Introduction

Peace Talks in Focus 2020. Report on Trends and Scenarios is a yearbook that analyses the peace processes and negotiations that took place in the world in 2020. The examination of the evolution and the dynamics of these negotiations at a global level offers a global view of the peace processes, identifying trends and facilitating a comparative analysis among the different scenarios. One of the main aims of this report is to provide information and analysis for those actors who take part in the peaceful resolution of conflicts at different levels, including those parties in dispute, mediators and civil society, among others. The yearbook also seeks to reveal the different formulas of dialogue and negotiation that are aimed at reversing the dynamics of violence and that aim to channel conflicts through political means in numerous contexts. As such, it seeks to highlight, enhance and promote political, diplomatic and social efforts that are aimed at transforming conflicts and their root causes through peaceful methods.

With regard to **methodology**, this report draws mainly from on qualitative analysis of studies and information from numerous sources –the United Nations, international organizations, research centres, the media, NGOs, and others–, in addition to experience gained in field research. The report also incorporates the gender perspective in the study and analysis of peace processes in a cross-cutting manner.

The analysis is based on a **definition** that understands **peace processes** as comprising all those political, diplomatic and social efforts aimed at resolving conflicts and transforming their root causes by means of peaceful methods, especially through peace negotiations. **Peace negotiations** are considered as the processes of dialogue between at least two conflicting parties in a conflict, in which the parties address their differences in a concerted framework in order to end the violence and encounter a satisfactory solution to their demands. Other actors not directly involved in the conflict may also participate. Peace negotiations are usually preceded by preliminary or exploratory phases that define the format, place, conditions and guarantees, of the future negotiations, among other elements. Peace negotiations may or may not be facilitated by **third parties**. The third parties intervene in the dispute so as to contribute to the dialogue between the actors involved and to promote a negotiated solution to the conflict. Other actors not directly involved in the dispute may also participate in peace negotiations. Peace negotiations may result in comprehensive or partial **agreements**, agreements related to the procedure or process, and agreements linked to the causes or consequences of the conflict. Elements of the different type of agreements may be combined in the same agreement.

With respect to its **structure**, the publication is organized into six chapters. The first presents a summary of those processes and negotiations that took place in 2020, and offers an overview of the main trends at a global level. The following five chapters detail the analysis of peace processes and negotiations from a geographic perspective. Each addresses the main trends of peace negotiations in Africa, America, Asia, Europe and the Middle East, respectively, and describes the development and dynamics of each of the cases present in the regions, including references to the gender, peace and security agenda.

1. Negotiations in 2020: global overview and main trends

- 40 peace processes and negotiations were identified around the world in 2020. The largest number of cases were reported in Africa (13), followed by Asia (11), Europe (seven), the Middle East (five) and the Americas (four).
- The COVID-19 pandemic slowed down negotiating processes and the implementation of peace agreements, while aggravating the humanitarian situation in armed conflicts and socio-political crises.
- Various armed actors in conflict announced ceasefires in response to the UN Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire, though follow-up and implementation were limited.
- Progress was made in some negotiating processes in 2020, such as in Mozambique, Sudan, Sudan-South Sudan, South Sudan, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Thailand and Papua New Guinea.
- Many peace processes faced serious difficulties, such as in Burundi, Cameroon, Mali, Libya, Yemen, Syria, North Korea-South Korea, the US-North Korea, the Philippines (NPA) and others.
- There was support from at least one third party in 82.5% of the peace negotiations studied in 2020, though this was only true of 55% of the cases in Asia.
- The UN was involved in 60% of the processes with third-party support, while regional organisations and various states also actively supported negotiations.
- Women's organisations around the world continued to demand participation and integration of a gender perspective in the peace negotiations in a year that marked the 20th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325, though little progress was observed in this area.

During 2020, a total of 40 peace processes and negotiations were identified on a worldwide level. The analysis of the different contexts reveals a wide variety of realities and dynamics, a result of the diverse nature of the armed conflicts[1] and socio-political crises[2] that the negotiations are linked to. Without losing sight of the need to consider the specific characteristics of each case, it is possible to draw several conclusions and offer reflections on the general panorama of peace processes and negotiations, as well as to identify some trends. Several conclusions are presented below regarding the geographical distribution of the negotiations, those actors involved in the negotiation processes, the third parties who participated, the main and recurrent issues in the negotiation agendas, the general development of the processes, inclusiveness and the gender dimension in these peace negotiations.

Table 1.1. **Summary of peace processes and negotiations in 2020**

Peace processes and negotiations	Negotiating actors	Third parties
AFRICA		
Burundi	Government, political and social opposition grouped in the National Council for the Respect of the Peace Agreement and the Reconciliation of Burundi and the Restoration of the Rule of Law (CNARED)	--
Cameroon (Ambazonia/North West and South West)	Government, political-military secessionist movement formed by the opposition coalition Ambazonia Coalition Team (ACT, including IG Sako) and Ambazonia Governing Council (AGovC, including IG Sisiku)	Church, civil society organisations, Switzerland, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
CAR	Government, armed groups belonging to the former Séléka coalition, anti-balaka militias	The African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation (AU and ECCAS, with the support of the UN, ICGLR, Angola, Gabon, the Rep. of the Congo and Chad), Community of Sant'Egidio, ACCORD, OIC, International Support Group (UN, EU, among others), Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, China, Russia, Sudan

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1. The School of the Culture of Peace (Escola de Cultura de Pau, ECP) defines armed conflict An armed conflict is any confrontation between regular or irregular armed groups with objectives that are perceived as incompatible in which the continuous and organised use of violence a) causes a minimum of 100 battle-related deaths in a year and/or a serious impact on the territory (destruction of infrastructures or of natural resources) and human security (e.g. wounded or displaced population, sexual violence, food insecurity, impact on mental health and on the social fabric or disruption of basic services) and aims to achieve objectives that are different than those of common delinquency and are normally linked to a) demands for self-determination and self-government or identity issues; b) the opposition to the political, economic, social or ideological system of a state or the internal or international policy of the government, which in both cases leads to fighting to seize or erode power; or c) control over the resources or the territory.
2. A socio-political crisis is defined as that in which the pursuit of certain objectives or the failure to satisfy certain demands made by different actors leads to high levels of political, social or military mobilisation and/or the use of violence with a level of intensity that does not reach that of an armed conflict and that may include clashes, repression, coups d'état and bombings or attacks of other kinds, and whose escalation may degenerate into an armed conflict under certain circumstances. Socio-political crises are normally related to: a) demands for self-determination and self-government, or identity issues; b) opposition to the political, economic, social or ideological system of a state, or the internal or international policies of a government, which in both cases produces a struggle to take or erode power; or c) control of resources or territory.

