



# **Peace mediation**

From Concept to successful implementation, learning from Quaker experience



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# Peace mediation

From Concept to successful implementation, learning from Quaker experience

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### About QCEA

The Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) is a non-governmental organisation, which works to bring a vision based on the Quaker commitment to peace, justice and equality to Europe and its institutions. It has been based in Brussels since its foundation in 1979. QCEA advocates for nonviolent approaches to conflict resolution, the intrinsic equality of all people everywhere, and a sustainable way of life for everyone so that the one Earth we share can support us all. QCEA seeks to build support for humane, non-military policies at the EU level, both inside and outside its borders. We do so in the spirit of peaceful cooperation which forms the foundation of European politics.

QCEA is a member of the advocacy networks European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), Security Policy Alternatives Network (SPAN) and Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN) as well as a number of Quaker networks. QCEA's Peace Programme seeks to create a new narrative around European peace and security which emphasises sustainable peacebuilding and a humancentred, inclusive approach to conflict prevention and resolution. It aims to highlight and develop research on civilian nonviolent alternatives to conflict, including peace education and mediation, and gives them visibility.



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### Acronyms

### AU: African Union

**CMI:** Crisis Management Initiative

**CSDP**: Common Security and Defence Policy

CSO: Civil Society Organisation

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

**EEAS**: European External Action Service

EDF: European Defence Fund

**EIDHR**: European Instruments for Democracy and Human Rights

**EIP:** European Institute of Peace

**EPF**: European Peace Facility

**EPMS**: European Parliamentary Mediation Support

**EPLO**: European Peacebuilding Liaison Office

**ERMES**: EU Resources for Mediation Support

EU: European Union

**EUGS**: European Union Global Strategy

**EUSR**: European Union Special Representative

**HRDN**: Human Rights and Democracy Network

**HR/VP**: High Representative/Vice President

**IcSP**: Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace

**MEP:** Member of the European Parliament

**MFF**: Multi-annual Financial Framework

**NATO:** North-Atlantic Treaty Organisation

**OSCE**: Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe

**PESCO**: Permanent Structured Cooperation

SFL: Stabilisation Facility for Libya

**SPAN**: Security Policy Alternatives Network

**QCEA**: Quaker Council for European Affairs

**QUNO:** Quaker United Nations Office

**UN**: United Nations

WCC: World Council of Churches

**WOSCAP**: Whole of Society Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding

### **Executive Summary**



At a time when mediation makes the headlines as a conflict resolution tool used by multiple actors around the world, the EU published its new *Concept on EU Mediation*<sup>1</sup>. This coincided with the publication of a book on Quaker mediation and conciliation, bringing some of the most hidden Quaker experience to the public eye.

This report seizes this momentum around mediation to showcase some of the Quaker experience for the implementation of the EU Concept. It makes the case for a multi-layered approach to mediation based on gender and climate sensitive conflict analysis. It offers useful advice for mediation practitioners based on Quaker lessons learned over the years.

The report analyses the new geopolitical context and makes the case for strengthening soft power tools like mediation and dialogue to address the changing nature of violence. It looks at definitions and the evolution of the EU approach to mediation from the 2009 Concept to its revision in 2020. While recognising the EU's added value in mediation, it also points to challenges such as the EU's increased militarised responses

and how this might affect its ability to act as an impartial mediator.

Finally, the report dives into Quaker experience on mediation. It underlines the uniqueness of Quaker practice in this field, by developing an approach based on trust, independence, principled impartiality, long-term engagement and humility. The report argues in favour of adequate funding for EU mediation and setting up accountability mechanisms to ensure the guiding principles are fully taken on board in the implementation. The key questions below emerge from the analysis contained in the report and build on the foundation that mediation processes should contribute to peace and avoid inadvertently worsening the situation.

- How can all of the EU actors involved in mediation better promote and support the work of local actors involved in mediation to ensure the sustainability of peace processes?
- Could a gender and climate sensitive conflict analysis be the basis of all EU mediation engagement?
- How might the EU include initiatives around quiet diplomacy and conciliation as part of its mediation support to address issues of trust?
- To avoid duplication or miscommunication between the different layers of engagement of the EU, might an increased level of coordination be necessary to avoid different directions and ensure one common goal: peace? If so, how could the different parts of the EU come together to coordinate their actions?

How will the EU ensure that peacebuilding principles are meaningfully included in any EU mediation process, including inclusivity, ownership and addressing power relations?

- How to avoid the gaps and trust deficiencies between EU staff and local actors, caused by the staff turnaround in EU missions? Might there be opportunities for knowledge management and institutional memory to ensure the EU's long-term engagement?
- Given the importance of trust-building in mediation engagement, could the EU invest more in trainings and capacity-building activities around trust building? Would the EU consider supporting or financing safe and confidential spaces, like the Quaker Houses, to provide space for parties to communicate and build trust?
- Are there specific principles or skills necessary for mediation which EU staff may need to engage in mediation, such as principled impartiality or humility?

### Foreword

In 1999 I finished a 3-week training on conflict management, mediation and trauma healing. At the time, most Rwandans were suffering from the consequences of the 1994 genocide. Some women's husbands were killed during the genocide, other women's husbands had led the mass killing and were imprisoned, suspected or convicted of committing genocide. I was inspired to bring the two sides together with a vision that children would live in a peaceful and friendly environment where women play a key role in rebuilding the broken social fabric and the foundation of Rwandan society.

Bringing the two sides together was difficult at the beginning. But, slowly, taking the time to understand and consider the fears, the pain, the resistance of the two parties, helping them search for common ground for a brighter future for their children and country, I was able to mediate between them. Today, they are working together for peace, visiting and supporting each other. The same women have been able to contribute to Gacaca courts to mediate between many families of the survivors and the released prisoners.

The home-made solutions, using the traditional grassroots mediation,

our Christian faith, the culture of forgiveness and tolerance played key roles in this mediation. I considered mediation as a procedure in which the parties discussed their disputes with the assistance of a trained impartial third person who support them in reaching a settlement.

In today's world, different actors are helping in different contexts such as border disputes, natural resource management, refugee issues using different types of mediation such as facilitative or transformative -sometimes they reach a successful outcome, sometimes the conflict escalates. The reason is not always because of the third party's lack of neutrality, it can also be because of its inability to produce an attractive outcome for all parties.

I am glad to see that the European Union is thinking carefully about its role in mediation and broadening its support to different types of mediation and actors. My experience in the Rwandan genocide makes me hope that actors like the EU will provide support in mediation in conflicts as early as possible instead of waiting and coming in later. An emphasis on the use of mediation for conflict prevention is essential and trusting actors who are already on the ground to undertake mediation processes will be central to the EU's success in mediation in the future.

The deep injuries and trauma caused by genocide are so hard to mend, early intervention through early planning and budgeting will be key. I welcome this report, the emphasis put on Quaker lessons for mediation and the importance of trust; and I hope it will help the EU in its implementation of mediation processes.

Cecile Nyiramana, African Leadership and Reconciliation Ministries (ALARM-Rwanda), Peacebuilding Program Coordinator



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### Introduction

Mediation has progressively become one of the most used peacebuilding and conflict prevention tools, alongside diplomacy and dialogue. Media headlines zoom in on the role of, in many cases, interest-led countries or regions in mediation processes around the world. third-party showcasing how involvement now takes place in a majority of violent conflicts<sup>2</sup>. The climate in which mediation happens has changed. Today there are a wide range of actors involved in mediation including the European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN), governments like Russia in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. But the lack of visibility that grassroots mediation actors suffer from in international media does not take away from their importance and successes.

In December 2020, the European Council made public its Conclusions<sup>3</sup> on a revised *Concept on EU Peace Mediation*<sup>4</sup>, providing momentum to the EU's role in mediation. We welcome the addition of 'peace' to mediation in the title compared to the 2009 Concept, because ultimately the main goal of mediation processes should be peace and not an external actor's interest. The revised concept recognises the EU as a value-based actor and promotes a multi-track approach to mediation based on guiding principles such as conflict sensitivity, partnerships, human rights, gender equality and inclusivity, which are welcome improvements from the 2009 Concept. Guidelines accompany the Concept which should help its implementation.

Quakers have decades of peace work experience including in mediation and conciliation. The revision of the EU Concept on Peace Mediation is an opportunity to build on the Quaker work in mediation and draw lessons from it. Until recently Quaker peace work was quite secretive but the recent publication of *Dining with diplomats, praying with gunmen<sup>5</sup>* provides an opportunity to share Quaker experience, principles and skills in mediation and dialogue processes.

Beyond the argument that soft tools like mediation and dialogue should be the first and only EU response in the face of violent conflict, this report aims at sharing some of the Quaker experiences in trust building and principled impartiality, key to mediation processes. We aim to highlight the efficiency of a multilayered approach<sup>6</sup> to mediation where the actors and types of mediation are chosen based on a gender and climate sensitive conflict analysis. Finally, this report focuses on the implementation of the Concept, calling for accountability from actors involved in mediation and ensuring that the commitments recently made by the EU Council are fully implemented.



## X Changing nature of conflicts and violence: new tools are needed

The nature of conflict and violence has and continues to change over time, creating new challenges and needs for conflict resolution. According to a 2018 report by the UN and the World Bank, the number of violent conflicts tripled since 20107. Today, the majority of conflicts are intra-state/civil in nature, and are more complex, notably because of a growing internationalisation, challenging the pursuit of a peace agreement even further<sup>8</sup>. Research shows that conflicts are increasingly protracted and intractable, making peace agreements harder to achieve and sustain<sup>9</sup>. The complexity and fragmentation have, over time, received incoherent responses from the international community<sup>10</sup>. Better understanding of the conflict drivers and developing new soft tools to address them becomes key to successful conflict resolution. Our report Building Peace Together<sup>11</sup> provides principles for peacebuilding such as inclusivity and emphasises the importance of conflict analysis as the backbone of any engagement.

### X New actors involved in conflict

Another layer of complexity for mediation processes is the presence of a wide range of non-state actors, such as organised criminal groups, including those involved in terrorism and trafficking<sup>12</sup>. These actors are often fragmented and disunited, which makes it even more challenging for peace actors to intervene and support stakeholders to identify common political solutions<sup>13</sup>. Among these new actors, there are a number of designated 'terrorist groups' including jihadist groups, which are engaged in some of the most violent current conflicts, such as Syria, Yemen, Mali or Afghanistan. Actors like the EU or the UN have lists of terrorist organisations forbidding them from engaging with these groups which, in turn, makes their role as mediator or dialogue facilitator close to impossible<sup>14</sup>.

## K Growing securitisation and militarisation

In recent years the EU has strenghtened its hard security apparatus by reinforcing military and 'defence' institutions and instruments. These policies and finances have been directed towards internal and external policies. Hard-security and military responses are more popular but they often convey simplistic answers to complex issues and risk perpetuating cycles of violence, and contributing to even more fragility. Also, research shows that nonviolent approaches and tools lead to long-term peacebuilding, and are therefore better adapted to the changing nature of conflict<sup>15</sup>.

### X Multilateralism under fire

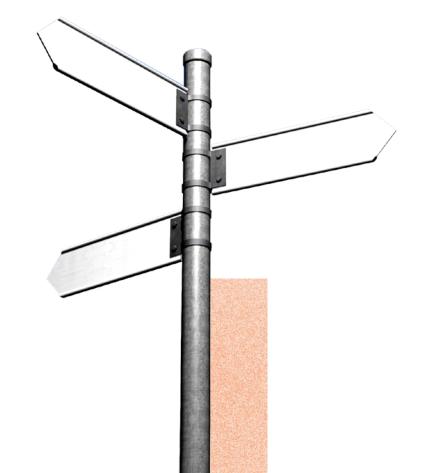
The current geopolitical context poses several challenges to peace and mediation processes. The liberal international order is being challenged nationalism, popularism, by authoritarianism and xenophobia, making it harder to achieve consensus and build comprehensive responses to global threats<sup>16</sup>. Multilateralism is increasingly called into question. More and more countries are asking for a more balanced distribution of power<sup>17</sup>. Within this new order, traditional regional powers such as the EU are challenged and debated<sup>18</sup>. The Trump presidency had quite a negative impact on multilateralism, but the Biden-Harris administration provides an opportunity to revive multilateralism and global cooperation, necessary for peacebuilding<sup>19</sup>.



# X The field of mediation is evolving too

In this context, soft tools like mediation are more important than ever as stated by Charles Tenenbaum (Sciences Po Lille mediation expert)<sup>20</sup>: "promoting the importance of negotiation and non-violent alternatives to end a conflict becomes all the more necessary". With the rise of intra-state wars compared to interstate wars since 1990, mediation is one of the main tools used to resolve conflicts and negotiate peace<sup>21</sup>. We hope this trend will continue to grow.

As a consequence, mediation has become a "crowded field"22, with an important level of competition between the various actors involved in mediation, each using different strategies, mandates and values. Mediation is now part of the foreign policy strategy of countries such as China, Russia and Turkey which are now involved actively in different peace processes. Yet, as questioned by Crisis Management Initiative (CMI), is such "peace mediation just an extension of their own power politics or are they really interested in building peace?"<sup>23</sup> The involvement of new actors in mediation will likely shape the field of mediation, including how traditional mediation actors like the EU or the UN will engage with these actors, position themselves and show their added value in mediation<sup>24</sup>. One might also question how this competition affects a sector that is supposed to promote peace and coexistence and how the international community might address this new environment to ensure the interests of the parties remain at the centre of discussions? In order to adapt to the increased complexity of today's conflicts, mediation practices have tried to adjust to this new reality<sup>25</sup>. Mediation is now not only a closed and exclusive process but has different layers that enable the involvement of a multitude of stakeholders.





# Defining and framing mediation

There are many different ways of understanding and interpreting mediation and there is no internationally agreed definition of mediation, even if many practitioners refer to the United Nations Guidance for Effective Mediation<sup>26</sup> as an important document to frame and define mediation. Moreover. mediation can take different forms and is often associated with other peacebuilding tools, (many examples can be found in QCEA's resource Building Peace Together<sup>27</sup>) and negotiation tools such as conciliation and quiet diplomacy defined below.

In its 2020 Concept on EU Peace *Mediation*<sup>28</sup>, the EU defines key concepts such as mediation, facilitation, mediation support and dialogue, which many practitioners called for during the consultation on the revision process.

Some types of dialogue typically used by Quakers to build trust between actors include:

#### 🗙 Conciliation

Conciliation is about bringing people together and help them build trust so that they can have a useful conversation on divisive and controversial issues in a peaceful way. Mediation is a form of conciliation favoured by many Quaker organisations. Conciliation is not present in the new Concept (except for describing the role of EUSR, EU Special Envoys and EU Ambassadors<sup>29</sup>).

#### X Quiet diplomacy

The idea is to host difficult conversations in a confidential and safe space to find common ground between the parties. QCEA and Quaker United Nations Offices in Geneva and New York use this methodology in Quaker Houses to bring actors together who do not usually listen or talk to each other.

These tools can mutually reinforce each other in a given context and are effective when based on a **conflict analysis** that would guide the type of actors and layers of mediation needed to address the conflict drivers.

Typically, to describe the different levels of mediation engagement, scholars and practitioners defer to three 'tracks' in mediation:





### Track 1

Official formal negotiations at the highest level involving senior officials usually government and/or military leaders

mediation engagement. Some pra-

ctitioners and academics identify

a track 1.5, which is a hybrid

format that links track 1 & 2. Track

1.5 refers to the involvement of

official representatives in informal

processes<sup>31</sup> and can also refer to a

### Track 2

Non-official dialogue processes involving civil society actors or organisations who can also engage with government representatives.

### Track 3

Dialogues and interactions at the grass-roots level, involving local community leaders.

However, more tracks have been developed over time. The report Beyond the Tracks? Reflections on Multitrack Approaches to Peace Processes<sup>30</sup> identifies more than three tracks to account for contemporary

the three tracks: Track 1+2+3 = Track 6) in order to have more inclusive and locally owned processes and connect all three tracks and actors involved in them<sup>33</sup>. Because most conflict analysis finds that the majority of conflict drivers and issues happen

situation where government officials

at all levels it is crucial to use a Track 6 approach for any mediation engagement, which can be also named **multi-track approach**.

In 1996, Louise Diamond and John McDonald developed a 'multitrack diplomacy model' with nine tracks<sup>34</sup>:

However, to avoid duplication or miscommunication between these different layers, a level of coordination should take place to avoid different directions and one goal. Ownership in these processes is essential to ensure its sustainability, stakeholders should identify the media-tor and determine the coordination procedures.

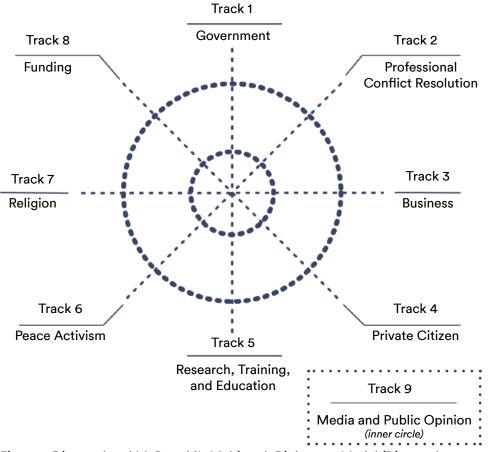
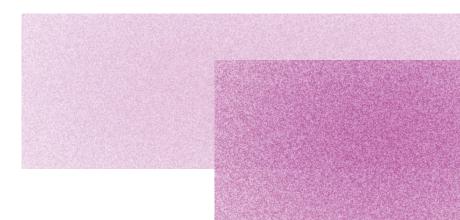


Figure 1. Diamond and McDonald's Multitrack Diplomacy Model (Diamond and McDonald 1996)





### EU Mediation: state of play

The EU has been involved in mediation at different tracks and levels in different contexts. While the EU was originally created as a peace project, EU policy has become more militarised, ultimately challenging its ability to efficiently use 'soft power'. In that context we cannot help but wonder what will be the place of mediation in the future.

The growing focus on hard security and 'defence' through resource allocation and new initiatives, such as the European Defence Fund (EDF)<sup>A</sup>, the European Peace Facility (EPF)<sup>B</sup>, and the Permanent Structured The European Defence Fund was А officially launched in 2017 by the European Commission, made of different public funding tools in order to finance Research and Development (R&D\*) projects in goods and technologies for military purposes. The main recipients are profit-making companies and applied research groups. The amount dedicated to this instrument is being negotiated at the time of this report's publication. Further information can be found on the website of the European Network Against Arms Trade:

http://enaat.org/eu-defence-fund#part1 B The European Peace Facility will enable the financing of operational actions under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) that have military or 'defence' implications. It proposes to draw together existing relevant off-budget mechanisms, namely the Athena mechanism and the African Peace Facility, addressing their gaps and limitations. The amount dedicated to this instrument is being negotiated at the time of this report's

Cooperation (PESCO) will affect the reputation of the EU around the world and its ability to act as an impartial actor. This rhetorical and political shift can be explained by different factors such as the geopolitical context, long-term lobbying by arms industries, and the rise of populism and authoritarianism in many European countries putting the EU under pressure to use security policy as a tool in areas such as migration and climate. Despite assurances from Josep Borrell, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/ Vice-President-designate of the European Commission for a Stronger Europe in the World (HR/VP), that "mediation is a tool of first response in EU external action"35, recent hard security policies call into question whether soft tools such as mediation and dialogue will remain the EU's first response in the future.

publication. Further information is available here: https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/ headquarters-homepage/46285/europeanpeace-facility-eu-budget-fund-build-peaceand-strengthen-international-security\_en



Prior to the 2020 EU Concept on Peace Mediation, a number of official documents and EU normative frameworks referred to mediation and dialogue as central tools of the EU:

#### Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities<sup>36</sup> -2009

It is the first policy document focusing on mediation. The document describes the EU's scope of engagement in this field and gives a list of recommendations to enhance EU's capacities.

### X Global Strategy for European Foreign and Security Policy<sup>37</sup> – 2016

Mediation is mentioned several times in the document as an important EU external instrument, including in relation to conflict prevention and early warning as wells as in the part on conflict settlement and on the cooperation with the UN. While mediation is mentioned in this document, its role and status, and the extent to how it should be used as a foreign policy tool remains unclear in the document<sup>38</sup>.

### X Council Conclusions on the Integrated Approach to External Conflicts and Crises<sup>39</sup> - 2018

This document completes the EUGS. It highlights the "unique potential" of the EU in mediation and stresses the prior importance of mediation within the EU toolbox. It seeks to strengthen the capacities of the EU in mediation. It notably asks for a better support of the EU towards local actors including insider mediators.

### X European Parliament resolution on "Building EU capacity on conflict prevention and mediation<sup>40</sup> - 2019

The resolution calls on the EU to "further prioritise conflict prevention and mediation". It also gives recommendations including the need for appropriate financial resources in the next Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021-2027.

### X Concept on EU Peace Mediation<sup>41</sup> – 2020

The Concept was published after a consultative process. It provides the framework for EU mediation, underlines some guiding principles and lists the EU actors involved in mediation. It promotes a multi-track approach to mediation and recognises mediation as a privileged tool for the EU which "merits becoming an even more prominent component of the EU's external engagement."

While these documents internalise civilian tools like mediation, dialogue or diplomacy as first responses, some have questioned whether the EU was increasingly deferring to hard power security initiatives. According to Luxshi Vimalarajah, (a Berghof Foundation mediation expert) for many European diplomats and actors, mediation is sometimes not seen as the first response in crisis management and is overruled by traditional priorities and tools such as security, stabilisation and traditional diplomacy<sup>42</sup> (as opposed to dialogue processes that aim at bringing all conflict parties at the table).

While there is no doubt in our minds that soft power tools such as mediation should be the first response, the question we seek to answer is how do we make the EU more accountable for using civilian tools such as mediation as a first response to conflict resolution?



### EU'S RANGE OF MEDIATION ENGAGEMENT

The EU's 2009 Concept on mediation provided five guiding principles<sup>43</sup>, which are still relevant today and are part of the revised 2020 Concept. Some have been articulated differently, showing the EU's ability to adapt to new contexts and evidence on peace.

The 2020 Concept on EU Peace Mediation lists 12 principles marking a clear evolution in the EU's understanding of mediation<sup>44</sup>. However, the lack of accountability mechanism makes any assessment of the EU's use of these principles hard to measure (including the actions funded or supported by the EU).

Assessment of risks used to be a principle in the 2009 Concept. The 2020 Concept frames 'risk perceptions and defining success' as part of the facets of EU engagement in mediation, acknowledging that risks and non-success are not a condition for EU engagement.

### Part of the 2009 Concept and present in the 2020 Concept:

Coherence with EU foreign and security policy goals.

**Human rights:** The 2009 Concept included transitional justice with human rights, the 2020 Concept refers to the *Council Conclusions* on *EU support to transitional justice*<sup>45</sup> (November 2015).



Applying the EU Integrated Approach with a focus on mediation: There is notably a focus on the importance of better promoting track II and III efforts. The 2009 Concept, referred to 'Comprehensiveness' to allow for the use of other foreign policy instruments.

Promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment: From the inclusion of women in peace processes in the 2009 Concept to the broader and more inclusive notion of gender equality, the EU shows its ability to adapt to new research and evidence on peace.

New and welcome additions in the 2020 Concept:

**EU as a value-based actor** refers to some principles and fundamental values that should be respected in all EU mediation engagement.

Multi-track mediation refers to the EU's ability to be active at all levels and act as a connector between the tracks.

Inclusivity: The Concept promotes an 'all-of-society' approach for the EU mediation.

Partnerships: in particular

with the UN and the OSCE.

Conflict sensitivity, 'do no harm': the EU is careful to only act when it is sure that such intervention will not worsen the conflict situation and will apply conflict sensitivity at every stage of the conflict cycle, a welcome evolution in the EU's intervention framework.

Climate and natural resources: the Concept recognises the link with conflict and peacebuilding and ensures that climate and natural resources will be taken into account in every EU mediation engagement. This is an important addition given European member states' involvement and interests in natural resource exploitation in conflict zones.

An evidence-based approach: Here we have every hope that facts and evidence proving the risks involved with hard security will make the EU less likely to engage in military responses and privilege locally owned mediation and dialogue.

In the 2009 Concept<sup>46</sup>, five levels of engagement were described, they are still present in the 2020 Concept but they have been completed to fully describe the range of EU engagement in mediation<sup>47</sup>:



#### Already in the 2009 Concept:

Leading mediation: the EU can be part of track I mediation processes.

Supporting mediation: through technical, logistical support or the provision of EU's ex-pertise on one issue or another. It was already in the 2009 Concept.

Leveraging mediation, the EU can use its diplomatic leverage or its economic power. The risks here are that the EU is not perceived as an impartial actor, and rather one that interest' driven.

**Funding mediation**, through the various EU instruments, with a focus on insider mediators.

Promoting mediation, through official declarations or statements for instance.

New areas for EU engagement in mediation recognised in the 2020 Concept:

**Co-leading mediation**: notably with organisations like the UN.

Facilitating mediation and dialogue spaces: a non-directive and more discrete mediation role, the EU can open up spaces for dialogue.

Accompanying mediation: notably by taking the role of the witness, observer or guarantor.

**Coordinating mediation:** the EU can be a connector between the different tracks and levels in an inclusive way.

Supporting mediation process outcomes: the EU can act once the peace agreement is signed thanks to civil and military instruments to ensure its implementation. The risk here is that military threat puts pressure to achieve results that will ultimately not be long last-ing given decisions were taken under threat rather than willingly respecting local decisions on timing and terms.



The 2020 Concept recognised that EU mediation can be carried out and supported by a variety of EU actors; the European Council, the HR/VP, the EEAS, EU Special Envoys, EU Special Representatives and EU Ambassadors, EU Delegations on the field, EU Member States or CSDP Missions<sup>c</sup>.

However, some references in the new Concept risk impeding the ability of the EU to act successfully in mediation. First, the Concept affirms that "EU foundational values and interests go hand in hand."<sup>48</sup> Historically foundational values and EU Member State interests have not always gone hand in hand. In some cases, strategic and/or economic interests have taken over a valuebased approach, i.e. a member state's trade interests are prioritised over the respect for human rights.

Secondly, with regards the support to mediation process outcomes, the Concept refers to the EU using its "full range of civilian and military crisis management and response instruments as well as the political, diplomatic, regulatory, trade and development tools"49 to exercise a leverage on mediation and peace processes. The use of military or hard power to put pressure on a process risks weakening its sustainability in the long term. Trust and local willingness to build peace are necessary for long-term peace and should be privileged outcomes for the EU to be perceived as an impartial actor. Fear and pressure through military or trade tools risk weakening sensitive trust relations and, in turn, impacting the success of mediation processes.

Thirdly, the Concept mentions setting up a high-level Peace Mediation Task Force within the EEAS to deliver on the implementation of the Concept. While a welcome initiative, the task force should not only act at the high-level but also make sure that local and grass roots actors are also involved and included in monitoring the implementation of the Concept from the early stages.

### EU ADDED-VALUE IN MEDIATION

### X The financial weight of the EU:

The EU's financial capabilities enable it to fund diverse mediation activities through different instruments. This financial power is both a strength and a weakness for the EU. It is first an added-value because the EU is engaged in many different countries through its humanitarian and/ or development aid, and this can enhance the EU's credibility in a given mediation process. For instance, in Yemen, the EU was present in the country as a development and humanitarian actor, and this helped it be perceived as legitimate when it supported the ongoing peace negotiations<sup>50</sup>. The EU could take advantage of this financial power to exercise leverage over parties in a mediation and peace process but it risks affecting its impartiality and in turn stakeholders' perception of the EU as a mediator. On the other hand. the way the EU finances are used in practice can become a weakness if there are discrepancies between the financial streams.

C For examples, please refer to Table 2 in the Annexes section.

**X** Broad geographic presence of the EU and capacity to be present on the long-term and through the whole conflict cycle

Another specificity of the EU is its important in-country presence. Through its delegations the EU is present in about 135 countries. Thanks to this large coverage, the EU has the ability to have useful information on diverse issues and can count on a local expertise to support mediation activities. The EU has all the necessary tools to remain engaged and that has been one the reasons for some of its successful engagements in the Philippines, Aceh-Indonesia or Kosovo-Serbia<sup>51</sup>. This multi-level engagement is reinforced by the fact that the EU is a multitrack mediation actor. The EU also has a multi-stakeholder approach to mediation, it rarely acts alone and can partner with high-level and grassroots actors. However how this presence is used will depend on the leadership and the staff. An EU delegation's ability to analyse the conflict situation, decide what role it should play and how it should use mediation is based on the staff knowledge, its training and skills on mediation issues. Mediation should therefore be better institutionalised in EU infrastructures.

