



# Germany as Mediator

Peace Mediation and Mediation Support  
in German Foreign Policy

CONFERENCE REPORT

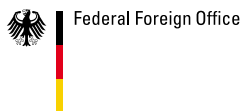
**PEACE MEDIATION**

Conference 2014

25 November 2014

Federal Foreign Office, Berlin

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## Abbreviations

EU	European Union
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
IMSD	Initiative Mediation Support Germany
MdB	Member of the German Bundestag
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
UN	United Nations
ZIF	Center for International Peace Operations

## Executive Summary

What are peace mediation and mediation support? What role can Germany play in this area? These questions were the focus of the 2014 Peace Mediation Conference, which brought together 200 policy-makers, staff from relevant ministries, Members of Parliament and representatives of organisations engaged in peace mediation. The Conference aimed to increase Germany's visibility and sharpen its profile as a conflict mediator in the foreign policy arena. Based on a joint stock-taking of German engagement in the field of peace mediation, the German and international experts developed proposals on ways of intensifying cooperation and improving shared learning. This is the only way to expand and make more effective use of existing peace mediation potential. In this context, a broad consensus emerged among the state and non-state actors represented at the Conference that there is a need to establish an integrated, multi-track approach to mediation in Germany, which must be embedded in the bilateral and multilateral approaches being pursued at the international level.

As the expert contributions during the morning of the Conference made clear, Germany has stepped up its engagement in the field of peace mediation and mediation support in recent years, especially since the adoption of the Action Plan "Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Peace-Building" in 2004. This is a field in which state and non-state actors frequently cooperate. The mediation process which accompanied the 2008 presidential elections in Kenya was an example of engagement by a German government representative, but the German Federal Foreign Office also provides support – notably in Yemen – for specialist organisations working in the field of mediation support.

It was the experts from other countries, in particular, who emphasised that in the field of peace mediation and mediation support, Germany can make a valuable contribution to civilian crisis prevention and conflict management. Germany's potential as a peace mediator and mediation support actor is based on the following three main factors:

- a) Germany's own experience and credibility, based on its post-war history and efforts to come to terms with two authoritarian regimes,
- b) its existing expertise and willingness to deploy resources in the fields of peace mediation and mediation support, and its longstanding presence in development cooperation,
- c) its role as a key political and economic actor in Europe.

The following challenges and possibilities were identified:

### 1 Building resources and expertise in Germany

The concept of long-term, sustainable and preventive engagement based on a sound situation and needs analysis met with broad approval. There is scope to build national expertise and mobilise the requisite capacities on this basis.

### 2 Building local capacities

Supporting and involving local mediators (insider mediators) should be a key focus of attention in order to utilise their expertise and knowledge of the local context. The importance of context-specific tailor-made design of mediation processes was also emphasised.

### 3 Complementarity, cooperation and coordination across stakeholders and levels

Closer cooperation among state and non-state actors in Germany was regarded as useful, along with better coordination among international stakeholders; this for instance includes making use of synergies through cooperation with the Mediation Support Units set up by the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations (UN), focusing, inter alia, on exchanging experience and pooling knowledge.

## Next steps

In order to promote more intensive engagement by Germany in the field of peace mediation and mediation support, the following steps – based on the Conference outcomes – are recommended:

1

### Stock-taking/mapping of existing expertise

This should involve national peace mediation stakeholders, including the Federal Foreign Office, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Federal Ministry of Defence, Initiative Mediation Support Germany (IMSD) and other civil society organisations.

2

### Developing long-term measures and funding opportunities

Here, there is a need to modify government funding principles. Intensive cooperation with the German Bundestag's Subcommittee on Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Management and Integrated Action is recommended in this context.

3

### A long-term, well-structured dialogue

This should involve German state and non-state actors engaged in peace mediation and mediation support. The cooperation already established between the Federal Foreign Office, other relevant departments and the IMSD is a first step and should be continued and expanded.

4

### Establishment of a German roster of experts

in peace mediation and mediation support, in order to respond more effectively and efficiently to requests from conflict parties and to meet advisory needs.

5

### Building mediation capacities in the Federal Foreign Office

and the German embassies, in order to raise staff members' awareness of peace mediation and the range of opportunities for its use, and to provide training if necessary.

6

### Facilitating regular exchange between national and international experts

on Germany's role in the fields of peace mediation and mediation support, e.g. through annual conferences.





# KONFERENZ 2014 FRIEDENSMEDIATION

Berliner Außenamt

Berghof Foundation

cpm Center for Peace Mediation

CSP Berlin Center for Integrative Mediation

inmedio

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## Preface

The US politician J. William Fulbright once said that it makes no sense to close doors if they can be left ajar. In the management of crises and conflicts, peace mediation is like a door that has been left ajar. The importance attached to engaging for peace and mediation here in Germany is evident from the findings of a survey in which two thirds of respondents voiced support for more intensive German engagement in humanitarian assistance, diplomacy and negotiations. This shows how important it is to build on the power of prevention and diplomacy at a time of growing crises. Presenting the German Government's Fourth Report on Implementing the Action Plan "Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Peace-Building" in the German Bundestag, Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier underlined the need for a precautionary foreign policy. He emphasised that it is better to make preventive investments in peace and stability, rather than ultimately having to intervene too late.



Peace mediation is generally quiet and discreet. Unlike military operations or humanitarian missions in crisis regions, mediation processes attract little media attention. Very little information about their content, measures and stakeholders reaches the outside world. This is deliberate, in order to avoid any risk to difficult mediation and consultation processes. Their successes are, in most cases, almost impossible to measure. Their failures, on the other hand, resonate very clearly – in the form of tomorrow's crisis and conflicts.

Peace mediation is an important element of preventive foreign policy. It forms part of states' commitment to peaceful conflict resolution, required by Article 33 of the United Nations Charter. In view of the numerous and multifaceted crises that currently confront us, peace mediation is now more important than ever. In the Middle Ages, it was often papal authority which was invoked as an arbitrator. In the 19th century, arbitration agreements smoothed relations between states. Today, peace mediation operates at various levels. Classic inter-state conflicts have become the exception, and intra-state conflicts involving a variety of actors are now the norm. This must be the starting point for mediation.