Peace processes and negotiations	Negotiating actors	Third parties
AFRICA		
DRC	Government led by Cap pour le Changement (coalition led by Félix Tshisekedi), in coalition with Front Commun pour le Congo (coalition led by Joseph Kabila, successor to the Alliance for the Presidential Majority), political and social opposition, armed groups from the East of the country	Congolese Episcopal Conference (CENCO), Church of Christ in the Congo, Angola, Tanzania, Uganda, Support Group for the Facilitation of the National Dialogue on the DRC led by the AU, SADC, International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), AU, EU, UN, OIF and USA
Eritrea – Ethiopia	Government of Eritrea and government of Ethiopia	United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, USA
Libya	Presidential Council and Government of National Accord (GNA), House of Representatives (HoR), National General Congress (NGC), LNA or ALAF	Quartet (UN, Arab League, AU, EU), Germany, France, Italy, Russia, Turkey, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, The Netherlands, Switzerland, among other countries; Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
Mali	Government, Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA), MNLA, MAA and HCUA, Platform, GATIA, CMFPR, CPA, faction of the MAA	Algeria, France, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), AU, UN, EU, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, The Carter Center, civil society organisations, Mauritania
Morocco – Western Sahara	Morocco, Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro (POLISARIO)	UN, Algeria and Mauritania, Group of Friends of Western Sahara (France, USA, Spain, United Kingdom and Russia)
Mozambique	Government, RENAMO	National mediation team, Community of Sant'Egidio, Catholic Church, UN, Southern African Development Community (SADC), AU, EU, Botswana, South Africa, Switzerland, Tanzania, United Kingdom
Somalia	Federal Government, leaders of the federal and emerging states (Puntland, HirShabelle, Galmudug, Jubaland, Southwest), political military movement Ahlu Sunna WalJama'a, clan and sub-clan leaders, Somaliland	UN, IGAD, Turkey, among others
South Sudan	Government (SPLM), SPLM/A-in-Opposition (SPLM/A-IO), and several minor groups (SSOA, SPLM-FD, among others) and SSOMA (NAS, SSUF/A, Real-SPLM, NDM-PF, UDRM/A, NDM-PF, SSNMC)	"IGAD Plus": the IGAD, which includes Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia and Uganda; AU (Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Chad and Algeria), China, Russia, Egypt, Troika (USA, United Kingdom and Norway), EU, UN, South Sudan Council of Churches, Community of Sant'Egidio
Sudan	Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF, coalition comprising the armed groups of South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur), Movement for Justice and Equity (JEM), Sudan Liberation Movements, SLA-MM and SLA-AW factions, Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), Malik Agar and Abdelaziz al-Hilu factions	African Union High Level Panel on Sudan (AUHIP), Troika (EEUU, United Kingdom, Norway), Germany, AU, UNAMID, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Uganda
Sudan - South Sudan	Government of Sudan and Government of South Sudan	IGAD, African Union Border Programme (AUBP), United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), Egypt, Libya, USA, EU
AMERICA		
Colombia (ELN)	Government, FARC	UN Verification Mission in Colombia, International Verification Component (Technical Secretariat of the Notables, University of Notre Dame's Kroc Institute)
Colombia (FARC)	Government, ELN	--
Haiti	Government, political and social opposition	Haitian Patriotic Initiative Committee, United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), Apostolic Nunciature, Core Group (UN, OAS, EU and governments of Germany, Brazil, Canada, Spain and USA)
Venezuela	Government, political and social opposition	Norway, Turkey, International Contact Group
ASIA		
Afghanistan	Government, Taliban insurgents, USA	Pakistan, China, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Germany, Norway, UN
DPR Korea – Republic of Korea	North Korea, South Korea	--
DPR Korea – USA	North Korea, USA	--
India (Assam)	Government, ULFA-PTF, NDFB-P, NDFB-RD	--
India (Nagaland)	Indian government, NSCN-IM, NNPG: GPRN/NSCN (Kitovi Zhimomi), NNC, FGN, NSCN(R), NPGN (Non-Accord) and NNC/GDRN/NA, ZUF	--
Myanmar	Government; armed groups that have signed the ceasefire agreement (NCA): DKBA, RCSS/SSA-South, CNF, KNU, KNLAPC, ALP, PNLO, ABSDF, NMSP and LDU; armed groups not part of the NCA: UWSP, NDAA, SSPP/SSA-N, KNPP, NSCN-K, KIA, AA, TNLA, MNDAA	China

Peace processes and negotiations	Negotiating actors	Third parties
ASIA		
Papua New Guinea (Bougainville)	Government, Autonomous Region of Bougainville	Bertie Ahern
Philippines (MILF)	Government, MILF	Malaysia, Third Party Monitoring Team, International Monitoring Team, Independent Decommissioning Body
Philippines (MNLF)	Government, MNLF (faction led by Nur Misuari)	--
Philippines (NDF)	Government, NDF (umbrella organisation for different communist organisations, including the Communist Party of the Philippines, which is the political arm of the NPA)	Norway
Thailand (south)	Government, BRN	Malaysia
EUROPE		
Armenia – Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)	Armenia, Azerbaijan	OSCE Minsk Group (co-chaired by Russia, France and the USA; the remaining permanent members are Belarus, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Finland and Turkey),[3] Russia, Turkey[4]
Cyprus	Republic of Cyprus, self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus	UN, EU; Turkey, Greece and United Kingdom (guarantor countries)
Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia)	Government of Georgia, representatives of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, government of Russia[5]	OSCE, EU, UN, USA, Russia[6]
Moldova (Transdniestria)	Moldova, self-proclaimed Republic of Transdniestria	OSCE, Ukraine, Russia, USA and EU
Serbia – Kosovo	Serbia, Kosovo	EU, UN, USA
Spain (Basque Country)	ETA (dissolved), government of Spain, government of the Basque Country, government of Navarre, government of France, *Communauté d'Agglomeration du Pays Basque (*Basque Municipal Community), political and social actors of the Basque Country, Basque Political Prisoners Collective (EPPK)	Permanent Social Forum, Bakea Bidea
Ukraine (east)	Government of Ukraine, representatives of the self-proclaimed People's Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk, government of Russia[7]	OSCE in the Trilateral Contact Group, where Ukraine and Russia[8] also participate); Germany and France (in the Normandy Group, where Ukraine and Russia also participate[9])
MIDDLE EAST		
Iran (nuclear programme)	Iran, P4+1 (France, United Kingdom, Russia and China, plus Germany), EU	UN
Israel-Palestine	Israeli government, Palestinian Authority (PA), Hamas, Islamic Jihad	Quartet for the Middle East (USA, Russia, UN, EU), Egypt, France
Palestine	Hamas, Fatah	Egypt, Qatar
Syria	Government, political and armed opposition groups	UN, EU, USA, Russia, Turkey, Iran
Yemen	Government of Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi, Houthis/Ansar Allah South Transitional Council (STC), Saudi Arabia	UN, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia

The peace negotiations in bold type are described in the chapter.
-- There are no third parties or no public proof of their existence.

3.   In the run-up to the outbreak of war in 2020, the OSCE Minsk Group was the main mediating actor in the peace process. The November 2020 agreement, mediated by Russia and ending hostilities, made no reference to the negotiating format to be followed thereafter, although the OSCE Minsk Group expressed its willingness to continue to be involved in the search for solutions to the conflict.
4.   Turkey's status as a third party may be subject to dispute. It is included in this table due to the establishment by Russia and Turkey of a peacekeeping centre for monitoring the ceasefire. The creation of the centre was ratified in a Memorandum between Russia and Turkey.
5.   Russia's status in the Georgian peace process is subject to different interpretations. Georgia considers Russia a party to the conflict and a negotiating party, while Russia considers itself a third party.
6.   Ibid.
7.   Russia's status in the Ukranian peace process is subject to different interpretations. Ukraine considers Russia a party to the conflict and a negotiating party, while Russia considers itself a third party.
8.   Ibid.
9.   Ibid.

