

Peace Talks in Focus 2025. Report on Trends and Scenarios



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Executive summary

Peace Talks in Focus 2025. Report on Trends and Scenarios is a yearbook that analyses the peace processes and negotiations that took place in the world during 2025. The examination of the development and dynamics of negotiations worldwide allows to provide a comprehensive overview of peace processes, identify trends and comparatively analyse the various scenarios. One of the main objectives of this report is to provide information and analysis to those who participate in peaceful conflict resolution at different levels, including parties to disputes, mediators, civil society activists and others. The yearbook also aims to grant visibility to different formulas of dialogue and negotiation aimed at reversing dynamics of violence and channelling conflicts through political means in many contexts. Thus, it seeks to highlight, enhance and promote political, diplomatic and social efforts aimed at transforming conflicts and their root causes through peaceful methods.

Methodologically, the report draws mainly on the qualitative analysis of studies and information from many sources (the United Nations, international organisations, research centres, media outlets, NGOs and others), as well as on experience gained during field research. The report also cross-cuttingly incorporates a gender perspective in the study and analysis of peace processes.

The report is divided into six chapters. The first presents a summary and map of the 53 peace processes and negotiations that took place in 2025 and provides an overview of the main global trends. The next five chapters delve into the peace processes and negotiations from a geographic perspective. Each of them addresses the main trends of peace negotiations in Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and the Middle East, respectively, and describes the development and dynamics of each case in those regions. At the beginning of each of these five chapters, a map is included indicating the countries where peace processes and negotiations have occurred in 2025.

Peace processes and negotiations in 2025

AFRICA (19)	ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (12)	EUROPE (7)
CAR	Afghanistan – Pakistan	Armenia – Azerbaijan ³
Chad ¹	India (Nagaland)	Cyprus
DRC	India – China	Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia)
Eritrea – Ethiopia	Myanmar	Moldova (Transdnistria)
Ethiopia	North Korea – South Korea	Russia – Ukraine
Ethiopia (Amhara)	North Korea – USA	Serbia – Kosovo
Ethiopia (Tigray)	Papua New Guinea (Bougainville)	Türkiye (PKK)
Ethiopia – Egypt – Sudan	Philippines (MILF)	
Ethiopia – Somalia (Somaliland)	Philippines (MNLF)	MIDDLE EAST (8)
Libya	Philippines (NDF)	Iran (nuclear programme)
Morocco – Western Sahara	Thailand (south)	Israel – Lebanon (Hezbollah)
Mozambique	Thailand - Cambodia	Israel – Palestine
Senegal (Casamance)		Israel – Syria
Somalia	AMERICA (7)	Palestine
Somalia – Somaliland	Colombia (Comuneros del Sur)	Syria
South Africa	Colombia (ELN)	Yemen
South Sudan ²	Colombia (EMBF) ⁴	Yemen (Houthis) – USA
Sudan	Colombia (FARC)	
Sudan – South Sudan	Colombia (CENB) ⁵	
	Haiti	
	Venezuela – Guyana	

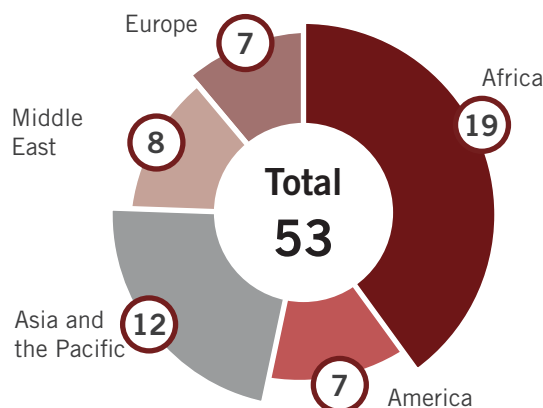
1. In the case of Chad, there are two processes: firstly, a consultation process involving the faction of the insurgency that did not sign the 2022 Doha Agreement, facilitated by the Community of Sant'Egidio; and secondly, the negotiations and peace agreement in Miski (Tibesti region) between the Government and the Miski Self-Defence Committee.
2. This peace negotiation process includes two distinct spaces: 1) Negotiations on the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) (2018); and 2) Peace negotiations between the Government and armed groups not signatory to the R-ARCSS in Rome and Nairobi. The actors involved in each of these are specified in the "actors" column.
3. Starting with the 2024 edition, this yearbook stopped using the designation "Armenia – Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)" to refer to the negotiating process between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan's military offensive in 2023 resulted in the military takeover of Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijan gained full control over the region and the self-proclaimed administration of Nagorno-Karabakh ceased to exist in January 2024. In 2023, Armenia agreed to recognise the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. All this led to the final exclusion of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue from the negotiations between both countries.
4. The negotiations between the Colombian government and the armed group Estado Mayor Central (EMC) shifted to involve the Government and the Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frente (EMBF, which arose from EMC).
5. The negotiations between the Colombian government and the Segunda Marquetalia insurgency evolved in 2025 into negotiations between the government and the Coordinadora Nacional Ejército Bolivariano (CNEB, a group that originated from Segunda Marquetalia).

Negotiations in 2025: global overview and main trends

An increase was identified in the number of peace processes and negotiations analysed worldwide in 2025. The year saw the highest number of peace processes and negotiations since 2017, when Escola de Cultura de Pau (ECP) began using its current classification of peace processes and negotiations. Following the drop in the number of processes in 2020 and 2021, the years of the COVID-19 pandemic, with 40 and 37 processes respectively, an upward trend ensued, reaching 53 in 2025. In 55% of the armed conflicts active in 2025 there were dialogue and negotiation processes (22 out of 40 conflicts, see table “Armed conflicts and peace processes in 2025”).

This rising trend in peace processes since the pandemic years has not been accompanied by lower levels of violence and global armed conflict and, on the contrary, it has come amid an increase in armed conflicts and sociopolitical crises worldwide. In fact, 40 armed conflicts were recorded in 2025, three more than in

Regional distribution of peace negotiations



2024 and the most since 2011. And, in parallel, in recent years there has been an upward trend in the number of socio-political crises. The increase in the number of processes analysed takes place in a changing context in the field of ‘peacemaking’, characterized by

Armed conflicts and peace processes in 2025

Armed conflicts with peace negotiation (22)	Armed conflicts without peace negotiation (18)
AFRICA (7)	AFRICA (10)
CAR -2006-	Burundi -2015-
DRC (east) -1998-	Cameroon (Ambazonia/ North West and South West) -2018-
Ethiopia (Amhara) -2023-	DRC (east – ADF) -2014-
Libya -2011-	DRC (west) -2023-
Somalia -1988-	Ethiopia (Oromia) -2022
South Sudan -2009-	Lake Chad Region (Boko Haram) -2011-
Sudan -2023-	Mali -2012-
AMERICA (2)	Mozambique (North) -2017-
Colombia -1964-	Somalia (Somaliland-SSC Khatumo) -2023-
Haiti -2024-	Western Sahel Region -2018-
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (5)	ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (7)
Myanmar -1948-	Afghanistan -2001-
Philippines (Mindanao) -1991-	India (CPI-M) -1967-
Philippines (NPA) -1969-	India (Jammu and Kashmir) -1989-
Thailand (south) -2004-	India – Pakistan -2025-
Thailand – Cambodia -2025-	Indonesia (West Papua) -2024-
EUROPE (2)	Pakistan -2001-
Russia – Ukraine -2022-	Pakistan (Balochistan) -2005-
Türkiye (PKK) -1984-	MIDDLE EAST (1)
MIDDLE EAST (6)	Iraq -2003-
Israel, EUA – Iran ⁶	
Israel – Hezbollah -2023-	
Israel – Palestine -2000-	
Syria -2011-	
Yemen -2004-	
Yemen (Houthis) – Israel, USA, United Kingdom	

6. In this report, the negotiations relating to this case are analysed under the heading ‘Iran (nuclear programme)’.

more fragmented and non-linear processes, a growing number of ad hoc initiatives rather than formal and structured processes, and a decline in the number of peace agreements formally signed each year. Furthermore, most peace processes faced deadlocks, obstacles, and difficulties.

The total number of peace processes and negotiations in 2025 (53) represented an increase of only one case compared to 2024 (52), but there were changes in the negotiating processes that make up this figure. Among the new cases or those derived from previous processes are the case of Mozambique, where a national dialogue was initiated, and Colombia, where the fragmentation and division of armed groups led to transformations in various processes. Additionally, negotiations started in 2025 between the Colombian government and Comuneros del Sur, a group that emerged from the ELN. Thailand and Cambodia conducted negotiations over the armed conflict that erupted in 2025 over their longstanding border dispute. Furthermore, Israel and Syria initiated contacts in 2025 to address the crisis between them in relation to Israel's attacks on and occupation of territory in southern Syria. The US and the Yemeni armed group al-Houthi also established contacts in 2025 through Oman, which led to a ceasefire. In contrast to these new processes, or those resulting from previous ones, other peace negotiations ceased to be analysed as such in 2025: Mali, Cameroon, the Ethiopian region of Oromia, Mozambique (Renamo), Venezuela, China (Tibet) and India (Assam).

As regards the **geographical distribution** of processes and negotiations in 2025, the majority of the cases analysed were concentrated in Africa, which hosted 19 negotiation processes, accounting for 36% of the total (20 processes and 39% of the total in 2024). Asia and the Pacific was the region with the second-highest number of cases, with a total of 12, representing 23% of the negotiations in 2025 (the same figure and percentage as in 2024). The rest of the negotiations were distributed across the Middle East (eight processes and 15% of the total, compared to six cases and 12% in 2024), and the Americas and Europe, with seven cases each, equivalent to 13%, the same as the previous year. (See table "Peace processes and negotiations in 2025" and graph "Regional distribution of peace negotiations").

In all cases, one of the **actors involved in the peace processes and negotiations** was a state government. The state governments involved in dialogue negotiated or maintained contacts directly or indirectly with various kinds of actors, depending on the characteristics of the context, but which generally included armed groups (directly or through political representatives, and in some cases through coalitions of armed groups); a combination of armed groups and political and social actors; representatives of political and military

organisations with territorial control; other state and sub-state governments; and political and social opposition groups. To a lesser extent, attempts at dialogue and rapprochement with criminal armed groups were also identified. Overall, the upward trend in the diversity of actors involved in negotiations was maintained.

In 2025, the number of international peace processes rose slightly, involving two or more governments from different countries or governments and actors from different countries. In total, 22 dialogue and peace negotiating processes involved actors from different countries as the main negotiating parties, equivalent to 41.5% (compared to 20 cases in 2024, or 38%). Parallel or complementary negotiating tracks were pursued in some contexts, linked to a global scenario of armed conflicts and sociopolitical crises with highly complex configurations of actors and disputes. Furthermore, many peace processes encompassed only some of the actors involved in the armed conflicts or sociopolitical crises, but not all. For example, the negotiations over the armed conflict that began in 2025 and pitted the Houthis against the US, Israel and the United Kingdom only involved the Yemeni armed group and the US.

A total of 53 peace processes were recorded in 2025, in a scenario also characterised by an increase in armed violence around the world

Whilst it is often possible to clearly identify the **third-parties involved in mediation, facilitation and dialogue support** activities, on other occasions these tasks are carried out in a discreet or non-public manner. In 2025 in 48 of the 53 peace processes (90.5%), at least one third party was involved. This was a higher percentage than in the last two years (86% in 2024 and 89% in 2023) and was the same as in 2022. All new peace processes that were begun or transformed in 2025 included third parties. Once again, third-party support was observed in processes with different formats, both as part of internal negotiations and in international negotiations (see Table "Internal and international peace processes and negotiations with and without third parties in 2025"). Only five of the 53 peace processes had no third parties, four of them in Asia and the Pacific and one in Africa.

