2019
ANNUAL REPORT
Remembering Luis Peral

Luis’ journey with mediatEuR began many years ago. He was one of the first members of the organisation and committed to contributing to its work world-wide. In the past few years, Luis became particularly active for mediatEuR, notably with our project on mapping refugee voices from Syria, where he took the lead as key facilitation expert. In addition, I had the privilege to work with Luis on mediatEuR’s Board and transition working group. In this setting, Luis could make full use of his energy and vision, outlining and shaping a potential future for mediatEuR.

Two things have marked me particularly during this time with Luis: His genuine passion about helping others and leaving an impact, and his wonderful generosity when engaging with people.

“Thank you, I am feeling fine. I will take you for ice-cream when I am in Brussels soon”. This was Luis’ last message to SEO Kathrin Quesada on the 27th of June before she left for the summer holiday. This is how we want to remember him. Optimistic and confident. And never afraid. Rest in Peace, dear friend.
“WE MUST COME TOGETHER. AS A GROUP, WE CAN MAKE A CHANGE.”

A decisive and hopeful statement, spoken by a young Syrian woman in a focus group discussion held in Lebanon for our VOICES platform in April 2019. Her words have stayed with me ever since. The resonance of this simple sentence lies in its reflection of what we aimed to achieve by establishing a platform for Syrian refugee voices through our Robert Bosch project and has served as a key theme for mediatEUr in 2019.

Throughout the year, we continued to support the EU’s efforts to prevent and resolve conflict worldwide by carrying out 24 assignments under the Framework Contract on conflict prevention and mediation support (FWC) and providing thematic expertise to 4 out of 8 activities under ERMES III. Work under the FWC took our experts to Turkey, Kenya, Nigeria, and Georgia in 2019, amongst other places, analysing conflict dynamics, the role of the EU as peace mediation actor, trends in environmental peace-making, and devising a communication strategy on sensitive issues, to name just a few. Other strands of our work focused on capacity building, including a peer to peer coaching and mentoring of Heads of Delegations, and a Community of Practice workshop on mediation.

Whilst we place a strong sense of pride in being the smallest organisation in both consortia that is capable of delivering high quality and timely expertise to the majority of assignments, we very much recognise: our strength lies in being part of a group. It is as professionals in a group of like-minded yet complementary organisations that we are able to harness our strengths and make a difference – collectively.

This rationale underpins another critical process that started in 2019: the coming together of mediatEUr and Conciliation Resources (CR). When a conversation on the alignment of our two organisations began in January 2019, we quickly realised that our mission and values were innately compatible and that if we were to join forces, we would certainly have an even greater impact. For CR, expanding its mediation expertise and ensuring a permanent presence in Brussels are appealing prospects, whilst mediatEUr benefits from being attached to a more operational peacebuilding organisation with a substantial administrative backbone. As all of this translates into practice, one thing is clear: There are exciting times ahead for both organisations.

The turbulent start of 2020 has clearly shown the growing divide between nations and people. We must come together. Forging strong and reliable partnerships is a key to build lasting peace. In this spirit, dear friends and colleagues, let me thank you for your continued trust and support.

Kathrin Quesada
Senior Executive Officer, February 2020
OUR WORK IN
2019
mediatEUr begins strategic partnership with Conciliation Resources

In light of the closeness of their missions, mediatEUr and the international peacebuilding NGO Conciliation Resources have decided to come together in partnership to combine their objectives and operations.

mediatEUr is closely connected to the values and approach of Conciliation Resources, which is headquartered in London. Dialogue and support to mediation processes are core focal points for both organisations, as is a commitment to continuous learning and the sharing of experiences to improve mediation and peacebuilding practices. Conciliation Resources has a track record of providing mediation support in a range of contexts and also hosts a network of women mediators across the Commonwealth. Notably, the organisation provided technical advice to the 2014 Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front as a part of the International Contact Group. The organisation has also recently supported the 2018 peace deal between the Government of Ethiopia and the Ogaden National Liberation Front.

