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BACKGROUND PAPER

**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT
THE MEDIATION PROCESS**

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Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency
No. 7, 9th Avenue, F-8/1, Islamabad, Pakistan
Tel: (+92-51) 111-123-345; Fax: (+92-51) 226-3078
E-mail: info@pildat.org; Web: www.pildat.org

CONTENTS

Preface

Profile of the Author

Step 1: Assess the Conflict	11
Step 2: Ensure Mediator Readiness	12
Step 3: Ensure Conflict Ripeness	14
Step 4: Conduct Track-I Mediation	15
Step 5: Encourage Track-II Dialogue	18
Step 6: Construct a Peace Agreement	19

PREFACE

The background paper on **Conflict Resolution: The Mediation Process** has been written as a part of PILDAT's programme of Orientation of Members of National Assembly and Provincial Assemblies on Conflict Resolution.

Elected legislators engage in the resolution of many conflicts – in their constituencies, at the local level, within legislatures, regionally and nationally and internationally. The basic objective of the PILDAT programme is to build conflict resolution capabilities of legislators so that they are better equipped to play their role as mediators in various conflicts in the society. It is envisaged that by building the conflict-resolution capabilities of elected legislators at all levels, our efforts should contribute positively towards Pakistani legislators' long-term ability to respond and diffuse conflict at all levels.

The background paper has been compiled by Ms. Nina Sughrue, an international Conflict Resolution expert affiliated with the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), using the materials from the USIP.

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this paper belong to the USIP and are not necessarily shared by PILDAT. Furthermore, the opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this paper are those of the USIP and do not necessarily reflect the views of the PILDAT, or the British High Commission, Islamabad.

Islamabad
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PROFILE OF THE AUTHOR

Ms. Nina Sughrue is a senior programme officer in the Education and Training Center/International at the **United States Institute of Peace – USIP**.

The USIP is an independent, nonpartisan institution established and funded by the United States Congress. Nina Sughrue coordinates training programmes that help government officials, military and police personnel, representatives from various international organisations and non-governmental employees improve their conflict management skills. She has conducted training in Afghanistan, Colombia, Egypt, Jordan, India, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Poland, Sudan and Turkey and with Israelis and Palestinians.

Prior to joining the USIP, Sughrue worked for eight years in various positions in the U.S. government agencies, where she focused on the Middle East and South Asia and was posted to several American embassies in South Asia. Sughrue also spent two years in the State Department Foreign Language School studying Arabic. Sughrue has travelled and worked all over the globe. Nina Sughrue received a B.A. in political science with a focus on international relations from Boston University and an M.A. in international policy from the Elliott School of International Affairs at The George Washington University.

Conflict Resolution: The Role of Parliamentarians

Parliamentarians are uniquely positioned to play leadership roles in the peace building process in their democratic societies. As such, they must be acutely aware of their considerable responsibility to the people and larger society they represent. They contribute to conflict mediation/resolution by stimulating forums, agenda setting, and constituency building, ensuring that bottom-up as well as top-down constructive ideas at all levels are heard and incorporated into the process. The ultimate goal is a sustainable peace.

The representative Parliament provides its members with opportunities to negotiate and mediate and thus construct the building blocks fundamental to a lasting peace. Mediation is a particularly important skill for the representatives as they are singularly positioned to assist in the negotiating process on the road to peace. This is so on the community level as well as on the international stage. Mediation is an art form, incorporating institution, subtlety, and vision. Yet there is also a bit of science to it with transferable tools, definable tasks, and management challenges.

This paper offers an overview of the process of mediating interstate and intrastate conflicts. Each of its six chapters covers a different step in the process, identifying what needs to be done at that step and how best to accomplish it. It is important to note, however, that some steps may be ongoing, overlapping with outlasting other, later steps. For example, conflict assessment, which launches the entire mediation process, will likely continue in some fashion throughout the process until a peace agreement is reached. The other five steps focus, in turn, on ensuring mediator readiness, determining and enhancing ripeness, managing negotiations between the parties to the conflict, encouraging and coordinating with Track-II endeavours, and constructing and implementing an agreement. The paper is geared towards Track I (governments and government officials) actors.