In the vast majority of cases involving a third party, more than one actor performed mediation or facilitation tasks (40 of the 48 cases with third parties, equivalent to 83.3%). An immense majority of the cases had a set of actors with mediation, facilitation and dialogue support functions, occasionally with collegiate, complementary and coordinated formulas, and at other times, and increasingly, with fragmentation, coordination difficulties or competition. In the other eight of the 48 cases, only one third party was observed or information emerged about it.

In an international context characterised by a multitude of mediating actors, these took various forms, notably **intergovernmental organisations** –such as the UN, the EU, the AU and IGAD, in particular– and states, as

Internal and international peace processes and negotiations with and without third parties in 2025

Peace processes	INTERNAL					INTERNATIONAL	
	Direct negotiations without third parties (2)	Negotiations with third parties (28)	National dialogues without third parties (1)	National dialogues with third parties (2)	Other formats (0)	Direct negotiations without third parties (3)	Negotiations with third parties (19)
AFRICA							
CAR		x					
Chad ⁱ	x	x					
DRC							x
Ethiopia				x			
Ethiopia (Amhara)		x					
Ethiopia (Tigray)		x					
Eritrea – Ethiopia							x
Ethiopia – Egypt – Sudan							x
Ethiopia – Somalia (Somaliland)							x
Libya		x					
Morocco – Western Sahara							x
Mozambique				x			
Senegal (Casamance)		x					
Somalia		x					
Somalia – Somaliland ⁱⁱ							x
South Africa			x				
South Sudan		x					
Sudan ⁱⁱⁱ		x					
Sudan – South Sudan		x ^{iv}					x
AMERICA							
Colombia (Comuneros del Sur)		x					
Colombia (ELN)		x					
Colombia (EMBF)		x					
Colombia (FARC)		x					
Colombia (CNEB)		x					
Haiti		x					
Venezuela – Guyana							x
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC							
Afghanistan – Pakistan							x
India (Nagaland)	x						
India – China						x	
North Korea – South Korea						x	
North Korea – USA						x	
Myanmar		x					
Papua New Guinea (Bougainville)		x					
Philippines (MILF)		x					
Philippines (MNLF)		x					

i. Two previous initiatives are being implemented in Chad: the Doha peace agreement between part of the Chadian insurgency and the government and the commitments made in the National, Inclusive and Sovereign Dialogue (DNIS). There is also a consultation process for the part of the insurgency that did not sign the Doha agreement facilitated by the Community of Sant'Egidio.

ii. Although the Republic of Somaliland is not officially recognised as an independent state, this peace process is considered international because the region enjoys de facto recognition as an autonomous administration independent of Somalia.

iii. The three peace processes and negotiations that were underway in Sudan in 2018 were consolidated into just one in 2019 due to the end of the national dialogue forum between the government and the opposition following the formation of a transitional government, as well as the merging of the negotiations over Darfur and the “Two Areas” (South Kordofan and Blue Nile) into a single peace process. Since 2023, the negotiations have focused on resolving the national armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces.

iv. This dialogue track refers to negotiations to resolve inter-community disputes in the Abyei region and border areas.

Peace processes	INTERNAL					INTERNATIONAL	
	Direct negotiations without third parties (2)	Negotiations with third parties (28)	National dialogues without third parties (1)	National dialogues with third parties (2)	Other formats (0)	Direct negotiations without third parties (3)	Negotiations with third parties (19)
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC							
Philippines (NDF)		x					
Thailand (south)		x					
Thailand – Cambodia							x
EUROPE							
Armenia – Azerbaijan ^v							x
Cyprus		x					
Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia) ^{vi}							x
Moldova (Transnistria)		x					
Russia – Ukraine							x
Serbia – Kosovo							x
Türkiye (PKK) ^{viii}		x					
MIDDLE EAST							
Iran (nuclear programme)							x
Israel – Lebanon (Hezbollah)							x
Israel – Palestine							x
Israel – Syria							x
Palestina		x					
Syria		x					
Yemen		x					
Yemen (houtis) – USA							x

v. International negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the normalisation of relations, territorial integrity, border demarcation and transport routes, amongst other issues, took place in 2025 without external mediation in some areas, such as border demarcation, and with external mediation in others.

vi. The nature of the peace processes of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, as well as Russia's role in those conflicts, is subject to interpretation. Georgia considers Russia an actor in the conflict and a negotiating party, while Russia considers itself a third party.

vii. The peace process between Serbia and Kosovo is considered international. Although Kosovo's legal status is still controversial, it has been recognised as a state by over 100 countries. In 2010, the International Court of Justice handed down a non-binding ruling stating that Kosovo's independence did not violate international law or UN Security Council Resolution 1244.

viii. The dialogue process in Türkiye officially has no third parties, but political representatives from the Iraqi Kurdistan Region have played supporting roles in the process.

well as religious organisations and civil society actors, including specialised centres. Intergovernmental organisations played a predominant role, except in Asia and the Pacific, where their role was smaller. In line with the trend consolidated in recent years, the UN was the main intergovernmental organisation involved in supporting peace processes. In 25 of the 53 processes identified during the year and in 25 of the 48 cases that had at least one third party (47% and 52%), the UN was present in different formats (primarily special envoys and representatives and missions) and support functions (mediation, co-mediation, verification, ceasefire monitoring, assistance, support or good offices and others). Despite continuing to be the main intergovernmental organisation involved in mediation and facilitation in peace processes, its role as a third party was reduced compared to the previous two years. In 2024 and 2023, the UN participated as a third party in 58% and 60% of peace processes that involved third parties, respectively; and in 50% and 53% of the total peace processes in those two years, respectively. Once again, the UN's role in peace processes in Africa stood out, but its participation fell from 11 peace processes there in

2024 to eight in 2025: Libya, Morocco–Western Sahara, the CAR, the DRC, Somalia, Sudan, Sudan–South Sudan and South Sudan. In regions such as the Middle East, the UN's role changed or was diminished by the development of events and decisions that affected its initiatives or the mandate of its missions, among other factors.

Other international and regional organisations also played a prominent role, especially regional organisations in their geographical areas of operation. The EU was the only regional organisation that carried out mediation and dialogue support tasks outside its regional area of operation. The role of the OAS stood out in 2025, as it was involved in four peace processes in 2025: Colombia (Comuneros del Sur), Colombia (EMBF), Colombia (FARC) and Haiti. Furthermore, alongside intergovernmental organisations, a significant number of **states** became involved as third parties in negotiating processes, often amid the projection of national interests. The growing role of states as third parties was observed in all regions. In Africa, states led or supported dialogue initiatives in most peace processes in 2025, with a particularly active role played by Türkiye, Qatar,

the UAE and Saudi Arabia in different negotiations involving Eritrea, Ethiopia, the DRC, Somalia and Sudan. The role of the US revealed contradictions and tensions in 2025. In the Middle East, it presented itself as a mediating actor whilst providing decisive political and military support to one of the parties involved in most of these conflicts at the same time: Israel.

Each of the **negotiating agendas** exhibited unique aspects and the details of the issues under discussion did not always become public knowledge. As in previous years, the pursuit or implementation of **truces, ceasefires and cessations of hostilities** was one of the central issues of discussion in several peace processes. This issue was present in peace processes in Africa, such as in the Ethiopian regions of Amhara and Tigray, in Senegal (Casamance), in Sudan and in the DRC, in relation to the armed groups in the east of the country and especially the M23. In Asia and the Pacific, practically all interstate negotiations during the year pivoted mainly on this issue, as the cases of Thailand-Cambodia and Afghanistan-Pakistan illustrate.

In Europe, the US, Russia and Ukraine announced ceasefire agreements on energy infrastructure and safe navigation in the Black Sea in March, but they were unsuccessful. Throughout 2025, various ceasefires were announced in the cases analysed in the Middle East, although the vast majority were characterised by their fragility, recurrent violations or partial scope. Thus, for example, the ceasefire between the US and the Houthis involved only those two parties and not Israel, so hostilities between Netanyahu's government and the Yemeni group continued throughout the year. The ceasefires announced for the Israel-Palestine and Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah) conflicts were continuously violated by Israeli forces. The widespread appearance of negotiations linked to ceasefires is consistent with analyses highlighting that in the last 15 years, particularly in the MENA region, ceasefire agreements have become more important as a mechanism for addressing armed conflicts alongside a decline in broader and more comprehensive peace processes that address the root causes of conflicts.

Other military-security issues also featured prominently on the agendas, such as the **disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants (DDR)** and security sector reform (SSR). The issues of DDR and SSR were present in most cases analysed in Africa. In Europe, the PKK initiated a symbolic disarmament. In the Middle East, the disarmament of armed actors was the subject of negotiations affecting Israel-Palestine, Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah) and Syria.

The UN remained the main intergovernmental organisation involved in mediation and facilitation work in peace processes, but its role as a third party decreased compared to previous years

Many states became involved as third parties in negotiations, often amid the projection of national interests

Issues related to **autonomy, self-determination, independence, territorial integration and the recognition of the identity** of different minorities were also prominent. This was true in the peace processes of Ethiopia, Ethiopia (Tigray), Senegal (Casamance), South Sudan, Morocco-Western Sahara, India (Nagaland), the Philippines (MILF, MNLF), Myanmar, Papua New Guinea (Bougainville) and Thailand (South).

Meanwhile, some negotiations addressed issues related to **border demarcation, state sovereignty and mutual recognition**. These issues were important in peace processes between Eritrea and Ethiopia, between Sudan and South Sudan, between Ethiopia and Somalia and between Somalia and Somaliland; between Venezuela and Guyana; between Thailand and Cambodia; between Armenia and Azerbaijan, whilst the Serbia-Kosovo case also involved the normalisation of relations. Furthermore, specifically in the Middle East, another issue was **territorial withdrawal**, found on the agendas of Israel-Palestine, Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah) and Israel-Syria, given Israel's expansion of territorial occupation. Issues relating to countries' **governance** and political transitions, power-sharing and electoral processes were also addressed. Other items on negotiating agendas included **prisoner exchanges**, such as in Russia-Ukraine, Israel-Palestine and Yemen, as well as other humanitarian challenges, including access to aid, and procedural issues, especially in Asian peace processes.

With regards to the **evolution of negotiations and peace processes**, in 2025, most dialogue processes followed a trend of encountering difficulties, stagnation and even setbacks. In Africa, the cases of Eritrea-Ethiopia, Ethiopia (Tigray), Ethiopia-Egypt-Sudan, Ethiopia-Somalia, Libya, Morocco-Western Sahara, CAR, Somalia, Somalia-Somaliland, Sudan, South Sudan and Sudan-South Sudan worsened due to impasse, deadlock and in some cases a situation on the brink of collapse. In Asia, various dialogue processes also suffered deadlock and even setbacks, among them the cases of Thailand (south), India (Nagaland), the Philippines (NDF), Papua New Guinea and the Korean peninsula. The negotiations between the Philippines and the MILF regarding the implementation of the 2014 peace agreement entered a situation considered dangerous in 2025, with trust between the parties at its lowest levels since 2014 and the MILF ordering the suspension of the demobilisation of 14,000 combatants until the government complied with several provisions of the peace agreement. In the Americas, there was a clear setback in the Colombian peace process involving the ELN, as the negotiations were officially suspended in early 2025 and did not resume for the rest of the year. The rest of the peace

processes faced stagnation or significant difficulties, such as the divisions of Colombian armed groups, which led to transformations in several processes. In the Middle East, some peace processes remained deadlocked, such as Yemen, affected by the dynamics of regional upheaval and the interrelationship of conflicts. In Europe, the negotiating processes between Serbia–Kosovo, Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Russia) and Moldova (Transdniestria) remained largely at an impasse, bogged down by internal difficulties and geopolitical divisions.