In a special membership meeting convened on the 20th of September 2019, mediatEUr’s members appointed Jonathan Cohen, Executive Director of Conciliation Resources, as Chair of mediatEUr’s Board. Dr. Teresa Dumasy, Director of Policy and Learning with Conciliation Resources, was also appointed as a member of the Board, along with Dr. Catherine Turner, who had previously joined mediatEUr as a member in 2018. Over the coming months, Conciliation Resources and mediatEUr will continue working on a process of strategic thinking around structures and personnel, putting plans in place for the submission of joint funding applications and the sharing of resources. This partnership will see mediatEUr benefit from uniting with a larger well-established international peacebuilding organisation with a global network of expertise to collaborate with. Conciliation Resources will in turn be able to strengthen its work with the EU, as well as enhance its mediation support expertise. Having worked together in the past, this move is a first step towards creating a constructive joint future.
The EEAS Framework Contract for Conflict Prevention and Mediation Support

The European External Action Service’s (EEAS) Framework Contract for Conflict Prevention and Mediation continued to be implemented in 2019 through mediatEUr’s Consortium composed of Essec Irene, CitPax, Swisspeace, ECDPM and Search for Common Ground. The contract began in August 2018 and will run until July 2022.

The Consortium’s role is to provide the EEAS Integrated Approach for Security and Peace Division with external expertise, technical and logistical assistance for conflict prevention, as well as peace mediation and dialogue support. The contract directly supports the implementation of relevant policy commitments such as the Lisbon Treaty provisions and the 2009 EU Concept on Mediation and Dialogue, and also falls in line with international good practices.

In 2019, mediatEUr undertook thirteen out of twenty-five assignments, of which four required mediatEUr in-house experts and seven included contracted experts by mediatEUr, featured below. The confidential nature of these assignments allows for their outline only.
**FEBRUARY**

*EEAS Mediation Team Support Retreat (Brussels)*

mediatEUr’s staff organised a one-day retreat in Brussels for the Mediation Support Team of the EEAS.

*Study on a Potential Peace Agreement in the Central African Republic*

Pierre-Yves Monette (mediation expert and Conciliation Resource’s Associate) authored a report on the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic signed on the 6th of February 2019. The report included recommendations to the European Union to ensure the Agreement’s implementation.

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**MARCH**

*High-Level Meeting on the Implementation of the Peace Agreement in the Central African Republic (Brussels)*

mediatEUr supported the EEAS with the organisation of a High-Level Meeting on the implementation of the Peace Agreement in the Central African Republic (CAR). In addition to CAR President Faustin Archange Touadéra and Deputy Secretary-General of the EEAS Pedro Serrano, the meeting gathered numerous representatives from the European institutions, the African Union, the United Nations, European and African diplomatic missions, as well as several peacebuilding organisations.

**JUNE**

*Literature Review – Issue Paper on Conflict Dynamics in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo*

Steven Spittaels and Lotte Hoex authored a substantive report on the conflict dynamics in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

*EU Member States Meeting and Community of Practice on Peace Mediation (Brussels)*

On the 10th anniversary of the EU’s Concept on Mediation, mediatEUr supported the EEAS in the organisation of a meeting of Member States on peace mediation that took place on the 25th of June. This meeting was followed the next day by the first Community of Practice (CoP) meeting on peace mediation in Brussels, organised by mediatEUr in collaboration with the EEAS and the partners of the EEAS Framework Contract for Conflict Prevention and Mediation. The meeting gathered Member States and EU institutions representatives, as well as more than 30 non-governmental organisations working in the sphere of mediation and peacebuilding.