#### X The EU as a value-driven actor:

As stated in the *EPLO Statement on mediation*<sup>52</sup>, the EU's ambition to be a value-driven actor is crucial in its engagement in mediation. It means that any action undertaken by the EU, including mediation, is framed by a set of fundamental values and principles such as human rights, justice, equality, human dignity, the rule of law, nondiscrimination, tolerance and the respect for minorities, ... The 2020 Concept<sup>53</sup> confirms the EU's ambition to be a value-based actor but cases have shown that interests sometimes take over. The implementation of the 2020 EU Concept on mediation will show whether the EU is able to overcome these interests, put parties' grievances at the forefront and respect fundamental values.

### CHALLENGES

The EU's mediation potential and experience face important challenges today which question its ability to act as a legitimate and credible mediation actor.

### X The EU: a political actor with an agenda

The EU is a political actor with strategic and geopolitical interests and this can clash with the traditional definition of mediation which entails a degree of impartiality. The EU also carries the historical baggage of its member states and this can also hinder the EU's legitimacy, notably in countries that carry a colonial past with one or several member states. Also, the EU often uses its external aid as a leverage, but this conditioning aid can contribute to the perception of the EU as a neo-colonial power<sup>54</sup>. This baggage is rarely recognised or addressed by the EU which eventually hinders its ability to engage at the international level.

# X The EU and its Member States: conflicting interests?

The EU is the sum of 27 national States, with very different political positions and strategic interests and it is sometimes impossible to reconcile these views and speak in one voice. Another issue is the lack of coherence between the member states and the EU. The balance between national autonomy and a common EU foreign policy is hard to find. In the 2020 Concept<sup>55</sup>, the role of member states is slightly more precise: they can act as entry points for EU mediation engagement in a given context but they can also lead a mediation process if the Council or the HR/ VP delegates such a role. Moreover, the Concept recognises the need to strengthen the "coordination and coherence between the EU and Member States"56 which many have recognised over time. However the EU can only be as strong as the member states want it to be and without a real political willingness to have the EU become a relevant regional bloc, incoherence and competition will continue to be in the way of united initiatives. A member state's strong presence in a conflict setting can complicate the EU's engagement in that context. In the case of Mali, the EU and France were both engaged in the field but independently from each other. France tried to push for a stronger EU involvement but engaged alone militarily with

Operation Serval<sup>57</sup>. Even if the EU was not officially supporting France's military operation, France's military presence could hinder the local perceptions of the EU as an impartial actor, especially given the sometimes negative perception of France in the Sahel region<sup>58</sup>.

## X Lack of coherence and coordination

One of the EU's specificities in the field of mediation is its multi-layered approach<sup>59</sup> to mediation. This is enabled by a variety of EU actors involved in mediation at all levels and tracks, with different tools at their disposal and distinguishes the EU from other organisations engaged in mediation. The challenge is that the majority of EU actors in mediation suffer from a lack of coherence and coordination between their actions. And this coordination gap impedes the EU's credibility. The EU has the capacity to multiply mediation actions but often these initiatives are not interconnected, because the 'clustered approach' initiatives don't always reinforce one another<sup>60</sup>. This lack of coherence between the different EU actors was also mentioned in the recent external evaluation on the EU's support to peacebuilding and conflict prevention for the period 2013-2018.61 The report states that the lack of coherence affects the EU's ability to implement an integrated approach when it comes to peacebuilding and conflict prevention, and rather works through a "fragmented institutional

environment". Sometimes, there are even overlapping or competing mandates between these different actors. This is mainly due to a lack of communication between the diverse institutions and actors, which is not only a problem for mediation but for most of the EU's field of intervention. According to Luxshi Vimalarajah, part of the problem is that there is no transparent division of roles and there is a lack of knowledge about each other's comparative advantage<sup>62</sup>.

# X The risks associated with the EU privileging high-level mediation at the expense of Track III mediation:

The EU's duty to its citizens and taxpayers may have motivated the need to give more visibility to its engagement in high-level mediation. Research shows that the EU seems to prioritise high-level mediation and diplomacy actions rather than grassroots initiative<sup>63</sup>. Yet in reality, thanks to its various financial instruments, the EU has funded a variety of local mediation projects even if less public and visible. Because EU application for financing is complex and not accessible to all, most local projects financed by the EU are actually undertaken and implemented by international NGOs rather than local ones<sup>64</sup>. In the longterm, this lack of local ownership risks impacting the EU's effectiveness in mediation.

## X Can the EU be a military and a soft power?

The increased militarisation of EU policy risks impeding the EU's credibility and legitimacy as a softpower and therefore as a mediator. The 2020 Concept argues that the EU's military and civilian tools are an advantage for the EU as it will enable

it to support "mediation process outcomes" i.e the implementation of peace agreements<sup>65</sup>. Can the EU have it both ways? Are military tools compatible with nonviolent and civilian tools like mediation and dialogue? The majority of experts we interviewed for this research said no. In some contexts, the EU will not be seen as a credible mediator with the degree of impartiality needed to own the trust of parties if it is also engaged 'militarily'. For instance, in Libya, the EU aims to support the peace process but is also militarily engaged in the country through the mission

EUNAVFOR MED operation Sophia, which mandate includes "training of the Libyan coastguards and navy"<sup>66</sup>. Given the human rights violations caused by Libyan coastguards, the EU's support could be perceived as complicit to these violations. This hinders the EU's legitimacy to support the peace processes given local perceptions of Europe as an actor that has sided with one party and reinforced that side with military training and operations at the expense of others, thus contributing to an imbalance.



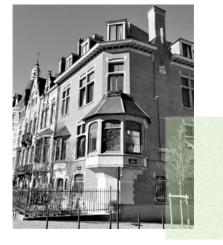


### Quakers and mediation: a brief introduction

Quakers have been strongly involved in peace work over the years, and the Peace Testimony<sup>67</sup> provides spiritual foundation. а strong This engagement for peace and nonviolence takes different forms of actions and mediation is one of them. These peace activities include among others, relief development and other humanitarian projects, advocacy for the oppressed, or peacemaking and reconciliation<sup>68</sup>. What distinguishes Quakers from other actors is the fact that they do not have any other agenda than peace. Because of their commitment to pacifism and nonviolence, Quakers will do anything so that it appears impossible to settle disputes by the use of force<sup>69</sup>, military and hard-security means are not even an option to settle a dispute. which differentiates Quakers from other actors involved in mediation, including the EU.

Thanks to a rich history of mediation and conciliation, Quakers have built a strong reputation and legitimacy, as Florence Foster (Representative for Peace & Disarmament, QUNO Geneva) said at the 2019 Woodbrooke Consultation "our reputation opens doors as our predecessors have made a huge footprint"<sup>70</sup>. Their involvement in conciliation dates back to the 17th century and really expanded after World War II and their Nobel Peace Prize. An important step is the creation in 1945 of Quaker UN offices in Geneva and New-York and of QCEA in 1979. These organisations are involved in mediation and quiet diplomacy, and make good use of their Quaker Houses as safe spaces to host meetings, one of the particularities of the Quaker engagement in mediation.

Thanks to this ancient and rich experience a real 'model' of Quaker mediation has been elaborated, even if one of the added-value of the Quaker work in this field is their **flexibility** and their constant adaptation to the context, nothing is set in stone, there is no one-size fits all approach.



There are different **levels of involvement** in Quaker mediation that complement each other. Some guiding principles of Quaker approach to mediation and conciliation<sup>A</sup>:

 $\times$  One-off projects, such as the project of Elmore Jackson in the Middle-East in the 1950's<sup>71</sup>, who sought to contribute to the achievement of a political settlement between Israel and Egypt.

