



Australian Mediation and Peacemaking Project Round Table Report

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ISSUES PAPER SERIES

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**MELBOURNE
SCHOOL OF
GOVERNMENT**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFP	Australian Federal Police
AMPP	Australian Mediation and Peacemaking Project
ANU	Australian National University
AVRM	Armed Violence Reduction Monitor
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
IDG	International Deployment Group
INTERFET	International Force for East Timor
MSU	Mediation Support Unit
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands

Contents

Introduction	6
Schedule and Round Table themes	7
Open discussion on key theme	7
Key Themes	7
Participants	8
Executive Summary	9
Thematic Report	12
The changing nature of conflict and warfare	12
Defining mediation and factors of success and failure	13
The significance of conflict prevention and resolution to Australia's security and prosperity	14
Why hasn't mediation been used as a concrete diplomatic mechanism more often?	15
What are the impediments to Australia's use of mediation?	17
Could Australia articulate an active role in mediation and preventative diplomacy?	20
Where might Australia actively invest in mediation, peacemaking and preventative diplomacy activities?	22
What would be the most effective methods for building up Australia's capacity?	24
Strengthening women's role in mediation and peacemaking	28
Conflict Prevention and Resolution in the Australian Defence Force and Australian Federal Police	29
Recommendations	32
Appendices	35
Policy Brief: Women in Mediation and Peace Negotiations	35
Armed Violence Reduction Monitor Data	39
Resources and websites	40

Introduction

THE AUSTRALIAN MEDIATION AND PEACEMAKING PROJECT (AMPP) IS A RESEARCH INITIATIVE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE'S SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT. THE PROJECT SEEKS TO REVIEW THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S CAPACITY TO ENGAGE IN INTERNATIONAL PEACEMAKING. IT ANALYSES PAST AND CURRENT PEACEMAKING ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSES FUTURE POSSIBILITIES.

The review is founded on the proposition that mediation is an established international mechanism for attempting to resolve intrastate and regional conflicts. The project seeks to work with academics and policy makers to identify and strengthen Australia's conflict resolution capability in the areas of preventative diplomacy and mediation.

On Friday 5 September 2014 a high level panel met to engage in a dialogue on these themes at the Australian Mediation and Peacemaking Round Table, held at the Australian National University in Canberra. This document reports on the key themes discussed, and distils several recommendations for further research and action to enhance Australia's institutional capacity to deliver targeted and effective conflict resolution and conflict prevention interventions in our region and beyond.

The report is structured in several sections. The schedule, guiding themes, and participants of the 2014 Round Table are provided, followed by an executive summary of the round table discussion and key recommendations. A thematic report follows, developed from handwritten notes recorded by three facilitators during the round table. Key recommendations emerging from the discussion are presented, with the view that they might form the basis for future projects and initiatives. Supplementary information is provided in appendices for interested readers.

SCHEDULE AND ROUND TABLE THEMES

8:30 – Arrival and coffee

9:00 – Session 1

Welcome and introduction by John Langmore

Quantifying Australian Mediation – A brief overview of Australia’s post-WWII engagement with peacemaking (Presented by Nathan Shea)

Peacemaking and Australia’s role: a brief introduction to the notion of role conception and placing Australia’s enthusiasm for acting as a regional mediator (Presented by Aran Martin)

Open discussion on key themes

11:00 – Morning tea

11:30 – Session 2

Open discussion on key theme

KEY THEMES

- The significance of conflict prevention and resolution to Australia’s security and prosperity.
- Why hasn’t mediation been used as a concrete diplomatic mechanism more often? What are the impediments to Australia’s use of mediation?
- Could Australia articulate an active role in mediation and preventative diplomacy?

- What would be the most effective methods for building up Australia’s capacity to use mediation, preventative diplomacy, and other peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms?

The round table took place under Chatham House Rules.

The aim of the discussion was to explore how departmental resources may be mobilised to provide the most effective support to mediation and peace initiatives, and how government might articulate a clearer vision for Australian peacemaking and preventative diplomacy.

Key to this is the achievement of developmental goals in fragile and conflict-affected regions and states. It is fundamental that regional peace processes are conducted in a manner that is inclusive of women and minorities. How best Australia might support these development and gender-mainstreaming goals is of vital consideration for Australia’s engagement in preventative diplomacy.

Participants

The round table was attended by the following participants:

Cdr Guy Blackburn – Royal Australian Navy

Prof John Braithwaite – Australian National University

Mr David Chick – Director, Peace and Conflict Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Dr Sara Davies – Queensland University of Technology

Dr Jeremy Farrall – Australian National University

Mr Alistair Gee – Executive Director, Act for Peace

Prof Jonathan Goodhand – University of Melbourne and School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

Dr Patrick Hagan – International Deployment Group, Australian Federal Police

Prof John Langmore – Melbourne School of Government

Dr Aran Martin – La Trobe University

Ms Leanne McDonald – Melbourne School of Government

Asoc Prof Jochen Prantl – Australian National University

Mr Tyson Sara – Assistant Secretary Strategic Policy, Department of Defence

Ms Lisa Sharland – Investigator, Australian Strategic Policy Institute

Mr Nathan Shea – Melbourne School of Government

Ms Harinder Sidhu – First Assistant Secretary, Multilateral Policy Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Ms Sarah Storey – Advisor, Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs

Prof Ramesh Thakur – Australian National University

Executive Summary

On 5 September 2014 a high level group of experts invited by the Melbourne School of Government met to discuss the prospect of enhancing Australia's capacity to deliver international peacemaking and conflict prevention services. The meeting was in part a response to the October 2012 recommendation by the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade that "the Minister for Foreign Affairs should create a mediation unit within AusAID [now amalgamated into DFAT] and funded from the aid budget. The aim of the unit would be to prevent conflict by providing timely assistance to mediation efforts, and acting as a mediator and legitimate third party."¹

The round table hosted a wide range of views. This summary provides the facilitation team's view of the key points made by participants on the day. These points neither represent the views of the facilitation team, nor should the views expressed here be seen to be points of consensus at the round table. From the discussion, it is however possible to provide a broad overview of the key issues to emerge

from the day. This is set out below.

Peacemaking and conflict prevention techniques are the answer to a problem: that of conflict. The nature of international conflict has evolved from national armies in interstate wars to increasingly complex asymmetric, intrastate and transnational conflicts with significantly blurred lines between state and non-state actors.

In this setting, Australia should be equipped with a policy toolkit to deliver peacemaking and conflict prevention services in track 1, 1.5 and 2 settings, and to leverage international coalitions and NGO/university organisations to respond to and prevent conflicts ranging from small scale and low intensity violence in fragile states to major intra- and interstate wars.

The priority for this capacity is threefold. First, such engagement in international peacemaking is fundamentally in Australia's interest in maintaining a peaceful international context and in attempting to be a good international citizen, and aligns with its strong commitment to overseas development. Second, Australia is highly dependent on trade and open, peaceful sea transportation. Preventing any major war is critical to the survival of the Australian state as it currently exists. Third, the Asia-Pacific region is the location of the world's sharpest

military calibration. What has worked in the past in terms of defence alliances with strong external powers may not work in the future. Developing a capacity and a reputation for seeking peaceful international conflict resolution could be of great value as part of Australian foreign policy, and could be critical to managing a changing geo-strategic environment.