Most of the peace processes and negotiations studied in 2020 were concentrated in Africa, which hosted 13, equivalent to 32.5% of the total. Asia was the region with the second-highest number of cases, with a total of 11, representing 27.5% of the negotiations in 2020. The rest of the negotiations were distributed between Europe, with seven (17.5%), the Middle East, with five (12.5%) and the Americas, with four (10%). Compared to the previous year, there was decrease in the number of peace processes and negotiations studied around the world. There were 50 such processes in 2019 and 49 in 2018. The decrease took place mostly in Africa (13 peace processes, compared to 19 in 2019), where the agreements made in previous years were being implemented in some places and were no longer analysed in this publication as part of peace negotiating processes, such as the Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia (Ogaden) and Ethiopia (Oromia). In other cases, various dialogue initiatives and peace efforts active in previous years ceased to be counted as such after they were considered to have become discontinued. This was the case in Nigeria (Niger Delta), the Lake Chad region (Boko Haram) and Senegal (Casamance). The lack of talks and negotiations in 2020 also led to the exclusion of cases that had been covered in the previous year outside of Africa: Iran (northwest), Iraq (with information emerging about exploratory contact in two processes the previous year), Nicaragua and China (Tibet). Unlike in 2019, no new negotiating process was reported in 2020.

Most of the negotiations in 2020 took place in Africa (32.5%), followed by Asia (27.5%), Europe (17.5%), the Middle East (12.5%) and the Americas (10%)

The COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on peace processes around the world in various ways. For instance, the need for negotiated solutions became clear in light of the severity of the pandemic in many conflicts and socio-political crises, which worsened access to health care, impacted the economic situation and access to livelihoods, hindered freedom of movement and access to services for populations in divided territories and increased violence against women, among many other

Unlike in 2019, no new peace process was accounted for in 2020

things. Faced with this situation, the UN Secretary-General called for a global ceasefire in March 2020. Although some governments and armed opposition groups decreed and honoured ceasefires, on the whole most armed state and opposition actors continued to prioritise armed action, so the impact of the appeal was limited and uneven. In contexts where there were ceasefires, not all responded to the call, or it intersected with factors specific to each context and process. The coronavirus pandemic also had a negative impact by slowing down peace negotiations and the implementation of peace agreements. In this sense, COVID-19 created obstacles for negotiating actors and mediators to travel, delayed rounds of negotiations and posed technological challenges. Among other cases, the negotiations in South Sudan were suspended for months due to the pandemic situation, in combination with other factors. The pandemic also delayed rounds of international dialogue over the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, while Georgia accused Russia of instrumentalising the pandemic to obstruct the negotiations. In Syria, the meetings of the constitutional committee as part of the UN-sponsored negotiations were postponed several times due to the pandemic, though problems in reaching a consensus on the agenda also played a role. In Yemen, the exploratory meetings established early in the year to implement some confidence-building measures between the government, the Houthis and Saudi Arabia were halted by the onset of the pandemic and by the rise in violence. In Mali and Mozambique, sanitary restrictions slowed down implementation of the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes for combatants envisaged in the peace accords. The pandemic highlighted the urgency of integrating environmental protection in approaches to conflicts amidst a worldwide loss of biodiversity, the weakening of such protection, the overexploitation of natural resources and other issues.

National governments were one of the negotiating parties in all the peace processes and negotiations. The governments of the respective countries conducted direct or indirect negotiations with various kinds of actors, according to the peculiarities of each context, which generally included armed groups (directly or through political representatives, and in some cases through coalitions of armed groups), as was usually the case in Asia; a combination of armed groups and political and social actors, prevalent in Africa and the Middle East; and representatives of political/military bodies seeking secession or recognition as independent territories, which dominated the cases in Europe. To a lesser extent, cases involving governments and the political and social opposition were also identified, as in the Americas.

**Graph 1.1. Regional distribution of peace negotiations**
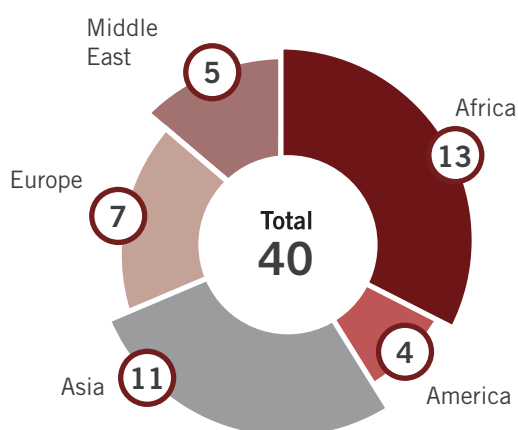
Various governments had specific institutional structures to conduct the negotiations. This was the case of the High Council for National Reconciliation in Afghanistan, the Office of the Presidential Advisor for Peace Process in the Philippines and others. In a significant number of contexts, parallel or complementary negotiations were carried out, linked to a global scenario of highly complex armed conflicts in terms of the actors and disputes. In Yemen, the internationally recognised government of Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi continued to be involved in the UN-sponsored negotiating process with the Houthis. Meanwhile, contact continued between the Hadi government and southern pro-independence groups under the Southern Transitional Council, which led to the creation of a new unity government in late 2020. In Afghanistan, the Taliban and the US reached an agreement in early 2020, while in September the start of the intra-Afghan negotiating process was formalised. Other cases from Asia, such as the Philippines (both in relation to Mindanao and the conflict with the NDF), Thailand and Myanmar, held parallel or complementary formats. The negotiating processes in Libya, Cameroon, Mali, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and the DRC also followed highly complex formats in terms of actors and channels of dialogue in Africa, while in the Middle East, the conflict in Syria revealed the importance of regional

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and international actors in the dynamics of negotiating processes for yet another year. In this scenario, Bashar Assad's government continued to prioritise a military solution in 2020, though it remained linked to the Astana process, led by Russia, Turkey and Iran, and to the UN-backed Geneva process, and also maintained contact with Kurdish actors, at Moscow's behest.

Another type of negotiation involved various governments. Thus, 10 of the 40 peace processes and negotiations in 2020 were international in nature: Eritrea-Ethiopia, Morocco-Western Sahara, Sudan-South Sudan, North Korea-South Korea, North Korea-USA, Armenia-Azerbaijan, Serbia-Kosovo, Iran (nuclear programme) and Israel-Palestine. In 2020, the outbreak of war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh revealed the limits of the negotiating process thus far, while the agreement reached in November left many questions open, both on the negotiating format and on the background of the conflict. In relation to the negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme, the countries that had signed the 2015 agreement stayed in contact to ensure its implementation, with the exception of the United States, which abandoned the deal in 2018. The victory of opposition candidate Joe Biden in the 2020 US presidential election raised expectations about the