Besides mediation itself, there is a further element, known as mediation support. This means involving local organisations and stakeholders who enjoy the conflict parties' trust. Opening channels of communication and building trust are often the first steps.

What role does Germany play in peace mediation and mediation support? What role might it play in future? These guiding questions formed the background to the 2014 Conference. The word "mediation" often brings countries such as Switzerland, Finland and Norway to mind, but in Germany too, the Government is engaged in a range of activities. Germany also has a number of highly specialised non-governmental organisations and institutes of international repute working in this field.

The aim, however, is to utilise existing potential even more effectively in future. At present, requests for mediation or mediation support are often unexpected and arrive with little notice. We wish to improve our mechanisms to offer rapid and reliable German expertise in this context. We must create more effective linkage between state and non-state activities: I am thinking in particular of our embassies, which can play a coordinating role at the local

level in such cases. And we need to ensure that our contributions are multilateral in focus, and adapt them accordingly. Here, I am thinking of the regional organisations. Many of them – not only the OSCE – have now established their own peace mediation structures and mechanisms. We need to link in with them and explore further opportunities for co-operation – for one thing is clear: the regional and local structures are often most suitable for mediation. Not only do they have knowledge of the conflict parties, but they also know which approach is best suited to achieving a solution to the conflict. There is still a great deal of work to do here, and the discussions at the Conference are simply a first step.

The Federal Foreign Office is in regular dialogue with the Initiative Mediation Support Germany (IMSD), focusing on German engagement in peace mediation and the potential for its development. The IMSD consists of the Berghof Foundation, CSSP – Berlin Center for Integrative Mediation, the private consultancy inmedio Berlin, the Center for Peace Mediation at the European University Viadrina and the Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF). This Conference was the Federal Foreign Office's first joint project with the IMSD. My sincere thanks go to the staff of all these organisations for the very positive collaboration on developing and delivering the Conference.

In order to make peace mediation a more tangible concept, the Conference focused on a number of case studies to which Germany has contributed experience and resources. A panel then discussed the challenges and possibilities of peace mediation and assessed the German contribution in this context. The Conference also considered the international perspective and how Germany can step up its engagement.

It is notable that representatives of the relevant departments from the United Nations, the European External Action Service and the OSCE also attended the Conference. It was a particular pleasure to learn from Switzerland's experience and to explore opportunities for joint activities. I would like to express warm thanks to all the panellists and participants in the working groups for attending and supporting the Conference.

Referring to his mediation efforts in the Balkans in the 1990s, Richard Holbrooke once described mediation as something like a combination of chess and mountain climbing. Sharp wits and stamina are essential in peace mediation, and they are the characteristics that I wish for everyone working in this area. Despite all the obstacles that arise time and again in mediation, I am mindful of Nelson Mandela's words: "If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy."

I wish you all continued success in your very important work.

*Professor Maria Böhmer, Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office*

## Conference Concept and Goals

What are peace mediation and mediation support? What role can Germany play in this area? These questions were the focus of the 2014 Peace Mediation Conference – Germany as Mediator: Peace Mediation and Mediation Support in German Foreign Policy, which was organised by the Federal Foreign Office in cooperation with the IMSD and took place on 25 November 2014. The Conference turned the spotlight on peace mediation as an instrument of precautionary foreign policy and civilian crisis prevention.

Ahead of the Conference, Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said: “We talk a lot about overt conflicts and wars but we often overlook the many crises that have been prevented. But this is exactly where precautionary foreign policy comes in: it means investing in a more targeted and flexible manner in stability and peace, rather than having to intervene later on – often too late! In the current year alone, the Federal Foreign Office budget is allocating 150 million euros to this field. We want to maintain this direction.”

### The Conference achieved a number of goals

- ✓ It increased Germany’s visibility and sharpened its profile as a conflict mediator in the foreign policy arena. With reference to specific examples, it showcased the activities and resources which form part of Germany’s substantial contribution to international peace mediation and mediation support, and pointed out where there is still scope for expansion.
- ✓ We were able to pool and make visible the available resources in this field.
- ✓ Delegates voiced unanimous support for the establishment of an integrated, multi-track mediation approach in Germany.
- ✓ With reference to specific case studies and through panel discussions, delegates not only discussed the current German contribution to peace mediation and support but also explored possibilities and challenges, complementarity, cooperation and coordination.

The delegates looked in depth at the core issues mentioned above in three working groups. Working Group 1 focused on Germany’s role in peace mediation from an international perspective and asked: What are international actors’ expectations of Germany, and in which conflicts can Germany make a valuable contribution as a peace mediator? Working Group 2 considered how to facilitate the structural embedding of peace mediation and mediation support, with reference to international comparative examples but also with a particular focus on cooperation and networking between state and non-state organisations. Working Group 3 looked at points of contact, common ground and interaction between diplomacy and mediation. Here, the experts discussed commonalities and dividing lines, as well as the greatest challenges to closer integration between diplomacy and peace mediation.



## What is peace mediation?

Mediation is increasingly being recognised by the international community as a way of dealing preventively with latent conflicts, transforming protracted and entrenched conflicts through constructive engagement, avoiding their escalation, and developing solutions.

The UN Guidance for Effective Mediation describes it as a voluntary process “whereby a third party assists two or more parties, with their consent, to prevent, manage or resolve a conflict by helping them to develop mutually acceptable agreements” (UN Guidance for Effective Mediation 2012, p. 4).

Peace mediation is a structured undertaking which starts from the moment the mediator engages with the conflict parties and can extend up to implementation of an agreement (see UN Guidance for Effective Mediation 2012, p. 4). Mediation can thus be deployed preventively, in crisis management or in peacebuilding, especially during the implementation of peace agreements, which may last for some time.

Peace mediation also includes mediation-related activities such as national dialogues, support for insider mediators, and informal civil society dialogues, which take place at different levels (tracks). It is only through the interaction of these tracks that peace mediation develops its full potential. A multi-track approach is therefore required.

## Mediation or diplomacy?

There are considerable overlaps between diplomatic initiatives and mediation, which are mutually reinforcing. Mediation is an important foreign policy tool whose potential is not yet being fully utilised. Two basic common features of diplomacy and peace mediation are, firstly, that they aim to transform and resolve conflicts constructively, and, secondly, that non-violence is part of their core commitment and ethos. A key difference is that diplomacy is intended to achieve foreign policy goals and interests, whereas mediation is a consensus-based approach which focuses on the interests of all parties. As a consequence, diplomats and mediators have different perceptions of their roles and adopt different approaches. Improving the interaction between diplomacy and mediation therefore offers great potential.

## What is mediation support?

This means support for mediators and mediation teams and processes. Mediation support aims to sustainably improve the conditions for successful mediation and long-term peace processes by providing targeted support to stakeholders. Its target groups and users include mediating third parties, conflict parties, stakeholder groups and donor institutions, and other supporting actors. Persons and institutions engaged in mediation support can act as mediators, advisers, training providers, researchers, supervisors and coaches.

## Mediation support encompasses the following topics, methods and approaches:

### a) Implementation and operational support for mediation processes:

Mediation support includes logistical and organisational planning and preparation of mediation processes, methodological, thematic, strategic, psychological and legal advice and collaboration, and networking of key actors and processes. It also includes the monitoring, evaluation and funding of these processes.

### b) Analysis and information-sharing:

Here, the focus is on analysis of lessons learned and best practices and the (further) development of strategies and mechanisms, e.g. for conflict analysis, communication and process design. Mediation guidelines, good practices and codes of conduct are also developed. Mediation processes are supported by the analysis of conflict cases, regions and actors (and their interests) and relevant topics such as religion, ethnicity, human rights, gender, and legal and constitutional issues.

### c) Capacity building:

Training sessions build methodological, thematic and normative knowledge and practical mediation skills. Human and institutional capacities and expertise are developed in workshops. Coaching and supervision of mediators and diplomats are also used for targeted and sustainable capacity development.

### d) Establishment and development of structures:

Mediation support also facilitates and advises on the embedding of mediation at political level, the establishment of mediation support departments in ministries and international organisations, the development and management of in-house mediation expertise, standby teams and external pools of experts (rosters), and the introduction of conflict management programmes and systems.

## In essence, there are three models for institutionalising mediation support:

1. Legally and institutionally autonomous organisations, such as NGOs, universities, private providers and/or individual experts can be commissioned to provide support services.
2. Certain services can be institutionalised in in-house departments. Examples are the Mediation Support Unit in the United Nations Department of Political Affairs and the mediation units and focal points set up by the OSCE, the African Union and the European External Action Service.
3. A further option is to adopt a mixed form of internal and external support. Here, specific services are provided by institutionally autonomous or linked and directly financed organisations. This is the model adopted by the Mediation Support Project in Switzerland, the Crisis Management Initiative in Finland, and the United States Institute of Peace.

## Germany's Contribution to Peace Mediation and Mediation Support

Since the adoption of the Action Plan "Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Peace-Building" in 2004, Germany has stepped up its engagement in the field of peace mediation and mediation support. According to German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Germany has increased its funding for crisis prevention roughly tenfold since the Action Plan was launched.

In the Report on Implementing the Action Plan, presented in November 2014, the German Government pledged to further expand and intensify Germany's engagement in the field of peace mediation. It wants to be able to take earlier, more resolute and more substantive action in the foreign policy sphere. Actions include networking with civil society stakeholders (non-governmental organisations and research institutes) and implementation of a series of measures together with these specialised institutions. The 2014 Peace Mediation Conference is one example. The aim is to improve networking among stakeholders, with a view to progressively establishing a roster of mediation experts for deployment in civilian conflict management.

This is a field in which government and non-governmental organisations frequently cooperate. The mediation process which accompanied the 2008 presidential elections in Kenya was an example of engagement by a German government representative, but the German Federal Foreign Office also provides support – notably in Yemen – for specialist organisations working in the field of mediation support (see case studies at the end of this chapter). Among other things, Germany is also supporting the new Ministry of National Reconciliation in Mali, whose task is to facilitate dialogue between hostile groups, especially in the north of the country.

In the UN context, Germany is a member of the Group of Friends of Mediation. Groups of friends are mechanisms for diplomatic negotiations. They are small, informal groups of UN member states which support the Secretary-General or his local representatives and the Security Council in managing a conflict or addressing a substantive issue relating to UN crisis management.

### Structures in Germany

In the Federal Foreign Office, Division VN 02 (Crisis Prevention; Post-Conflict Peacebuilding; State-Building; Promoting Democracy) was primarily responsible for dealing with mediation in international conflicts until March 2015. The "Review 2014 – A Fresh Look at German Foreign Policy" process initiated by Foreign Minister Steinmeier in 2014 marked the start of an in-depth debate within the Federal Foreign Office itself and in the public arena about the goals, interests and tools of German foreign policy. The process, which involved German and international experts, civil society and staff from the Federal Foreign Office, focused mainly on the question: "What is wrong with German foreign policy? What can we do better?" One of the important insights gained in recent months is that crisis appears to be the new normal. Wishing to respond structurally to this development, the Federal Foreign Office has set up a separate Department for Crisis Prevention, Stabilisation and Post-Conflict



Peacebuilding. This new Department S will pool existing capabilities in this area and thus facilitate a more intensive response to all types of crisis. The new Directorate-General will consolidate and build on existing mediation expertise. Mediation has long formed an integral element of international diplomatic training and is now part of the Federal Foreign Office's training programme for attachés as well. There are also plans to establish structures for the deployment of German mediators and mediation support experts.

In the fields of civilian crisis prevention and development cooperation, various government departments and non-governmental organisations support mediation processes, offer mediation training and are actively involved in mediation research. The list below (which, by its very nature, is not exhaustive) offers an initial overview of these stakeholders:

1. Mediation plays a role in numerous projects implemented by the [Civil Peace Service](#) and forms part of the training for civil peace experts.
2. The [Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit \(GIZ\)](#) GmbH is Germany's largest development agency. It is involved in various projects focusing on mediation and often cooperates with non-governmental organisations in this context.
3. The [Center for International Peace Operations \(ZIF\)](#) offers mediation courses, among other things, and has a roster of civilian experts available for international peace operations; mediation is one of the skills offered by the roster.
4. The [Berghof Foundation](#) and [CSSP – Berlin Center for Integrative Mediation](#) both specialise in mediation in civilian conflict transformation and conduct comprehensive mediation processes in international political contexts.
5. [Inmedio Berlin](#), a private consultancy and training provider, runs mediation and dialogue projects in crisis regions and offers training for peacebuilding and development agencies.
6. Some [political foundations](#) (such as the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung) and the German Academic Exchange Service cooperate on mediation issues with various German universities (such as the University of Applied Sciences, Potsdam).
7. Several [universities](#) work in the context of peace mediation. The Bonn International Center for Conversion and the Center for Conflict Studies (CCS) at the University of Marburg periodically conduct research on peace mediation issues. The [Center for Peace Mediation](#) at the European University Viadrina specialises in the theory and practice of international peace mediation and offers a Master's programme in mediation.

## Linking development cooperation and mediation

The Action Plan “Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Peace-Building” defines peace policy and crisis prevention as cross-sectoral tasks in all areas of government. While the German Federal Foreign Office is a contact point for peace mediation and mediation support at governmental level, German development cooperation also offers good starting points for developing mediation structures. It enjoys a high level of trust and confidence in many partner countries, and its agencies have been working in these countries for many years and are therefore familiar with local structures and traditions. Projects and programmes supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ) primarily aim to build mediation capacities, structures and networks and to provide advice. There is no aspiration, however, to assume the role of a mediator.

GlZ very rarely acts as a mediator, and when it does so, it focuses on Tracks 2 and 3. However, it can provide valuable support for mediation processes and enhance the work of the Federal Foreign Office and other peace organisations at the local level in a meaningful way. GlZ also hosts internal training sessions on conflict sensitivity and has trained mediators available. Above all, it can bring state and non-state actors together and help to establish local mediation structures.

German development cooperation is actively involved at various levels: regional, national and local. Regional conflicts should be resolved primarily through international frameworks such as the African Union’s African Peace and Security Architecture or African regional organisations (e.g. the Economic Community of West African States, Intergovernmental Authority on Development). Here, German development cooperation is involved in capacity building and organisational development via the technical cooperation portfolio (GlZ). Through its development cooperation, Germany also provides training for national and local mediators from partner countries. The expertise and capacities of the Civil Peace Service in particular are available in this context.

In view of the broad range of possible forms of engagement, practical case studies are particularly useful in illustrating the potential of mediation-based approaches.

## The Panel of Eminent African Personalities and the conclave in the savannah

*Dr Gernot Erler, Member of the German Bundestag*

Gernot Erler gave an account of Kofi Annan's mediation mission in Kenya in spring 2008 as an example of the successful deployment of a team of experts. The background was as follows: due to irregularities in the 2007 presidential elections, major unrest broke out in Kenya, claiming at least 1,500 lives and resulting in mass expulsions. This pushed the country to the brink of civil war.

Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan was appointed to mediate between the two conflict parties. His mission, with a 40-strong Dialogue Team of the Kenya National Dialogue and Reconciliation (KNDR), began in January 2008. The team included a number of leading figures from Africa, known as the Panel of Eminent African Personalities. Kofi Annan was keen to achieve a coalition government based on power-sharing between the two rival political parties.

The mediation team and the conflict parties' negotiating teams were taken to a remote lodge in Tsavo West National Park, where they were able to conduct their negotiations in a protected space out of the media spotlight.

Gernot Erler, at the time a Minister of State in the German Government, was the only representative of a Western country to be invited to the conclave. His role, as Germany's representative, was to pass on German expertise on the technicalities of forming a grand coalition. In February 2008, the then US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice also arrived in Nairobi. She paid tribute to Germany's grand coalition and described such an arrangement as a good opportunity for Kenya too.

On 17 April 2008, Africa's first grand coalition was sworn in and political tensions eased, despite ongoing difficulties and a relatively low level of public support for the coalition. Nonetheless, this proved to be the right approach for the long term, for in 2010, Kenya successfully adopted a modern constitution and, on 4 March 2013, held general elections based on the new constitutional arrangements.

Although the international support from Germany and the US is seen as important, Kenya is viewed as a successful example of an African process which was brought to a positive conclusion, not least, by the figure of Kofi Annan. He attached great importance to ensuring that peace mediation enjoyed a measure of authority, through his own involvement and the Panel of Eminent African Personalities. The Panel's participation also underlined the principle of African ownership by building on traditional African approaches to conflict resolution. Both the size of the mediation mission and the remote location for the negotiations were intended to signal that failure was not an option. Annan also operated on the basis of a broader strategy which involved providing the public with regular, cautiously optimistic messages. The successful outcome was due, not least, to the patience shown by mediators and negotiators: it took four months of negotiating before a result was achieved.

Mediation teams – both professional mediators and eminent personalities – are clearly very important for the success of peace initiatives. It would therefore be desirable for this type of mediation team to be available on every continent. However, not enough of them exist at present.

Case study – Kenya

## Case study – Yemen

## A multi-track initiative with strong public participation

*Dr Oliver Wils, Berghof Foundation*

After former President Ali Abdullah Saleh handed over power to his Vice-President in 2012, a National Dialogue took place in Yemen as part of a two-year transitional period. Against a backdrop of multiple internal conflicts (including a separatist movement in the South and frequent violent clashes in Saada), the dialogue aimed to reach a national consensus on key issues and, on this basis, to adopt a constitution. The transitional phase was to end with presidential and parliamentary elections.

The UN and other external actors supported this process, but no external mediator was available in Yemen. The key political actors therefore had to devise the basic dialogue and negotiating processes themselves. To that end, in advance of the National Dialogue Conference, a preparatory committee, with 25 members, was established to develop the structures and governance mechanisms for the National Dialogue. In parallel, the issue was discussed at public events across Yemen.

The Conference opened on 18 March 2013 with 565 delegates representing the main political parties, the Southern Movement and the Houthis, independent women and youth, and civil society. The agenda was fairly open-ended and covered a broad range of topics. The Conference lasted for 10 months (until 24 January 2014) and during this time adopted a number of key decisions and made around 1,400 recommendations.

The National Dialogue Conference did much to resolve complex conflicts. In retrospect, however, it is clear that the scope and thematic range of the Conference were too broad and ambitious. Furthermore, a number of key issues remained unresolved, with the result that disagreements over implementation and further decision-making contributed to a new escalation of the violence.

## Significance of National Dialogues in peace mediation

National dialogues are currently being discussed as an important option in many Arab countries and in other regions. They address problems of great political sensitivity to which autonomous solutions, without external involvement, are sought. National Dialogues are also important because the complexity of mediation processes has increased: in the past, negotiations focused mainly on issues such as ceasefires, but now, more complex topics such as power sharing, transitional justice and development issues feature on the agenda. That being the case, it is often necessary to involve a broader range of local (and international) stakeholders in mediation processes.

For that reason, classic mediation is giving way to increasingly complex and more localised forms of peace mediation, and hybrid forms are becoming more common. For example, although no official mediator was involved in the National Dialogue, there were many mediated processes. Even classic mediation is now characterised by many self-mediated processes and dialogues.

## Ways of providing support

Due to the complexity of the processes, National Dialogues generally require substantial support, notably on issues such as process design and on political opinion-forming and consensus-building within and outside the negotiating teams. Methodological expertise is also required, e.g. on deadlock-breaking mechanisms and measures to ensure that the process is inclusive and involves a broad cross-section of society.



This was the starting point for the Berghof Foundation's work in Yemen. At the invitation of the main political parties and President Abed Rabbo Mansur Hadi, the National Dialogue Support Programme was established in summer 2012 in cooperation with a Yemeni partner, in order to provide advice to the National Dialogue Conference (expertise, background papers, thematic workshops, etc.), develop the capacities of the conflict parties (training and coaching), and support consensus-building (mapping, facilitated workshops, option papers, scenario workshops). Furthermore, in order to involve a broader cross-section of society, moderated and structured dialogues were conducted in various governorates.

The prerequisites for supporting National Dialogues are: a clear political commitment to process support (as opposed to supporting individual stakeholders), multi-partiality, patience (as the process can be quite lengthy), flexibility, and fast responses (as needs tend to be communicated at very short notice), a high level of decision-making authority at the local level, and technical and thematic expertise.

Germany has a good reputation in the Middle East, and we are therefore seen as an important and reliable partner. Moreover, with GIZ and the political foundations, Germany has good representatives and appropriate mechanisms in place at the local level.

## Strengthening Germany's Role and Potential

There was a general consensus among the state and non-state actors represented at the Conference that there is a need, and considerable potential, for Germany to step up its engagement in international peace mediation and mediation support. As several delegates emphasised, Germany can make a valuable contribution to civilian crisis prevention and conflict management as there is still considerable scope for complementary engagement in this area. In order to counter the risk of competing with other countries over mandates and duplicating existing activities, Germany's involvement should focus primarily on those countries where mediation processes and mediation support currently receive little attention or funding and where mediation can be deployed as a form of prevention. Germany's potential as a peace mediator and mediation support actor is based on the following three factors: its credibility, based on its post-war efforts to come to terms with its own history; its experience and resources in peace mediation and development cooperation; and its role as a key political and economic actor in Europe.

German development cooperation also offers good starting points. It often enjoys a high level of trust and confidence in the partner countries and has good knowledge of local structures and traditions, due to the German development agencies' longstanding presence in these countries. The expertise and structures of German development cooperation should therefore feed into the process and be utilised to the optimum extent. There is also scope to make use of the worldwide network of German embassies and diplomatic missions abroad and the presence of ZIF's civilian experts in many conflict regions in order to respond rapidly to crises and provide expertise and resources. These structures and resources should also be expanded on a targeted basis.

Germany is now an important political and economic actor in Europe. This role creates responsibilities and expectations and offers opportunities to exert influence. Germany should use its influence in order to strengthen and enhance civilian crisis prevention and especially peace mediation at the international level. A Subcommittee on Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Management and Integrated Action has existed in the German Bundestag since March 2010; it aims to make civilian crisis prevention a focal point of German foreign policy. A further opportunity to strengthen peace mediation will arise in 2016, when Germany is due to take over the chairmanship of the OSCE. Germany should make use of this opportunity in order to mobilise additional resources for civilian crisis prevention and develop its structures in Europe and worldwide. In light of Germany's major potential to step up its engagement in civilian crisis prevention, delegates agreed that mediation activities should not be undertaken as an end in themselves or an arbitrary manner. What is needed, instead, is criteria-based and conscious decision-making on where and how Germany should engage, and where it should not.



## Possibilities and Challenges

The Conference also looked at challenges and associated possibilities for action by Germany. The most important are outlined below. They fall into three main categories: strengthening national resources and expertise; building local capacities; and complementarity, co-operation and coordination in the planning and implementation of measures.

### Strengthening Germany's resources and expertise

#### **Conscious and responsible engagement**

The participants agreed that Germany should strengthen and expand its existing resources and expertise. Before taking a decision to engage as a peace mediator or provide mediation support in specific conflicts, the possible impacts must be carefully assessed ("do no harm" approach). However, mediation is not always the best option, so alternatives should always be considered as well. It is important to ensure that Germany's own motives for participation are transparent and that the consequences and possible implications of German engagement are clearly understood.

Furthermore, representatives of several governmental and non-governmental institutions emphasised that Germany should not attempt to cover all topics and fields of action in peace mediation. As they pointed out, it is better to adopt a focused approach and start with areas where Germany has traditionally been well-represented. The available resources should be utilised strategically and in a targeted manner in order to ensure that these extra activities genuinely add value. The worldwide distribution of mediation resources must also be considered, taking particular account of hitherto neglected countries and regions where German engagement can complement action by other international stakeholders. However, there are also some regions which are "over-mediated", Syria being one example. A sound analysis of the field and the international stakeholders which are already engaged can identify gaps and niches where there may be particular scope for action by Germany.

