

## **Lead Mediator (M)**

### *Joint Mediation Team*

#### **Background**

You are from the neighboring country of Golana. Your family was very wealthy and you attended the best schools in Golana. After university, you rose quickly to high-ranking positions within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Golana is a regional power and a leader in the Regional Organization for Economic Integration (ROEI), and as such, your country has worked to stabilize and bring peace to its neighbors. A few years ago, you were involved 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 met the ROEI Special Advisor and grew to admire his pragmatism and level-headedness.

Over the past two years, you have often played the role of informal mediator in the Danaanian conflict. You previously held private meetings with the Danaanian Minister of Foreign Affairs as well as the Alliance for Freedom and Democracy (AFD) Commander General, urging both sides to agree on a peace process. Your persistent approach has earned trust and established a working relationship with both factions. This existing relationship is one of the reasons why the President of Golana offered your name to the UN as a candidate for the lead mediator position.

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. Any changes to the structure and/or configuration of actors present at the talks would require agreement by the parties (and Contract Group).

#### **What you hope to accomplish**

Your top priority is to obtain a signed peace agreement that signifies a commitment to peace by both the Government of Danaan and the AFD. A successful peace process would have a positive impact on your career both in your own country and among the international community. At this point in time, you are hoping to begin by getting both the parties to agree on power sharing provisions in the draft agreement.

Some in the international community have criticized the current draft agreement for prioritizing the needs of the warring parties above the needs of the Danaanian people. You believe that an attempt to make the agreement more inclusive would set back the peace talks and threaten all that you have achieved. Therefore part of your agenda is convincing the international community that the existing agreement is sufficient; there will be plenty of time after the agreement is signed to include other perspectives and interests through processes like a national dialogue. The UN Senior Mediation Expert has been pushing hard for inclusion, which you find annoying and distracting from your main purpose.

Your task as Lead Mediator is to end the conflict, and you believe the peace agreement as drafted has great potential to accomplish this. You are aware that the two negotiating sides are crafty; they will

put personal, clan, and ethnic interests above the country at any opportunity. Your main goal is to find the right balance of interests, so that peace can be achieved and sustained in Danaan.

### **Capacity to create change**

As the Lead Mediator, you have legitimacy to bring people to the table and to apply pressure on the government and AFD to agree. Your legitimacy is largely rooted in your ties to the UN and other international supporters, but this also brings foreign interests into play. Any resulting agreement must please the parties as well as your international backers.

### **Relationships with others**

You have a good working relationship with your two advisors. Even though you don't agree all the time, you still value their input and respect their opinions. You have a closer relationship with the ROEI Special Advisor than with the UN Senior Mediation Expert, and your beliefs overall align with the ROEI Special Advisor quite closely. The UN Senior Mediation Expert is new to your team, and she is stubborn about issues that you consider less important, like gender and inclusion. There is also a representative from the ROEI Commission on Gender at the peace talks who is advocating for much of the same issues. You know her from previous peace processes.

You have gotten to know both of the negotiating teams; you and your team met with both delegations privately as you prepared the draft agreement. In those meetings, both delegations expressed very polarizing demands. You and your team did the best you could 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.

You have met with members of the Contact Group on a number of occasions to set-up resources and structures for these peace talks. A member of your team also briefs them regularly. The UK and US governments are the primary funder of the Joint Mediation Team – while this has not had any impact on the process thus far, you are aware that the Special Envoys might use this as leverage at some point.

As the Lead Mediator, you have very little time for meetings outside the Contact Group and the government and AFD delegations. You can only meet with individuals with whom you have a previous relationship. If anyone you don't know approaches you for a meeting, they must first be vetted by a member of your staff or the Contact Group. If you feel it is necessary, you can meet with the ROEI Commission on Gender representative since you know of her from previous peace processes, but you are under no obligation to meet with anyone she suggests.