Step 1: Assess the Conflict

The first step in any mediation effort should be to assess the conflict. Conflict analysis should provide a contextualized understanding of the conflict and answer questions of strategy: at what level to engage, how to gain leverage, and no whom to focus efforts. That said, the mediator may often have to navigate relying not on hard information but on experience, intuition and common sense but it helps to know what questions the mediator would ideally like answered.

Generally, this step involves four activities:

- (1) understanding what the conflict is about
- (2) understanding who the actors are
- (3) understanding the larger context, and
- (4) understanding sources of power and leverage

Understand What the Conflict Is About

The basic question, "What is this conflict about?" can be conceptualized in a number of ways. In order to communicate effectively with parties, a mediator needs to grasp the history and content of the conflict as it matters to the participants, including key symbols and turning points. A conflict may have multiple manifestations, being "about" different things at different levels: local, national, regional, and international.

Assess Positions and Interests

The mediator must identify the positions of the parties to the conflict and the issues that divide them. Their perceptions and misperceptions of themselves and their antagonists, of the course of the conflict thus far, and of the process of negotiation will be central to their willingness to engage in mediation. The mediator should differentiate between the stated positions and the underlying interests of the key actors.

Understand the Actors

Ultimately, the local society must be responsible for the resolution of conflict, but it is likely that a number of other actors will be involved. Effective mediators devise different forms of engagement appropriate to and functional for different actors. Some actors will have a place at the table. Others will have observer status. Private and public consultations will occur in many different forms. Part of an effective mediation strategy is finding constructive forms of inclusion for different actors.

Analyze the Parties to the Conflict

The mediator should examine the groups directly involved in the conflict, including how they define themselves and whether they possess political as well as military wings.

The mediator should identify the top leaders and the basis of their authority (e.g., military prowess, political skill, popular following, or potential to lead after the conflict). How are the leaders accountable to their group and to the populace? How removed are they from the costs and consequences of the conflict? It is helpful to consider the consequences for the conflict of a change in the top leadership.

Midlevel leaders may be significant to a negotiation. In profiling the middle level, the mediator should determine how independent its members are from the top leadership and identify the relevant social networks to which they may be connected (e.g., the business community, professional associations, churches, academic institutions, and the popular arts community).

Spoilers may attempt to scuttle a peace process. The mediator should try to determine their interests for doing so, the support they might command, and the channels they might use to obtain resources to continue the conflict.

Step 2: Ensure Mediator Readiness

The mediator needs to know not only what needs to be done but also whether he or she is the right person to do it — whether he or she has the right skills, the right resources, and the right support to be successful. To answer these questions, mediators need to take a long, hard look at themselves and their situation. Whatever happens, a prospective mediator must not let institutional vanity or personal commitment cloud his or her judgment — the mediator, and the victims of the conflict, will pay a heavy price later for failing to acknowledge any shortcomings he or she may have to mediate a particular conflict. By the same token, however, if the mediator's self-assessment shows that he or she can make a real contribution, then the mediator should have faith in that assessment and act accordingly.

Determine the Right Mediation Role Given Backing and Resources

Mediators can play very diverse roles. That diversity extends far beyond the division between Track-I initiatives conducted by governments and intergovernmental organizations and Track-II endeavours launched by private organizations and individuals.

Ensure That the Mediation Strategy Is Appropriate to the Mediator's Identity

A mediator's strategy must be appropriate to his or her identity. Weak negotiators cannot throw their weight around. Neither can a superpower slip in a side door or whisper over someone's shoulder. Each type of mediator has specific assets, and those are the ones he or she should deploy.