#### **Providing adequate resources, optimising their use**

One of the major challenges identified is providing adequate financial and human resources and optimising their use. Among other things, there is a need for qualified mediators, analysts and experts who can support mediation and reconstruction processes. Resource use can be improved through more intensive monitoring of mediation activities and by more intensive networking between relevant state and non-state actors. It is also important to support existing international mediation mechanisms, such as the Mediation Support Units set up by the UN, the EU and the OSCE, by sharing Germany's expertise. Through these organisations, Germany can play a more active role in mediation processes or mediation support.



### Building national capacities

German government institutions – including the Federal Foreign Office, the German embassies and other relevant departments – often do not have sufficient opportunities to develop local conflict expertise or prepare comprehensive analyses, due to their limited resources and constant rotation of staff. At present, the potential for mediation or mediation support is not being identified to an adequate extent in the embassies' conflict analyses, for example.

One option, in order to meet state actors' need for expertise and advice, is to establish a roster of experts in mediation and mediation support, who can be deployed rapidly and flexibly. It could be modelled on the structures in place in the EU, which works closely with specialist civil society partner organisations in the field of peace mediation. Germany already has an organisation – the ZIF – with many years of experience in managing a pool of experts for deployment in international civilian crisis operations. Before drawing up a roster, Germany should identify and define its potential fields of action in mediation and mediation support, so that it can provide targeted expertise as required.

#### The EU model

The EU has increasingly developed mediation capacities in recent years and, among other things, has set up the Mediation Support Unit in the European External Action Service for this purpose. Practical experience has shown that embedding these capacities within the organisation itself and integrating them into strong and effective networks is extremely important. The EU now has robust capacities of its own and a very good overview of the available expertise. Under framework agreements with specialised partner organisations, mediators can be mobilised at short notice in crisis situations.

A further option is to establish or develop local conflict management expertise at the embassies. Similar to the model adopted by Switzerland (human security advisers) and the United Kingdom (conflict advisers), peace advisers could be employed at German embassies. These advisers would have peace mediation skills and very good knowledge of the local context. German development cooperation, with its existing structures and partnerships, should also be integrated into these arrangements. Moreover, German diplomats should be sensitised to the issue of peace mediation, which should form part of their initial and continuing professional training. Only then will they be able to reliably identify a possible need for mediation. Information materials and guidelines for the Federal Foreign Office and local embassies could also be developed in cooperation with experts.

Besides institution- and capacity-building at the governmental level, it is important to further develop non-governmental capacities, to train staff with the appropriate skills, and to involve them in peace mediation processes. Training for mediation experts should focus in particular on building analytical and support skills, as mediation processes increasingly involve mediation teams consisting of experts with diverse roles and skill sets. Furthermore, active exchange between the relevant government departments and institutions can optimise the use of resources and promote cooperation between state and non-state actors. A first positive step which is already yielding initial successes – notably in the form of this Conference – is the interdepartmental exchange on mediation with the IMSD, which has taken place since early 2014.

### Case study: Switzerland

Switzerland is a good example of government engagement in peace mediation and mediation support. In 2005, Switzerland decided to intensify its engagement further in order to be able to respond appropriately to requests for mediation and mediation support. Since then, Switzerland has developed a range of measures in this context: for example, it provides mediation training for diplomats, funds publications on mediation topics, and supports local experts and projects. The Mediation Support Project, which is funded by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) and implemented by swisspeace and the Center for Security Studies at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, is currently building further expertise. Switzerland also has positive experience of deploying human security advisers with mediation skills at its embassies.

Switzerland's experience, however, also highlights the challenges facing donor countries in the peace mediation field. The confidentiality and discretion that are essential for mediation can sometimes cause confusion or frustration if information cannot be shared with all stakeholders. There may also be resistance to the process in some cases if the conflict parties include armed groups which are involved in the negotiations. Mediators themselves also face specific challenges, as the failure of mediation processes often rebounds on third parties.

Government engagement in the field of peace mediation must be based on a clear vision and a long-term commitment to establishing a permanent role in this field of action for the country concerned, and cannot be driven by an interest in short-term visibility. This too is evident from the Swiss experience.

### Long-term engagement

In order to expand resources, long-term preventive engagement is required – beyond electoral terms and international financial commitment periods. As an economic powerhouse, Germany has the potential and the opportunity to establish structures for this type of long-term engagement and to utilise its capacities and financial resources in a preventive manner. There was broad consensus among delegates that Germany should focus on long-term processes and should continue to support them even if international interest wanes. In order to safeguard a stable peace, it is essential to stay engaged even after a peace agreement has been reached and to support these agreements' implementation, along with peacebuilding measures, over the long term.

For cooperation with civil society actors in and outside Germany, it is important to support multiannual projects to a greater extent as well. At present, many projects are short-term in focus and are limited to a one- to three-year period. However, crisis prevention and peacebuilding often need much more time and require long-term measures.

These long-term measures require broad-based support from policy-makers and the general public.

### Public involvement and awareness-raising

Although the German public generally approves of more intensive engagement in civilian crisis prevention, it is often difficult to raise public awareness of this field of action in individual cases, as this type of engagement generally relies on discretion, and media attention tends to focus on acute crises rather than on conflict prevention and post-conflict support. Awareness-raising and targeted involvement of the public are therefore essential in order to consolidate Germany's engagement in civilian crisis prevention in the long term.

## Building local capacities, increasing context sensitivity

Several speakers and delegates identified building and utilising local capacities, and integrating context-specific factors into the planning of mediation activities, as other key challenges.

### Cooperation with local mediators

In order to facilitate effective and sustainable mediation, it is often advisable to work with local mediators (insider mediators) and integrate their perspectives into the mediation process. Local mediators are familiar with the context and the conflict parties and have important knowledge and perspectives on conflict resolution that they can share. Cooperation with local actors and mediators offers an opportunity to take action in less accessible regions such as the Pacific region. By building networks of local peace actors and mediators, civil peacebuilding measures can be supported even in those countries in which no engagement is possible (yet) at governmental level (Track 1).

For that reason, support should be provided to develop local mediation expertise (capacity building) and establish national and international mediation networks. An appropriate first step is to identify existing local peace mediation capacities in order to strengthen, support and complement them in a targeted manner.