Many other peace processes trended both ways across all regions, with a combination of difficulties and obstacles and some often limited and fragile progress, as well as the achievement of various agreements (see table “Main agreements in 2025”). This ambivalent evolution occurred in Africa in cases such as Ethiopia (Amhara), in the national dialogue processes in Ethiopia, South Africa and Mozambique and in the DRC, where some diplomatic progress was made when peace agreements were signed between the DRC and Rwanda. However, these agreements did not reduce violence in one of the most critical years in the DRC in the last decade. In various scenarios in Asia and the Pacific, some progress was also made, but it was also relative. In several

cases (Afghanistan–Pakistan, Thailand–Cambodia and Myanmar), violence reduction agreements were signed; in some instances these included ceasefires, demilitarisation measures and confidence-building initiatives. Although such agreements led to a reduction in tension, in all three cases high levels of violence were reported in 2025 and the security situation remained volatile and uncertain at the end of the year.

In the Americas, several partial agreements stood out, reached during the year between the Colombian government and the armed group Comuneros del Sur. In Europe, a large part of the peace processes trended both ways. The agreement reached between Armenia and Azerbaijan, pending signature, was a historic step towards the normalisation of relations after decades of conflict. Nevertheless, the agreement included problematic aspects from a human rights and transitional justice perspective. The resumption of political-military negotiations in various formats in the peace process in Russia–Ukraine represented a significant new development compared to previous years, but it advanced with great difficulties, shaped by the antagonistic positions of the warring parties. In the Middle East, the ceasefires reached, notably in

Main agreements of 2025

Peace processes Agreements

Armenia – Azerbaijan	In March 2025 the two governments separately announced the completion of the final text of an agreement, formally known as the Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and Interstate Relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan. At the end of the year, it was still pending signature and subject to conditions demanded by Azerbaijan. The agreement, comprising 17 points, designates the borders between the former USSR republics as the international borders of the independent states recognised by the international community and enshrines recognition of and respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of international borders and the political independence of both countries (Article 1 of the agreement). The text also commits the parties not to make territorial claims against the other party; to refrain from the use or threats of the use of force against each other's territorial integrity or political independence; and not to interfere in the internal affairs of the other party (Articles 2, 3 and 4). The agreement also includes a commitment not to deploy third-party forces on their shared border (Article 7) and to withdraw and dismiss or resolve disputes and proceedings brought before the courts (Article 15). Besides, at a trilateral meeting in Washington on 8 August between Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and US President Donald Trump, the Azerbaijani and Armenian leaders signed a seven-point joint declaration. The first point endorses and ‘initiates’ the text of the March agreement and notes mutual recognition of the need for further steps towards its final signing and ratification. As part of these trilateral arrangements, the parties agreed to resolve the issue of the connection between Azerbaijan and its Nakhchivan enclave through a project called the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP), to be operated and exploited by a US-Armenian consortium.
Chad	In April 2025, the government of Chad and the armed group known as the Miski Self-Defence Committee reached a peace agreement involving local figures such as former minister Adoum Younousmi and the government's official mediator and former opposition figure, Saleh Kebzabo. The agreement included an amnesty for combatants and security forces, the temporary suspension of mining activities and a commitment to review the distribution of gold revenues.
Colombia (Comuneros del Sur)	The government of Colombia and the armed group Comuneros del Sur reached several partial agreements during the year, including Agreement No. 6 on memory, truth and the dignity of victims (for the application of the Non-Judicial Mechanism for Contribution to Truth); Agreement No. 7 on the substitution of illegal crops (the transformation of illegal economies in the department of Nariño); Agreement No. 8 on the creation of a Temporary Zone for the Co-Construction of Territorial Peace in the municipality of Mallama; Agreement No. 9 on the comprehensive reintegration of Comuneros del Sur of Nariño for peace and territorial transformation (for the transition to civilian life of members of the armed group); Agreement No. 10 on the strengthening of democracy in the territory; and Agreement No. 11 on the protection of the rights of children and adolescents as part of the table for the shared construction of territorial peace in Nariño.

DRC	On 27 June, the foreign ministers of Rwanda and the DRC signed a US-facilitated agreement in Washington in the presence of US President Donald Trump. Known as the Washington Agreement, it rested on three main pillars: 1) the gradual withdrawal of Rwandan troops from Congolese soil; 2) a security operation conducted through the creation of a joint security coordination mechanism within 30 days; and 3) the establishment of regional economic integration mechanisms within 90 days, closely linked to the exploitation and marketing of strategic minerals, with the direct involvement of US companies. As part of the agreement, the DRC was supposed to facilitate the dismantlement of the FDLR, whilst Rwanda pledged to withdraw its troops and end its support for the M23. However, the agreement did not directly include the M23 or the FDLR. On 4 December, President Tshisekedi and President Kagame met in Washington with US President Donald Trump to ratify the Washington Agreement.
Ethiopia (Amhara)	On 4 December, the Amhara regional government and a Fano militia faction called the Amhara Fano Popular Organisation (AFPO) reached a peace agreement mediated by the AU and the IGAD. The agreement includes formal commitments to a cessation of hostilities, the reintegration of combatants into official security structures under certain conditions and the opening of channels for political dialogue. However, the agreement did not constitute a definitive solution for all actors or for all Fano militia factions because the latter lack a unified chain of command.
Israel – Palestine	Following mediation by Qatar, Egypt and the US, a ceasefire agreement for Gaza was announced on 15 January. The agreement was structured in three phases. The first phase, lasting 42 days, provided for the release of a first group of Israelis held by Hamas in exchange for the release of Palestinians detained by Israel, an increase in humanitarian aid access to the Gaza Strip and an Israeli withdrawal from the most populated areas of Gaza. The second phase, whose duration was not determined, was to involve the exchange of the remaining prisoners held by Hamas for Palestinians detained by Israel and the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza. However, this second phase was not implemented, nor was the third, and Israel broke the ceasefire on 18 March, intensifying its military campaign. It was not until October that the US and Israel jointly announced a 20-point plan for Gaza, presented as an ultimatum to Hamas. Trump's proposal included a ceasefire, new prisoner exchanges, the reactivation of humanitarian aid to Gaza, a phased Israeli withdrawal, the deployment of an international 'stabilisation' force and the establishment of a technocratic government with Palestinian and international figures supervised by a Board of Peace, which would also oversee the reconstruction of Gaza. Despite ambiguities and abundant criticism, Trump's plan for Gaza was endorsed by the UN Security Council through Resolution 2803, adopted in November.
Senegal (Casamance)	In February 2025, the government of Senegal and the faction of the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) led by César Atoute Badiate, the Provisional Committee of the Unified Political and Combat Wings of the MFDC, reaffirmed their commitment to peace during a meeting held in Bissau, under the mediation of Guinea-Bissau and with the support of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue. The negotiations focused on security, justice and political demands, providing continuity to the disarmament agreement signed in 2022. Though the practical aspects of disarmament remain to be defined, both parties ratified their willingness to move the process forward. The agreement provides for amnesties, pardons and reintegration programmes, making it an important step towards resolving the Casamance conflict for good.
Yemen (Houthis) – USA	On 6 May, US President Donald Trump announced the suspension of the intense aerial offensive that the US had conducted against the Yemeni group in the preceding months. Oman then reported that it had mediated a ceasefire between the parties that committed them not to attack each other. According to reports, the agreement stipulates that Washington halts its military operation and the Houthis cease their attacks on military vessels and vessels linked to US maritime commerce and allow freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. Both parties presented the agreement as a victory. The agreement did not include Israel, so hostilities between the Houthis and the Israeli government continued in the following months until the US announced a 'ceasefire' in Gaza in October.