Enhancing Australian capacity to deliver peacemaking and conflict prevention services requires a recognition of the significant activity in this field undertaken by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), military services, and the Australian Federal Police (AFP) International Deployment Group (IDG), particularly in the area of track 2 peacemaking and conflict prevention. These initiatives are rarely publicised or acknowledged. Further, there remains an existing pool of expertise in peacemaking strategies that might be drawn upon, including in Australian universities, with Australian personnel within international organisations, and in the large numbers of serving and retired military and police personnel with experience in conflict zones.

Fundamental barriers to delivering peacemaking services must also be recognised, including a chronic underfunding of DFAT, a lack of public reporting and public awareness of Australian peacemaking activities, an elaboration of the national

role conception which at present emphasises military and policing responses to conflict situations, and the lack of institutionalised mechanisms to retain mediation experts and coordinate timely Australian responses to opportunities to engage in conflict situations through mediation and peacemaking.

With this in mind, several recommendations were made to strengthen Australia's capacity to deliver international peacemaking services.

- Formation of a mediation support unit within the Peace and Conflict division of DFAT. Alternatively, to increase the diffuse expertise in mediation and conflict prevention among DFAT staff in keeping with existing organisational philosophy.
- Increase the overall funding for DFAT peacemaking activities and for Australian government funding for external delivery of peacemaking activities.
- Formation of a Centre for Excellence to provide high-level support to the Australian government and to directly offer peacemaking and conflict prevention services in the region.
- Formation of a Centre for Excellence on track 2 diplomacy would also recognise and enhance the already significant capacity in this area within Australia.

¹ *Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (JSCFADT), Australia's Overseas Representation – Punching below our weight?, (Canberra: Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, October 2012), Recommendation 11, p. 66.*

- Establish a register of Australian personnel with mediation and peacemaking expertise, including in particular retired diplomatic, military, and police personnel, and Australian's with expertise in UN and NGO peacemaking and conflict prevention organisations.

Two key priorities should shape the work of groups interested in pursuing these recommendations. First, any support for and involvement in peacemaking and conflict prevention should embody priority support for the role of women in peace processes in line with the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security and related UN Security Council resolutions. Second, peacemaking and conflict prevention undertaken or funded by the Australian state should avoid any approach in which the outcome for conflict parties (reduced violence and increased peace and justice) is not at the core of policy objectives.

A complete list of recommendations and thematic reports are contained within the main text of this document.

Thematic Report

The following is a report on the various views presented during the round table. These discussions have been reproduced and categorised into the thematic sections as listed below.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF CONFLICT AND WARFARE

The nature of conflict has changed; conflict has become predominantly focussed on intrastate wars and non-state actors. The UN Charter was geared towards national armies and relatively orderly interstate conflicts. There is now a single dominant military superpower, the United States, in response to which other states and actors have resorted to asymmetric strategies in order to advance their goals in international conflicts. An example of this is Russia-backed militants in Crimea, who have acted as non-state forces but are also unofficially backed by the Russian state. This has changed the nature and realm of conflict.

There has also been a shift in the application of military force beyond the threshold of war. Militaries are being deployed earlier than ever before in conflict settings, and used for new and diverse roles. An increased emphasis on conflict prevention and conflict resolution needs to take into account this changing nature of conflict.

The tragic downing of Malaysian airlines flight MH17 over Ukraine is an example of how conflict has changed. Rather than a state-to-state conflict, the flight was apparently shot down by Ukrainian rebels backed by the Russian government through the provision of weapons across borders. Some state complicity is likely, but the responsibility for the action is unclear. Mediation and intervention in these conflicts by third party states becomes difficult precisely because the contours of the conflict are unclear and politically sensitive. Australia could take an active role, not necessarily through mediation services at the point of conflict, but through taking the lead on reforming regulations on air traffic jurisdiction – currently defined by sovereign territorial jurisdictions ill suited to the needs of the globalised aviation industry. In this regard, Australia has the technical expertise, capacity and knowledge to drive reform, and is well respected internationally. In this respect Australia can accept that conflict itself will become increasingly complicated and diffuse, but actively look for opportunities to make useful systemic interventions to support peace.

Challenges to power are viable in many forms including cyber attacks. How a state might respond to such attacks is more difficult – should a

building hosting a cyber attack unit in a foreign country be bombed because it is launching cyber attacks on critical infrastructure? These shifts amount to a significant challenge to which Australia must respond in order to have any influence in shaping the nature of modern conflicts.

It should also be clear that the Department of Defence and DFAT operate on different logics. Defence bases its operation around what to do when conflicts become violent, whereas DFAT bases its operation around what to do to stop conflict becoming violent. For DFAT, it is often difficult to detect and act to stop crises – it is much easier to react when a case for action is obvious. It is difficult to invest resources when a significant crisis is not taking place. In this regard, politicians cannot be relied on to identify and prevent crises. Track 2 capacity is very important in democracies and commonly drives the political and bureaucratic process in regard to conflict situations.

DEFINING MEDIATION AND FACTORS OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE

In calling for increased mediation and conflict prevention, there is a need for the AMPP team to carefully define what mediation is, what conflict prevention is, the different types of intervention, the role of biased (interested) versus unbiased intermediaries, and the factors behind the success of mediation attempts. Lessons from mediation literature should be integrated, including costs and reputational issues. Track 1, track 1.5 and track 2 diplomacy should be separated.

Conflict resolution and conflict prevention should be kept theoretically separate. Conflict prevention should focus on preventing conflict spreading horizontally (to other regions or issue areas), from growing in intensity, or from re-ignition. Conflict resolution should be sensitive to timing, including identifying hurting stalemates. If conflict parties see merit in the battle continuing, there may be little point in third parties intervening.

When analysing historical trends in peacemaking the number of mediation attempts versus the number of conflicts mediated in needs careful assessment. A state that is more successful in mediation may have a smaller record of mediation attempts.

Large statistical databases may also be limited in what they can tell us about mediation. In this situation case studies are more revealing.

There are currently no practically tested mechanisms or generalist expertise that can be relied on by funders to guarantee the success of a mediation attempt, or to identify when the right point to intervene may be. There is no replacement for deep in-country knowledge in guiding mediation attempts. The best approach to institutional reform would be to undertake best practice case studies of Australian mediation and preventative diplomacy, to undertake a needs assessment for mediation services, to prepare an academic report, and then to produce policy recommendations based on this work.

Any approach to mediation has to recognise that situations change. Conflicts like that in Northern Ireland have been resolved as much by changing national and international conditions as by the efforts of peacemakers. Changes in income spectrums of countries and regions often render conflict obsolete. External structural variables such as the Cold War or a multipolar international system affect conflict dynamics, as do the existence of a hurting stalemate, a military gain by one side, or the confidence of long term victory and military superiority.

In some circumstances, underlying turmoil in a situation will make mediation attempts pointless if they aim at a comprehensive peace agreement. Even in these circumstances, a third party can play a useful role in brokering local truces and providing a safe space for conflict parties to meet. Afghanistan is a good example of this, with Australian troops in Anbon village offering valuable protection to local groups. Peace in small areas is a vital example with the potential to impact on broader conflict dynamics.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION TO AUSTRALIA'S SECURITY AND PROSPERITY

It was agreed that mediation is a positive endeavour. To understand when and how Australia may involve itself, it is necessary to ask the following questions – what isn't being done in the region that could be? What conflicts have been missed by the local, national, regional and global conflict resolution providers? What might drive Australia to act or not in different conflicts?

The drivers of Australian action need to be understood. It is difficult to argue for Australian involvement in African conflicts because of a perceived lack of national interest.

On the other hand, The UN plays a limited role in the Asia-Pacific region, and Australia may be able to fill a gap in the provision of conflict resolution services there.

