

ROEI Special Advisor (M)

Joint Mediation Team

Background

You are from a country who is a member of the ROEI and you joined the military at a young age. During your tenure in the military, you were deployed to several conflict zones, including one failed peacekeeping mission in Danaan. Prior to leaving the military, you served as a high-ranking, decorated officer overseeing a joint-operation with the US and other ROEI countries against a growing Al-Qaeda affiliate in the nearby Waraan Desert. It was during this campaign that you first worked with the Lead Mediator, a man you came to respect for his commitment to peace in the region. After 25 years and a successful career in the military, you retired to serve as an advisor to your president from 2005 to 2010. Since leaving your government position you have served as an advisor on post-conflict security issues for the UN and other regional bodies such as the ROEI.

You believe the Lead Mediator is well positioned to bring a resolution to the conflict in Danaan. A few months ago he asked you to serve as an advisor in these peace talks and you readily agreed. You are very practical and technical - not an idealist in the least.

While a final date and time has not been set for the formal peace talks to begin, the parties have agreed to meet in person to discuss the power sharing provisions of the peace agreement. This meeting will take place in Abayo (the capital of Trumont) and will include the Joint Mediation Team, the parties, and members of the Contact Group as observers. This structure has been tentatively agreed upon by the parties, but is not set in stone. The Lead Mediator is generally against making any changes to the structure and/or configuration of actors present at the talks; any such changes would require agreement by the parties (and Contact Group).

What you hope to accomplish

Your mandate is to support the Lead Mediator in managing the peace process and drafting a viable peace agreement. You see peace and security through a traditional military lens with the state as the central actor. The international community seems keen on increasing representation of civil society and women in the talks but you don't believe their participation is necessary for any aspects of the peace agreement or even the peace process itself. Community groups can have a role in public life and on soft issues, like reconciliation, after peace is achieved. Peace processes are precarious enough; it would be too risky to bring more voices to the table, especially voices outside the state apparatus. You believe policies relating to power sharing are the concern of the warring parties in partnership with international actors, such as the UN and members of the Contact Group. And, to be honest, men are the primary actors in any war, so to achieve peace you need to convince the men to stop fighting. This requires political incentives and power sharing; civil society has little to do with any of this.

You believe the draft peace agreement is well-structured, although many more details must be worked out in order for implementation to be practical and effective. Without careful planning and detailed assignment of responsibilities, the peace agreement has a small chance of lasting. You want

to support the Lead Mediator in determining what it will take to get the government and AFD delegations to agree.

Personally, you want to assert yourself in the mediation team. You have a good relationship with the Lead Mediator and you have proven yourself in similar situations.

Capacity to Create Change

Your position can potentially have the most sway with the mediator. He trusts you and takes your advice seriously. In addition, as a member of the mediation team, you are also a gatekeeper to the Lead Mediator. Anyone without a prior relationship to the Lead Mediator must meet with you or the UN Senior Mediation Expert first, so you can vet them and decide if the Lead Mediator should meet with them. The Lead Mediator only has relationships with the Contact Group and the negotiating parties. You are aware that the ROEI Commission on Gender are familiar with each other from previous peace processes, but you are not interested in furthering this relationship – you believe the Lead Mediator needs to focus on the challenge at hand.

Relationship with Others

You and the UN Senior Mediation Expert do not always see eye to eye. The UN Senior Mediation Expert only recently joined the mediation team and often focuses on issues that you believe may disrupt the process. For example, she believes inclusion is the key to a successful negotiation. While inclusion can be important at the right time and place, you have seen peace talks fail because they try to accommodate every request from every group and do not prioritize the more urgent issues. You want to maintain a professional relationship, but hold her at arm's length.

Your close relationship with the Lead Mediator means that he trusts you and sees you as a close confidante. You know you can use this to your advantage to make sure the UN Senior Mediation Expert doesn't gain too much influence.

You have met with members of the Contact Group on a number of occasions to set-up resources and structures for these peace talks. You also brief them regularly.

You have gotten to know both of the negotiating teams; the Joint Mediation Team met with both delegations privately as you prepared the draft agreement. In those meetings, both delegations expressed very polarizing demands. You did your best to find areas of compromise, but you know that both sides will find the draft agreement problematic. Your hope is that the draft can be a starting point of conversation for both sides.

Additional notes

Civil society will be trying to meet with you, but you are not at liberty to meet with them unless a formal introduction is made by a member of the Contact Group or the UN Senior Mediation Expert. You are the go-between for the Lead Mediator, and you cannot spend your time meeting with civil society groups who could potentially derail the peace talks. You know it is also crucial that you don't waste the Lead Mediator's time by arranging meetings that have no critical purpose.