the cases of Israel–Palestine and Yemen (Houthis)–US, Syria, or implemented, such as in Israel–Lebanon (Hezbollah), were fragile, partial or subject to continuous violations. These agreements resulted in a partial and relative reduction of violence for civilian populations subjected to extremely severe impacts and, in some cases, limited and insufficient access to humanitarian aid to try to alleviate vast needs.

Finally, with regard to the **gender, peace and security agenda**, as in previous years, the analysis of the different processes in 2025 confirms the obstacles that women face in participating in formal processes and the difficulties in incorporating a gender perspective

into negotiations. Peace processes continued to be characterised mostly by the limited participation of women in negotiating and mediation teams. For the most part, **no specific participation mechanisms were designed for women in most negotiations, and a gender approach and the recognition of the rights of women and the LGBTIQ+ population were left out of much of the negotiating agendas.**

The Americas was the only region in which women's participation and leadership was observed in many of the active peace negotiations, but without this implying that gender agendas were in any way pre-eminent. In Colombia, two government negotiating delegations were

headed by women: the delegation participating in the negotiations with the ELN, led by Vera Grabe, and the negotiation with the EMBF, headed by Gloria Quiceno appointed in 2023 and 2025, respectively. Despite the limitations and obstacles encountered in other regions, some initiatives stood out in Libya, Mozambique, Somalia and South Africa regarding the participation of women in negotiating teams and consultation and support spaces for negotiating processes. In Libya, women achieved 35% representation in the initiatives promoted during the year by the UN: the Advisory Committee and the Structured Dialogue, conceived as advisory and consultation forums to help to unblock the country's peace negotiations. In Asia and the Pacific, one of the few exceptions to the practically non-existent participation of women in formal negotiations was the case of the Philippines, where some women held key positions in the negotiating process between the government and the NDF. In Europe and the Middle East, the country delegations continued to have predominantly male leadership.

In 2025, 38 of the 53 peace negotiations involved at least one negotiating country that had a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, which should promote the participation of women in these processes. Of these 38 processes, 36.8% (14 cases) took in Africa, 18.4% in Asia and the Pacific (seven cases), 15.8% in Europe and the Middle East (six cases each) and 13.2% in the Americas (five cases). Twenty-nine countries that were negotiating parties in peace negotiations in 2025 had a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, which should promote the participation of women in such processes. However, the official implementation period of national action plans had ended in various countries and new generations of plans had not been officially approved. Despite having this tool at their disposal, most peace negotiations continued to exclude women, and the gender perspective was not incorporated into the dynamics of the peace processes either, calling into question the effectiveness of action plans as tools for inclusive peacebuilding.

Regional trends

Africa

- Nineteen peace processes and negotiations were identified in Africa in 2025, accounting for nearly 36% of the 53 worldwide. Most of them deteriorated, however.
- National dialogues were launched in both Mozambique and South Africa during the year, seeking to incorporate reforms and ease social and political tensions.
- The resolution of the various internal conflicts and regional crises facing Ethiopia was stalled by multiple endogenous and exogenous factors.

- The government of Senegal and a faction of the MFDC reaffirmed their commitment to peace in Casamance.
- The Qatari-US diplomatic initiative between the DRC and Rwanda failed whilst the M23/Rwanda offensive persisted, along with the progressive involvement of Burundi, which could lead to a regional escalation of the conflict.
- The peace agreement in South Sudan teetered on the brink of collapse following the arrest of former Vice President Riek Machar.

America

- In the Americas, there were seven negotiating processes in 2025, accounting for 13% of the world total.
- In Colombia, the group Comuneros del Sur agreed to hand over war materiel and begin to demobilise.
- Negotiations between the ELN and the Colombian government were officially suspended in January as a result of the resurgence of violence in Catatumbo and were not resumed for the rest of the year.
- The Colombian government and the armed group Coordinadora Nacional Ejército Bolivariano reached more than 10 partial agreements at the negotiating table.
- The main coalition of armed gangs in Haiti, Viv Ansanm, expressed its desire to enter into some form of dialogue with the government regarding the political transition in the country.
- Caracas continued to insist on bilateral negotiations to resolve the dispute between Venezuela and Guyana over the Essequibo region, whilst Georgetown insisted on arbitration by the International Court of Justice.

