



With breaking stories and
newswire products from

UN NEWS CENTRE



UN must lead way in conflict mediation efforts worldwide, say top officials



9 November 2011 –

The United Nations must enhance its capacity to provide mediation support to prevent conflicts worldwide, [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon said today, adding that partnerships with regional organizations and civil society would be crucial to achieve this.

During an informal session on mediation at UN Headquarters in New York, Mr. Ban [said](#) he was pleased by the progress that had been made to increase mediation efforts in the past five years, but noted there was still much to be done in this area.

“I am pleased to note how far we have come in recognizing mediation as an invaluable tool for conflict management and resolution,” he told the General Assembly during an informal session on mediation. “Today we are able to offer more consistent and professional support to complex peacemaking processes, whether undertaken by the UN or its partners.”

Mr. Ban stressed that there must be a more “comprehensive approach to conflict management” and said he intends to hold consultations with Member States, regional organizations and civil society to develop guidance for more effective mediation.

The meeting, which was attended by high-level officials, academics and representatives of civil society, sought to promote mediation as a tool of peaceful resolution of disputes among countries, and serve as a forum to share experiences on conflict prevention, peacemaking, and peacekeeping.

The meeting is the first of a series of events on the topic, which has been a high-priority issue on the General Assembly agenda after a resolution passed in June called for countries to strengthen their mediation capacities and promote women’s participation in mediation forums.

“The world is going through a particularly difficult time and transition, and the United Nations can – and should – play an important role in resolving disputes and conflicts worldwide,” said General Assembly President Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, who organized the meeting.

“There has been a growing interest in mediation within the UN system, among Member States and other actors. This encouraging trend, as well as my firm belief in the critical role of mediation for peaceful resolution to disputes, led me to suggest the theme ‘The role of mediation in the settlement of disputes’ for the General Debate this session,” he said in his opening remarks.

Mr. Al-Nasser also emphasized there are a number of challenges that need to be tackled when it comes to mediation, both at Headquarters and on the ground, stressing the UN needs to find ways to provide sufficient mediation resources in all the countries that require them and learn from previous mediation efforts.

“Sometimes mediation endeavours are carried out by regional, sub-regional organizations, national actors or by civil society,” he said. “However, we have seen that even in such situations, the support of the United Nations was still necessary.”

Mr. Al-Nasser said he was encouraged by the positive response and support from Member States for this issue and said today’s discussion would contribute to the mediation guidance requested by the resolution adopted in June.

News Tracker: past stories on this issue

[General Assembly urges States to always seek peaceful means of conflict resolution](#)