Risks of conflict in Australia's region affect the nation's interests. In this context Australia has often not hesitated to intervene. This applies to conflicts in Bougainville, Cambodia and East Timor for example.

There is a mercantile mindset for conflict prevention based on supporting the resilience of trade systems and due to the earlier threshold for military (state and non-state) action. Australia is heavily dependent on international trade. It has a relatively low level of strategic fuel supplies. If conflict were to significantly disrupt international trade, Australia will suffer greatly. Therefore, global conflict is necessarily a national government concern. There is no spare capacity to deal with conflict in the international trade system. Australia will feel the effect of any serious global conflict. It is therefore in the national interest to prevent conflict at all levels of the international system.

WHY HASN'T MEDIATION BEEN USED AS A CONCRETE DIPLOMATIC MECHANISM MORE OFTEN?

It was argued that Australia could not be compared to the Nordic states. These states are small with limited military power. Australia doesn't have a tradition of resourcing conflict resolution in the same way as Norway, for instance. Norway has a social role conception as a peacemaker that is shared throughout the country's society. There is an established mediation infrastructure and an elite consensus on the merits of mediation within foreign policy. South Africa is another example of a country which has created institutions working on conflict resolution throughout Africa. It was argued that Norway lacks geostrategic interests, whereas Australia has significant baggage in this regard. Canada is more comparable as a middle power.

The public often does not hear about successful and active mediators and mediation attempts. Preventive diplomacy deserves more attention and its value is rarely recognised. The most successful mediations are sometimes so due to their lack of media and scholarly attention.

Has there ever been an Australian head of mission on a major UN conflict resolution initiative? Given Australia's size and the strength of its diplomacy it is surprising that none could be

immediately recalled, though it was later mentioned that Alexander Downer was head of the negotiating mission in Cyprus and that Catie Steines had been head of the UN mission in Darfur.

In the past, conflicts that are closer geographically have been regarded as more important than those far away. This has manifested in active preventative diplomacy in the Pacific by Australia, with relatively few interventions in geographically distant regions such as Africa and Latin America. However, there are signs that recent actions and rhetoric by the Abbott government may signal a policy shift to a global, interventionist role (for example in the South and East China seas, Ukraine and Iraq).

A view is that though Australia is not well placed to engage in track 1 diplomacy, it is well placed to undertake track 2 activity. Bougainville is a good example of this; in the 1990s and 2000s Australia played more than a supportive role in the peace process. New Zealand facilitated the truce in the conflict, while Australia facilitated the peace agreement. Australia has worked at building local consultation, and has encouraged leaders to meet with each other at safe local environments with Australian assistance.

Yet examples such as Australia's role in Bougainville shouldn't necessarily be viewed as a success. Australia failed to engage in the preventative diplomacy

that could have prevented violence. In PNG the Australian government has learnt these lessons and is more proactive. A centre for 'backstage' mediation may be more useful than a DFAT mediation support unit in this regard. RAMSI and AFP supported negotiations of peace agreements in the Solomon Islands are a useful example. These are more formal and top down approaches. As a general rule, Australia's diplomacy in the Pacific is too focused on capital cities, and Australia could expand its grassroots peacebuilding focus in rural areas.

In Afghanistan, support for police station security has been of critical importance where Taliban forces have sought to assassinate police heads as part of a strategy to undermine their legitimacy and encourage locals to go to Taliban courts. This is a very good example of Australia supporting local forms of conflict resolution.

There is a spectrum of activity on conflict prevention which should be recognised. The AFP IDG takes actions on specific crises and is very effective when deployed in preventing escalation of conflicts. There is integration between Australian diplomacy towards a conflict situation and the available responses (although this can always be improved). Both the ADF and the AFP IDG head off crisis situations a few times a year in the Pacific through direct dialogue with conflict actors.

The preventative role of Australia is very strong in this regard, but often unseen and unpublicised.

The Australian Navy has a long tradition of diplomatic support. In the Solomon Islands and other conflicts, the Navy has used ships as mediation platforms. This is a different manner of using military assets than is often recognised. Diplomatic support is a doctrinal role in the Navy. The military performs this role frequently, on a quiet basis, and is comfortable and experienced in doing so. It has a long history adopted from British naval and military tradition. It is therefore suggested that potential may exist to more greatly recognise and utilise this capacity. Further, would expanding coordination between the AFP IDG and Naval diplomatic support functions in response to conflict situations in the South Pacific be fruitful?

WHAT ARE THE IMPEDIMENTS TO AUSTRALIA'S USE OF MEDIATION?

Participants suggested that Australia has a tendency to be judgemental and is often publicly outspoken on foreign policy issues relating to conflict situations. This is an impediment to offering and being accepted as a mediator.

It was suggested that there has been a geographic shift of conflict away from the Asia-Pacific region.

Further, much of conflict is now asymmetrical, between state and non-state groups, and this is more difficult to prevent. With the change in the nature of conflict, the nature of prevention has also changed. For a state seeking to intervene, interactions with non-state actors present a new set of potential costs and consequences.

The question is: what isn't being done that should be done? Why has there been engagement in some disputes but not others? It is often simply that Australia's interests are not seen to be involved. But some long-standing conflicts are clearly so resistant to intervention that motivation has evaporated. Some types of conflict are clearly more amenable than others to intervention. Reluctance to intervene is sometimes because of doubts about the effectiveness of intervention: the literature on mediation is contested.

There is a need to be specific regarding the distribution and nature of conflicts in different regions. In Asia the trend is towards sub-national conflicts in the context of strong developmental states. Non-state militant groups are resilient but rarely a threat to the state itself. States in this context will often be resistant to mediation.

DFAT annual reports do not make reference to mediation or mediation activities.

While this is true, a counter argument is that while the word is not used, mediation is already taking place in situations where it is seen to add the best value relative to other forms of intervention (capacity building, technical assistance, preventive diplomacy). The public profile and reporting on mediation and conflict prevention by DFAT and the Australian government is very low compared to military and police interventions. On one hand this is an impediment to greater utilisation of mediation and preventative diplomacy as the work and actions go unrecognised. On the other hand the quiet nature of Australia's work may be an asset in undertaking these tasks.

Experts on countries or policy areas are often frustrated that their knowledge is not drawn upon by DFAT or government staff. The merging of AusAID and DFAT has been a large logistical challenge which has limited the capacity of staff to undertake stakeholder engagement. This should change in the near future.

Funding of conflict prevention and mediation initiatives by the Australian government is very low. It was argued that Australia is not making enough resources available for those who can act to prevent or manage conflicts. Fifty per cent of the aid budget goes to conflict affected countries; however, only \$14 million, or 0.3 per cent of the total is spent on conflict

resolution initiatives (AVR Monitor, see appendix 2). This can be compared to the commitment of over \$100 million annually by Norway and the UK respectively to conflict resolution and prevention activities. These AVR Monitor statistics do not account for diverse Australian ODA contributions to multilateral organisations dealing with conflict resolution; for governance and capacity building projects in conflict affected countries, or for overseas law and justice initiatives. All of these play significant peacebuilding and conflict prevention roles, although they do not fit neatly within the categories of mediation and conflict resolution being considered at the round table.

Linked to this is underfunding of DFAT across the board. The Peace and Conflict Section of DFAT requires far greater financial resources to extend and improve on the good work it is doing on limited funding. DFAT prevention and resolution of violence overseas has a direct benefit in terms of development objectives and also national prosperity through the increase in trade and markets.