Asia and the Pacific

- In Asia and the Pacific there were 12 negotiation processes, 23% of the total cases in the world.
- Different armed groups in Myanmar held negotiations with the military junta due to pressure from China to de-escalate the armed conflict.
- The new South Korean president took some conciliatory measures and offered to resume unconditional dialogue based on 'peaceful coexistence'.
- The US and North Korean governments highlighted the good personal relationship between the leaders of both countries and expressed their willingness to resume dialogue under certain conditions.
- In the Philippines, the body monitoring the implementation of the peace agreement warned that trust between the government and the MILF was at its lowest point since the agreement was signed and that the negotiating process was at a dangerous juncture.

- Faced with the outbreak of the most serious border armed conflict in decades, Cambodia and Thailand signed several truces with the assistance of third parties such as ASEAN, the US and China.
- The governments of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville signed the Melanesian Agreement, a roadmap to complete the peace process begun in the 1990s and determine the political status of Bougainville Island.

Europe

- In 2025, seven of the 53 peace processes in the world (13%) took place in Europe.
- In 2025, negotiations between Russia and Ukraine were resumed in different formats and with US government mediation, though they faced multiple obstacles.
- Armenia and Azerbaijan reached a peace and normalisation of relations agreement, though it had not yet been signed and was subject to conditions demanded by Baku at the end of the year.
- The peace process in Cyprus gained some momentum in 2025 through informal meetings and some confidence-building measures, but formal negotiations were not resumed.
- The peace process in Türkiye yielded some significant military-related results, such as the PKK's decision to dissolve and end its armed struggle.

Middle East

- The Middle East was the scene of eight negotiations in 2025, accounting for 15% of the total number of cases worldwide.
- The negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme experienced ups and downs and were affected by the 'Twelve-Day War' pitting Iran against Israel and the US.
- The negotiations to address the conflict in Yemen remained deadlocked in 2025, in part due to the impact of regional upheaval on the country.
- Following mediation by Oman, the US and the Yemeni armed group the Houthis agreed to a ceasefire that did not include Israel.
- Despite the ceasefire agreement in late 2024, Israel continued to conduct almost daily attacks in Lebanon.
- The agreements announced in 2025 only relatively lowered the extraordinary levels of violence in Gaza.
- Following the expansion of territories occupied by Israel in Syria, Netanyahu's government and the new Syrian government initiated contacts, but talks remained stalled.
- The regime change in Syria activated internal processes of dialogue and conflict management, in parallel with dynamics of tension and violence.

Introduction

Peace Talks in Focus 2025. Report on Trends and Scenarios is a yearbook that analyses the peace processes and negotiations that took place in the world in 2025. 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 2025, 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 2025: global overview and main trends

- 53 peace processes and negotiations were identified worldwide in 2025, one more than the previous year. The highest number of cases was reported in Africa (19), followed by Asia and the Pacific (12), the Middle East (eight), the Americas (seven) and Europe (seven).
- There were dialogue and negotiating processes in 55% of the active armed conflicts in 2025, a slightly smaller proportion than the previous year (57%).
- Most dialogue and negotiating processes faced difficulties, stagnation and setbacks, including most cases in Africa, the Middle East and the Americas.
- At least one third party was involved in 48 of the 53 peace processes (90.5%), more than in 2024 (86%).
- Many states became involved as third parties in negotiations, often in a context of the projection of national interests.
- No specific participation mechanisms were designed for women in most peace negotiations, and a gender approach and the recognition of the rights of women and the LGBTIQ+ population were left out of the negotiating agendas.

Fifty-three peace processes and negotiations were identified worldwide in 2025. The analysis of the different contexts reveals a wide variety of realities and dynamics, resulting from the diverse nature of the armed conflicts¹ and sociopolitical crises² to which the negotiations are linked. 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 negotiations, those actors involved in negotiating processes, the third parties involved, the main and recurrent issues in the negotiating 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 2025

Peace processes and negotiations	Negotiating actors	Third parties
AFRICA		
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

1. The School of the Culture of Peace (Escola de Cultura de Pau, ECP) defines armed conflict as 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		
Chad³	The 18 armed groups that did not sign the Doha Agreement (2022) and that did not participate in the Inclusive and Sovereign National Dialogue (DNIS) formed the Cadre Permanent de Concertation et de Réflexion (CPCR), including FACT and CCSMR. Government and Miski Self-Defense Committee	Community of Sant'Egidio
DRC	Government of the DRC, government of Rwanda, armed group M23, armed groups from the eastern part of the country, political opposition and civil society	AU, SADC, ICGLR, EAC, EU, UN, OIF, USA, Angola, Qatar
Eritrea – Ethiopia	Eritrea, Ethiopia	United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, USA
Ethiopia	Government, political parties, political and social opposition, citizens	UNDP, EU, Germany, Norway, Berghof Foundation
Ethiopia (Amhara)	Ethiopia, Fano militia faction (Amhara Fano Popular Organization, AFPO)	Amhara Peace Council, AU, IGAD
Ethiopia (Tigray)	Federal Government, political and military authorities of the Ethiopian region of Tigray (Tigray People's Liberation Front)	AU, USA, IGAD
Ethiopia – Egypt – Sudan	Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan	AU, World Bank (WB), UAE, EU and USA
Ethiopia – Somalia (Somaliland)	Ethiopia, Somalia	Türkiye, Qatar
Libya	Government of National Unity (GNU), Government of National Stability (GNS), Presidential Council, High State Council (HSC), House of Representatives (HoR), LNA/ALAF	UN, Quartet (UN, Arab League, AU, EU), Germany, France, Italy, UK, USA, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Türkiye, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia (Berlin Process)
Morocco – Western Sahara	Morocco, Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia elHamra and Río de Oro (POLISARIO Front)	UN, Algeria and Mauritania, Group of Friends of Western Sahara (France, USA, Spain, United Kingdom and Russia)
Mozambique	Government, social and political opposition	Instituto para Democracia Multipartidária (IMD)
Senegal (Casamance)	Government, factions of the Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC)	ECOWAS, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD), Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde, Sub-regional Coordinator for Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Casamance (COSPAC)
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, Türkiye, AU
Somalia – Somaliland	Federal Government of Somalia, Republic of Somaliland	Türkiye, Norway
South Africa	Government, social and political opposition	--
South Sudan⁴	Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) (2018): Government (SPLM), SPLM/A-in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO), and several minor groups (SSOA, SPLM-FD, among others), two independent factions of the SPLM-IO: the Kitwang faction led by Simon Gatwech Dual and the faction headed by General Johnson Olony. Peace talks in Rome-Nairobi (Tumaini Initiative): Non-Signatory South Sudan Opposition Groups (NSSSOG, previously SSOMA): National Salvation Front (NAS), South Sudan United Front (SSUF), the Real SPLM, South Sudan People's Patriotic Movement (SSPPM).	Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) (2018): IGAD Plus (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, Rome-Nairobi negotiations: Kenya, Community of Sant'Egidio
Sudan	Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF)	'Quad' Mechanism or Quartet (USA, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and UAE), Trilateral Mechanism (UN, AU and the IGAD (Ethiopia, South Sudan, Djibouti, Kenya, Uganda), Switzerland, Türkiye, EU
Sudan – South Sudan	Government of Sudan, Government of South Sudan, Ethnic communities of the Abyei region	IGAD, African Union Border Programme (AUBP), Egypt, Libya, USA, EU, UNISFA, UN
AMERICA		
Colombia (Comuneros del Sur)	Government, Comuneros del Sur	Netherlands, OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia, Episcopal Conference of Colombia

3. In the case of Chad, there are two processes: firstly, a consultation process involving the faction of the insurgency that did not sign the 2022 Doha Agreement, facilitated by the Community of Sant'Egidio; and secondly, the negotiations and peace agreement in Miski (Tibesti region) between the Government and the Miski Self-Defence Committee.
4. This peace negotiation process includes two distinct spaces: 1) Negotiations on the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) (2018); and 2) Peace negotiations between the Government and armed groups not signatory to the R-ARCSS in Rome and Nairobi. The actors involved in each of these are specified in the "actors" column.

Peace processes and negotiations	Negotiating actors	Third parties
AMERICA		
Colombia (ELN)	Government, ELN	Guarantor countries (Brazil, Cuba, Venezuela, Norway, Mexico and Chile); permanent supporters (Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Colombia, Episcopal Conference of Colombia); supporting countries (Germany, Sweden, Switzerland and Spain)
Colombia (EMBF)⁵	Government, Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frente (EMBF)	Permanent supporters (Episcopal Conference of Colombia, World Council of Churches, Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Colombia, OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia), guarantor countries (Ireland, Norway, Switzerland, Venezuela)
Colombia (FARC)	Government, Comunes	UN Verification Mission in Colombia, International Verification Component (Technical Secretariat of the Notables, University of Notre Dame's Kroc Institute), OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia
Colombia (CNEB)⁶	Government, Coordinadora Nacional Ejército Bolivariano (CNEB)	Guarantor countries (Norway, Netherlands, Switzerland, Venezuela and Uruguay); permanent supporters (UN Verification Mission and the Episcopal Conference of Colombia)
Haiti	Government, political and social opposition	CARICOM (Eminent Persons Group), United Nations (BINUH and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General), OAS (including the Group of Friends of Haiti)
Venezuela – Guyana	Venezuela, Guyana	CELAC, CARICOM, Brazil, United Nations Secretary-General
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC		
Afghanistan – Pakistan	Afghanistan, Pakistan	Qatar, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia
India (Nagaland)	Indian government, NSCN-IM, NNPG: GPRN/NSCN (Kitovi Zhimomi), NNC, FGN, NSCN(R), NPGN (Non-Accord) and NNC/GDRN/NA, ZUF	--
India – China	India, China	--
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 that have not signed the NCA: UWSP, NDAA, SSPP/ SSA-N, KNPP, NSCN-K, KIA, AA, TNLA and MNDAA	China, ASEAN
North Korea – South Korea	North Korea, South Korea	--
North Korea – USA	North Korea, USA	--
Papua New Guinea (Bougainville)	Government, Autonomous Bougainville Government	United Nations, Jerry Mateparae
Philippines (MILF)	Government, MILF, Interim Government of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao	Malaysia, Third Party Monitoring Team, Independent Decommissioning Body, International Contact Group
Philippines (MNLF)	Government, MNLF (factions led by Nur Misuari and Muslimin Sema)	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
Philippines (NDF)	Government, NDF (umbrella organisation of various communist organisations, including the Communist Party of the Philippines, which is the political arm of the NPA)	Norway
Thailand (south)	Government, BRN	Malaysia
Thailand – Cambodia	Thailand, Cambodia	ASEAN, USA, China
EUROPE		
Armenia – Azerbaijan⁷	Armenia, Azerbaijan	USA, EU ⁸

5. The negotiations between the Colombian government and the armed group Estado Mayor Central (EMC) shifted to involve the Government and the Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frente (EMBF, which arose from EMC).
6. The negotiations between the Colombian government and the Segunda Marquetalia insurgency evolved in 2025 into negotiations between the government and the Coordinadora Nacional Ejército Bolivariano (CNEB, a group that originated from Segunda Marquetalia).
7. Starting with the 2024 edition, this yearbook stopped using the designation “Armenia – Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)” to refer to the negotiating process between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan's military offensive in 2023 resulted in the military takeover of Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijan gained full control over the region and the self-proclaimed administration of Nagorno-Karabakh ceased to exist in January 2024. In 2023, Armenia agreed to recognise the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. All this led to the final exclusion of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue from the negotiations between both countries.
8. The negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2025 were conducted without third-party mediation at some levels/areas, whilst they received external support in others, including US mediation support in 2025.

Peace processes and negotiations	Negotiating actors	Third parties
EUROPE		
Cyprus	Republic of Cyprus, self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus	UN, EU, guarantor countries (Türkiye, Greece and United Kingdom)
Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia)	Government of Georgia, representatives of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, government of Russia ⁹	OSCE, EU, UN, USA, Russia ¹⁰
Moldova (Transdniestria)	Moldova, self-proclaimed Republic of Transdniestria	OSCE, Ukraine, Russia, USA, EU ¹¹
Russia – