

US Special Envoy to Danaan (M)

Contact Group

Background

You earned a bachelor's degree in international relations and a master's degree in security studies from a prestigious university in the US. You are a career diplomat in the US Foreign Service and have worked in several conflict-affected countries. You assumed office as US Special Envoy to Danaan several months ago.

The negotiations for the peace agreement have been ongoing for a year and the US has thus far provided \$100 million in aid and technical support for the process. The US is part of the Contact Group of guarantors that includes the UK and Trumont; you are all funding and providing technical resources to the Joint Mediation Team and the peace process. As a funder of the process, you have a vested interest in seeing a peace agreement reached. You may decide to provide the Joint Mediation Team with guidance when the process is being implemented in a way that you disagree with.

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 at some point in time 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

As a representative of the United States, your broad agenda is to press for an end to the ongoing internal conflict in Danaan. You want to support efforts toward democratic governance reform, economic development, and transitional justice. The US is pushing hard for the parties to adhere to the ceasefire.

The US' main priority is to see the removal of the DPP from the government. Your country has tried to appear neutral in this conflict, but behind closed doors, the US has put its support behind the Alliance for Freedom and Democracy (AFD). The US has quietly trained some of their militias and provided strategic military advising. The DPP's grip on power has many in Washington concerned, and you are to push for as many democratic reforms as possible. You want to meet with the AFD delegation to discuss the progress of the training and to confirm their loyalty to your government.

The US has sanctioned the Danaanian government and American companies who are financially suffering from these sanctions have criticized the US government. You don't want to be the only country imposing sanctions, so you want to build on your existing relationship with the Trumont Minister of Foreign Affairs to convince his government to issue sanctions as well. You also want to make it clear to the Government of Danaan that for the US sanctions to be lifted, certain conditions that must be met: (1) the government must negotiate in good faith; and (2) free and fair elections must be scheduled in the next 12 months.

As US Special Envoy, you've met with a few civil society groups, including women's groups, who have been involved in negotiating local ceasefires and providing direct humanitarian support. They've provided you with inside knowledge of what is happening on the ground and have expressed their own interests

relating to peace in Danaan. These meetings have overall been productive and you are feeling very savvy for connecting with and taking into account civil society interests, which is more than you can say for the UK Special Envoy who has not left the UK government compound. You know that the United States has a National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace, and Security that clearly mandates the promotion of women and you feel you are doing your part. You have heard that some in the international community, particularly the UN Senior Mediation Expert, are calling for greater inclusion of civil society, and specifically women's voices, in the peace process. You agree with the idea of inclusion (as demonstrated by your repeated interactions with civil society), but are much less supportive of inviting civil society to participate in the talks. This could derail the process and destroy all the progress that has been made thus far. There must be other ways to support women's inclusion.

Capacity to create change

You represent the US and carry with you its image as a world superpower. This brings added legitimacy to your role in these peace negotiations. The US sanctions provide you with leverage to effectively advocate for your interests. Furthermore, money talks and your country has lots of it. You can use foreign aid as a leverage point. As the primary funder of the Joint Mediation Team, the Contact Group has the ability to put pressure on the mediation team to implement what it believes are the top priorities for reaching peace in Danaan.

Relationships with other roles

You know the Joint Mediation Team and have a strong working relationship with them. Within the Contact Group, you are familiar with the UK Special Envoy from prior diplomatic postings in the Middle East. You think she has her eyes set on retirement and is not sufficiently focused on the issues in Danaan. Her heart is clearly not in this; you feel that she wants to implement the quickest solution to the conflict even if it's not the most sustainable, so she can return home to her family. The US-led sanctions on Danaan's oil industry have also put a strain on the relationship between your two governments. You have also worked with the Senior Political Advisor. You know she is here in a non-US specific capacity and is intended to support the entire Contact Group. However, you hope she can help bolster US interests. You know the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Trumont and believe he is an honest and hardworking man who has the interests of his region at heart.

Prior to the talks, you met with several civil society actors. You had an especially interesting meeting with the leader of the Danaan Interfaith Dialogue Group, whose passion for the meaningful reconciliation was inspiring.

Having heard about your civil society outreach efforts, many civil society organizations have requested meetings with you. However now that the talks are officially restarting, your time is more restricted. You've already agreed to meet with the Executive Director of 4Peace at the request of your contact at the international NGO Women United International. Otherwise, scheduling meetings with other civil society organizations is not a priority for you at this time. You are a high-level government official with many competing priorities, so unless you have a previous relationship or connection, any civil society actor must be introduced to you through another member of the Contact Group or the Joint Mediation Team.