

Quarterly Progress Update on the Multi-Year Appeal

Department of Political Affairs (DPA)

1 January to 31 March 2017



United Nations
Department of Political Affairs

DIPLOMACY. PREVENTION. ACTION

This section lists activities and/or engagements organized around the six priority areas of the 2017 Update to the Multi-Year Appeal.



Prevention: Setting the Agenda

In **The Gambia**, following Former President Yahia Jammeh's announcement on 9 December 2016 rejecting the election results, the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sought to raise international pressure on the president to respect the outcome of the election. Former President Jammeh went into exile on 21 January 2017 only after intense negotiations and amidst the threat of a military intervention by ECOWAS. Immediately after the return of President Adama Barrow, winner of the 9 December 2016 election, to Banjul on 27 January, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) deployed a senior expert to support a smooth transition for the executive. Thanks to extra-budgetary (XB) funding, the expert helped establish a joint transitional team composed of new and former Ministers, and advised on ways of ensuring an orderly transfer of government documents and state assets. In addition, DPA and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), provided advisory support to the Election Commission on training and logistics, as well as assistance to the Civil Society Organization's Coalition on Elections, to ensure adequate domestic observation and monitoring. Thanks to Rapid Response funding, DPA was able to respond to an urgent request from the Election Commission to provide financial and technical support for expansion of voter education to increase understanding and promote participation in the parliamentary elections of 6 April 2017.

In the context of ongoing efforts to support the establishment and maintenance of peaceful neighbourly relations between **Sudan and South Sudan**, and peace processes in the two countries, the Office of the Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan (OSESSS), working closely with DPA and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), was able to greatly increase the scope of its activities thanks to XB funding. Expert services strengthened OSESSS' ability to engage with Sudanese and South Sudanese stakeholders at a time of heightened requirements, and helped develop options for effective engagement by the United Nations in support of the resolution of root causes of conflicts in Sudan, South Sudan, as well as outstanding issues between Sudan and South Sudan.

In **Papua New Guinea**, the United Nations continues to support the national Government and the Autonomous Bougainville Government with the implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement. Following the endorsement by the Joint Supervisory Body, both parties requested assistance from the United Nations for a new round of weapons disposal in order to prepare for the referendum on Bougainville's future political status by mid-2019. Using XB funding, DPA facilitated the deployment of two experts to Papua New Guinea to consult with the national authorities and key stakeholders, as well as to provide technical assistance and guidance on a weapons disposal strategy and implementation plan. The deployment also assisted the Resident Coordinator and the broader United Nations system to consider possible future support to the weapons disposal process.



Crisis Response and Resolution

In the first quarter of 2017, the United Nations Special Envoy for **Syria** held two rounds of intra-Syrian negotiations in Geneva on the basis of a Security Council-approved substantive agenda on political transition issues. His Office also continued to host the International Syria Support Group's (ISSG) standing task forces on ceasefire and humanitarian access, and facilitate the participation of Syrian women and civil society in the intra-Syrian talks through the Women's Advisory Board and the Civil Society Support Room. In addition, the Office of the United Nations Special Envoy has provided technical expertise to the Astana talks convened by guarantor countries - Iran, Russia and Turkey - to implement the 30 December 2016 ceasefire. XB resources have been critical to the resumed political process, helping cover direct costs of the rounds of negotiations in Geneva and the deployment of DPA staff and mediation experts from the Standby team. In addition, XB funds have supported the Syria Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) and its Working Group (WG) over an eight-month planning process to define a priority plan for United Nations engagement in the first 180 days that will follow a political agreement, if and when it is reached by the parties. With such dedicated staff capacity and expert consultancy services, the WG undertook preliminary consultations with relevant stakeholders, primarily Syrian parties which included the Syrian government, opposition, and civil society in Syria, Turkey and Lebanon. It also undertook conflict and risk analysis, stakeholder analysis, and extracted applicable lessons from other stabilization efforts. The plan was endorsed by the Syria IATF on 15 March.

Considerable progress was made in the **Cyprus** peace talks in January 2017. At the Conference on Cyprus held under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General in Geneva on 12 January, the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders came together with the guarantor powers of Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom -- represented by their respective Foreign Ministers -- to address the sixth and last chapter of the talks: Security and Guarantees. The European Union was also present in an observer capacity. The Conference reconvened at the level of deputies and experts from 18 to 30 January in Switzerland. Notwithstanding the progress made in January, the talks stalled in February but resumed on 11 April. XB funding allowed DPA to provide substantive and operational support to the efforts of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Cyprus, and the Conference at this critical juncture.

The **Rapid Response Window** continues to be an indispensable tool for the Department to provide flexible responses to urgent requests from envoys, Special Political Missions, Member States, and regional and sub-regional organisations. By the end of the first Quarter of 2017, a total of \$1.6 million was allocated to meet short-term needs worldwide.

At the end of February, the 2016 **Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers** (SBT) concluded its tenure and passed the baton to the 2017 SBT, which brings expertise in the design and facilitation of mediation and dialogue processes, and in thematic areas including: power-sharing arrangements, natural resources and conflict, constitution-making, gender and inclusion, ceasefires and other security arrangements. In the first quarter of 2017, the SBT provided in-person support and remote advice on over 30 occasions in contexts such as Central African Republic, Central Asia, Cyprus, El Salvador, Mali, Papua New Guinea, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen.



Investing in sustaining peace

DPA has continued to operationalize the “Sustaining Peace” resolutions through its two pilots. In **Sri Lanka**, DPA continues to advance a data driven approach that aims to yield insights into key trends and on specific topics, including to measure the overall impact of reform measures, as well as to anticipate new challenges. In close collaboration with the Government and key stakeholders, consultations are taking place to identify the scope and topic of a new perception survey. Based on the successful approach in Sri Lanka, comparative perception surveys are being undertaken in other countries in the Asia and the Pacific region. In **Burkina Faso**, the pilot project addresses drivers of instability through politically-driven engagement emphasizing national ownership and partnerships with key actors, and is supported by a light staffing structure and active coordination bodies at country-level and Headquarters. It focuses on good offices and institutional strengthening in politically-sensitive areas such as justice and rule of law, security sector reform, national reconciliation and community resilience. The deployment of a temporary Peace and Development Advisor (PDA) in the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in Ouagadougou has helped to deepen the political and conflict analysis, and ensure that the planned United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) addresses national peacebuilding challenges and priorities.

In **Colombia**, XB funding has allowed DPA to support the United Nations Mission in Colombia in accordance with resolution 2261 (2016), in particular in completing the force generation process and reaching full operational capacity with 450 authorized observers deployed. This includes 13 per cent of female observers, the highest percentage of female representation in any current UN peace operation. XB funding was also critical to enable DPA to support the functioning of the tripartite Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, coordinated by the UN Mission in Colombia, which during this period, monitored the completion of the movements of almost 7,000 FARC-EP combatants to 26 local zones and points where they are assembled and expected to disarm. In addition, the United Nations Mission in Colombia has identified expertise on destruction of unstable ammunition, a crucial support for the Mission to verify the laying down of arms and destroying arms caches.

In January 2017, DPA and the United Nations Assistance Mission for **Iraq** (UNAMI) launched a project to enhance the role of youth in Iraq’s post-conflict and national reconciliation processes. In its early stages, the project has already supported the organization of five international forums and consultations with some 500 youth participants. The forums have provided young Iraqis across ethnic and sectarian lines with the opportunity to deliberate on post-conflict issues and engage on national reconciliation. Two more conferences will be held in the governorates of Baghdad and Kirkuk in April, culminating in an overarching national conference in Baghdad in May 2017. The objective is to integrate the recommendations from the youth into the UNAMI-facilitated national reconciliation and coexistence discussions, which are currently ongoing.