The Community of Practice meeting was structured around four sessions focusing on “Digitalisation & Mediation”, “Religion & Mediation”, “Women’s Mediators Networks” and the “EU as a Mediation Actor”. Two members of mediatEUr participated in the meeting as thematic experts and co-facilitators: Miguel Varela presented the session on digitalisation with Dr. Antje Herrberg (EEAS), whilst Dr. Catherine Turner co-facilitated the discussion on Women Mediator’s Networks with Lara Scarpitta (EEAS). The session on “Religion & Mediation” also featured Owen Frazer (Swisspeace).
Strategic Communication on Sensitive Processes (Nigeria)
Communication expert Janina Markewitsch undertook a 5-day mission in Abuja (Nigeria). She delivered training courses on strategic communications in EU engagement with confidential and sensitive peace processes.

Preparatory Meeting on Stabilisation in UN Peacekeeping and Special Political Missions (Brussels)
On the 16th of June, mediatEU’s staff supported the organisation of a one-day meeting in Brussels entitled, “Stabilisation in UN Peacekeeping and Special Political Missions”.

AUGUST
Member States Mapping on Mediation
Miguel Varela (Associate Professor of the University of Valladolid and Conciliation Resource’s Associate) provided a visual mapping of EU member states mediation and mediation support capacities.

Coaching to the Head of EU Delegation to Yemen (Berlin)
International mediation expert Oliver Wils delivered a one-day coaching session on mediation and dialogue to the EU Head of Delegation to Yemen.

SEPTEMBER
High Level Mediation Coaching Seminar (Brussels)
On the 9th and 10th of September, mediatEU supported the organisation of a High-Level Internal Peer-Coaching Seminar on “Mediation Diplomacy in the Context of the EU Common Foreign Policy” alongside the Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF) and the European External Action Service (EEAS) in La Hulpe (Brussels).
The two-day coaching seminar provided a space for EEAS and Member States’ officials to engage in strategic reflection on mediation in the context of diplomacy, and to reflect on the tools and competencies necessary for effective mediation. Pierre-Yves Monette (expert member of mediatEU) and Natalia Mirimanova (contracted expert) were part of the coaching team alongside Richard Paisley and Günther Bächler (Swisspeace),

OCTOBER
Land Degradation and Peace Mediation: Methods, Entry and Action Points (Brussels)
Environmental peacemaking experts Olivia Lazard and Alan Channer delivered a workshop and report to EU and UN policymakers and peace mediation practitioners on the interconnection between land degradation and sustainable peace in mediation processes.

NOVEMBER
Desk Research on Papua New Guinea (Bougainville Peace Process and the Highlands)
Conciliation Resources project manager Amie Kirkham conducted desk research on the Bougainville Peace Process and the Highlands in Papua New Guinea.
New European Resources for Mediation Support: ERMES III

In 2019, mediatEUr continued its work as part of the Consortium of organisations collectively implementing the European Resources for Mediation Support (ERMES) contract.

The Consortium is led by the College of Europe and includes mediatEUr, the European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES), Fondation Hirondelle, Interpeace and the Institute for Research and Education on Negotiation (ESSEC Irene).

The ERMES contract is funded and managed by the European Commission’s Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI) in close collaboration with the EEAS and EU delegations. The contract enables the EU to provide assistance to conflict parties, third party mediators and groups participating in inclusive peace processes. ERMES operates in the context of local, national or international armed conflicts and/or for preventive purposes, through short-term operational support, technical assistance and capacity-building.

Under the contract, mediatEUr completed four missions in 2019:

1. In January, Pierre-Yves Monette (Conciliation Resource’s Associate) participated in a meeting with the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) as an expert and coach in mediation. The meeting aimed at enhancing the capacities of the IGAD mediation roster and providing recommendations for further action.

2. January also saw mediatEUr contract two senior experts, Brendan McAllister and Jonathan Cohen, to deliver a strategic workshop for the three Geneva International Discussions (GID) co-chairs (EU/UN/OSCE) and their advisory teams.


4. In December, two experts, Olivia Lazard and Ambassador Sergio Jaramillo participated as mediation and dialogue experts in an EU-UN high level meeting with international organisations on mediation support.
Voices of Syria: Making the Voices of Syrian Refugees Heard

In 2019, mediatEUr launched the “VOICES of Syria” project, which was enabled by the funding of the Robert Bosch Stiftung

The year-long project was undertaken by mediatEUr’s team of Luis Peral, David Price, Miguel Varela and Esther Kestemont. By giving Syrian refugees a voice in the design of their future, the initiative’s aim was to contribute to the creation of conditions for an inclusive multi-track mediation on the Syrian conflict.

The rationale of this project is the belief that refugee voices and perspectives must be at the core of peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction. It is not just a matter of restorative justice: sustainable solutions can only start when listening to those who, although in exile now, have a necessary and substantial role to play in the rebuilding of their country. This requires a complete overhaul of current top-down approaches to peace negotiations. The inescapable truth is that peace is inherently fragile if refugees are excluded.

Peace negotiations between adversarial leaders tend to impose a certain framing narrative on those experiencing the conflict, which rarely generates genuine reconciliation. Bottom-up approaches, on the other hand, create conditions for sustainable peace. Moreover, the determination of refugees to be involved in peacebuilding to a great extent depends on how early, and how deeply, their narratives concerning harm, loss and recovery are incorporated into the peace process.

Methodology and Approach

In order to discuss Syrians’ concerns and hopes and to collect their “voices”, mediatEUr organised focus group discussions and one-to-one interviews in urban low-incomes areas and refugees camps in Lebanon and Jordan. The focus groups were organised in collaboration with local partners and community centres on the ground who facilitated the discussions guided by mediatEUr’s mediation experts. They were held in Arabic, with interpretation in English provided for mediatEUr’s mappers.
VOICES has been constructed as a living document that can be updated with new insights as situations evolve and can be adapted to various conflict situations. Explore the platform at https://voices.themediateur.eu/en/.

Our partners included West Asia and North Africa (WANA) in Jordan and the Dawaer Foundation in Lebanon, who supported the organisation and facilitation of focus groups and interviews. In Jordan, discussions were hosted by Afaq-Jordan for Development and Training, the Charitable Organisation of East Amman and the UNHCR. In Lebanon, group discussions were hosted by Ishrak, the Nabaa Organization and Syrian refugees living in the camp in the Bekaa Valley. Furthermore, the Nizami Ganjavi International Centre provided additional travel and logistical support for the Jordan mission.

The focus groups were composed of 12 to 15 Syrians living in refugee camps in Lebanon or Jordan. A semi-structured design was followed, ensuring balance in gender and socio-economic representation. Discussions allowed for sufficient time for participants to reflect, listen and share, ensuring safety and confidentiality.

Discussions were articulated around 6 main questions:

1. How do you feel regarding the current situation in Syria?
2. How do you imagine Syria in the future?
3. Could you imagine yourself returning to Syria before or after the conflict ends?
4. What are your conditions to return?
5. What does it take for people in Syria to live in peace again?
6. How do you see the role of Syrian refugees in the future of Syria?

The same questions were brought to one-to-one and group interviews with Syrians from an entirely different background, wealthier and now better integrated in their host countries.

Mapping Syrians’ Voices

Based on the focus group discussions, mediatEUr built VOICES, its new online dialogue platform developed to map and echo the concerns and messages of Syrian refugees in policy development and peace processes. The platform combines maps and diagrams that allows readers to dive into the complex issues affecting refugees from Syria, whilst also guiding them through their
recommendations and key action points. More precisely, VOICES shows the synergies and interplay between issues, needs and conditions that could enable the return of Syrian refugees in safety, security and dignity.

*Communication & Outreach*

VOICES was launched with a small roundtable discussion on “Connecting Tracks in Peace Processes Through Online Networks” in December 2019. The roundtable discussion explored how technologies and specifically online networks can be used in bringing the concerns and messages from grassroots talks (“track 3”) to political and high-level discussions (“track 1”). Representatives from the European External Action Service, the United Nations and peacebuilding organisations were also present.

Moreover, Miguel Varela had the opportunity to promote “VOICES of Syria” in the high-level 6th Conference on Mediation in Istanbul sponsored by the UN and the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs in a session on “Emerging technologies and Peace Efforts”. Furthermore, he participated in the first Community of Practice in Peace Mediation in Brussels, organised by mediatEur in collaboration with the EEAS, on a session on “Digitalisation and Mediation”.

mediatEur is looking forward to designing new projects including VOICES in the future!
The European Institute for Public Administration

For the ninth year in a row, mediatEUr provided a seminar for 25 officials of the European External Action Service on “Mediation, facilitation, and dialogue”, in the context of the European Institute of Public Administration’s framework contract with the European institutions.

This year, the one-day training seminar took place on the 4th of December and consisted of both theoretical and practical training modules delivered by mediatEUr’s experts, Natalia Mirimanova (expert contracted by mediatEUr), and Jerome Grimaud (member of mediatEUr).

What is the role of the European Union in International Mediation? In which contexts can it play the role of a third party? What legitimacy would the EU have as a third-party neutral in a Mediation process? These were the questions that introduced the induction training on international mediation. The training further explored where mediation fits into the broader field of peace building, and when, and under which conditions, it could be a relevant intervention point for the EU. The afternoon session was dedicated to more technical aspects of mediation practice including difference and similarities between negotiations and mediation, the different styles of mediation practice, and the standards steps of a mediation process. The principles of neutrality and impartiality were intensely discussed and participants were introduced to key communication tools useful for mediator, which were then practiced in group role play. The participants commented positively on the training, which was rated “very good”.

Several field delegation’s participants also expressed the wish to receive extra training and field coaching for processes they are, or are willing to engage in.
Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Training on Peace Mediation

For the third year in a row, mediatEur was honoured to develop and deliver an intensive mediation training seminar to 10 selected diplomats from the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mrs. Kathrin Quesada, mediatEur’s Senior Executive Officer, and Mr. Jérôme Grimaud, mediation expert and Associate of Conciliation Resources, were the lead trainers of the programme. In the seminar, participants were introduced to the general concepts and principles of mediation, good practices at national, regional and international levels, conflict analysis and process design, mediator skills and communication tools, as well as to multi-track and humanitarian mediation.

We were also pleased to welcome Mr. Michael Keating, Executive Director of the European Institute of Peace and former UN SRSG for Somalia, who engaged in a fruitful conversation with participants on specific peace processes.

Mediation and the Police

In January and November 2019, mediatEur’s SEO Kathrin Quesada conceptualised and delivered a training session on mediation in post-conflict environments at the Police State College of Baden Württemberg in Germany. The programme which has been running since 2017, was developed in close collaboration with mediatEur and specifically targets police officers and civilians working in international peacekeeping missions. Highly interactive and practice-oriented, the training equips peacekeeping staff with the necessary concepts and tools to effectively support inclusive dialogue and mediation processes on the ground.
OUR PEOPLE AND PARTNERS IN 2019
Members

Members (until September 2019)

Bernard Defalque
Brendan Mc Allister
  (Chair of the Board as of November 2018)
Christian Hipp
David Price
Dr. Juan Diaz
Kathrin Quesada
  (Board member since December 2017)
Luis Peral
  (Board member since July 2018, † 15 July 2019)
Marc Otte
Bill Marsh
Dr. Catherine Turner
Dr. Giovanni Grevi
Hannah Tuempel
Jérôme Grimaud
Miguel Varela
Pierre-Yves Monette

Staff

Kathrin Quesada
  Senior Executive Officer
Nuno Costa
  Project Manager
Esther Kestemont
  Project Assistant

Accounting

Accounts 2019

In conformity with the accountancy standards we report an income of 452.867,85 Euros with expenditures of 406.638,22 Euros including rent and operations, producing a net of 25.531,29 Euros. This reporting of 2019 does not include the provision for VAT returns that are being held for the time being.

Names of Donors and Partners:

Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
European External Action Service
European Institute of Public Administration

VOICES of Syria Donor and Partners:

Robert Bosch Stiftung
West Asia and North Africa (WANA)
Dawaer Foundation
Nizami Ganjavi International Center