



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

27 April 2012

Excellency,

I have the pleasure to inform you that I will convene an informal high level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on “The Role of Member States in Mediation”. This one-day event will be held on Wednesday, 23 May 2012, at the United Nations.

The landmark resolution 65/283, adopted by the General Assembly on the 22nd of June last year, same day of my election as the President of the General Assembly, created a sound normative framework for the concept of mediation as a means for the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution. The increasing interest in mediation by Member States and my own commitment to this issue led me to suggest the theme “the role of mediation in the settlement of disputes” for the General Debate in September 2011. I was humbled and encouraged by the strong support expressed by the world leaders for this theme.

I also identified “the peaceful settlement of disputes” as one of the four pillars of my Presidency of the General Assembly. In this framework, I convened an interactive meeting on United Nations mediation on 9 November 2011 at the United Nations. This meeting was attended by the UN Secretary-General as well as former and current high level officials of the United Nations. Thorough discussions were held to collect UN-wide experiences on mediation from the prevention, peacemaking and peacekeeping perspectives. After the meeting, the chair’s summary was distributed to Member States and other participants.

Following this interactive debate, two related meetings have been organized. First, the Friends of Mediation brought together representatives of some regional organizations at the United Nations on 11 January 2012, on the role of the regional organizations in mediation. Second, the International Istanbul Conference on enhancing peace through mediation, which I also addressed, was held on 24-25 February 2012 and focused on the increasing and critical role of track II actors in mediation, such as civil society organizations, research institutions, and former high level personalities.

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers
to the United Nations
New York



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The above-mentioned meetings dealt with three of the four main players in mediation, namely United Nations, regional organizations, and track II actors. The aim of the high level meeting on 23 May is to complement this process with a focus on the fourth key actor: Member States.

In recent years, new Member States in many parts of the world have become actively engaged in mediation efforts to build bridges, settle disputes and resolve conflicts. The high level meeting aims to provide a platform for an in-depth and comprehensive discussion on the role of Member States in the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts. Distilling from the experience of key mediators, the meeting will seek to identify the challenges and deficiencies in effectively dealing with regional and international conflicts, and explore any other possible means and tools that would help better address these challenges.

Member States, Observers, regional and sub-regional organizations as well as representatives of civil society, research institutes and academia are invited to this informal meeting to share their experiences, ideas and suggestions on the critical role of Member States in settling disputes, and in preventing and resolving conflicts through peaceful means.

Following this informal high level meeting, a chair's summary will be circulated to the whole membership. The meeting is also expected to be followed by and feed into the Secretary-General's report and the guidance for more effective mediation, mandated by the General Assembly resolution, as well as contribute to the General Assembly resolution that will build on resolution 65/283, which will be submitted to the General Assembly during this session later this year.

The program of this high level meeting will be made available in due course. I look forward to your active participation at the highest possible level and contributions towards a successful meeting.

For further information, my office can be contacted as follows: Mr. Aziz Sevi, e-mail: sevia@un.org , tel: 1 (212) 963-4767.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser'.

Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser