediation can play an important role in such situations by allowing states to send messages to the suspected state about attributed attacks in order to avoid public pressure created through public attribution. Participants also noted that cyber issues can be useful for opening channels of dialogue in cases where states may otherwise be reluctant to engage on political issues, or where political dialogue tracks may be stalled.

Reflecting that many mediation practitioners may not have advanced technical skills, participants questioned whether these skills are necessary for mediating in the cyber domain. While it is important for mediators to know about the basics of cyber conflict, participants agreed that having access to experts who are aware of the solution set is sufficient for effective mediation in cyberspace.

Looking forward, participants agreed that many future conflicts are likely to include a cyber element. Although no cyber-attack has resulted in direct casualties yet, this is becoming increasingly likely as states and private actors develop their offensive capabilities. Therefore, there is a need for cyber diplomats and mediators to work on strengthening norms to improve definitions of acceptable cyber conduct, and of unacceptable targets.



*Hanna S. Tetteh*



*Markos Tekle Rike*

## The Horn of Africa and Red Sea Region: shifting tides?

The Horn of Africa has seen notable developments over the last few years. The rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea has marked the start of a new chapter in their historically contentious relationship; talks between Eritrea and Djibouti have changed the tone of a decade-long border dispute; and better management has Somalia making slow but significant progress. At the same time, parts of the region continue to struggle with instability – as evidenced by the ongoing political crisis in Sudan. For countries in the Gulf, this has nevertheless been a time of economic opportunity. Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar have all sought to engage more closely with their neighbours. Their increased presence in the region is a critical juncture for countries in the Horn, which must work to consolidate their achievements and capitalise on their successes in order to promote regional integration more strategically.

Participants in this session urged governments in the Horn of Africa to consolidate the gains from recent improvements in relations between themselves, before delving into political or economic commitments with the Gulf states. Some recommended investing in better governance and institutional capacity-building. Others spoke of the process of forming a national identity, particularly considering the tumultuous history of the region, where many states were born from deep-seated divisions with their neighbours. They argued that cooperation, whether at the regional or global level, could flourish only if internal differences are resolved first.

The next step would then be to establish a common vision and strategy to deal with threats to regional security, and to use all regional platforms to contribute to stability and prosperity for the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea. Some suggested more proactive involvement of regional institutions such as the African Union (AU) and the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD). They explained that there are many issues which

have a cross-cutting impact in the region, including access to and use of ports, economic zones, trade routes and clean water, as well as environmental protection and greater securitisation. Ethiopia, for example, relies on access through ports in Somalia, Djibouti or Eritrea to deliver goods to its 100 million people. Some participants worried about the detrimental effects of over-fishing in the Nile and Juba rivers, as well as toxic waste disposal along the coast, highlighting the central importance of resource use and protection.

Although the Horn and Gulf regions have only recently begun to cooperate more closely, there are already big projects under-

way. Participants mentioned some positive initiatives that have been launched, such as a council of Arab and African states proposed by Saudi Arabia, which has already met to discuss business zones and other maritime development. Gulf states have also offered significant economic and military support, in addition to the facilitation they provided during peace negotiations.

Still, participants advised both Horn and Gulf states to proceed with caution and to remain vigilant on how developments on one side can affect the other, particularly in regard to regional rivalries or other disputes that can

be disruptive. Closer engagement surely offers new and exciting opportunities, but it remains essential to ensure that support is harnessed to promote greater integration, provide better economic opportunities and accelerate the road to peace and development.

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Cooperation [. . .]  
could flourish only if  
internal differences  
are resolved first.

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*Mahbouba Seraj, Habiba Sarabi, Orzala A. Nemat and Maha Yahya*

## At a turning point? Mediation in political crises

There has been considerable political turmoil in 2019. In the first four months alone, Venezuela, Sudan and Algeria all experienced political crises. These crises have generally been brought about by the desire of some to change the general direction and leadership of their country. Such events can be significant in the trajectory of a country, as they can either precipitate positive changes or further fuel political upheaval.

In this session, participants underlined the importance for all parties to accept that there is a crisis and that a third party could make a useful contribution in resolving it. Choosing a mediator with influence and experience is essential. This reasoning influenced the decision of the Sudanese to agree to a mediation process led by the African Union (AU).

Apart from the engagement of bodies such as the AU, it is not uncommon in the face of turmoil for external actors to become involved – often to further their national interests. Such is the

situation in Libya, where regional actors, in their support for certain players in the conflict, take an ideological stance on issues which are primary facets of their national agenda. On the other hand, owing to the complexities affecting Libya, numerous countries have become less involved there, leaving the UN alone to become the key external mediator in the country.

Regardless of such external factors, the mediator must focus on ensuring ownership of an agreement, and on a consensus about the nature of the crisis and the aims of a mediated process. Understanding these will help in deciding the timeline and who should be involved in the process.

In many political crises, the opposition actors are numerous and often highly fragmented, making it challenging to bring the opposition and other relevant actors together effectively. Another major challenge of inclusivity is engaging with previously excluded actors or actors that were part of the ruling elite. Participants agreed



*David M. Beasley*



*Ine Eriksen Søreide*

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Given the unstable context of political crises, mediators should have simple objectives.

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that these actors must be included as they could otherwise spoil the mediation process or render the agreement ineffective by using their military might.

Given the unstable context of political crises, mediators should have simple objectives to progress without further destabilising the situation. To make gains, the mediator must be trusted by all parties and avoid publicity (which can cement polarised positions in society). Also, to avoid damaging a mediation effort, actors such as the AU must be careful when using tools such as sanctions or suspensions of membership.

Finally, despite the uncertainty and apparent sudden nature of political crises, there may, in some cases, be signs that a crisis is on the horizon, as in cases of electoral disputes. Since some of these crises can be predicted, mediators should consider preventive mediation.



*Theresa Jaintong*



*Stephane Rey*

## Mixed blessings for stability: vigilantes in Nigeria

For the longest time, Nigeria has been plagued by a variety of security challenges. Endemic corruption and poor governance have meant that the federal and state governments have been unwilling or unable to tackle security problems adequately. Consequently, in an attempt to fill the void left by the government, vigilante groups have emerged across the country. Given the urgency posed by the security issues and the shortcomings of the Nigerian security services, the government has, in many cases, partnered with these groups to provide improved security responses.

Most notable of the vigilante–government partnership is the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) in the northeast of Nigeria. The CJTF was founded in 2013 by members of communities affected by the conflict with Boko Haram. The group’s intimate knowledge of the local geography, language and culture was useful in the campaign against Boko Haram. Recognising this, the government collaborated with the CJTF and consequently recorded a significant number of successes against the insurgents. The positive contributions of the CJTF were praised by their communities who saw them as saviours. Simultaneously, however, the CJTF was also allegedly engaging in several criminal activities such as committing human rights atrocities with the military, dealing in drugs and engaging in sexual violence.

These alleged criminal activities, coupled with the CJTF’s call for recognition by the government, presents a dilemma now that the conflict in the northeast is dwindling. The group has insisted on job opportunities and stipends as compensation for its efforts. There is concern, however, that providing CJTF members with these benefits could legitimise them, or even inspire others to become vigilantes. Other concerns include deciding how to move towards disarming and reintegrating group members into communities. Disarming the group is challenging as it would not solve the issue of who will address the ongoing threat posed by

Boko Haram. Reintegration is also complicated as some members of the CJTF are not prepared to be reintegrated until they have exacted revenge or justice against Boko Haram. In addition, mediators need to consider carefully how dialogue can be facilitated and sequenced between Boko Haram, the CJTF, their communities and the military.

Mediators must not only tackle these issues but must also call for nuanced policies on vigilantism at the state, federal and regional levels. The compatibility of the policies is especially important, as the impact of vigilantism is transboundary. In particular, at the regional level, lessons can be learnt from countries such as Niger.

There, the approach included a positive-discrimination recruitment strategy in the army, hiring more members from conflict-affected communities, and a greater focus on community policing. Such an example could serve as inspiration for Nigeria, as the state and federal governments are formulating policies of their own.

Ultimately, mediators must support a multi-pronged approach to the issue of vigilantism. This approach must include short-term responses to matters such as reintegration, disarmament and dialogue. It must also be able to address long-term, structural problems such as underdevelopment, insecurity and limited access to education and employment opportunities. Such an approach should go some way in addressing the security challenges of the country, while the broader governance challenges facing Nigeria are addressed by the country’s leaders and institutions.

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Some members of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) are not prepared to be reintegrated.

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*David Harland*



*Mahboba Seraj*



*Miriam Coronel Ferrer*

## Libya: weathering the storm

Since first breaking out in early 2011, the war in Libya has been marked by disputes over power and access to resources. While Fayez al-Sarraj attempts to consolidate the internationally recognised Government of National Accord (GNA) in the West, Khalifa Haftar garners local and international support for his self-proclaimed Libyan National Army (LNA) in the East, and militias have persisted in their respective attempts to protect or overthrow the two leaders. Meanwhile, progress achieved by the UN-led National Conference Process was undermined when Field Marshal Haftar launched an assault on Tripoli in April 2019, only days before the carefully crafted National Conference was set to take place. Although important steps have been taken to create positive conditions for moving forward, it seems that new obstacles have consistently emerged and disrupted efforts to stabilise Libya. What can be done now, to lift the country out of conflict?

Many participants insisted that a central element of the conflict in Libya is oil: who produces it, but more importantly, who is entitled to sell it and who benefits from it ultimately. According to United Nations Security Council Resolutions, the National Oil Corporation (NOC) holds the monopoly on Libya's oil exports. As participants explained, the revenues generated have then to be directed towards public services. Some also stressed the importance of ensuring the NOC's institutional integrity in any effort to rebuild the state. They emphasised that, if armed groups retain control of oil production and exports, there will be no end to the civil war. Each faction would strengthen its own position, and any semblance of governmental regulation or coherence would be lost.

Participants argued that threats to the NOC stem in part from an inconsistent, divided international community. For example, some countries publicly claiming to support the GNA actually provide financial and military support to Haftar's army, and some

states openly act to undermine the internationally recognised administration. Other participants underlined the changing role of the Security Council, which they felt was able to apply strict oversight at first but has since become silent and divided in view of explicit violations of the arms embargo and other resolution-imposed restrictions.

It was also noted that the impact of the war in Libya is not limited to its borders: foreign fighters from Chad and Sudan continue to play an active role, and the humanitarian and security consequences, especially in the south of Libya and beyond its borders, are worrisome. Participants held that, despite cross-cutting issues and undeniable regional impact, it remains imperative to reduce

negative foreign interference and strictly implement the arms embargo. Otherwise, belligerents have more space in which to operate, as well as resources and supplies.

Intrinsic to the discussion was the idea that polarisation in Libya, often fuelled by deliberate, targeted misinformation campaigns on social media and other digital platforms, has created a deeply fragmented puzzle that needs to be recomposed. This requires efforts on all fronts, from the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to its local, regional

and international partners as well as its non-governmental associates, to develop the peace process from the bottom-up. This means investing in municipalities and local governance, strengthening institutional capacities and, arguably most importantly, building on the points of consensus identified during the 2018 National Conference Process. As participants emphasised, despite a seemingly disintegrating social fabric, there are significant levels of agreement about the country's way forward.

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**It remains imperative  
to reduce negative  
foreign interference.**

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*Lyse Doucet, Katia Papagianni and Meredith Preston McGhie (left), Jorge Iván Mora Godoy (top right), Tone Tinnes (centre right), Gamal Elshiekh Ahmed Osman (bottom right)*

## Yemen: walking the talk

In December 2018, Houthi rebels and representatives from the government of Yemen gathered in Sweden in an attempt to settle the country's brutal civil war. The UN-led talks were driven largely by concerns that the humanitarian crisis would worsen as a result of fighting in the port city of Hodeidah, through which most international aid, goods and services were being channelled. The negotiations were lauded as the first step towards peace, and – in a pivotal moment for Yemen – the parties to the conflict adopted a series of confidence-building measures. Not only did they agree to a ceasefire but they also promised to withdraw troops from Hodeidah and to negotiate prisoner exchanges.

In this session, participants primarily focused on the agreement and took stock of the military, political and humanitarian implications of its implementation. Discussing why the implementation efforts faltered, some participants claimed that the agreement lacked clarity and therefore left too much room for divergent interpretations. They felt that, while the document outlined objectives, it failed to provide specific instructions and efficient mechanisms to reach them. Furthermore, participants noted that both parties seemed reluctant to give up hard-earned control over territories. Beyond the issue of implementing the Stockholm agreement, which focused for the most part on Hodeidah, participants pointed out that the wider social, political and economic concerns central to the conflict have not yet been addressed.

Many participants also brought up questions of inclusion. For them, no bilateral agreement could adequately address the underlying drivers of conflict because it would exclude some of the war's most important players. However, the question of who exactly constitutes an important player remained a matter of debate. Some stressed that involving Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in discussions is key. Others disagreed, arguing

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The agreement [. . .] left too much room for divergent interpretations.

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*Mustafa A. Sanalla*

instead that the process must be Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned in order to succeed. This would mean integrating possibly dissenting voices, including from the Southern Movement and other armed groups. Alternatively, some participants suggested mobilising tribal leaders to help monitor the ceasefire, facilitate prisoner exchanges and clear roads. Despite this debate, it was agreed that the next round of negotiations should be more inclusive. However, there was a range of views on where, when and how to integrate different voices, and who exactly would be mediating them.

The war in Yemen was characterised as a mosaic, composed of multiple interests, influences, actors and issues. The peace process as it stands today seems to be missing some of those pieces; their incorporation in the process will be necessary to bring the war finally to an end.



*Naz K. Modirzadeh (top left), Martha Karua (bottom right)*

## Failure at the finish line: learning from the breakdown of talks

Although peace agreements are a central component of conflict resolution, the process of reaching them remains complex and uncertain. Parties seemingly on the brink of consensus can suddenly change their minds, leaving mediators to grapple with why carefully crafted negotiations unravelled at the very end. In this session, participants explored the forces influencing the outcome of talks and reflected on lessons that can be learned from setbacks and breakdowns. Can mediators adopt measures to protect peace processes better? What is the legacy of a peace process even if it fails to produce an agreement, and how can mediators build on the steps taken to revive negotiations?

Participants highlighted that mediated processes are not limited to the individuals at the table; they are affected by the interests and influence of powerful international players, strong-willed constituencies and disenfranchised groups that can act as spoilers. The peace process between the government of Uganda and

the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) from 2006 to 2008, for example, faced time constraints imposed by a US administration intent on resolving the issue before the insurgency strengthened, a concern also relevant to Sudan, which was hosting the talks. The anti-terrorist rhetoric of the US also arguably affected the position and approach of the government in relation to the LRA. Others mentioned the case of Cyprus, where they felt ongoing developments in guarantor countries undoubtedly played a significant role. This was true not only for conflict parties apprehensive about their neighbours but also for a mediation team challenged by increasingly divisive international politics.

It was also noted that peace processes can fall apart because of divergent perceptions of the drivers of conflict and the aims of peace. In Uganda, for example, the legal priorities of the International Criminal Court (ICC) were at odds with the political objectives of negotiators. The ICC's insistence on indicting LRA



*Said Djinnit*



*Karin Landgren*

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## Setbacks can be enlightening.

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insurgents exacerbated tensions between competing notions of peace, justice and reconciliation. In Cyprus, the context was marred by contradictory narratives about power and inequality: that of Greek Cypriots, categorical on protecting their state security, on one hand; and that of Turkish Cypriots, a minority primarily concerned with preserving their culture and community, on the other.

Most participants agreed that ownership of a process is fundamental to its success. One of the main lessons learned from the rejection of the Annan plan in Cyprus in 2004 was to adopt a different approach when picking up again ten years later, putting

representatives on both sides in charge of determining their own terms for the process. Participants also stressed the importance of enabling constituencies to participate actively, thereby ensuring they develop a vested interest in resolution – as in Uganda, where consultations with communities helped people visualise an end to hostilities.

Whether on context, issues, ownership or communication, participants held that there are many lessons to be learned from failure. They stressed that setbacks can be enlightening, and that just because no agreement was signed, this does not mean that no progress was made. In some cases, certain components of peace talks were implemented despite the lack of signature. In others, each round of negotiation, regardless of outcome, marked an important step in the right direction. What was clear from the discussion is that paramount to a mediator's role is ensuring that conflict parties are learning the right lessons from failure.



*Radhya Al-Mutawakel*



*Mahamadou Abou Tarka*

## Syria: where do we go from here?

Eight years on, the war in Syria continues with no political resolution in sight. While the Government of Syria has resumed control over most of the country's territory, significant pockets remain outside the government's control. Earlier this year, the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) formally announced the territorial defeat of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), but many issues persist in former ISIL areas. Most pertinently, thousands of suspected ISIL fighters are currently being detained in prisons, while tens of thousands of their family members are living in camps within SDF-administrated territory. These detainees present a logistical, financial and legal challenge for the SDF and the international community, but there remains a lack of agreement among regional and international actors about how to address this issue.

While discussing the wider role of regional and international actors, participants agreed that the US and Russia continue to play key roles, but have not made significant progress towards the political resolution of the conflict in the past year. Meanwhile, regional Arab states are shifting their long-held policy of isolating President Bashar al-Assad's government. Some experts noted that this shift is underpinned by ground realities and an effort to engage the Government of Syria to find a political solution to the conflict, and does not constitute an endorsement of the government's military strategy in the conflict. Concurrently, the US is increasing sanctions on Damascus, and has expressed a willingness to impose secondary sanctions on states, including its own regional allies, if they trade with Syria.

Participants also reflected on the UN-led Geneva peace process. Participants cautioned that the results of the process will not be able to effect change unless Syrian, regional, and international actors are aligned behind the process, and committed to implementing its outcomes. They also noted that the Syrian Kurds, who control and administer significant territory in the northeast of the country, remain outside the framework of the UN process,

as well as the Astana talks. Consequently, they are not part of the Constitutional Committee set up by the UN-led process either. Despite the 60,000 fighters and territory they control, and their role in defeating ISIL, the Syrian Kurds have not been included in any dialogue process. They have had some direct talks with the government, but without conclusive results.

Meanwhile, conditions within Syria continue to deteriorate. Eight years of conflict have severely degraded the ability of state institutions to deliver services and address the needs of Syrians. There is mass displacement of populations inside the country, and extensive destruction of infrastructure. Fragmentation within the opposition parties is widespread, and is also being witnessed within government-held areas.

While the fighting may draw to a close in the coming months, participants agreed that the war has not been – and cannot be – won by military means, as experts and policy-makers have been insisting for eight years. Yet the search for a political solution acceptable to all parties to the Syrian conflict is yet to yield results.

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The Syrian Kurds have not been included in any dialogue process.

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*Michael Anker Lollesgaard and Robert Malley*







*Donald E. Booth, Comfort Ero and Haile Menkerios (left), Espen Barth Eide (top right), Oona A. Hathaway (bottom right)*

## Efforts for peace in Afghanistan

After almost two decades of protracted conflict in Afghanistan, developments before the Oslo Forum gave new momentum to the prospect of peace. At the time, the intra-Afghan dialogue had brought together the government, the Taliban and civil society voices, including women, while discussions between the United States and the Taliban Political Commission in Doha continued to progress. There was also more active participation and collaboration among countries like Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan on regional development and some hope that more inclusive frameworks could facilitate engagement of women and other traditionally excluded groups. Therefore, the idea of a negotiated political settlement seemed increasingly tangible. Nevertheless, with foreign forces still on Afghan soil, and disagreements on the terms and conditions of the intra-Afghan dialogue, much work remained to be done.

While most participants agreed that the idea of an intra-Afghan dialogue was encouraging, many differed in who they believed should be included and in what capacity. Some suggested that it was necessary to first establish common ground between the government and opposition parties in Kabul, before developing a national consensus. Others worried that the process thus far had been driven by elites and was therefore not representative of Afghanistan as a whole. Many emphasised the importance of the inclusion of women at every step and level of discussions, which they insisted was necessary for sustainable peace. Opinions similarly diverged regarding the involvement of the international community. Most recognised the importance of the support of major powers like the US, China and Russia but debated whether the process would benefit most from being nationally versus internationally driven.

On a positive note, some participants were enthusiastic about countries like Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan becoming more proactive in investing in infrastructure and education, and promoting

economic development. For them, the involvement of Central Asian countries represented an opportunity for increased regional cooperation not only in the construction of railways but also in peace efforts more generally. Stories of grassroots efforts, like that of the Peace Marchers of Helmand – a group of civilians who marched across the Taliban-controlled territories calling for peace – further inspired hope that a better future is possible for Afghanistan.

However, despite recognisable progress, there were still three main factors that participants identified as posing a threat to peace. The first was rising tensions between the US and Iran and

rivalries between Middle Eastern countries like Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, which have further destabilised the region. Second, participants were concerned that escalating violence during elections was undermining public interest in peace. Third, some participants highlighted the pervasive problem of corruption and what they considered to be bad governance on the part of the Afghan state.

The complexity of the issues drove a discussion about identifying the most pressing concern, and how it can most appropriately be addressed. Should efforts be focused on

violence reduction, protecting the status of women, improving governance, safeguarding institutions, removing foreign forces, harnessing international support or promoting substantive political change? Regardless of differences in priorities or diverging conceptualisations of the road to peace, participants agreed that the situation as it stood at the time of the discussion was unsustainable for everyone, and that it is in the interest of all Afghans to strive towards a viable and inclusive peace.

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A negotiated political settlement seemed increasingly tangible.

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*Brett H. McGurk (left), Ngozi Amu and Maïmouna Thiombiano (top right), Roxaneh Bazergan and Nicholas Haysom (bottom right)*

## Hand in hand? Peace and constitutional processes

Constitutions are vital in defining the structure of a state, how power is exercised and shared, and the values governing state-society relations. Consequently, constitutional amendments are usually highly contested and often negotiated as part of a broader peace process.

In navigating this high-stakes process, it is useful for the parties to be adequately supported. Advisers must of course avoid transferring models across countries. Instead, they should encourage the constitution drafting committee to explore new ideas, and explain why specific models of constitutions have failed or succeeded. Fundamentally, however, constitution-making is more than a technical process. It is a profoundly political process that is influenced by different political and cultural needs.

It is important to consider meaningful inclusion in the constitution-making process. Although not easy to achieve and likely to be met with some resistance, the incorporation of marginalised groups,

youth and women in the process is vital in ensuring that a constitution represents society as a whole. Inclusion must be the goal not just during consultations but also in the preliminary stages in deciding the timeline and agenda of the process. Critically, participants noted that actors with significant power and influence in the conflict should be included, to prevent them from acting as spoilers.

Another challenge in constitution-drafting and peace processes is sequencing: the dilemma of deciding in what order constitutional and peace consultations should be held, given that the outcome of one will be likely to have a significant impact on the other. In Yemen, for example, constitutional consultations continued despite the war and created confusion over what should be done with the outcomes of the discussions after the conflict. To mitigate the uncertainty that comes with sequencing, participants suggested slowing down the entire constitution-drafting and



*Roman Vassilenko*



*Marie-Joelle Zahar*

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One certainty is that a constitution is only as good as its implementation.

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peacemaking processes. In cases such as Yemen, constitutional issues were rushed without consensus from all stakeholders and this destabilised all prospects of peacemaking. Slowing down creates time for mediators to build adequate support for constitutional issues.

Sequencing has also raised questions about the need for interim constitutions, and, more importantly, how they are to be created, implemented and phased out. An interim constitution can be useful in helping to create stability in a transitional phase. However, because it is temporary, an interim constitution cannot be as

comprehensive as a standard constitution could be. Consequently, participants agreed that it must be ensured that an interim constitution does not become the country's final constitution.

Fundamentally, the drafting process will always be complicated. Concerns will remain about badly drafted constitutions that create more conflict than they resolve. Also, deadlocks on specific topics will occur. Nevertheless, one certainty is that a constitution is only as good as its implementation.



*Seyed Rasoul Mousavi*



*Annette Weber*

# Oslo Forum 2019 agenda

**18** Tuesday  
June 2019

09.00–10.30 *Opening plenary*

**Locked between interests and influence:** what space is there for mediation?

11.00–12.30

Option 1

Option 2

Option 3

Three parallel sessions:

**Syria:**  
where do we go from here?

**Reconciliation in Somalia:**  
building peace from the  
ground up

**At a turning point?**  
Mediation in political crises

13.30–14.15

*Lunchtime conversation*

**Government negotiators on mediation:**  
experiences and lessons from mediated processes

14.30–15.45

Option 1

Option 2

Option 3

Three parallel sessions:

**Inter-communal  
violence in the Sahel:**  
how to break the cycle?

**Situation Report:  
Myanmar**

**Failure at the finish line:**  
learning from the breakdown  
of talks

16.15–17.30

Option 1

Option 2

Option 3

Three parallel sessions:

**The Horn of Africa  
and Red Sea region:**  
shifting tides?

**The Korean  
Peninsula summits:**  
breakdown or  
breakthrough?

**Carrying the costs of  
broken commitments:**  
a mediator's dilemma

18.00–19.30

**The Mediator's Studio**

# 19

Wednesday  
June 2019

09.00–10.15

Three parallel sessions:

Option 1

**Mixed blessings  
for stability:**  
vigilantes in Nigeria

Option 2

**Afghanistan:**  
current efforts and  
prospects for peace

Option 3

**Cyberspace:**  
mediation's next frontier?

10.45–12.00

Three parallel sessions:

Option 1

**Yemen:**  
walking the talk

Option 2

**Central Asia:**  
regional solutions for  
regional challenges?

Option 3

**Heating up:**  
climate change and  
mediation

13.00–13.45

*Lunchtime lecture*

**Power over proxies:** legal responsibilities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

14.00–15.30

Three parallel sessions:

Option 1

**Libya:**  
weathering the storm

Option 2

**Venezuela:**  
on the edge

Option 3

**Hand in hand?**  
Peace and constitutional  
processes

16.00–17.15

*Closing plenary*

**Rebooting mediation:**  
connecting tracks, processes and people

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