It was put forward that the Australian government's apparent irregular support for the UN and international law has at times been an impediment to contributing towards conflict resolution and mediation activities directly, and to Australia leading such initiatives. Is the Australian government firmly committed to the UN charter?

Australian governments are often elected on a domestic policy platform, and take time to recognise the value of multilateral affairs. Distance from Australia and relevance to immediate national interest often deters politicians from engaging with conflict situations. In this regard the downing of flight MH17 in Ukraine has been something of a watershed, with the new Australian government quick to see the relevance and power of action through multilateral channels resulting in UN Security Council Resolution 2166.² A positive development would be to maintain this focus on multilateral diplomacy beyond the temporary Security Council membership, which expires at the end of 2014.

In undertaking preventative diplomacy, UN missions are deployed rapidly to hold ground in order to allow more highly skilled mediation teams to arrive. Australian pre-deployment is based on going into conflict zones and providing security. Mediation taps into elements of experience which are not part of the foreign policy conflict tool box at present. In this regard building institutional experience for mediation would be very positive.

Existing Australian foreign policy towards other countries may act as an impediment to the type of mediation

and diplomacy the government can offer. Concern was raised that Australia's policy towards Sri Lanka – for instance in regard to deterring asylum seekers leaving the state – may impinge on it being able to act to build peace and stability. It was questioned whether Australia, if it were to engage in such undertakings, would be viewed as an honest broker by dissatisfied elements of the Sri Lankan community at this point.

DFAT has been viewed as having undertaken mediation poorly in the past. One example is Aceh, a regional peace process which was of great importance to Australia's interests. The Australian government did not make a significant contribution to peacemaking there, a reason being that the Indonesian government did not want Australia involved. However, it was observed that DFAT needed to act as a champion and support useful forces for peace. Australian academic Damien Kingsbury played an important role within the conflict and as advisor to the Free Aceh Movement had excellent access to conflict actors. But because Kingsbury was *persona non grata* with Jakarta, he lacked support. DFAT might have talked with him and supported his efforts in this case. Similarly, in Bougainville, approaches were made to DFAT in Port Moresby to request small amounts of money to support local peacemakers. Discretionary funds were available, but DFAT staff were

worried at the perception of providing funds in this way and concerned at a negative reaction (acknowledging that accountability is difficult when giving one off funding). In this case a champion was needed within the organisation. DFAT has a strong focus on providing small to medium grants in Bougainville, and will also send staff members to assist local groups and individuals with applications, which is promising, but there remain inconsistencies in this accessibility, as in the case discussed.

In West Papua, the community elected five peace negotiators who came to Australia seeking secretariat support for a peace conference. The West Papuan delegation found it easier to gain access to US officials in Washington to support their request than to access DFAT. The department held concern that assisting the delegation would upset Indonesia, but again, it missed a chance to be a champion in the peace process. At times, politicians and government Ministers have made representations to Indonesian officials in regard to peace processes against the advice of DFAT. It reflects poorly on DFAT and Australia for Ministers and departments to be at odds over how to approach conflict prevention and mediation initiatives.

If reluctance exists in DFAT to undertake this role due to perceived risks for bilateral relationships, one answer may be the formation of a Centre for Excellence, which might act as a champion in conflict situations in contexts where DFAT and the Australian government feel constrained.

COULD AUSTRALIA ARTICULATE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN MEDIATION AND PREVENTATIVE DIPLOMACY?

Australia is not militarily powerful enough to use sticks and carrots in an influential way in peace mediation. Yet it is not small enough to have no baggage – to be seen as neutral and uninterested. The tolerance point for Australia to enter a conflict situation as a mediator is higher than other actors; Nordic countries carry less baggage in most situations, and therefore have a lower point of tolerance to engage as a mediator.

Institutions are important to facilitating and strengthening Australia's conflict resolution capacity, though more important is credible, trained personnel. Australia has these resources – particularly in the Australian Mission to the United Nations in New York. These resources could be deployed in a crisis with better organisation. Australia's focus on conflict prevention via its membership of the UN Security Council has been at least temporarily strengthened.

² UN Security Council, Resolution 2166, S/RES/2166 (2014), 21 July 2014. [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2166\(2014\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2166(2014))

The question is whether this enhanced concern will continue.

Australia might play a role directly in preventative diplomacy, but is also well positioned to fund others. Australia supports the UN Department of Political Affairs, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and other UN responses to conflict. It also actively supports international NGOs, for example the International Crisis Group. Funding individuals or organisations engaged in peacemaking may be more productive and successful than conflict prevention and resolution activities conducted through state-to-state means. At the same time, engaging civil society and non-governmental groups for peacemaking should be done with due diligence. There are risks to the involvement of non-state groups. The question is how to support those actors who are not involved in violence. This should be the key approach.

Overseas governance and capacity building initiatives by DFAT account for a large share of the overall budget (18 per cent)³, and play a significant conflict prevention role. Law and justice initiatives are widespread, receive large funding and should also be regarded as important elements of peacemaking.

Would it be worthwhile investing in strengthening the peacemaking capacity of these projects, particularly in conflict-affected or fragile states?

Vital to mediation capacity is early warning capabilities about conflicts. This is necessary in order to be able to deploy mediation early, prior to the militarisation of disputes, which have been demonstrated to occur at much lower thresholds than in the past. A key objective should be to ensure potential conflicts do not get to the point where more is invested in an ongoing conflict than in its resolution. Early warning mechanisms and preventive diplomacy are key to this.

It was noted that a key question becomes: at what stage of a conflict should Australia intervene? This is particularly problematic if military and police forces engage in an official capacity, even if this intervention is for mediation or diplomatic support. It was expressed that force is often better left as a persuading factor – a reason for a party to come to the table. It can be used as an explicit or implicit threat to encourage parties to bring a conflict below the threshold of violence. But any policy that engages the military needs to consider how such actions will affect Australia's trade, politics and foreign policy.

It was also expressed by some that institutionalisation of mediation in Australian foreign policy should be resisted. There are examples of an over-reliance on bureaucratic forms of conflict resolution in Brussels and elsewhere that should be avoided. Simply creating an institution is not necessarily the answer. There are two approaches to mediation which are undertaken by other states and organisations. At times the focus is entirely on creating a positive impact on the conflict situation. At other times mediators have been more concerned with increasing their own reputation and standing, to the detriment of the conflict situation and parties involved. Australia should ensure that the latter outcome is only pursued as an adjunct to a primary focus on preventing or resolving conflict.

WHERE MIGHT AUSTRALIA ACTIVELY INVEST IN MEDIATION, PEACEMAKING AND PREVENTATIVE DIPLOMACY ACTIVITIES?

Australia has a competitive advantage in offering mediation in conflicts involving European and Asian parties, and also regionally in the South Pacific.

In Africa, Nordic and European countries have an advantage in offering mediation due to historical links. In the Asia-Pacific region Australia carries baggage but still may have a role to play as a middle power.

In the Middle East Australia holds some advantage as a mediator due to a lack of historical baggage, although involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan may challenge this perception.

A front of stage role in conflict situations is important, and Australia should not be shy in undertaking this position. Bougainville and the Solomon Islands are areas where Australia has a clear role to play. Both are still works in progress in building peace. They are not currently violent conflicts, but there is a great potential for violence to re-ignite. There is a great deal of work that all arms of the Australian government should be doing to prevent this.

The Australian government has a key role to play in ensuring that all parties in the Bougainville dispute honour the terms of the peace agreement – particularly in regard to facilitating

³ DFAT: Australia's aid program. <http://aid.dfat.gov.au/aidpolicy/Pages/home.aspx>

and respecting the outcome of a referendum on independence for the island. Cooperation and coalitions are key to effective Australian action; DFAT cannot undertake these types of mediation and conflict prevention initiatives on its own. Bougainville presents a good opportunity to build coalitions. This would also lessen both the cost burden and potential reputation risks of becoming involved in conflict situations. Australia could play a key role in bringing Indonesia to collaborate in conflict prevention in Bougainville; Indonesia's voice holds a great deal of legitimacy given its experience with East Timor. Similarly, there is a need to get the UN reengaged with the conflict, and perhaps to get Japan and China involved. There is a clear national interest to Australia in ensuring the referendum goes ahead peacefully.

There may also be capacity for Australia to collaborate with China on peacemaking elsewhere in the Pacific. At present, Australia has little collaboration with China in this respect. China operates under a different political and security logic than the thinking of Australia or the US. This shapes a capacity both to offer Australian led mediation and to partner with countries like China in regional peace initiatives.

China is not at the forefront of democracy promotion, and differs in its approach to engaging with poor countries. It is not keen to take a stance on the internal matters of other countries, its interactions take place primarily through business transactions supported by state diplomacy. A China that is neutral may in some respects be more constructive than a China that is actively engaged in this context.

It may be possible to connect with Chinese companies and bypass the state to some degree in collaborations for regional peacemaking. China has strong mercantile networks in the region. At the same time, China will increasingly want a voice in shaping global norms and a vote through global institutions. There is a changing level of acceptance in China of international norms.

The question of whether Australia can and should play a role in conflict prevention and mediation in East Asia was raised. The region is witnessing the sharpest military calibration due to the re-emergence of China as a world power and the relative decline in US influence. Australia should use mediation and diplomacy as a mechanism to address the risks of conflict in a changing geo-strategic environment in the coming decades, deploying mediation in niche areas to position Australia well for a range of possible outcomes in the region.

However, Australia may not have the current standing to play a strong role in the East Asia region. In the South China Sea and East China Sea disputes, China will largely make policy without reference to Australian views. The question is: how does Australia make itself relevant? Australia doesn't rank highly enough unless it leverages its relationship with the United States in order to be heard. However, using this strategy is unwise in shaping relations with states such as China, with which Australia is better served to be seen as an independent foreign policy actor and trade partner. What has worked in the past – alliance relationships with strong external Western states – may not work in the future.

WHAT WOULD BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE METHODS FOR BUILDING UP AUSTRALIA'S CAPACITY?

An Australian mediation support unit, as proposed by the AMPP team and recommended by the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade⁴, would need to be better defined. A cluster of mediators could be established, but Australian diplomats already engage in substantial preventative diplomacy which rarely makes the headlines. It is effective because it is quiet. Before a unit is established, it is important to determine in what way a high profile mediation support group would add to this.

The question should be: what should DFAT do? A focus should be on outputs (transforming/preventing conflicts) rather than inputs (a mediation support unit). While there is support for a mediation support unit, Australia could obviously do more than simply start a unit. A MSU will be of little use if it is established but there are no opportunities for its use or if it is not resourced effectively. DFAT country experts may be more effective in leading mediation missions or units.

⁴ Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (JSCFADT), *Australia's Overseas Representation – Punching below our weight?*, (Canberra: Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, October 2012), Recommendation 11, p. 66.

The current DFAT model is based around being 'lean and mean', to draw upon expertise across DFAT rather than create specialist branches. The merging of DFAT and AusAID and the philosophy behind it runs counter to the idea of creating a dedicated mediation support unit as proposed. Merging DFAT and AusAID was designed to break down the division between a security focus by DFAT and Defence on one hand, and a focus on aid and peacebuilding and local community assistance by AusAID on the other. An example of how a holistic framework within DFAT based around diffuse, integrated expertise can work well is the integration of gender-based approaches into recent DFAT policy towards Gaza. A similar approach could be taken to the integration of mediation and conflict prevention within foreign policy.

If the Australian government develops mediation capabilities, a menu of choices would be desirable. Track 1, 1.5 and 2 would be relevant in different settings, along with obtaining the consent of participants to proceed with an initiative. The government should have the capacity to offer a continuum of services to resolve conflict. Government-led mediation attempts signal very different priorities to parties in conflict compared to groups of NGOs; for instance, militant groups may be given more perceived legitimacy.

It should also be clearly set out where and in what situations Australia is prepared to mediate, and where it is not going to mediate – the limits should be clear. The cost of failure in mediation attempts can be quite high, particularly in terms of reputation. On the other hand, fear of failure should not deter Australia from acting. A mediation attempt can be done well and professionally even if it does not result in a peace agreement. A precautionary principle should be applied that Australia first must do no harm. In this regard, accumulating expertise and lessons learnt through some form of institution or institutional capacity would be highly desirable.

A working group on multilateral issues could harness gains by emphasising preventative diplomacy. DFAT staff in the Peace and Conflict Section already act as a focal point for operational delivery. Therefore, more specialisation may not be the best method, and dispersed expertise could be more fit for purpose.

There is a great appetite within DFAT to increase engagement with experts and non-governmental groups around issues of peace, development and security. The recent drive to align diplomacy and aid is one indication of this.

The ANU, University of Queensland and the University of Melbourne are among tertiary institutions that could be excellent resources, but it is at times difficult to absorb academic work and to resource DFAT staff to attend seminars and devote the time to disseminate the information within government organisations. Some form of facility to connect DFAT and university expertise would be highly useful. For instance, to contract one of the universities to engage a community of experts around an issue or conflict that would then make policy-relevant recommendations.

Australia could focus on working through international coalitions (state and non-state organisations) through Australian leadership in the UN system and through self-organised initiatives. There is some record of Australia funding mediation proxies, such as the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue in Southern Thailand, funding for the UN Department of Political Affairs and the UN Mediation Support Unit, and peacemaking training programs in Mindanao. The ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) is another blueprint. Launched in November 2012 and hosted by the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the institute has a focus on gender, conflict settlement and training of officials and scholars. This is an opportune time for creative engagement by Australia.

Resourcing a policy oriented research institution may be fruitful. Australia has no tradition in this respect compared to the US, Canada or South Africa. Examples include ACCORD⁵ and similar centres focusing on accumulating knowledge on early warning, conflict prevention and mediation. Mediation personnel and expertise are drawn internationally and from across the African continent, but the organisation remains resourced by the South African Government. These staff members are used as resources by high-level representatives deployed to conflict situations. ACCORD also delivers feedback on emerging conflict situations to governments.

Australia has significant resources of personnel, both resident in Australia and Australians abroad, with mediation and conflict prevention experience. Robert Dann, who has been head of the United Nations' Mediation Support Unit, is a high profile example. It would be worthwhile to track such people. Identifying the existing resources Australia has to draw on would be very useful in developing capacity for further mediations.

Another group of Australians with extensive experience at both mediation and in conflict situations is serving and retired military and AFP IDG personnel.

⁵ ACCORD website:
<http://www.accord.org.za/>

This reservoir of experience is potentially invaluable in building mediation and conflict prevention capacity. In particular, at present there is not a high level of utilisation of the skill sets of retired personnel. If a Centre for Excellence on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping or other initiative could offer a pathway to recruit and utilise these retired personnel, it would be highly desirable.

There exists a knowledge base in the military. In Iraq and Afghanistan, strategies were developed based on minimal application of force so that Iraqis and Afghans came towards Australian military personnel for protection rather than ran away. There are a large number of retired personnel with deep experience of conflict zones and practical skills in mediation. Many would be very pleased to be asked to apply these skills. This requires a central area or organisation for those personnel to contact and operate through.