Finally, during the first quarter of 2017, DPA received eight new requests for **electoral assistance**. XB funds continue to be instrumental to respond to these requests. For example, needs assessment missions (NAMs) were conducted in Lesotho and Somalia. In Lesotho, a NAM was requested by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) following the announcement to hold snap elections for the National Assembly. At the request of the IEC, the NAM assessed the preparedness of the IEC and determined possible areas of support by the United Nations and other partners.



Women, Peace and Security

In February 2017, DPA, DPKO and UN Women convened their first ever joint **Gender Advisers Workshop** in Entebbe, bringing together 39 Gender Advisers and focal points from the field and some from Headquarters. Participants explored ways to strengthen coordination and partnerships; identify areas for collaboration - including at the regional level; and devised strategies to advance the women, peace and security agenda in their respective roles.

On 13 and 14 February, the Gender, Peace and Security Unit and the SBT Gender and Inclusion Adviser supported a joint workshop on women, peace and security issues convened by the **United Nations Office to the African Union and UN Women** in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The workshop focused on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2242 (2015), and on gender mainstreaming. The workshop involved 29 participants from nine UN entities mandated to work with the African Union in the area of peace and security.

On 27 March, DPA launched its new **Guidance on Gender and Inclusive Mediation Strategies** (available in hard copy and on the [UN Peacemaker website](#)) with a panel discussion including the Permanent Representatives of Colombia, and Norway to the United Nations, as well as a Senior Mediation Adviser who shared experiences as a former Presidential Adviser on the peace process in the Philippines. The new Guidance complements DPA's ongoing efforts to establish solid gender and mediation capacity within the United Nations, as well with Member States and partner organizations. Rooted in practical experience, it seeks to inform mediators and their teams, as well as parties to conflict, about the principles and strategies for the effective inclusion of women, as well as gendered perspectives in mediation processes. The guidance recognizes that gender is but one aspect of inclusion, and addresses mediation preparation, and process design. It also highlights the key substantive issues of a peace process, including security arrangements, women's political participation, constitutions, power sharing, and the language and implementation of peace agreements through a gender lens.



Expanding partnerships with Member States and regional organizations

In line with United Nations efforts to provide capacity building support to regional organizations, DPA, in cooperation with UNDP, organized and facilitated in Cairo an Electoral Roundtable Discussion between the United Nations and the **League of Arab States** (LAS) in March 2017. It also organized an Electoral Workshop with the participation of representatives from the African Union, ECOWAS, European Union, LAS, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. These joint UN-LAS electoral events not only provided capacity building support to the LAS, but also enhanced UN partnerships with all other participating organizations. They provided an opportunity for further sharing of experiences between the United Nations and other regional organizations on electoral activities, and highlighted the importance of coherence and coordination among organizations in carrying out these activities.

DPA's SADC Liaison Team in Gaborone – fully financed through XB funds- supported three workshops organized by the Mediation Support Unit of the **Southern African Development Community** (SADC) Secretariat. The workshop series is part of the roll-out of the SADC Regional Mediation Manual previously developed in 2015 with the support of DPA and adopted in 2016. Each of the three workshops brought together a mix of over 30 senior and junior officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Gender, Security and civil society organizations of SADC Member States. The trainees will be placed in a regional roster of trainees from where the region can engage them to provide mediation support.

In March, the European Union and United Nations convened their **3rd Annual Partnership Meeting on Conflict Prevention** in Brussels. The partners confirmed the critical importance of devoting more attention, capacity and resources to the prevention of crises. The XB funds facilitated substantive participation by DPA. The funds also enabled DPA participation in the informal meeting on conflict prevention and mediation at the Council of the EU's United Nations Working Party (CONUN), which brought together the UN Directors of the 28 Member States of the EU.



Strengthening UN system-wide collaboration

XB funds have allowed DPA to play a critical role in support of the **UN-World Bank study on conflict prevention**, in two respects. First, the Department has commissioned a number of background papers that rigorously consider how development tools work together with diplomatic and political tools to prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of violent conflict. The background papers include country cases studies and literature reviews, as well as a number of thematic papers, including separate in-depth examinations of how preventive diplomacy, sanctions and macro-economic policies impact conflict prevention efforts. Second, an important part of the UN-World Bank study has involved liaison with key constituencies, both to obtain substantive input and to build support for the eventual policy recommendations of the study. In the first quarter of 2017, DPA organized consultations in the Middle East and North Africa region (Jordan and Cairo), in East and West Africa (Addis Ababa, Nairobi, and Dakar) and in Asia-Pacific (Bangkok). DPA also participated in consultations in Europe.

The **Joint UNDP-DPA Programme on building national capacities for conflict prevention** continues to be an excellent example of inter-agency collaboration. XB funds allow DPA to contribute to the Programme's achievements through funding programme activities, as well as staff engagement. In the first quarter of 2017, new Peace and Development Advisers (PDAs) were deployed to El Salvador, Kyrgyzstan, and Moldova, the latter being the first PDA selected through the newly established PDA roster. Upcoming deployments include Cambodia, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Jordan, Guatemala, Mauritania, Niger, South Caucasus, and Yemen.



Ensuring organizational effectiveness

At the end of the first quarter, DPA published its **2016 Annual Report on the Multi-Year Appeal**, an essential part of DPA's annual reporting obligations to donors. It details key results that were made possible with XB support and further progress under the goals and objectives of DPA's 2016-2019 Strategic Plan. In particular, it presented a number of instances where multilateral diplomacy, with the UN at the centre, made a difference. The report can be found at <http://www.un.org/undpa/en/funding>

In addition, DPA continues to capture, process, disseminate and implement lessons learned and best practices. In the first quarter of 2017, 14 documents including end of assignment reports were uploaded onto the Policy and Practice Database, and three Policy and Practice newsletters were circulated to all DPA and DPKO staff. DPA also organized seven brownbag seminars to promote peer-to-peer learning and to provide new insights to DPA's work. Several high-level UN officials, including Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, as well as senior mediation advisers and PDAs, discussed challenges and opportunities they encountered in the field. DPA also held brownbag seminars on cutting-edge topics, such as predictive analysis and data visualization.

New Ideas window

In response to securing resources above the \$27.4 million appealed in 2016, DPA launched an internal **New Ideas** window and issued two calls for proposals within the Department in late 2016 and early 2017. The New Ideas Window funded a total of \$2.57 million in projects. These included: a Pilot study on land and conflict in Somalia (in partnership with UNHABITAT); Empowering youth in Iraq; Engaging with non-state armed groups; Developing a new web-based application to improve access to and analysis of the work of the Security Council; and Supporting DPA's work on "Sustaining Peace" resolutions. In the first quarter of 2017 the approved proposals included: Sustaining Peace in Comoros; Enabling a strategic approach to housing land and property in Syria (in partnership with UNHABITAT and the Global Land Tool Network); Managing land disputes affecting minorities in Iraq (with UNAMI); Research and partnership with the World Bank; and Fit for the Future - effectively supporting the Security Council in the 21st century. The last proposal seeks to improve DPA's ability to support the Security Council by leveraging new technologies.

Financial snapshot

From 1 January to 31 March, the Department received contributions from 10 donors amounting to \$6.4 million. In addition, the Department has \$6.5 million in the pipeline thanks to multi-year agreements, and requests its partners to help DPA meet the \$27 million funding target outlined in the 2017 Update to the Multi-Year Appeal available at: <http://www.un.org/undpa/en/funding>

In 2017, DPA welcomed Estonia and Qatar as new donors. It also appreciated India's renewed contribution to the Multi-Year Appeal in 2017 since its previous contribution in 2013. New partners lend significant support to DPA's efforts to build a broad and diversified donor base. This helps us to better serve the global community through shared goals, stronger international cooperation, and multilateral diplomacy. Eighteen new donors have joined the ranks of partners since 2013.



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