### Context sensitivity

The importance of responding sensitively to the local context and adapting measures accordingly was emphasised by several speakers. Measures to support conflict parties and other local stakeholders should therefore always be tailor-made, context-specific and gender-sensitive. For example, Germany is often keen to ensure the visibility of its engagement, but in some contexts, this is impossible without putting the success of the measure at risk. The context specificity of the activities can be ensured, for example, through dialogue with local experts and, if available, with local peace advisers based at the embassies.

## Complementarity, cooperation and coordination

Both in Germany and internationally, there is a need for more intensive coordination and cooperation among stakeholders in order to ensure that resource use is optimised and demand gaps are closed.

### Coordination and cooperation among German stakeholders

In Germany, civilian crisis prevention and mediation/mediation support should be a task for all policy areas, not only foreign policy, and should involve all relevant government departments. Only through an interdepartmental peace policy approach can mediation develop its full potential. For that reason, stakeholders from various tracks and sectors should network with each other and cooperate as partners.

A major challenge – and opportunity – lies in the current notion of what constitutes genuine multi-track diplomacy that recognises the diversity of stakeholders, their capacities and the logic underlying their actions, and utilises this diversity in a constructive manner. To that end, all (state and non-state) actors must become more familiar with each other's characteristics, motivations and modus operandi. This must include their goals, internal information flows, financing issues, and administrative requirements. Joint pilot projects in individual missions, as a means of identifying structural learning effects as models of best practice, can establish the basis for future intensive cooperation.

So that cooperation between peace actors at the operational level can genuinely be intensified, appropriate joint networks and forums, but also clearly defined rules of engagement (e.g. in the form of a code of conduct) are needed, defining exactly what action will be taken under the peace mediation banner. The development and expansion of structures, resources and skills can also be approached synergistically: at present, numerous parallel programmes and spheres of responsibility exist. Training and supervisory formats should therefore be more flexible or be aligned to shared goals. This would facilitate the joint preparation and evaluation of practical approaches.

### International coordination

Experts see a need for better coordination among the countries and multilateral organisations that are actively engaged in this area. As peace mediation relies, first and foremost, on appropriate expertise, the individual stakeholders should think and act less in national terms and more in terms of skills. This is already reflected in the trend towards sharing mediation activities and mediation support roles among various stakeholders. International exchange and pooling of resources facilitate their optimised use. There is scope for Germany, therefore, to promote international networking of existing initiatives. An opportunity to do so will arise in 2016, when Germany is due to take over the chairmanship of the OSCE: Germany can potentially focus on civilian crisis prevention and especially on peace mediation, as well as on the related field of dialogue processes.

### Safeguarding and institutionalising knowledge

The Conference identified safeguarding, pooling and institutionalising knowledge as another key challenge. A great deal of experience-based knowledge is currently not being evaluated or analysed for future deployments, because the organisations concerned are unaware of the added value that this can generate, or have not identified the requisite resources or skills for this purpose.

Furthermore, a great deal of information is analysed solely at the level of the individual organisation, making smooth intermeshing of various tracks and stakeholders more difficult. One example is the preparation of an overview of available resources (“Who can do what?”), which should aim to improve selection and process design decisions in a given case.

In order to safeguard and institutionalise knowledge, one option is to establish a peace mediation coordination position in Germany, which would serve, inter alia, as a central point for the pooling of knowledge and reporting on experience.

A further possibility is to undertake mapping of existing best practices in the field of peace mediation and the associated recommendations and options for action. They could then be utilised in future mediation processes and would be available for stakeholders wishing to initiate a mediation process in their own conflict context.

### Addressing new and neglected topics

A further challenge is to promote research and develop expertise on new and neglected topics and areas of peace mediation. Complementarity and coordination with other institutions engaged in research in this field play a key role in this context. For example, it is important to take account of work being conducted with non-state violent actors, which makes an important contribution to civilian conflict management.

One topic identified by experts at the Conference as deserving support is process design as a whole, where there is still a lack of expertise worldwide. Knowledge of processes should, ideally, be coupled with specific technical expertise (e.g. on ceasefire negotiations). A further topic of relevance for the future is mediation in environmental and resource conflicts.

## Next Steps

As the 2014 Peace Mediation Conference clearly showed, there is a broad consensus among participating state and non-state actors in Germany and elsewhere that Germany has the potential, the commitment and the resources to step up its engagement in the field of peace mediation and mediation support. In order to harness this potential on a sustainable basis and embed it in German foreign policy, the following steps are recommended:

1

### Stock-taking/mapping of existing expertise, with the involvement of national and international stakeholders

This mapping should be undertaken in cooperation with all relevant state and non-state actors, and should identify the available expertise, resources, roles and stakeholder networking structures and clarify their interrelationships. A second goal is to define best practices in peace mediation and mediation support and identify fields of action in which Germany can make a valuable contribution. There should be a focus on new and neglected areas, and duplication with other stakeholders' initiatives should be avoided.

2

### Strengthening long-term measures and funding opportunities in conjunction with policy-makers

In expanding resources and funding opportunities, supporting long-term and sustainable measures should be a priority. Here, there is a need to modify government funding principles, which tend to be based around electoral terms and political processes. An ongoing dialogue and intensive cooperation with the German Bundestag's Subcommittee on Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Management and Integrated Action may prove fruitful in this context.

Measures which should be supported include: funding of mediation processes and mediators, strengthening of German and local mediation capacities in conflict countries and regions (capacity building), and the provision of good-quality training materials and toolkits.

3

### Intensifying the dialogue among German state and non-state actors

The dialogue already established between the Federal Foreign Office, other relevant departments and the IMSD is a first step towards a long-term, regular and intensive stakeholder exchange. There are plans to continue this format and to develop it with the inclusion of additional joint measures and projects. There is scope to institutionalise this dialogue by establishing an IMSD coordination position. The position would act as a contact point and provide human resources and expertise for state actors as required.

In order to respond more quickly to requests from conflict parties and meet the advisory needs of state actors, there are plans to establish a German roster of experts as a joint project involving the Federal Foreign Office and the IMSD. It would consist of experts in mediation and mediation support who are available for rapid and flexible deployment.

4

### Developing mediation capacities in the Federal Foreign Office and German embassies

In order to engage Federal Foreign Office and German embassy staff more fully, it is important to offer them advice and support with conflict analysis, as required, with a focus on mediation entry points. Deploying human security advisers/conflict advisers at the embassies, in line with the Swiss/UK model, may also be worth considering.

5

### Facilitating regular exchange between national and international experts

The Conference was a starting point in promoting stakeholder dialogue. It should take place on a regular basis and should be complemented by other formats, such as intensive workshops for experts on clearly defined specialist topics.

25 November 2014, 09.00 – 17.00 hrs  
Europasaal, Federal Foreign Office

9:00

## Welcome

**Dr Patricia Flor** | *Director, Department for United Nations and Global Affairs* | Federal Foreign Office

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## Introduction

**Professor Maria Böhmer, MdB** | *Minister of State* | Federal Foreign Office

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## CASE STUDIES ON PEACE MEDIATION

### Case Study Kenya

**Dr Gernot Erler, MdB** | *Coordinator for Intersocietal Cooperation with Russia, Central Asia and the Eastern Partnership Countries* | Federal Foreign Office

### Case Study Yemen

**Dr Oliver Wils** | *Programme Director MENA* | Berghof Foundation

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10:30 – 12:00

## Panel discussion

### Germany as Mediator: Possibilities and Challenges

#### Chairperson

**Dr Almut Wieland-Karimi** | *Director* | Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF)

#### Panellists

**Edelgard Bulmahn, MdB** | *Vice-President of the German Bundestag* | Member of the Subcommittee on Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Management and Integrated Action

**Dr Patricia Flor** | *Director, Department for United Nations and Global Affairs* | Federal Foreign Office

**Dr Tim Guldemann** | *Swiss Ambassador to Germany*

**Dr Norbert Ropers** | *Programme Director Southeast Asia* | Berghof Foundation

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### Working Group 1

## From an International Perspective: Germany's Role in International Peace Mediation

### Guiding Questions

In which conflicts can Germany make a valuable contribution as peace mediator?

German peace mediation and mediation support: What are the expectations of international actors?

### Co-Chairpersons

**Julia von Dobeneck** | *Integrative Mediator* | CSSP – Berlin Center for Integrative Mediation

**Sebastian Dworack** | *Head of Project, The African Union Civilian Standby Roster* | Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF)

### Resource Persons and Rapporteurs

**Dr Ben Hoffman** | *Co-Founder* | Canadian International Institute of Applied Negotiation (CIAN) and former Director of Conflict Resolution, Carter Center

**Dr Sven M. G. Koopmans** | *Senior Mediation Expert, Standby Mediation Team* | Department of Political Affairs, United Nations (UN DPA)

**Dr Claus Neukirch** | *Deputy Director* | OSCE Conflict Prevention Center

**Jamila Raja** | *Member of the National Dialogue Conference* | Yemen

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### Working Group 2

## How to Facilitate the Structural Embedding of Mediation and Mediation Support

### Guiding Questions

What experience do different countries and multilateral organisations have in institutionalising mediation and mediation support?

How can we organise cooperation between state and non-state organisations and ensure optimal networking between Germany and existing mediation and mediation support structures?

### Co-Chairpersons

**Dirk Splinter** | *Co-Director* | inmedio berlin – institute for mediation, consulting, development

**Luxshi Vimalarajah** | *Programme Director Dialogue, Mediation & Peace Support Structures* | Berghof Foundation

### Resource Persons and Rapporteurs

**Christina Beinhoff** | *Security Policy Division* | Federal Ministry of Defence

**Dr Simon J. A. Mason** | *Senior Researcher and Head of the Mediation Support Team* | Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich

**Murezi Michael** | *Leiter Mediation Support* | Eidgenössisches Departement für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten

**Christian Müller** | *Competence Centre for Emergency Aid, Reconstruction and Peace* | Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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continuer: Parallel working groups

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### Working Group 3:

## Points of Contact, Common Ground, Interaction between Diplomacy and Mediation

### Guiding Questions

Which goals and approaches, what scope for action and constraints are shared by both diplomacy and mediation?

What are the greatest challenges to a closer integration between diplomacy and mediation and what could a more effective cooperation look like?

### Co-Chairpersons

**Ina Lepel** | *Director for Civilian Crisis Prevention, Humanitarian Aid and Combating International Terrorism, Department for United Nations and Global Affairs* | Federal Foreign Office

**Professor Lars Kirchhoff** | *Co-Director* | Center for Peace Mediation (CPM)

### Resource Persons and Rapporteurs

**Ellen Alradi** | *Team Leader/Senior Political Affairs Officer, Europe Division* | Department of Political Affairs, United Nations (UN DPA)

**Professor Hans Joachim Giessmann** | *Executive Director* | Berghof Foundation

**Canan Gündüz** | *Mediation Adviser, Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Mediation Instruments Division* | European External Action Service (EEAS)

**Ambassador (ret.) Dr Claas D. Knoop** | Federal Foreign Office

**Dr Christian Schwarz-Schilling** | *former Federal Minister, former International Mediator in Bosnia and Herzegovina* | Honorary President CSSP – Berlin Center for Integrative Mediation

15:45 – 17:00

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## Closing Panel

### Peace Mediation in Germany Foreign Policy – Complementarity, Cooperation and Coordination

#### Chairperson

**Dr Almut Wieland-Karimi** | *Director* | Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF)

#### Panellists

Rapporteurs from the three Working Groups

**Dr Franziska Brantner, MdB** | *Chair of the Subcommittee on Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Management and Integrated Action* | German Bundestag

**Joelle Jenny** | *Director for Conflict Prevention and Security Policy* | European External Action Service (EEAS)

**Ina Lepel** | *Director for Civilian Crisis Prevention, Humanitarian Aid and Combating International Terrorism, Department for United Nations and Global Affairs* | Federal Foreign Office

**Gundula Weitz-Huthmann** | *Acting Head of Peace and Security Division* | Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

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The image features a solid blue background. In the center, there is a complex graphic composed of numerous overlapping, semi-transparent circles and arcs in various shades of blue and grey. These lines create a sense of motion and depth, resembling a stylized globe or a network of connections. The overall aesthetic is modern and professional.

*[www.konferenzfriedensmediation2014.de](http://www.konferenzfriedensmediation2014.de)*