**X** Long-term involvement through repeated visit in conflictaffected countries, for instance Everett Mendelsohn in the Middle-East<sup>72</sup>.

Long-term involvement with Quaker workers resident in the area for a limited period of time, as it was the case in Northern Ireland for Steve and Sue Williams in the 1980s.

× Mediation undertaken by local Quakers, like in South Africa, with the efforts by Hendrik van der Merwe, to build bridges between the African National Congress and the ruling government<sup>73</sup>. Create safe spaces for tricky conversations: this is mostly done with the establishment of Quaker Houses and centres in relevant places in the world.

**Long-term** commitment: Quakers understand mediation and conciliation as a process that necessitates patience and perseverance<sup>74</sup>.

**Trust building** is at the core of Quaker engagement and of their definition of conciliation<sup>75</sup>.

**Work with local people:** Quakers rarely work on their own and aim to build partnerships and creating networks. They are also aware that in some situations local people are better suited to engage in mediation.

X Independence: Quaker work is funded mostly by small contributions from members of the movement, and not from governments.



A For more information and examples please refer to the next section.

X Principled impartiality: which is different from neutrality<sup>76</sup>. Principled impartiality means listening equally to both sides, trying to understand everyone but without questioning a certain set of fundamental values.

**Humility:** Quakers are led by their spiritual belief in 'that of God in everyone' which guides their action and creates a sense of respect and acceptance towards everyone. It enables them to speak and listen to everyone regardless of power dynamics or any sense of hierarchy, unlike other actors. Quakers have historically acted discretely, off the radar, ensuring confidentiality which has contributed to them being a trusted actor.

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Adam Curle, a Quaker peace mediator, activist, and the first professor of peace studies at the University of Bradford in Britain

The Quaker 'methodology'/ 'model' has been widely recognised over the years. Quaker peacebuilders are aware of the evolving context and they are in a constant process of evaluation and adaptation. With the evolution of mediation and conflicts. Quakers self-reflect on what makes them distinctively Quaker and what space they will take in the future. They acknowledge that mediation is now an increasingly professional and overcrowded field and if they want to remain engaged it is at the condition that they can offer something different and relevant. With the lack of trust growing between member states, local actors, regional and international bodies, one could actually question whether discrete mediation actors like the Quakers is not more necessary today than ever. In these turbulent times, trust is challenged, the role of the state and regional/international organisations is being questioned. How to ensure that actors can act in such a way as to prioritise the interest of the parties at stake and not their own?



# Important principles and skills for mediation actors: lessons from Quaker experience

### PEACEBUILDING PRINCIPLES:

How to make sure they are included in mediation processes?

In our report *Building Peace Together*<sup>77</sup>, we underline seven peacebuilding principles, some of which have now been included in the 2020 Concept such as inclusivity and ownership. However, most principles should be applied in any mediation engagement, including:

Engaging populations: It is crucial that processes do not only rely on elites but include the entire society. This is even more critical with conflicts being more decentralised and multi-level.

**Building on local drivers of peace**: Often, there are local people already involved in peacebuilding and it is crucial to acknowledge their work and build on it.

Awareness of socio-political and economic factors: those aiming at changing inequalities, distortions or discriminatory practices in conflict settings need to consider these factors, in order to avoid reproducing problematic power structures.

X Addressing power relations: How power is distributed among different groups in society and how those groups feel about the (unequal) power sharing, are critical drivers of conflict that need to be taken into account.

**Pursuing accountable governance:** Fragile and conflict-affected societies are often characterized by precarious state-society relations that need to be addressed in any peacebuilding project in order to avoid chronic fragility, violence and underdevelopment<sup>78</sup>.



### WHY DO THEY MATTER FOR MEDIATION?

Challenges, advice and good practices

We welcome inclusivity × as a guiding principle in the 2020 Concept. Mediation is a multi-layered process<sup>79</sup> and people can be included in different ways at different levels and stages of the process, even if certain parts remain discrete and at some stages exclusive. Ensuring inclusivity leads to better trust-building which is crucial for mediation work. Being inclusive can be a challenge for mediators, especially given the growing presence of non-state actors in conflicts. The lack of inclusivity in mediation processes has been underlined several times, notably to criticise the fact that women, youth and marginalised groups are not included enough. When they are, it is mostly at the Track 3 level and therefore their work is much less acknowledged and recognised<sup>80</sup>. It is important to include these groups not only because they can add value to the discussions and contribute to the effectiveness and sustainability of the process but because they represent the diversity of the society<sup>81</sup>. Having

an inclusive mediation process also means leading by example and bringing an inclusive and diverse team of mediators to the table. In the 2020 Concept, the new EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III adopted in November 2020<sup>82</sup> is mentioned. It refers to the target of a "minimum 33 percent women participation in all EU actions related to peace processes"83 which is good signal. However given the variety of EU actors involved in mediation and peace processes, this target will require a considerable restructuring, and this will need to be monitored.

We welcome references to ownership or appropriateness: While the need for local ownership is widely recognised there is still an implementation gap in mediation processes. Parachuting international mediators at the highest level, without buy-in from the population risks challenging the efficiency of the process as it will impede the legitimacy and credibility of the process. Practitioners are therefore calling for a stronger inclusion of local people as drivers of the process. This is strongly linked with the necessity of constantly engaging populations in the process, since many mediation

processes have been accused of being elite-driven. It is crucial to encourage the participation of all, and to motivate the elites to really engage with the population and carry their demands so that there is full ownership of the process. This can notably be done by adopting a multitrack approach to mediation and conciliation.

**Building on local drivers of peace**: Before any engagement it is important to ask ourselves if people on the ground are already doing the job and have a reflection on how to partner with them, support their work and make their contribution to peace more visible. An actor like the EU can support and promote

local work by reinforcing their capacities. Another issue is to secure a better insertion of local/insider/ proxy mediators, which are still at the margins of official mediation processes, despite the call for a stronger EU support to these actors in the 2018 Integrated Approach to External Conflicts and Crises<sup>84</sup>. The EU is notably involved in a partnership with the UN since 2012 to "support the development, strengthening, and application of 'insider mediation' capacities worldwide."85. The need for better promotion and support to insider mediation is underlined in the new Concept, a welcome acknowledgement of an area in need for improvement<sup>86</sup>.

### How to build on local peace work: The Quaker involvement in the Balkans

During the Yugoslavian wars, Quakers based their engagement on building and developing relationships with people already doing peace work locally. Quakers were therefore able to support their work in many ways by grants or training programmes. Thanks to such engagement, Quakers managed to contribute positively to the peacebuilding process in the area and build strong and trustful partnerships which strengthens their future involvement in the Balkans<sup>87</sup>.



Addressing power relations: Mediation processes aim at building a commonly acceptable solution, but this cannot be done if power relations inherently anchored in conflicts are not properly addressed within the process. This implies notably taking into account socio-political and economic factors as important conflict drivers since inequalities, the sense of unfairness and grievances are at a source of many violent conflicts.

× Pursuing accountable governance: accountability mechanisms put in place within a governance structure ensure that actors fulfil their responsibilities and there are real consequences for non-compliance. Without accountable governance the commitments made during the mediation cannot be fully implemented. Accountable governance is fundamental for mediation but it is not a conversation (enough) in the context of EU mediation practices<sup>88</sup>. Given accountable governance is not present in the new Concept, how could civil society provide support to ensure accountability of EU mediation initiatives?

### IMPORTANT SKILLS AND PRINCIPLES FOR MEDIATION PRACTITIONERS:

We make a difference between organisations and individuals; we know that some aspects developed here can be learned while others cannot. Personality, resources or reputation matter as well. And this changes from one organisation or individual to another. Self-reflection is necessary before and during any engagement, not only after.

### Long-term engagement: patience and perseverance at the core of mediation

'Haste' is underlined by Lakhdar Brahimi as one of the seven deadly sins of mediation<sup>89</sup>. A mediation process is usually very long. It necessitates months of preparatory work, analysis and discussions prior to any engagement and involvement after the signing of a peace agreement to monitor the implementation. The Quaker mediation approach is strongly based on long term engagement. For a while the average duration of a Quaker involvement in mediation was 12 years<sup>90</sup>. The protracted and intractable nature of conflicts' today make longterm engagement after the peace agreement signature all the more necessary to ensure a follow-up of the situation and a long-term strategy. The EU has, in theory, tools for shortand long-term engagement. Some might argue that EU delegations are a form of long-term engagement while CSDP Missions correspond to

shorter term engagement. Mediation is a long-term process requiring long-term funding and support. Yet the important staff rotation in EU missions affect the building of trustful and established relationships on the ground, which are the basis of a long-term engagement. This frequent staff rotation has also been recognised as a challenge for the EU in the recent evaluation of the EU's support to conflict prevention and peacebuilding<sup>91</sup>. The 2020 Concept recognises that mediation is a "timeconsuming" process<sup>92</sup>, but the next step for implementation will be to assess how to reconcile this need for long-term engagement with the rapid staff turn-over in EU missions.

Might the EU consider a stronger knowledge management and an institutional memory system to address these gaps?

Remaining engaged also means being open to risks and failures. The EU is typically rather risk averse in the way it approaches peace processes. In order to establish itself as a fully fleshed mediator the EU might need to adopt a more 'risk-taking' culture in mediation<sup>93</sup>. This is referred to in the 2020 Concept, and will need to be monitored in the implementation. Accepting failures is a crucial skill for a mediator<sup>94</sup>.

#### Be open to (relative) failures: Quaker work in Nigeria<sup>95</sup>

Quakers were involved in peace work in Nigeria during the Civil War between Nigeria and Biafra, they remain engaged in the long-term with both sides. When Adam Curle, one of the Quakers involved, reflected on the situation he first thought that their mediation actions were not successful since the war ended with the military victory. Nonetheless, in retrospect he realised that their involvement may still have contributed to render the post-conflict situation more peaceful, saying "I cannot speak without emotion of the way in which, instead of slaughtering the defeated Biafrans the Federal Nigeria soldiers gave them food and money, cared for them, took them to hospitals, treated them as brothers in the most wonderful spirit of reconciliation".96

### Trust-building at the core of mediation

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Being able to build trust with a wide range of actors is one of the skills that distinguishes Quakers in the field of mediation. This process necessitates a great amount of sensitivity towards the parties, which can only be achieved thanks to a deep analysis of the context. Such relations are also crucial to making sure that the commitments made during the mediation or conciliation process are properly implemented afterwards.

Building trust is a process focused people-to-people relations. on which highlights the importance of a people-centred approach to mediation and to peacebuilding in general. The 2020 Concept mentions a people-centred approach to peace by the EU and refers to trust-building as a key element for mediation<sup>97</sup>. The question remains what does trust building and maintaining look like for an actor like the EU to ensure a people-centred approach? These two aspects are a great improvement compared with the 2009 Concept.

Quakers have highlighted skills and qualities which are essential for a mediator and can contribute to building trustful relationships. Being able to listen to all sides equally and with empathy is crucial<sup>98</sup>. It is through listening and treating everyone equally that the stakeholders involved can assume that what they have lived, what they want and what they are saying matter to the mediator.

### Listen equally with empathy: Quakers in Northern Ireland<sup>99</sup>

In Northern Ireland, Quakers have managed to engage with both sides and held many difficult conversations. At the beginning of each discussion, the Quakers involved let the persons describe the violence of the Troubles in their own way and how it has influenced their current position in the conflict. This step was crucial to build trust with the conflict parties, because they both felt that their perceptions mattered equally and that the mediator listened to their side of the story.

This ability (or not) to build trust at different levels and with diverse people is a very personal effort. That is why the selection of the mediation team is crucial. In order to ensure the best selection possible, the EU's investment in further training and capacity-building activities around trust building would be welcome steps.

### Humility, cooperation and complementarity

As mentioned before, mediation is now a busy field. It is therefore crucial to be able to build partnerships at different levels in a complementary way, something the 2020 Concept acknowledges as a guiding principle<sup>100</sup>. Cooperation is key here but it is challenging for the EU which already suffers from a lack of coherence from its own stakeholders.

Being able to rely on external partners in mediation requires humility and modesty. According to Stine Lehmann-Larsen (EIP mediation expert), a good mediator is above all someone who has a clear view of his/her strengths and weaknesses and is aware of his/her added-value and when to bring it<sup>101</sup>. The EU is sometimes not the best suited for a given mediation process, and this for various reasons, but it can still have an indirect role in the process. The 2009 Concept already recognised that "other actors, including NGOs, may be in a better position to do so and the EU may choose to support their activities."102. In the new Concept, in the paragraph about conflict sensitivity and 'do no harm', it is said that "in instances where the EU assesses that it is not useful to engage, it can support actors that may be in a better position to do so",

which is very important and should be followed by concrete actions<sup>103</sup>.

### Impartiality

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Being impartial has been highlighted by many scholars and practitioners as one of the main skills of a mediator. Since the EU is a political actor with a strategic agenda it is harder for the organisation to keep an impartial position and be perceived as such. It is even harder now that the EU is involving militarily in some settings and is investing in instruments such as the EPF. The Quakers developed the concept of "principled impartiality"104, in order to reconcile the necessary impartiality of a mediator with his or her values. In a mediation process the mediator may have to engage with actors that have very different or even opposite values, and it can be difficult to remain neutral. But with "principled impartiality" a mediator can remain impartial without accepting or even justifying issues that go against certain crucial personal principles. It is very difficult to find the right balance, especially when some discussions touch upon controversial issues, but it is possible.

Principled impartiality can apply to the EU as well. The EU is bound by treaties and international law, it promotes certain principles such as human rights which align with the EU as a value-based actor.

#### Impartial but not neutral: Diana Francis' personal experience<sup>105</sup>

During her interview Diana Francis shared her experience of being asked to facilitate an international dialogue on human sexuality with the World Council of Churches (WCC). The aim of the meeting was to [exchange and hear different views about] build understanding between those who opposed same sex relationships and those who supported them (a matter of heated contention at that time). Diana, who is a passionate supporter of equality for all loving relationships, had to ask herself whether she would be able to facilitate such a dialogue with true impartiality. After careful consideration she concluded that to promote understanding on this issue was important and that she was willing and able to set her views aside and to facilitate the process with equal respect for all participants, regardless of their views. The process had a deep impact on all its participants.

### 🗙 Confidentiality

Mediation is a private and quiet process, which often, if not always happens behind closed doors. A mediator needs to be able to protect the confidentiality of the process (when it is needed and that) for its entire duration. Confidentiality is at the core of the Quaker approach to mediation, notably through their engagement in quiet diplomacy activities which had permitted them to hold meetings on contentious issues and bring together actors with very different views and still be able to find some common ground and contribute to peacebuilding<sup>106</sup>.

Confidentiality can be more challenging for a public and political actor like the EU, - could the EU partner more with discrete and local actors to resolve this challenge?

### Ensure confidentiality and build trust at the same time: Quaker houses as safe spaces

Quakers have established Quaker houses or centres in different locations of the globe, in conflict settings such as Belfast or Cape Town but also in important 'hubs for international diplomacy' such as Brussels, Geneva or New-York. For instance, Quaker House Belfast was a neutral space at the disposal of all parties and was used to hold difficult conversations between both communities, always in a confidential way, and it opened many doors for conciliation<sup>107</sup>.

Safe spaces are needed more than ever in conflict zones: Could safe spaces like Quaker Houses be multiplied, better supported and

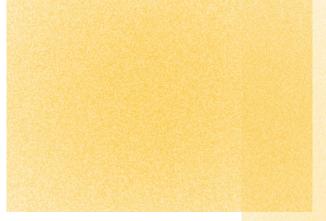
have more geographical spread given their im-portance in building trust between parties?

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In order to ensure that a mediation process is successful and contributes positively to peace, it is important to demonstrate to the conflict parties that non-violent tools such as mediation are a good way to solve disputes and that they can have better outcomes than violent ones. Quakers have been good mediators because they are deeply committed to peace and non-violence and are never 'tempted' to use military or harder tools instead of mediation or conciliation. As stated in *Dining with Diplomats, Praying with Gunmen*:

"The role of conciliators is to try to use established relationships to bring alternative, nonviolent options to the discussions, in this way providing the opposing groups with opportunities to explore alternatives"<sup>108</sup>. For many years, the EU was solely a soft power and could rely on a strong legitimacy and identity based on the solid foundations of its treaties. But this credibility will increasingly become challenged with the strengthening of hard-security and military instruments, because it puts pressure, creates an imbalance between parties and creates an atmosphere of fear rather than trust.





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### Annexes

# Annexe 1: METHODOLOGY:

For this report, we used desk research into relevant materials and interviews with mediation experts. We conducted a review of the academic literature on mediation and analysed relevant organisations documents on the topic. We also lead 10 interviews between June and August 2020 with people from different backgrounds: academics, Quaker practitioners, EU officials, and civil society representatives. The aim was to capture their reflections on EU mediation and also their potential experience as mediators themselves. We analysed their respective views and fed them into the report.

### Annexe 2: Table:

### **EU ACTORS IN MEDIATION**

This table has been conceived thanks to other tables developed by EPLO and the Berghof Foundation as part of the WOSCAP Project.

EU Actor	Type of mediation action	Example of action	Track
Council of the EU	Adoption of Council Conclusions. Adoption of targeted sanctions to support a peace or mediation process.	In May 2020, the Council adopted conclusions on the Afghanistan peace process in order to bolster the start of the talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban <sup>109</sup> .	Track 1
		Since 2014, the Council has adopted restrictive measures and sanctions against Russia, as an answer to the illegal annexation of Crimea <sup>110</sup> .	
Council Presidency	High-level mediation, direct involvement in peace processes.	Involvement of the French Presidency to mediate the conflict between Georgia and Russia over the status of South-Ossetia and Abkhazia in 2008 <sup>111</sup> .	Track 1
EU Member States	High-level mediation and diplomacy, they can promote EU's vision to the negotiation table.		Track 1

EU Actor	Type of mediation action	Example of action	Track
HR/VP	She/he can be involved in traditional high-level mediation processes.	The involvement of Federica Mogherini and now Josep Borrell in the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue.	Track 1
EEAS division Conflict prevention and mediation support	It can offer its expertise, and technical support to EU actors engaged in mediation, as well as to third parties <sup>112</sup> .	In Myanmar: the division offered its mediation and peace expertise to the EU Delegation there <sup>113</sup> .	Support to Tracks 1 & 2
EEAS Geographic Divisions	They can provide expertise on specific issues and contribute to peace processes.		Support to Track 1
EEAS Pool of EU mediators	The pool is there to reinforce the action of the EEAS in mediation and mediation support. It was created very recently so it is hard to assess its impact for now.		Support to all tracks
European Parliament	Creation of the European Parliamentary Mediation Support (EPMS) in 2014. MEP can also be involved at an individual level. The majority of the Parliament's mediation work is focusing on EU neighbourhood and the Western Balkans. Also there is the Jean Monnet Dialogue for peace and democracy, an instrument developed by the European Parliament to support its mediation and dialogue's activities <sup>114</sup> .	In North Macedonia three MEPS participated in the mediation process that led to the signature and implementation of the Pržino Agreement <sup>115</sup> .	Tracks 1 & 2
European Commission	Through its funding instruments the Commission can support mediation processes. For instance the IcSP and the EIDHR.	The IcSP has funded a project which contributed to the OSCE Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, involved in high-level diplomacy and dialogue between the government in Kyiv and communities representatives from eastern Ukraine <sup>116</sup> .	Support to Tracks 2 & 3

EU Actor	Type of mediation action	Example of action	Track
EU Special Representa- tives or Envoys	Their mandates usually include support to peace processes or conflict resolution. Only a few have a clear mandate to mediate a conflict. They can also be designated observers in some contexts <sup>117</sup> .	The EUSR for the Middle-East Peace process is tasked with contributing to the peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine and to promote a two-state solution <sup>118</sup> .	Tracks 1 & 1.5
Mediators or Facilitators appointed by the EU	They are usually directly involved in official mediation processes or facilitating discussions.	Robert Cooper was appointed to facilitate the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia <sup>119</sup> .	Track 1
EU Delegations	They can provide a neutral space for dialogue and mediation processes. They can also offer expertise and resources to support a peace process. Heads of Delegation can also be indirectly involved in a process.	In Mali, the EU Delegation helped the inclusion of local civil society actors in the Algiers peace process <sup>120</sup> . In Yemen the EU Delegation was involved in the facilitation of informal discussions <sup>121</sup> .	Support to all 3 tracks
CSDP Missions	CSDP Missions do not necessarily have 'mediation' in their official mandate but they often have the potential and the capacities to contribute to peace and mediation processes. They can also support the implementation of a peace process as well as ceasefires.	In Georgia the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) is a civilian mission which mandate includes "to build confidence among the conflict parties" <sup>122</sup> . The mission has contributed to the peace process by talking with relevant actors including government officials and civil society representatives <sup>123</sup> . The EU Police Mission for the DRC (EUPOL RD Congo) contributed to the peace discussions by directly participating in negotiations on security arrangements linked to the mediation processes <sup>124</sup> .	Track 2

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EU Actor	Type of mediation action	Example of action	Track
ERMES – EU Resources for Mediation Support	EU project, established by the IcSP. It supports EU mediation thanks to actions like technical assistance, research, trainings and capacity-building. Five organisations are involved in this project: Crisis Management Initiative (CMI), International Alert, ACORD, Search For Common Ground and the HD Centre <sup>125</sup> .	In Syria and Yemen, ERMES was central to improve the inclusion of women in mediation and peace processes. One example is the organisation of a high-level dialogue between Syrian and Yemeni female political representatives and women from civil society to exchange on the role of women in peace processes, mediation, peacebuilding and conflict resolution <sup>126</sup> .	Suport to tracks 1 & 2

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