Map 1.1. **Peace negotiations in 2020**
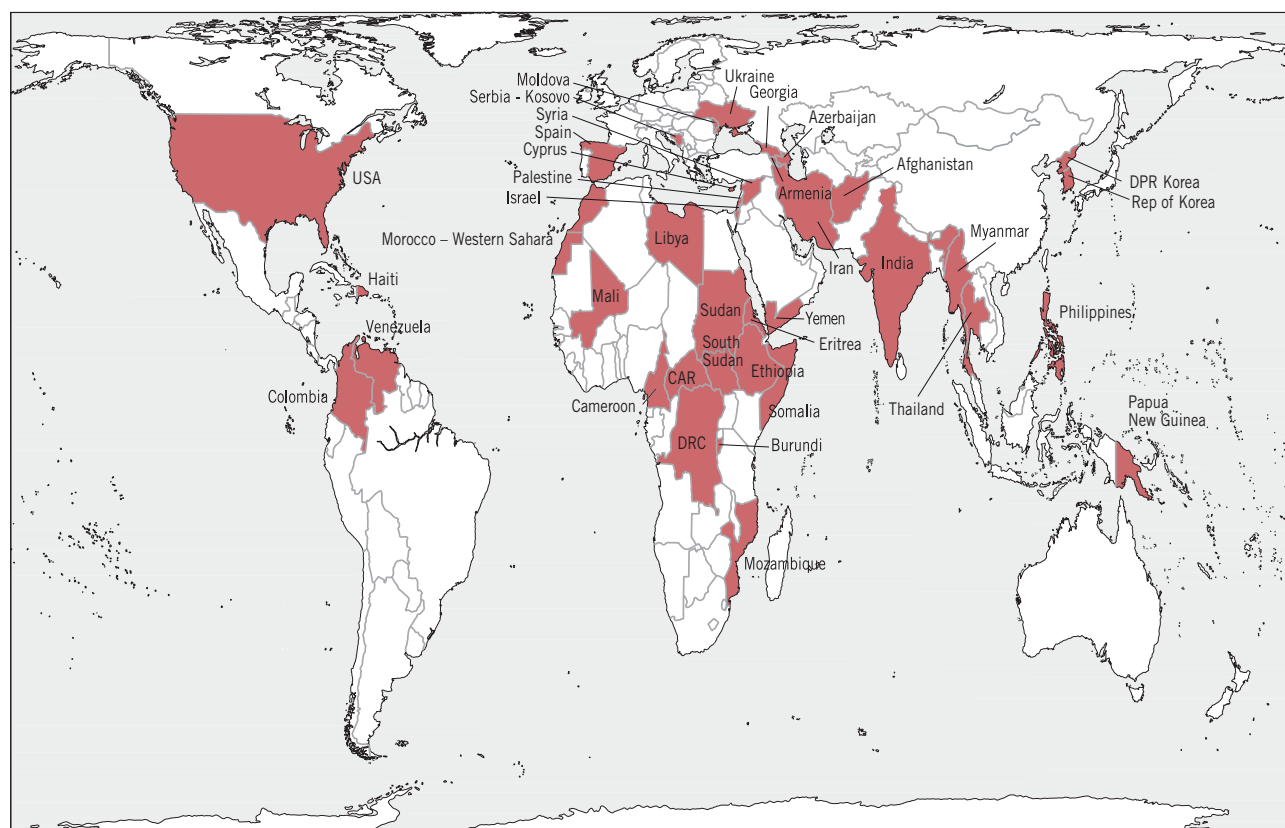
■ Countries with peace processes and negotiations in 2020

possibility of the US returning to these multilateral negotiations. Two processes with unique aspects were related to the conflict over Western Sahara, involving the Moroccan government and the POLISARIO Front, and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which deals with the governments of Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The UN continues to consider Western Sahara a territory pending decolonisation, whose alleged possession by Morocco is not recognised either by international law or by any UN resolution. Likewise, the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) proclaimed by the POLISARIO Front has not received any international majority recognition. Meanwhile, decades of negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian leaders have not led to the full configuration of a Palestinian state. Nevertheless, Palestine has been recognised as such by other states and has been an "observer member" of the UN since 2012.

Regarding the **third parties involved in peace and negotiation processes**, although in many cases one can clearly identify the actors involved in mediation, facilitation and accompaniment activities, in others these tasks were carried out discreetly or behind closed doors. Third parties participated in the vast majority of the peace processes (33 of 40, or 82.5%), in line with the previous year (80%). Yet again this year, there was third-party support for processes with different formats, including internal and direct negotiations (24), national dialogues (one), international negotiations (seven) and other formats (one) (see table 1.2.). Most international negotiations enjoyed third-party support (77%). While third-party support was very high in Africa, the Americas, Europe and the Middle East on a regional basis, peace processes involving third parties represented only 55% of the cases in Asia, while the international negotiations between North Korea and South Korea and between North Korea and the US, as well as the internal negotiations in the Philippines (MNLF), India (Assam) and India (Nagaland), took place without third-party support. Other cases without third parties in other continents included the dialogue process in Burundi following the resignation of the official facilitator, former Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa, in 2019, and the national dialogues in Mali and South Sudan, although both countries had other negotiating formats at the same time that had third-party support.

In nearly all processes with a third party (28 of the 33), more than one actor performed mediation or facilitation tasks. In contrast, in other cases a single third party was observed, such as Norway in the peace process in the Philippines (NDF), China in the peace process in Myanmar, former Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern in the peace talks in Papua New Guinea and Malaysia in the negotiations in Thailand (south). The many different types of international actors included intergovernmental

In the vast majority of the cases analysed in 2020 (82.5%), a third party participated in the peace negotiations, though only 55% of the peace processes in Asia had third-party support

organisations, such as the UN, EU, AU, OSCE, IGAD, OIC, SADC, EAC, CEEAC and OIF, national governments, religious organisations and civil society actors, including specialised centres. Intergovernmental organisations played a dominant role, except in Asia, where they were much less involved.

Local, regional and international third parties were involved through various formats, including support structures. These assumed different forms and degrees of complexity. Some included only states participating in diverse structures, such as the Normandy format in Ukraine (Germany, France, Ukraine, Russia), the Group of Friends of Western Sahara (France, USA, Spain, UK and Russia) and the Troika in Sudan (USA, UK, Norway). Others included a combination of states and intergovernmental organisations, such as the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR (the AU and ECCAS, with support from the UN, ICGLR, Angola, Gabon, the Republic of the Congo and Chad), the IGAD-Plus, made up of 19 members (six from the IGAD (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda), five from the AU (Algeria, Chad, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa), the AU Commission, China, the EU, the Troika (USA, UK and Norway), the UN and the IGAD Partners Forum), the International Contact Group on Venezuela (made up of Bolivia, Argentina, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama, Uruguay, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the EU), the Core Group of Haiti (Germany, Brazil, Canada, Spain, USA, the UN, OAS and EU), the International Monitoring Team and the Third Party Monitoring Team support structures in the Philippines (MILF) and the Quartet on the Middle East (USA, Russia, the UN and the EU) in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. In some cases, intergovernmental organisations coordinated through specific structures, such as the Libya Quartet, made up of the UN, Arab League, AU and EU, while in others the coordination occurred on a practical level, without specific platforms.

Overall, for yet another year the UN stood out as the main intergovernmental organisation involved in peace processes. It was present in different formats (mainly envoys and special representatives and missions) and served various support functions (mediation, co-mediation, verification, ceasefire supervision, assistance, support, the use of good offices and others) in 20 of the 40 peace processes during the year and in 20 of the 33 that involved at least one third party (60%, a similar percentage to the previous year, 56%). The UN played a prominent role in the negotiating processes in Africa, where it supported ten of the 13: Libya, Mali, Morocco-Western Sahara, Mozambique, CAR, DRC, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Sudan-South Sudan.

Table 1.2. Internal and international peace processes/negotiations with and without third parties in 2020

Peace processes	INTERNAL					INTERNATIONAL	
	Direct negotiations without third parties (4)	Negotiations with third parties (24)	National dialogues without third parties (2)	National dialogues with third parties (1)	Other formats (2)	Direct negotiations without third parties (2)	Negotiations with third parties (7)
AFRICA							
Burundi	x						
Cameroon (Ambazonia/North West-South West)		x					
CAR		x					
DRC		x					
Eritrea-Ethiopia							x
Libya		x					
Mali		x	x				
Morocco – Western Sahara							x
Mozambique		x					
Somalia		x					
South Sudan		x	x				
Sudan[I]		x					
Sudan – South Sudan							x
AMERICAS							
Colombia (FARC)		x					
Colombia (ELN)					x		
Haiti				x			
Venezuela		x					
ASIA							
Afghanistan		x					
Korea, DPR–Korea, Republic of						x	
Korea, DPR – USA						x	
Philippines (MILF)		x					
Philippines (MNLF)	x						
Philippines (NDF)		x					
India (Assam)	x						
India (Nagaland)	x						
Myanmar		x					
Papua New Guinea (Bougainville)		x					
Thailand (south)		x					
EUROPE							
Armenia – Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)							x
Cyprus		x					
Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia)[II]		x					
Moldova (Transdniestria)		x					
Serbia – Kosovo[III]							x
Spain (Basque Country)					x		
Ukraine (east)[IV]		x					
MIDDLE EAST							
Iran (nuclear programme)							x

Peace processes	INTERNAL					INTERNATIONAL	
	Direct negotiations without third parties (4)	Negotiations with third parties (24)	National dialogues without third parties (2)	National dialogues with third parties (1)	Other formats (2)	Direct negotiations without third parties (2)	Negotiations with third parties (7)
MIDDLE EAST							
Israel-Palestine							x
Palestine		x					
Syria[v]		x					
Yemen		x					

i. In 2019, the three peace processes and negotiations that were taking place in Sudan in 2018 were merged into one, due to the completion of the national dialogue between the government and the opposition after the formation of a transitional government, as well as the merger of the peace negotiations in Darfur and the "Two Areas" (South Kordofan and Blue Nile) into a single process.

ii. The nature of the peace processes in Abkhazia and South Ossetia and Russia's role in those conflicts and peace processes are open to interpretation. Ukraine considers Russia a party to the conflict and a negotiating party, whereas Russia considers itself a third party.

iii. The peace process between Serbia and Kosovo is considered interstate because even though its international legal status is still controversial, Kosovo has been recognised as a state by over 100 countries. In 2010, the International Court of Justice issued a non-binding opinion that Kosovo's declaration of independence did not violate international law or UN Security Council Resolution 1244.

iv. The nature of the peace process in Ukraine and Russia's role in the conflict and peace process are open to interpretation. Ukraine considers Russia a party to the conflict and a negotiating party, whereas Russia considers itself a third party.

v. There are two parallel negotiating processes in Syria (Astana and Geneva). Third parties are involved in both processes, though some of them directly project their interests onto the negotiations.

In addition to the UN, regional organisations played an important role both in their respective areas or proximity zones and beyond their most direct territorial spheres. For instance, the EU carried out third party functions in 16 contexts, including in six peace processes in Africa (Libya, Mali, Mozambique, CAR, DRC and South Sudan). The AU was a third party in eight African negotiating processes (the same as the EU, but also in Sudan and Sudan-South Sudan), the OSCE in four peace processes (Armenia-Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) and the IGAD in three (South Sudan, Sudan-South Sudan and Somalia). Other organisations such as ECOWAS, OIC, SADC, EAC, ECCAS, OIF, the Arab League and the OAS played a lesser role.

Along with intergovernmental organisations, a growing number of states became involved in negotiating processes, often while projecting their national interests. The role of Middle Eastern countries continued to grow, such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman and Egypt, partly linked to their regional struggle to expand their areas of influence, among other issues. In 2020, Oman facilitated an agreement between the Houthis, Saudi Arabia and the United States for a prisoner exchange and Egypt facilitated talks between Hamas and Fatah and promoted truces when the Israeli-Palestinian conflict escalated. Norway, Malaysia, Qatar and China were involved in peace processes in Asia, such as the one between the Philippines and the NDF, between the Philippines and the MILF, in Afghanistan (both in relation to the talks between the Taliban and the US and in the intra-Afghan dialogue) and in Myanmar. German diplomacy continued to expand in support of processes such as Libya, Sudan, Haiti and Ukraine. Turkey also raised its profile in support of dialogue in 2020, engaging in Venezuela, in addition to other peace processes where it was already involved, such as Somalia. Russia continued to mediate in various contexts, such as Armenia-Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh), where it played a dominant role in facilitating the agreement that ended hostilities after the outbreak of war in 2020 while the future of the OSCE Minsk Group's mediating role remained uncertain. The role of several of these countries continued to be controversial due to their roles as warring parties or supporting actors involved in conflicts, such as Russia and Turkey in Syria and Saudi Arabia in Yemen.

The UN was involved in 60% of the peace processes that involved at least one third party

With regard to the **negotiating agendas**, one must consider the particular aspects of each case and bear in mind that the details of the issues under discussion did not always become known to the public. For yet another year, the search for **truces, ceasefires and cessations of hostilities** was among the most outstanding issues on the agenda. In 2020, this became more important due to the COVID-19 pandemic and UN Secretary-General António Guterres' call in March for a global ceasefire that would help people to deal with the pandemic and facilitate humanitarian access to the most vulnerable populations affected by violence.[10] By June, 179 UN member states had supported the call, although in some cases only in relation to specific conflicts or while defending the right to continue counter-terrorism operations. Dozens of regional organisations, sub-state government actors and women's and civil society networks and organisations also heeded the call. Various armed actors in conflict joined the call, though the implementation and length of the ceasefires were sometimes questionable. According to United Nations data, in June around 20 armed groups and their organisations or political fronts had responded positively to the global appeal, while the

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10. For further information, see Escola de Cultura de Pau, "Ceasefires in Armed Conflicts during the Coronavirus Pandemic" and "Cessation of hostilities in times of COVID-19 Pandemic", *ECP notes on conflict and peace,* no.4 (April 2020) and no.7 (July 2020).

Table 1.3. **Intergovernmental organisations as third parties in peace processes in 2020**

UN (20)	
AFRICA	
CAR	UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA) UN Secretary-General's Special Representative in the CAR UN is member of the International Support Group for CAR
DRC	UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region UN Stabilisation Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) UN Secretary-General's Special Representative in the DRC
Libya	UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Libya United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) The UN forms part of the Quartet for the Libyan Political Agreement along with the AU, Arab League and EU
Mali	UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Mali United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)
Morocco – Western Sahara	UN Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for Western Sahara UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Western Sahara United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)
Mozambique	UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Mozambique
Somalia	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM)
South Sudan	UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for South Sudan United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)
Sudan	United Nations-African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS)
Sudan-South Sudan	United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA)
AMERICA	
Colombia	United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia
Haiti	United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) The UN is member of the Core Group
ASIA	
Afghanistan	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)
EUROPE	
Cyprus	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) Mission of the Good Offices of the UN Secretary-General in Cyprus UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cyprus Office of the UN Secretary-General's Special Advisor on Cyprus (OSASG)
Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia)	United Nations Special Representative in the Geneva International Discussions
Serbia – Kosovo	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)
MIDDLE EAST	
Iran	International Atomic Energy Agency The UN Secretary-General regularly reports on implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2231, which validated the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (2015)
Israel-Palestine	The UN participates in the Quartet for the Middle East along with the United States, Russia and the EU to mediate in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict Special Envoy for the Peace Process in the Middle East
Syria	UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Syria
Yemen	UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeida Agreement (UNMHA)
EU (16)	
AFRICA	
CAR	EU is a member of the International Support Group for the CAR
DRC	EU delegation in the DRC EU Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region
Libya	The EU forms part of the Quartet for the Libyan Political Agreement along with the AU, UN and Arab League
Mali	EU Special Representative for the Sahel
Mozambique	EU Special Envoy for the Peace Process in Mozambique
South Sudan	The EU forms part of the IGAD Plus mediation group

AMERICA	
Haiti	The EU forms part of the Core Group
Venezuela	The EU forms part of the International Contact Group
ASIA	
Philippines (MILF)	The EU forms part of the International Monitoring Team and has lent support to the Third Party Monitoring Team
EUROPE	
Armenia – Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)	EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia
Cyprus	High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice President of the European Commission
Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia)	EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia EU Observation Mission in Georgia (EUMM)
Moldova (Transdniestria)	EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM) The EU has an observer role in the 5+2 format of the peace process
Serbia – Kosovo	High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice President of the European Commission EU Rule-of-Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX Kosovo) EU Office in Kosovo / EU Special Representative for Kosovo
MIDDLE EAST	
Israel-Palestine	The EU participates in the Quartet for the Middle East along with the United States, Russia and the UN to mediate in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy EU Special Envoy for the Middle East
Syria	The EU and the UN co-organised the third international conference on the future of Syria and the region
AU (8)	
AFRICA	
CAR	The AU leads the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR (the AU with the support of the ECCAS, ICGLR, Angola, Gabon, the Republic of the Congo and Chad)
DRC	The AU leads the Support Group for the Facilitation of the National Dialogue in the DRC
Libya	The AU forms part of the Quartet for the Libyan Political Agreement along with the Arab League, UN and EU
Mali	AU High Representative for Mali and the Sahel The AU participates in the Mediation Team, which supports implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement in Mali
Mozambique	The AU is a guarantor of the peace agreement
South Sudan	Integrated into IGAD Plus, represented by Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Chad and Algeria
Sudan	AU High Level Implementation Panel on Sudan (AUHIP) African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID)
Sudan – South Sudan	African Union Border Programme (AUBP)
OSCE (4)	
EUROPE	
Armenia – Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)	Minsk Group Special Representative of the Rotating Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE for the Conflict Related to the Minsk Conference of the OSCE
Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia)	Special Representative of the Rotating Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE for the South Caucasus
Moldova (Transdniestria)	Special Representative of the Rotating Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE for the Transdniestrian Settlement Process OSCE Mission in Moldova
Ukraine	Special Representative of the Rotating Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group OSCE Special Observation Mission in Ukraine (SMM) OSCE Special Observation Mission at the Gukovo and Donetsk Checkpoints Coordinator of OSCE projects in Ukraine
ECOWAS (1)	
AFRICA	
Mali	ECOWAS in Mali
IGAD (3)	
AFRICA	
Somalia	IGAD delegation
South Sudan	The IGAD, which consists of Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia and Uganda, is part of "IGAD Plus" in South Sudan
Sudan – South Sudan	IGAD delegation

OIC (1)		
AFRICA		
CAR	OIC delegation in the CAR	
SADC (2)		
AFRICA		
Mozambique	The SADC is a guarantor of the peace agreement	
DRC	SADC representation in the DRC	
EAC (1)		
AFRICA		
Burundi	EAC delegation in Burundi	
CEEAC (1)		
AFRICA		
CAR	CEEAC delegation in the CAR	
OIF (1)		
AFRICA		
DRC	OIF delegation in the DRC	
OAS (1)		
AMERICA		
Haiti	The OAS forms part of the Core Group	

states' response was more limited.[11] In contrast, violence worsened in some cases, especially in conflicts in which the parties had foreign support. In its analysis of the response to the call, the United Nations found that parties in conflict cited various motivations for responding positively, including to explore or reactivate channels of dialogue (the underlying logic being that the government may be under greater pressure to respond, although governments may also be reluctant to consider such a ceasefire lest it internationalise certain conflicts); to claim moral authority and seek political relevance and legitimacy and gain attention and recognition; to reaffirm or consolidate authority and legitimacy to govern in areas where control is disputed; to prolong an advantageous situation; or, finally, to avoid military setbacks. In its mid-year conclusions, the United Nations indicated that in the absence of realistic recognition of the impacts of the pandemic, this did not seem to be a central concern in the calculations of the parties to the conflict.

Armed groups that explicitly endorsed the call included the SLM/A-AW, which declared a unilateral ceasefire in Sudan's Darfur region; the ELN, in Colombia, for a period of one month; the Communist Party of the Philippines, which unilaterally ordered a halt to the offensive activity of its armed wing (the NPA) between 26 March and 15 April; and the armed group FLEC, which announced a four-week ceasefire in the Cabinda region of Angola; among others. In Thailand, the BRN announced a cessation of offensive armed actions in

Various actors in conflict announced truces in response to the UN Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire to facilitate the humanitarian response to the pandemic, though the response was limited and fragile in its implementation

April, citing humanitarian reasons and prioritising the response to the pandemic. Though the government did not reciprocate, the announcement was followed by a substantial drop in hostilities by both parties. In Myanmar, unilateral ceasefires were declared by both the government and various armed groups in response to the appeal. In relation to Yemen, Saudi Arabia announced a truce in April that was criticised by the Houthis, who demanded that it be part of a broader agreement and presented an alternative proposal, without committing the country to a ceasefire. According to the United Nations, in most cases the parties to the conflict declared unilateral ceasefires that did not last long (between 15 and 90 days). Implementation of the ceasefires was mostly uneven and limited in time.

In July, the UN Security Council approved UNSC Resolution 2532 (2020), which backed the Secretary-General's call by issuing a demand for a general and immediate cessation of hostilities in all war situations that were part of the Security Council agenda. The resolution supported the Secretary-General's efforts and called on the parties to the conflicts to immediately participate in a humanitarian truce for at least 90 consecutive days to allow humanitarian activity. However, unlike the general appeal made by the Secretary-General, the Security Council and the text of Resolution 2532 indicated that it was not applicable to military operations against ISIS, al-Qaeda, the Al-Nusra Front and other groups classified as terrorists by

11. United Nations (Mediation Support Unit, Policy & Mediation Division), *Policy Note on the United Nations Secretary-General's Call for a Global Ceasefire: Challenges and Opportunities*, June 2020.

the Security Council. The Security Council's position contrasted with approaches being considered in various countries regarding dialogue with jihadist groups. This was the case of Mali, where in 2020 the government and other actors considered the possibility of exploring avenues of negotiation with some of these actors, which led to an agreement between Bamako and the JNIM on a prisoner exchange. Moreover, some in Somalia called for dialogue with al-Shabaab, though no contact was disclosed.

During the year, armed actors in different contexts tried to negotiate, establish or agree on ceasefires without necessarily having any relation to the Secretary-General's global appeal, though they yielded different results. In South Sudan, for example, the government and groups that had not signed the 2018 agreement committed to a ceasefire, humanitarian access and dialogue with the facilitation of the Sant'Egidio community and regional organisations, even though the truce was later broken. After three years of serious violence in Cameroon, confidence-building talks were held in an attempt to reach a ceasefire, though only a sector of the separatist movement participated and the talks stalled. In Libya, a permanent ceasefire agreement was reached in October that provided for the withdrawal of military units and armed groups within three months and the departure of foreign fighters. However, various violations of the ceasefire were reported until the end of the year. The ceasefire breaks were a constant in the CAR as well. The Taliban and the US reached an agreement that included the Taliban's commitment not to plan or carry out terrorist attacks against US interests in exchange for Washington's withdrawal from the country. In Ukraine, the parties took steps that bolstered the ceasefire and led to a significant reduction in violence. In Syria, Russia and Turkey reached a cessation of hostilities agreement in Idlib in March. The truce in this part of northwestern Syria reduced levels of violence during the first half of the year, but air strikes resumed in June and it was formally maintained amid growing violations at the end of the year.

As in previous years, another issue in the negotiations was the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of combatants. In Mozambique, the DDR process agreed in 2019 was launched in 2020 after the peace agreement signed that same year, although the objective of dismantling all the RENAMO bases was not achieved by August 2020 and the armed group's dissidents continued with their armed activity. In Cameroon, talks launched during the year after three years of serious violence between the government and part of the separatist movement not only addressed attempts at a ceasefire, but also the demilitarisation of English-speaking regions, albeit with significant difficulties. In Mali, differences were found in the implementation of

DDR and in the reform of the defence and security sector. In the CAR, limited progress was made in establishing special mixed security units, made up of soldiers and members of demobilised armed groups. In the DRC, a demobilisation agreement was reached between the government and some CODECO factions. In Colombia, many former FARC combatants were killed, which demonstrated the risks of implementing agreements in stages. The situation of the former combatants was described as particularly worrying by the Kroc Institute, which verifies compliance with the peace accords. In the Philippines, progress was made on DDR in relation to the MILF, culminating in the second stage of the demobilisation process in March (which included 30% of the members of the former guerrilla group) and the third stage began. The COVID-19 pandemic affected demilitarisation processes throughout the year, such as in Mozambique, by reducing the mobility of the technical teams responsible for implementation.

Progress was made in some negotiating processes in 2020, such as Mozambique, Sudan, Sudan-South Sudan, South Sudan, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Thailand and Papua New Guinea

As in previous years, another relevant issue on the negotiating agenda was the **status of disputed territories** and issues related to self-government. In Sudan, Darfur came to be considered a single region, as part of the peace process and agreements on administrative status. As such, the Two Areas (South Kordofan and Blue Nile) and West Kordofan will expand their autonomy. In Papua New Guinea, the foundations were laid for the negotiating process between the government and the autonomous government of Bougainville to prepare the proposal on the status of the region, which must be voted on by the Parliament of Papua New Guinea. However, the status issue remained deadlocked in the peace processes in Europe, where in some cases it was not part of the negotiating agenda (Georgia, in relation to Abkhazia and South Ossetia) and in others it remained stagnant (Moldova, in relation to Transdniestria). Regarding the dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, the outbreak of interstate war in October was followed by an agreement in November ratifying the transfer to Azerbaijan of territories adjacent to Nagorno-Karabakh. In addition, Baku's takeover of some areas of the former Soviet autonomous region was accepted by default and the status of the disputed territory was left unresolved. Turkish Cypriot and Turkish government actors called for a two-state option to be considered a solution to the dispute over the divided island of Cyprus, weakening the prospect of a bicommunal and bizonal federation on which the stalled peace process was based. Negotiations remained blocked on the recognition and definitive status of "Greater Nagaland", territories divided into different Indian states and inhabited by the Naga population. The peace process in Mindanao pivoted mainly on the institutional development of the self-government recognised for the Moro people in the 2014 peace agreement between the Philippine government

Table 1.4. **Main agreements of 2020**

Peace processes	Agreements
Afghanistan	Agreement to bring peace to Afghanistan between the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, which is not recognised by the United States as a state and is known as the Taliban, and the United States of America. Signed on 29 February 2020, it establishes the gradual military withdrawal of the United States, the Taliban's pledge that terrorist attacks against US interests will not be planned or perpetrated on Afghan soil and the beginning of an intra-Afghan negotiating process between the Taliban and the Afghan government.
Armenia - Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)	Nine-point agreement signed by the President of Azerbaijan, the Prime Minister of Armenia and the President of Russia that was mediated by Russia on 9 November and went into effect on 10 November. The points included: 1) a complete ceasefire and cessation of all hostilities; 2) the transfer of the Agdam district and the Armenian-controlled territories of the Qazakh district to Azerbaijan; 3) the deployment of Russian peacekeeping forces along the line of contact and the Lachin corridor; 4) the terms of the deployment (parallel to the withdrawal of the Armenian Armed Forces, for a renewable period of five years); 5) the establishment of a peacekeeping centre to monitor the ceasefire and implementation of the agreements; 6) the transfer to Azerbaijan of the Kalbajar and Lachin districts, with the exception of the Lachin corridor, which will guarantee the connection between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia, without affecting the city of Shusha, and a plan to build a new route along the Lachin corridor that connects Stepanakert and Armenia and will be under the protection of Russian forces, as well as security guarantees by Azerbaijan for the movement of people, vehicles and goods; 7) the return of internally displaced people and refugees to Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent areas, under the control of UNHCR; 8) the exchange of prisoners of war and other detainees, as well as the remains of deceased persons; and 9) the unblocking of all economic and transport communications in the region, Armenia's provision of a connection between Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan enclave and traffic control conducted by the Russian Federal Security Service's border control agency.
Libya	Permanent ceasefire agreement between the main parties to the conflict signed on 23 October by representatives of the Government of National Accord (GNA) and the LNA (or ALAF) forces of Khalifa Haftar in Geneva after several meetings of the 5+5 Libyan Joint Military Commission (the negotiating format adopted after the Berlin Conference on Libya in January 2020). The agreement stipulates that within a maximum period of three months, all military units and armed groups must withdraw from the battle lines to their bases and all mercenaries and foreign fighters must leave Libyan soil, airspace and waters. It also provides for the suspension of military training programmes until a new government is formed, the start of the demobilisation of armed groups and some confidence-building measures.
Mali	Agreement between the Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA) and the Platform on security arrangements to avoid confrontation between their respective local factions in Ménaka.
South Sudan	Rome Declaration on the Peace Process in South Sudan, signed on 12 January between the government of South Sudan and the SSOMA rebel alliance, in which the parties committed to a ceasefire, to guarantee humanitarian access and to maintain continuous dialogue under the auspices of the Community of Sant'Egidio and regional organisations.
Sudan	Juba Peace Agreement signed on 31 August by the Sudanese government and the rebel coalition Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) and the Sudan Liberation Movement faction led by Minni Minnawi (SLM/A-MM).
Sudan-South Sudan	Agreement in September to form a joint technical committee to resume oil production in the state of Unity and other key oil fields. In late October, the governments of both countries signed a joint military and defence cooperation agreement.
Ukraine (east)	Agreement on measures to strengthen the ceasefire, reached on 23 July by the Trilateral Contact Group (Ukraine, Russia, OSCE) with the participation of representatives of Donetsk and Luhansk. The seven points of the agreement included: 1) a ban on offensive, reconnaissance and sabotage operations and of operating any type of aerial vehicle; 2) a ban on gunfire, including by snipers; 3) a ban on the deployment of heavy weapons in or near settlements, especially in civil infrastructure, including schools, nurseries, hospitals and public places; 4) the use of disciplinary action for ceasefire violations; 5) the creation of and participation in a coordination mechanism to respond to ceasefire violations facilitated by the Joint Centre for Control and Coordination; 6) specification of the limited circumstances in which opening fire is permitted in response to an offensive operation; and 7) a ban on non-compliance under any order. The agreement went into effect on 27 July.

and the MILF, while one of the main aspects of the substantive agenda of the negotiations between the Thai government and the BRN was linked to degrees of autonomy and decentralisation in the southern provinces of the country.

Another theme recurring as the root cause of many conflicts was the distribution of political power, including aspects related to governance, the formation of national unity governments and elections. Thus, all the negotiating processes in the Americas had to do with governance, including aspects of institutional and political functioning in Haiti, with disagreements between the government and the opposition regarding the suitability of constitutional reform and the holding of new elections. In Venezuela, the election issue, along with others such as the situation of exiled and imprisoned people, was the focus of a large part of the

agenda of the meetings between the government and opposition groups. In Africa, progress was made in South Sudan in implementing the clauses of the 2018 peace agreement regarding the formation of the national unity government. In contrast to previous opposition electoral boycott strategies, part of the political opposition ran in the elections in Burundi, but the negotiations between the government and the rest of the political and military actors remained blocked. After the coup in Mali, the new transitional government included representatives of the armed movements CMA and Platform for the first time since the signing of the 2015 peace agreement.

Regarding the **evolution of the peace processes and negotiations**, it is usually possible to identify a great variety of trends: a good development of meetings leading to draft agreements; the establishment of negotiations where there had been no talks or the

reactivation of dialogue after years of standstill; intense exploratory efforts fuelling expectations; rounds of negotiation that make no progress on key points, but keep a channel of dialogue open; situations of serious impasse and an absence of contact despite the efforts of third parties to facilitate negotiations; obstacles and difficulties in implementing agreements; and contexts in which violence and ceasefire violations have a profound impact on the prospects for peace processes. Our analysis of the different cases in 2020 confirms these diverse dynamics.

On a positive note, progress was made in some negotiating processes in Africa, such as in Mozambique, with the launch of the DDR programme after the 2019 peace agreement, despite failing to achieve the objective of dismantling all the RENAMO bases; Sudan, with the signing of the historic peace agreement between the government, the SRF rebel coalition and the SLM/A-MM faction following a year of negotiations; Sudan-South Sudan, with the continuation of the approaches begun in 2019 and headway made in diplomatic relations and border delimitations; and South Sudan, where progress was made in the implementation of some clauses of the 2018 peace agreement, mainly those related to the formation of the unity government and territorial decentralisation, as well as in negotiations with groups that had not signed the agreement. Asia also witnessed notable progress, such as in Afghanistan, with the historic agreement between the Taliban and the US government and the beginning of the intra-Afghan dialogue. In the Philippines, very significant progress was made in the implementation of the peace agreement with the MILF, mainly in terms of the demobilisation of its combatants and in the institutional rollout of the new Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. After two years of impasse in Myanmar, the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong was restarted, reuniting the government with many of the insurgent groups. The government of Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Bougainville Government agreed on the foundations of the process to negotiate the political status of the region. And in Thailand, a new peace process began between the government and the armed group BRN, the most active in the southern part of the country, after the failure of the previous negotiating format between the government and a coalition of rebel groups. Some dynamics that could be described as progress in the Middle East, such as the agreement to hold presidential and parliamentary elections in Palestine in 2021 and the agreement between the Hadi government and southern secessionist groups to form a unity government in Yemen in line with the provisions of the 2019 Riyadh agreement, appeared to be on shaky ground at the end of the year. There was little

In a year marking the 20th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, women around the world continued to face obstacles to their participation in peace processes, though relative progress was made in contexts such as Mali

progress in Europe, although the agreement on fresh action to bolster the ceasefire in Ukraine stood out.

In contrast, many negotiating processes faced difficulties and some remained at an impasse. In the Americas, little positive headway was made and all the peace processes were very fragile as a result of the serious ongoing political and social crises. There were significant obstacles and permanent deadlock between the Colombian government and the ELN, for example, as the ELN's temporary ceasefire in response to the UN Secretary-General's call did not reactivate the peace talks because Bogotá remained firm in its demand for preconditions. Likewise, the general scene in the Middle East in 2020 followed in line with previous periods, with dynamics of chronic deadlock (as in Israel-Palestine), the widening of gulfs between the parties with respect to previous commitments (the Iranian nuclear programme) and rounds of meetings with no or limited results (intra-Syrian talks). Impasse and even regression prevailed in several negotiating processes in Asia, such as the deadlock in the peace process in Nagaland, the deterioration of the dialogue between North and South Korea and between the US and North Korea, and the disruption of negotiations between the Philippines and the NDF. The peace processes in Burundi, Cameroon, Libya, the CAR, the DRC and Somalia in Africa also faced obstacles and difficulties. In Burundi, regional initiatives to promote inclusive political dialogue failed. Although some divisions in the opposition led to contact between the government and some opposition sectors and the return of some of their representatives to the country, in practice the atmosphere of violence, insecurity and repression prevailed. In Africa, the peace process between Eritrea and Ethiopia remained frozen, despite the signing of a historic peace agreement two years before, as did the process between Morocco and Western Sahara, where tensions escalated at the end of the year. In Sudan, South Sudan and Mozambique, the major peace agreements reached in recent years faced the challenge of incorporating the different armed groups that had not signed them and maintained hostilities. The negotiations in Europe for the most part faced significant obstacles and dynamics of deadlock, such as in Cyprus, where it was not possible to restart the talks and positions on the status of the island continued to diverge, in Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia) and in Moldova (Transdniestria). The outbreak of the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh revealed the fundamental difficulties of the process thus far and although an agreement put an end to hostilities, it was surrounded by uncertainty in many respects, such as the future negotiating format and the political status of the region.

Finally, regarding the **gender, peace and security agenda**, the analysis of the different peace processes in

2020 confirms, like in previous years, the obstacles that women face in participating in formal processes and the difficulties in incorporating a gender perspective in negotiations. In a year that marked the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, which recognises the specific impacts of war on women and their role in peacebuilding and demands commitments in this area from states and other actors, the warring governmental and opposition parties' lack of political desire to integrate a gender perspective and to implement mechanisms and guarantees for effective female participation became apparent once again, with regard to both negotiating parties involved in conflict and female civil society activists.

Despite the limitations, there were cases in which some progress was made at formal levels. In Mali, the participation of nine women (three for each signatory party) in the sessions of the Follow-up Committee on the Implementation of the Peace Agreement represented real progress compared to the body's previous composition, even though women had yet to be included in the four subcommittees and other executive bodies. In Libya, the political dialogue (known as the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum, or LPDF) included 16 women out of 75 total participants. The female participants issued a joint statement on the importance of Libyan women's involvement in the peace process, political talks, reconstruction and reconciliation in the country. At the end of the year, however, UN Women warned of threats to the safety of female delegates in the LPDF. In the Philippines, a woman became the head of the NDF's negotiating panel. In the intra-Afghan negotiations, the government's negotiating panel included four women. In Somalia, the agreement on the election model guaranteed 30% female representation in Parliament. Colombian women's organisations remained active in the process to implement the Colombian peace agreement and continued to exercise leadership so that the rights of women and the LGTBI population were not excluded from that implementation. In 2020, they participated in the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition. Even so, there was still a noticeable gap between the degree of implementation of the agreement as a whole and the lesser implementation of specific gender provisions

Women's organisations continued to call for ceasefires and supported the UN Secretary-General's call, such as women from Yemen and Syria

in Colombia. In contrast, in Syria while in 2019 the establishment of a constitutional committee that included 28% women was considered a positive step, in 2020 it was verified as having a limited capacity for action amidst the impasse in the negotiations aggravated by the pandemic. At the same time, in Syria, meetings continued between the UN special envoy and the Syrian Women's Advisory Council.

Women active in civil society continued to demonstrate around the world, demanding greater participation in formal processes, denouncing violence and putting forward proposals in multiple areas related to conflicts and their impact. For example, the Afghan Women Leaders Peace Summit was held in Afghanistan, in which women's organisations demanded 30% participation in intra-Afghan peace negotiations and the formation of a technical gender committee. In alliance with international actors, female civil society activists in Kosovo demanded effective female participation in Kosovo's delegation in the talks with Serbia. Though excluded from the negotiating processes in Somalia, Burundi and the CAR, women demanded to participate in the elections under way. In Myanmar, the Alliance for Gender Inclusion met with the armed groups that had signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement to discuss female involvement in the peace process and political talks, as well as gender equality. Yemeni women's groups hailed the formation of a unity government on the anti-Houthist side, but criticised the exclusion of women and the breach of previous commitments regarding a minimum of 30% female participation in decision-making spheres.

Likewise, women's organisations in multiple conflict areas expressed their support for the UN Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire, in line with many women's efforts to broker a ceasefire there. In the context of the pandemic, their calls for ceasefires increased. This was the case of women from Syria and Yemen who mobilised around demands for an urgent ceasefire, linking their demand to the need to prioritise a humanitarian response and face the impact of the pandemic amidst the serious deterioration of health infrastructure and the accumulated effects of years of violence on human security in both countries.