Enhance the Ability to Engage Effectively

What makes a good mediator? There are as many answers as there are good mediators. But all mediators need credibility, a portfolio of skills, and cross-cultural awareness.

Build Credibility

Standards of conduct that can help a mediator earn and maintain trust include performing competently, consistently, and predictably; communicating accurately and openly with a balance between transparency and confidentiality; interacting appropriately and with equal levels of proximity with all parties; and exhibiting empathy toward and commitment to the possibility of a solution.

Develop and Strengthen a Broad Portfolio of Skills

- Active listening, which reassures parties that their concerns have been heard and understood
- Conducting open-ended questioning to encourage meaningful answers
- Re-framing proposals by paraphrasing and summarizing them
- Describing a problem, including its symptoms and causes, before proposing solutions, and then gathering all proposals before beginning to evaluate them
- Envisioning "possibility trees" — diagrams that chart the possible evolution of systems from their present condition — and identifying steps necessary to achieve imagined futures
- Dis-aggregating and sequencing to promote movement: dividing issues into several parts, mandating or delegating preliminary work to study groups, layering discussions, or sequencing decisions
- Using matched conditioned statements ("yes, if") to define elements of a settlement

Recognize Cultural Differences

Different cultures communicate and negotiate differently. Cultural patterns are not homogeneous across any grouping such as nation or ethnicity, and although they exhibit considerable continuity, they are subject to change and adaptation. Nonetheless, culturally distinctive styles and expectations regarding expression and interpretation are deeply relevant to a process of mediation. Mediators should not only be able to speak and read the local language (or have reliable interpreters who can) but should also be familiar with the local cultural styles of communication: for instance, forms of courtesy; uses of humour; patterns of reciprocity; and ways of conveying respect, gratitude, or disapproval and of declining an offer or expressing criticism.

Ensure Adequate Authority and Resources

Obtain a Clear Mandate

In order to generate appropriate strategies, mediation initiatives need clear mandates. The underlying purpose of the mandate may be to resolve a conflict, to contain it so as to maintain regional stability, or to freeze it until anticipated contextual changes occur.

Build and Sustain Political Support

To pursue a peace process with confidence and credibility, mediators need consistent political support. Predictable rhythms such as the term of office for an organization's leadership or the election cycle of the sponsoring nation will affect support for mediation. A mediator should be attentive to other major events that will affect the sponsor's political support.

Obtain the Necessary Resources and Staying Power

The institutional sponsor of a mediation should provide decision-making authority, open channels of communication with the parties and other stakeholders, expertise for specific tasks, and counsel. It should also provide or pay for the full range of logistics and for adequate staff and administrative support.

Both institutional support and material resources are needed throughout the entire mediation effort. Peace processes are typically protracted, going through many phases and rotations of staff. Those that are truncated, under-resourced, or abandoned prematurely can do grave damage, exacerbating the intractability of a conflict.

Know When Not to Mediate

Ignoring protracted conflicts (on such grounds as they are containable, too complex, a low strategic priority, someone else's problem, or the subject of previous intervention failures) risks both intractability and contagion. Nonetheless, valid reasons do exist for deciding not to launch a mediation initiation or to withdraw from an ongoing effort.

Avoid Mediation if the Sponsor Lacks Commitment, Resources, or Credibility

If the sponsoring organization or government lacks either the commitment or the resources to truly support a mediation, the effort could be counterproductive. Mediators cannot work with credibility and confidence if political change in their sponsoring institution may undercut the work, if their communications will be ignored, if required decisions will be postponed, or if necessary funding will not be forthcoming.

Another circumstance in which mediation may be inappropriate is when the prospective mediator or sponsoring organization is too closely aligned with one

party or too directly involved in the conflict to be balanced and/or credible. This is not to say that a mediator must be impartial to be effective, but a mediator does need to be capable politically of pressing and influencing both sides toward a settlement.

Avoid Mediation if the Conflict Is Not Ripe for Resolution

Mediation may not be the right answer when the parties do not demonstrate serious intention to explore a political solution. In such circumstances, the mediator needs to test parties' motives and avoid pleading for the engagement. The mediator should be cautious about engaging when mediation may play into the hands of a dominant party, legitimizing actions by the parties that may cross the line of acceptable conduct.

The best response in some conflict situations, in other words, may be benign neglect, coercive diplomacy, or even threatening use of force rather than mediation. There may also be times when the would-be mediator is best advised to undertake activities aimed at ripening the conflict.

Know When to Withdraw

Ongoing mediation initiatives should be regularly evaluated. In some situations, a lack of clear progress is best met with renewed commitment and the introduction of new forms of leverage or new settlement formulas; in other settings, the best option might be to focus on protecting the peace process itself until more propitious conditions emerge. In some contexts, however, withdrawal may be the most responsible action. This is the case if the process is clearly being pursued in bad faith by one or more parties (such as using a cease-fire to rebuild fighting capacity) or if it is heading to a settlement that the mediator judges to be unworkable, illegal, or unethical.

Step 3: Ensure Conflict Ripeness

In addition to ensuring that he or she is ready to tackle a conflict, the mediator should also ensure that the conflict is ready to be tackled — that it is, in professional parlance, ripe for resolution.

Ensuring conflict ripeness is presented here as the third step in the mediation process, but it actually consists of two activities — assessing ripeness and enhancing ripeness — that will probably be initiated at different times: assessment early on, while the conflict as a whole is being assessed, and enhancement later, once the mediator has determined that he or she is ready and able to tackle this conflict. Once begun, however, both activities will run in tandem.

Assess Ripeness

Many mediation studies give considerable attention to the concept of conflict ripeness. A conflict may become ripe for negotiation when antagonists recognize that they are in a mutually hurting stalemate and sense that a way out is possible. Both sides become aware they cannot defeat the enemy outright and that continued violence not only will be costly and ineffective but will risk weakening their situation. A related conceptualization of ripeness is the moment when antagonists recognize their interdependence and those important goals cannot be achieved without the other side. The two sides must also have a sense that some mutually acceptable settlement formula is available to them.

Parties not only must perceive the stalemate to be painful but also must be strong and coherent enough to make decisions and deliver on them.

Finally, for ripeness to be complete, there must be strong support for a peace process among both internal political actors and the public.

Enhance Ripeness

A mediator should make judgments about how best to intervene to help ripen the conflict and to create a readiness to negotiate among the parties. Effective mediators convince parties (particularly those actors with decision-making power or influence in the conflict) that goals cannot be achieved through continued violence and that other means are possible and practical. A mediator may follow several paths of persuasion in the effort to induce a change in antagonists' perspectives.

- Help Elites Understand Costs and Benefits
- Increase Pressure on Elites through Accountability
- Create Balance between Parties
- Change the Costs and Benefits of the Conflict
- Take into Account the Legacies of Previous Mediation Attempts
- Assess Positive and Negative Results of Previous Efforts
- Consider New Sequencing of Decisions, New Settlement Formulas, and New Actors

Step 4: Conduct Track-I Mediation

Once the mediator has assessed the conflict, determined his or her readiness to act and evaluated and, if necessary, enhanced ripeness, the mediator is ready to begin the fourth stage of the process: negotiation. Among the tasks that fall to the mediator at this stage are laying the groundwork, creating roles for all relevant actors, handling logistics, actually conducting negotiations, fitting the public into the process, and working with the media.

Use Consultations and Pre-negotiations to Lay the Groundwork

Solicit Input and Build Trust

Regardless of the specific structure of the negotiations, participants are more apt to be satisfied with the outcome if they have been consulted in its design. Rather than independently reviewing and choosing from among available designs and then presenting the parties with that choice, mediators should solicit the parties' input early on: what form should the meetings take, where should they be held, whether and how to record them, how broad should the agenda be..