Australia could consider founding an international Centre for Excellence on backstage mediation and diplomacy which engages Australian personnel and compiles lessons learnt. Three questions could drive the Centre: how best to accumulate wisdom to design effective contextual strategies for peacemaking? How can local security be provided to local peacemakers? How can women leaders be encouraged to play a role in peace processes?

A Centre for Excellence on Peacemaking could be considered, bringing together civil society, business and academic expertise which could be drawn upon and make recommendations to DFAT. A comparable institution might be the Asia-Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect at the University of Queensland⁶, which links global, regional and national groups and provides normative and ideational leadership around an international norm.

Another option is to establish a small civilian unit which would coordinate and support mediation and conflict prevention initiatives identified by each of DFAT, AFP and Defence. This could start small, and grow over time.

The central idea behind these initiatives is to assist politicians and bureaucrats to identify experts in the relevant field easily and quickly. Politicians are at their best when responding to communities. A centre of the type suggested could play a critical role in bringing conflict prevention and mediation initiatives into the public debate.

⁶ Asia-Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect website: <http://r2pasiapacific.org/>

STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S ROLE IN MEDIATION AND PEACEMAKING

Empowering women within any framework for mediation and peacemaking should be a priority in Australian foreign policy in accord with UN Security Council resolutions such as UNSCR 1365⁷ and 2122⁸ along with the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.⁹

A good example of an existing program is Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development, to which the Australia government commits \$320 million over ten years.¹⁰ Any new institution or increased capacity to deliver mediation and preventative diplomacy services should focus both on empowering local women in peacemaking roles, and in incorporating women peacemakers within Australian institutions.

It is important to note that women are not always peacemakers, and play different roles in all stages of conflict. In the Northern Ireland conflict, participants noted that enmity and a culture of violence was sometimes passed down to children via mothers in a matriarchal society. Providing opportunities for education and employment for women was central to halting this dynamic, and broke the communication of the conflict across generations.

A policy brief on this topic by Associate Professor Laura Shepherd entitled 'Women in Mediation and Peace Negotiations' is included in Appendix 1 of this report.

⁷ UN Security Council, Resolution 1365, S/RES/1325 (2000), <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>

⁸ UN Security Council, Resolution 2122, S/RES/2122 (2013), <http://unscr.com/files/2013/02/122.pdf>

⁹ Australian Government, Australia National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, 2012-2018, https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2012/aus_nap_on_women_2012_2018.pdf

¹⁰ <http://www.pacificwomen.org/>

CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION IN THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE AND AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Increasingly, militaries around the world are drawn on not for interstate conflicts, but to respond to complex peacekeeping challenges and asymmetric conflicts. Any trade-off between warfighting training and peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and counterinsurgency skill sets must be evaluated in the context of the changing nature of conflict (see the relevant section in this report). There is also a direct military benefit to developing community engagement and conflict prevention skill sets. Battalion leaders have developed capacities in theatres such as Afghanistan which focus on building local relationships in order to avoid being targeted. Negotiating a permissive environment has been key to successful missions, and has been the task of personnel all the way down to the common infantry soldier. Non-kinetic efforts to engage with the community have become part of the overall mission. These skills and lessons built in theatres such as Afghanistan can usefully be applied to forms of conflict resolution and conflict prevention in less violent settings.

There are some concerns at greater shifts within the military from warfighting to peacekeeping skill sets.

One view is that increased capacity to act in a peacekeeping role comes at the direct expense of effective warfighting. An over emphasis on peacekeeping is claimed to be one reason why Canadian forces experienced a larger number of losses in Afghanistan than did Australia. The mindsets to undertake these tasks are very different, and as such it is very difficult to switch between the two quickly. Within some services, in particular the Navy, this may be easier to do and finds expression in the provision of diplomatic support and constabulary duties. However, CIMIC (Civil military cooperation) also has a long tradition within the army. This is particularly so for engineers and artillery groups, who are able to transition quickly from military to civilian purposes (the core task of building a bridge in an area remains similar).

The US military has some models which can be drawn on within Australia. While forces such as the Marines and SAS are particular poor means to deliver results in situations other than violent engagements, other arms of the military regularly deliver infrastructure, gather information, engage in public affairs and go well beyond traditional peacekeeping roles in situations of counter-insurgency.

This experience can be drawn on in preventing and resolving conflicts which have not crossed a threshold into violence.

The Australian Navy has a core focus on conflict prevention which can be built upon. The first task that is undertaken when Naval resources are moved into a territory is to undertake talks with Naval political attachés based in overseas locations. There is also a common rhetoric base to speak with Naval personnel of other states due to the underlying duty of safety of life at sea. It is easy to discuss a range of issues – including political tensions within another state – from this initial platform. There is good dialogue at the Navy-to-Navy level within the Pacific. At times this results in direct feedback that there is cause for concern in either the relationship with Australia or in an intra-state issue, which Naval attachés can in turn pass back to DFAT. Naval training emphasises the need to listen as much as talk. A key priority is to leave a territory on sound terms.

The defence cooperation program also creates a reservoir of personnel with strong regional connections in conflict zones, and is a vital component of conflict prevention and early warning.

In East Timor during the INTERFET intervention, Company commanders regularly engaged in dialogue with military personnel in the Indonesian military they had developed relationships with through prior defence cooperation programs. This was done in order to avoid escalation of situations to conflict, and is a strong example of a particular type of conflict prevention.

There is a cohort of officers across the region who are friends and professional colleagues, and understand each other's motives and pressures. These contacts provide feedback that in turn can be relayed to DFAT and other government departments to prevent escalation of conflicts through diplomatic means. The Australian government's Pacific Patrol Boats program for instance has a substantial impact in building relationships between Australia and overseas militaries.¹¹

¹¹ See Joanne Wallis, 'The South Pacific: 'arc of instability' or 'arc of opportunity'', *Global Change, Peace and Security*, Vol. 27, No. 1, February 2015 p. 39-53 and Ridzwan Rahmat, 'Australia announces Pacific Patrol Boat Program', *HIS Jane's* 360, 24 June 2014.

One of the challenges is that within services such as the Australian Federal Police, individual careers are disadvantaged by staying for lengthy periods within the International Deployment Group. There is therefore a high degree of staff turnover in the organisation. This is a positive in some ways – it equips many Australia-based staff with overseas experience. But a negative consequence is that it is more difficult to retain expertise and institutional memory. Another challenge is the focus on training. The IDG has been transformed to undertake aid-based activities, which have slightly degraded policing and peacekeeping capabilities. In the past the AFP had a much more robust peacekeeping training regime. Now, IDG staff are entering countries as advisers. AFP personnel do not have police powers in these roles, and focus on improving police service delivery—a task that requires a greatly different skill set and is also much harder to do than a peacekeeping role. This is not to denigrate this trend towards local capacity, which is a good example of pro-active intervention to build state capacity.

Measuring the impact of a local adviser is very difficult, particularly in terms of an impact on overall national stability. In East Timor it is difficult to measure the IDG policing impact on the national situation, as there is no common policing culture to build upon.

Australia operates on a British model of policing by consent. Regionally, police forces are often tools of the elite and viewed as oppressors. There is also an expectation that police will maintain a visible presence, with an officer on every street. The Australian model is very different; it is reactive and based on attending situations as they occur. There are some things that can be done well – for instance to instil normative elements for the use of force within policing culture.

There is also a view that police officers are not always the most appropriate persons to build a police force. What is needed is often human resources managers or project managers. A parallel example would be attempting to use pilots to build an aviation industry; they have a role, but it is unclear that they have the necessary skills. The question is whether at present Australia has the right people or departments involved to achieve its objectives.

A cautionary note is the capacity of military and police services to undertake multiple roles in multiple theatres. It is easy for Australia, with limited financial and personnel resources, to become overdrawn in Iraq, Afghanistan, RAMSI, and other operation theatres. Australia should be careful to allocate resources and evaluate mission creep once engaged in a conflict situation.

Recommendations

- The Australian Mediation and Peacemaking Project team should carefully define what mediation is, what conflict prevention is, the different types of intervention, the role of biased (interested) versus unbiased intermediaries, and the factors behind the success of mediation attempts. Lessons from mediation literature should be integrated, including costs and reputational issues.
- The AMPP team might seek to undertake best practice case studies of Australian mediation and preventative diplomacy, to undertake a needs assessment for effective mediation, to prepare an academic report, and to produce policy recommendations based on this work.
- DFAT, as an alternative to a mediation support unit, might see fit to increase the diffuse expertise on mediation and conflict prevention tool kits within the department, so that they might be drawn upon within all programs and areas of policy.
- In response to the observation that Australian diplomacy in the Pacific is too focused on capital cities, DFAT might see fit to expand its grassroots peacebuilding focus in rural areas, through its country programs and in-country partners.
- The Australian government and government departments might explore closer links and partnerships with the newly established ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation.
- The Australian government should maintain a focus on multilateral diplomacy for conflict prevention and resolution beyond its temporary UN Security Council membership, which expires at the end of 2014.
- DFAT might benefit from several reporting initiatives, including reporting the total budget allocated to mediation and conflict prevention annually, and reporting on the conflict resolution and prevention activities undertaken by the department.
- Increased funding and resources should be given to the Peace and Conflict Section of DFAT, along with DFAT overall, to improve the peacemaking work of the department. The AVR monitor places government spending on conflict resolution and prevention as greatly lower than the commitment of other states, including Norway and the United Kingdom.
- Australia is well placed to utilise its expertise in international law and norms in resolving tensions surrounding current legal inconsistencies and loopholes.

An example may be to take the lead on reforming regulations on air traffic jurisdiction – currently defined by sovereign territorial jurisdictions improperly suited to the needs of the globalised aviation industry. While not necessarily an active component of mediation services, the downing of flight MH17 illustrates that such work is necessary to improve conditions for peace.

- The Australian government might see benefits from resourcing a policy oriented research centre on mediation, preventive diplomacy, negotiation and other conflict resolution techniques. The centre may be useful to build on Australian experience in Asia and the South Pacific by engaging Australian personnel and compiling information on past regional peacemaking initiatives. The centre might operate in a similar manner to ACCORD in South Africa, and provide policy advice to government departments, as well as early warning on deterioration in regional conflicts.
- DFAT might seek to establish mechanisms to effectively connect Australian non-governmental expertise on conflict prevention and resolution to the policy making process within the Australian government.

- A Centre for Excellence may be of value in response to the observation that linkages between DFAT and universities are underdeveloped. A number of Australian universities are readily able to provide expert knowledge and advice to government departments on best practices for conflict prevention and peacemaking in the Asia-Pacific region. A centre may also be well placed to engage a community of experts to make policy-relevant recommendations on a specific conflict or issue.
- Initiatives to track Australians with significant mediation and conflict prevention experience would be valuable to improving departmental peacemaking capabilities. Such a task might be well suited to a dedicated Centre for Excellence, and would allow their knowledge to be incorporated into the diplomatic operations of government.
- A Centre for Excellence or other initiative could offer a pathway to recruit and utilise the knowledge of retired military and federal police officers with experience in conflict prevention and resolution gained in regional peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations.

- Expanding coordination between the Australian Federal Police International Deployment Group and Naval diplomatic support functions in response to conflict situations in the South Pacific could be considered. Diplomatic support by the Australian Navy plays an important role in supporting mediation and conflict prevention in the South Pacific.
- All arms of the Australian government, in collaboration with universities and non-governmental organisations, should implement a proactive and immediate focus on supporting the peaceful holding of the upcoming referendum on independence in Bougainville as a priority of foreign policy. This represents a critical test of Australia's capacity to deliver preventative diplomacy and peacemaking.

Appendix 1

POLICY BRIEF: WOMEN IN MEDIATION AND PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

Laura J. Shepherd, UNSW Australia

'Women's under-representation in mediation processes and peace negotiations as well as the lack of gender expertise in mediation teams seriously limits the extent to which women's ... needs for justice and recovery are addressed within these processes'.¹²

Summary: Historically, women have not been included in mediation and peace negotiations in a systematic and meaningful way. The effects of this exclusion have been to build structural gender inequalities in to the emergent post-conflict environment. Post-conflict reconstruction efforts have often failed to recognise women's leadership and to ensure that peacebuilding practices are gender-sensitive.

Background: The meaningful participation of women in all forms of peace and security governance is mandated by a series of UN Security Council resolutions, collectively known as the 'Women, Peace and Security' agenda. The most recent resolution, UNSCR 2122, calls explicitly for increased support for women's participation, including capacity-building efforts in-country (para. 7). Australia has made commitments under its 'National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018' to 'ensure that peace processes in which Australia plays a prominent role promote the meaningful participation of women' (Action 4.5).¹³

There are two key ways in which gender affects mediation and peace negotiations. First is the exclusion of women from peace processes. A 2012 study of 31 major peace processes over a ten-year period revealed that only 4% of signatories, 2.4% of chief mediators, 3.7% of witnesses and 9% of negotiators involved in the processes were women.¹⁴ The meaningful participation of women is important because social, political and economic equality in the post-conflict environment correlates positively with the durability of peace settlements and the converse is also true: societies that move into a post-conflict phase but retain high levels of inequality and the centralisation of power in the hands of a few individuals are likely to lapse back into conflict quite rapidly.

Second, if women are not involved in peace processes then the agreements that are reached are not likely to reflect the needs of women nor are the agreements likely to protect women's rights. For example, the exclusion of women from peace processes may lead to the violation of women's property rights in the post-conflict environment, or to a lack of women's participation in electoral processes, and/or judicial and security sector reform. A survey of 585 peace agreements in 102 peace processes identified references to 'women' in only 16% of the 585 documents.¹⁵ There is as yet no 'best practice' guidelines regarding representing the needs and priorities of women in the post-conflict environment through including a gender perspective in peace agreements, but there is widespread agreement that the meaningful inclusion of women in mediation and peace negotiations is a necessary, though not sufficient, condition.

¹² European Union External Action (2012) 'Factsheet – EEAS Mediation Support Project – Knowledge Product Women's Participation and Gender', http://eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/conflict_prevention/docs/2013_eeas_mediation_support_factsheet_women_participation-and-gender_en.pdf

¹³ Australian Government Office for Women (2012) 'National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security', http://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2012/aus_nap_on_women_2012_2018.pdf

¹⁴ UN Women (2012) 'Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations: Connections between Presence and Influence', <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/03AWomenPeaceNeg.pdf>.

¹⁵ Christine Bell and Catherine O'Rourke (2011) 'Opinion: UN Security Council 1325 and Peace Negotiations and Agreements', http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/1325andPeaceNegotiationsandAgreements_HDCenter2011.pdf.

Recommendations: It is essential that the various Australian stakeholders (inter alia Defence, AFP, ACMC, DFAT):

- Recognise that women's participation in mediation and peace processes, from Track 1 to Track 3, is more than a simple matter of numbers but demands quality of contribution and influence.
- Identify and prepare qualified female mediators;
- Increase the availability and quality of gender expertise in mediation processes;
- Draw on the experience of successful initiatives, e.g. 'Women at the Asian Peace Table' and 'Peace Talks' training by femLINKPACIFIC, to facilitate capacity-building at the local, national, and regional levels.¹⁶

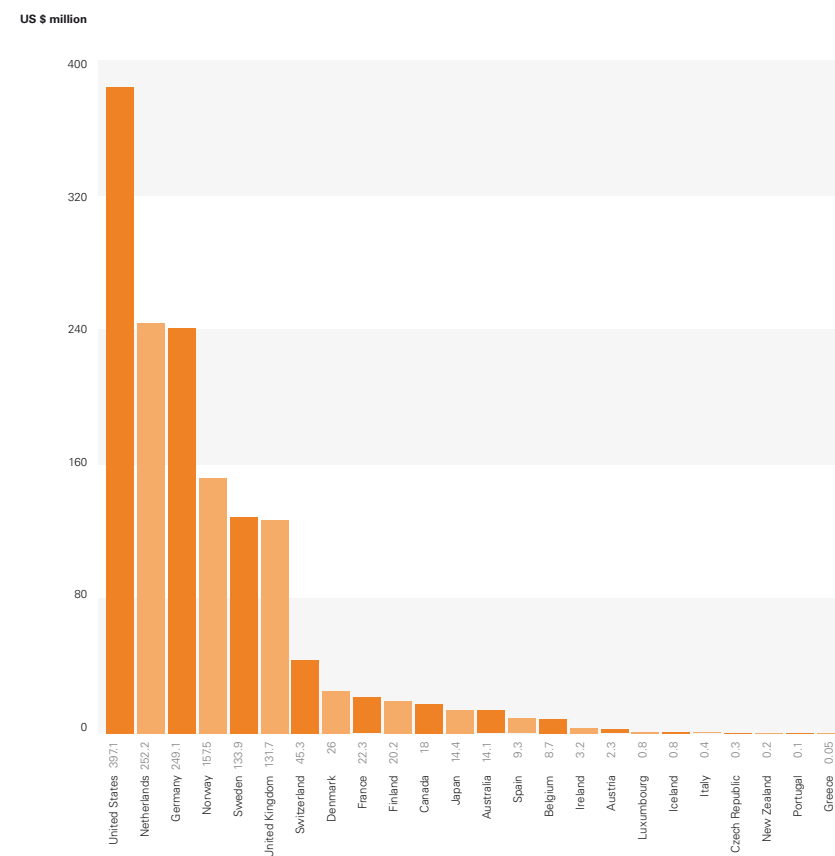
Prepared for Australian Mediation and Peacemaking Round table, September 2014.

Received date: 29 August 2014

¹⁶ For details of these examples and others, see AusAID (2010) 'Women, Peace and Security: AusAID's implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325', <http://aid.dfat.gov.au/Publications/Documents/womenpeacesecurityunres1325.pdf>.

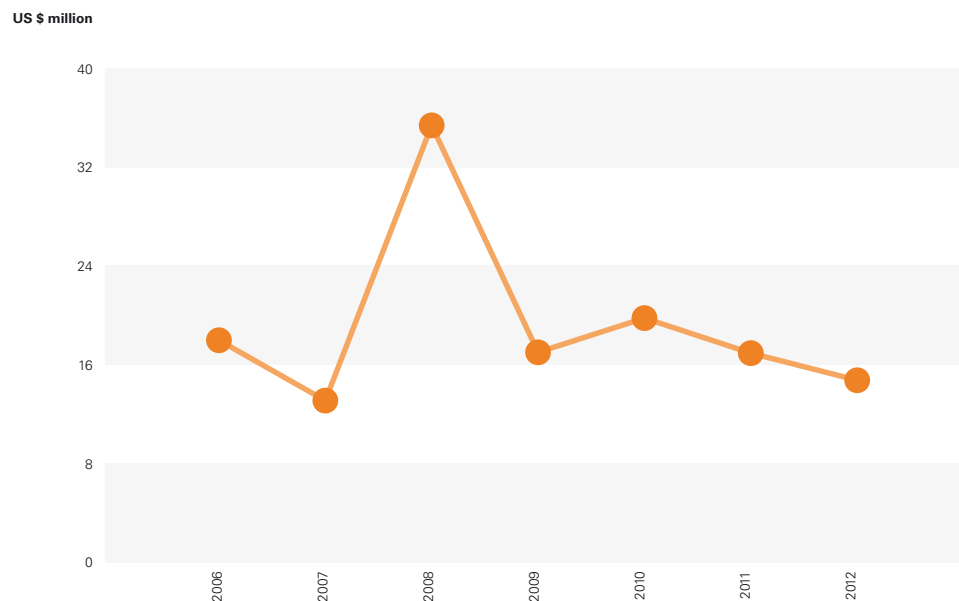
Appendix 2

ARMED VIOLENCE REDUCTION MONITOR DATA CIVILIAN PEACEBUILDING, CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION (OECD COUNTRIES)



Alpers, Philip and Marcus Wilson. 2013. *Armed Violence in Australia: Conflict prevention, development, peace and security*. Centre for Armed Violence Reduction, London and Sydney. AVRMonitor.org, 21 October. Accessed 29 October 2014. at: http://www.avrmonitor.org/investment/compare/10/civilian_peace_building_conflict_prevention_and_resolution/11,18,31,49,50,65,66,69,71,232,86,88,91,105,125,128,136,1

CIVILIAN PEACEBUILDING, CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION (AUSTRALIA)



Alpers, Philip and Marcus Wilson. 2013. *Armed Violence in Australia: Conflict prevention, development, peace and security*. Centre for Armed Violence Reduction, London and Sydney. AVRMonitor.org, 21 October. Accessed 29 October 2014. at: http://www.avrmonitor.org/investment/compareyears/10/civilian_peace_building_conflict_prevention_and_resolution

Appendix 3

RESOURCES AND WEBSITES

UN Security Council, Resolution 2166, S/RES/2166 (2014), 21 July 2014. [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2166\(2014\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2166(2014))

UN Security Council, Resolution 1325, S/RES/1325 (2000), [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1325\(2000\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1325(2000))

UN Security Council, Resolution 2122, S/RES/2122 (2013), <http://unscr.com/files/2013/02122.pdf>

Australian Government, Australia National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, 2012-2018 https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2012/aus_nap_on_women_2012_2018.pdf

Pacific Women
<http://www.pacificwomen.org/>

AVR Monitor
<http://www.avrmonitor.org/>

AusAID, Framework for Working in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States
http://aid.dfat.gov.au/Publications/Pages/1345_8687_9985_5238_2253.aspx

ACCORD
<http://www.accord.org.za/>

Conciliation Resources
<http://www.c-r.org/>

Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
<http://www.hdcentre.org/en/>

Conflict Management Initiative
<http://www.cmi.fi/en/>

UN Peacemaker
<http://peacemaker.un.org/>

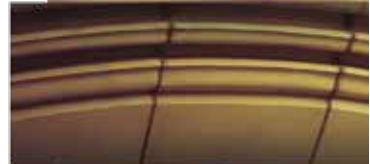
UN Mediation Support Unit
http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/undpa/mediation_support

UN Guidance for Effective Mediation
http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/undpa/main/issues/peacemaking/mediation_guidance

Asia-Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect
<http://www.r2pasiapacific.org/>



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