Establish Clear Ground Rules

Trust and confidence among the parties can be fostered by clear and consistently applied ground rules for negotiations. Involving participants in designing those ground rules is itself an exercise in building trust.

Determine Participants

While a large number of stakeholders will be consulted, relatively few will participate in direct negotiations. When helping to determine whom to involve in direct negotiations, the mediator should consider the most viable partners, be prepared to manage spoilers, and try to include marginalized groups as appropriate. **Top-Level Leaders**
Negotiations often involve the top leaders of each party or their direct representatives. A high profile, however, can constrain top leaders, who, if they appear to be accepting less than publicly stated goals, risk both their own positions and the interests of their constituencies.

Mid-level Leaders

Mid-level leaders play a useful role in many negotiations. They know and are known by the top leaders, yet have broader connections to constituencies. Their positions and

effectiveness depend less on a having a high public profile, and they thus enjoy greater manoeuvrability.

Manage Spoilers

Spoilers, who will block settlements if their own interests are not met, require careful management. To give a seat to a spoiler may appear to be rewarding bad behaviour, and may risk alienating other participants and tainting the talks. Yet outright exclusion often means they will use their power to resist both the peace process and its outcome. Furthermore, their exclusion risks eliminating from negotiations the very actors and issues that are most difficult to deal with, thus undercutting the realism of the mediation effort. Consequently, instead of excluding spoilers, mediators should find ways to marginalize or undercut them while also involving them in the process — for instance, via meetings with mediators rather than with the other parties or by including them as individuals without conferring a public role or formal standing.

Inducement involves taking positive measures to address the grievances of factions that obstruct peace. When spoilers act out of fear, they will usually demand some sort of physical protection. When acting out of a sense of fairness, they will usually demand material benefits. When acting out of a sense of justice, they tend to demand recognition or legitimacy. However, when used inappropriately, inducement can exacerbate the problem.

A socialization strategy establishes a set of norms for acceptable behaviours by parties that commit to peace or seek to join a peace process. Adherence to these norms is encouraged by the use of carrots and sticks. The norms must be clearly established and communicated to all stakeholders and must remain consistent over time.

A coercion strategy relies on the threat of punishment if a spoiler does not fall into line. Coercion can take the form of threats, the use of force, warnings that the peace process will go forward with or without the spoiler (the "departing-train" strategy), and the mediator's withdrawal from the peace process.

For spoilers who pursue total power and whose goals are not subject to change, the use of force or the departing-train strategy are usually the only effective strategies. Inducement may be useful for spoilers with more limited goals, but only if their grievances are acceptable to the other

stakeholders; otherwise, some level of socialization or coercion may be necessary. However, inducement should never be used with a greedy spoiler, whose goals expand and contract with calculations of cost and risk, as it is likely to simply whet the spoiler's appetite for further grievances. Depending on the context, some coercion may be necessary, but long-term socialization is the only truly effective strategy for greedy spoilers.

Include Marginalized Groups in Negotiations

In addition to combatants or other parties central to the conflict, the key stakeholders in society ideally should have seats at the table. Typically, they will include representatives of civil society (whether or not these are formal organizations); women; and ethnic, religious, or ideological minorities, who are often marginalized in decision making

Provide a Safe, Effective, and Well-Resourced Working Environment

Effective mediators provide a safe working environment that accords no unfair advantage to any side and enables effective exchange. Arranging and paying for the components of such an environment is essential to any mediation. These components include:

- A secure, accessible venue that is not identified with any party to the conflict
- Security, transportation, meals, housing, and meeting space (including space for private meetings within each party and informal sharing of views between parties)
- Visas and identity papers (including documents for participants who may be outlawed or travelling under aliases)
- Proven translators who are independent of both parties
- Skilled staff who are sensitive to protocol and cross-cultural issues, and who can provide technical expertise and help draft agreements
- Agreed-upon mechanisms for recording proceedings
- Reliable and secure means of communication (between mediators and their institutional base as well as between all negotiators and their counsellors and constituents)
- The means to handle press inquiries

Develop and Execute Strategies for Advancing Negotiations

During negotiations, a mediator must deploy numerous specific skills (such as convening, facilitating, and

reframing) to accomplish numerous tasks, including cultivating confidence, disaggregating and sequencing decisions, developing and assessing options, breaking deadlocks, and communicating with constituents.

Introduce Fresh Frameworks

One way of keeping negotiations moving is to persuade parties to frame issues in terms not of positions, which are often in opposition to each other, but of interests, needs, and ultimate goals which are often compatible or even mutually supportive (e.g., increasing the security of one side often increases the security of the other). Once interests, needs, and ultimate goals are understood, mediators should highlight any areas of commonality and help the parties brainstorm options for resolving disagreements.

Use Different Types of Leverage to Encourage Compromise

Mediators should review the potential sources of leverage identified during step 1 (conflict assessment) and determine which can actually be brought to bear on the parties. Typically, mediators can bring some or all of the following types of leverage to the negotiating table:

- Reward power, when the mediator has something to offer to the parties in exchange for changes in behaviour
- Coercive power that relies on threats and sanctions, and includes military options
- Expert power that is based on the mediator's knowledge and experience with certain issues
- Legitimate power that is based on certain rights and legally sanctioned authority under international law
- Referent power that is based on a desire of the parties to the conflict to maintain a valued relationship with the mediator
- Informational power that works on the content of the information conveyed as in the case of a go-between or message carrier

Specific resources within these categories depend on the mediator's institutional readiness, mandate, and resources.

A mediator can increase and multiply these sources of leverage by using coalitions and allies.

Engage the Public and Media

Develop Channels for Public Involvement

Public participation in the negotiations in some form is imperative; after all, the ultimate responsibility for resolving a conflict lies within the local society. Public participation is also strategically sound, as participants are far more apt than spectators to support and sustain a settlement.

Two-Way Communication

Another way to incorporate the public is by instituting some form of two-way communication. News of negotiations should reach the public, and public discussion and reactions should be heard by negotiators. The means of such communication could include discussion forums, workshops, opinion polls, and referenda.

None of these methods is without risk. Broad engagement can make negotiations unwieldy or unfocused. Parallel meetings could be hijacked by elite groups to promote their own, narrow interests. An informed civil society may reject delicate agreements reached by elites or may conclude that talks are not addressing their own concerns.

Manage Media and Public Relations

During a mediation effort, a media strategy that extends beyond responding to press questions is essential. The strategy should take into account the role that the media has played thus far in the conflict; any legacy of hate media or propaganda must be addressed. At the same time, the mediator should work with the media to reduce inflammatory or biased news coverage. Confidentiality may be an important aspect of talks, yet the lack of information is a vacuum that someone will fill, perhaps with rumors, fears, or slander. The mediator should encourage the parties to make joint public appearances, which will model the progress of negotiations while reducing the ability of the parties to spin public announcements to their own benefit.

Step 5: Encourage Track-II Dialogue

There is a growing consensus among both official and unofficial actors that no single actor or activity is sufficient to build sustainable peace in situations of complex conflict, and that the achievement of that goal requires both top-down and bottom-up approaches. Track-II, or unofficial, diplomacy conducted among grassroots and midlevel opinion leaders can be a valuable adjunct to the formal peace negotiations. Track-II efforts can help the local community engage in the kinds of tasks and make the necessary psychological changes required to generate and sustain support for a peace process. They also can generate ideas and issues that should be included in the negotiation process.

Ascertain Status and Potential of Track-II Efforts

The Track-I mediator should ascertain the existence and status of ongoing Track-II efforts and decide if and how to communicate, coordinate, or even work with those endeavours.

Focus on Track-II Activities That Build Parties' Capacity and Foster Wider Support for the Process

The Track-II activities most relevant to a Track-I mediator are those that either build the parties' capacity to participate effectively and to reach a settlement or build support for the peace process in the wider community. To be most effective, capacity building for the parties should be coordinated with the Track-I process to target specific needs identified by the official mediator, such as negotiation skills, coalition building, or platform development. Track-II processes aimed at building wider support for the process should engage members of elite subgroups with ties to official negotiators, as well as leaders who represent significant sections of the public, especially those sections not directly involved in the Track-I process.

Promote Cooperation between Tracks

Share Information and Clarify Roles

Ideally, coordination between the two tracks will occur both during the mediation process and toward its end, when Track-I mediators may need to hand off some of the responsibilities for implementation to Track-II actors. Whenever possible, Track-I mediators should meet with the major Track-II groups to share information and analysis (to

the extent possible, given confidentiality restrictions) and use this information as a basis for agreeing on explicit Track-I and Track-II roles for facilitating the peace process.

Step 6: Construct a Peace Agreement

The sixth and final step in the mediation process is constructing an agreement that is acceptable not only to the parties to the conflict but also to the wider public, and that stands a good chance of being implemented successfully.

Develop a Declaration of Principles

Obtain Agreement on Basic Principles

Prior to the development of final agreements, it is often helpful to have the parties agree to a "declaration of basic principles" or a negotiating framework that provides the overarching structure for a subsequently drafted, detailed peace agreement

Assemble a Peace Agreement

Determine a Drafting Process

Most agreements are drafted in one of two ways. One approach is the "single-text" negotiating process in which the mediator listens to the suggestions of both sides and drafts a proposed agreement that best meets each side's needs and interests. This single text is then edited — either simultaneously or sequentially — by the parties until a draft acceptable to all sides is attained.

The other approach is for each side to simultaneously produce its own draft agreement; the mediator then takes these agreements and, working with the parties, tries to mesh them together into one document that eventually everyone can agree on.

Translate Principles into Legally Binding Language

Changing a declaration of principles into an actual agreement is often an arduous task that takes weeks — if not months or even years — of negotiation over the details. Each general statement has to be spelled out in legal terms so that it is clear to both sides exactly what is expected of whom and when each action is to be accomplished.

Incorporate Strategies for Implementation and Monitoring

One key to fashioning a successful agreement is to write into that agreement strategies for implementation and for monitoring and (if possible) enforcing compliance with the terms of the agreement. It needs to be clear who is to do what by when, how performance is to be measured and by

whom, and what will happen if targets are not reached. When these specifics are left vague, one or both sides can too easily procrastinate or evade their responsibilities. (Further approaches to implementation are discussed below.)

Plan for Implementation

Peace settlements have to be implementable. Overly ambitious agreements that do not attract the resources, skills, and commitment to enforce them do damage by disillusioning the parties and encouraging the view that violence is the only feasible route to the decisive achievement of their goals.

Peace is made by people, not by settlements. Thus, the parties to the conflict, affected societies, and external partners must be mobilized to undertake implementation, from planning and managing to monitoring and enforcing. Implementation plans should anticipate both the immediate transitions out of violence and long-term post-conflict peace-building.

A successful and durable peace will be more likely if society is fully mobilized to implement the settlement benchmarks. The local business community can be directly involved in the economic reintegration of combatants; traditional justice mechanisms or religious practices can be adapted to enable reconciliation; local materials and labour can be utilized in reconstruction; local human rights monitors can help safeguard returning refugees; local stewards can keep watch to prevent corruption and waste; and local media can keep the community informed about all these practices. Societal actors should be involved in ways that make them stakeholders and guarantors of the agreement instead of passive onlookers.



No. 7, 9th Avenue, F-8/1, Islamabad, Pakistan
Tel: (+92-51) 111 123 345. Fax: (+92-51) 226 3078
E-mail: info@pildat.org: URL: www.pildat.org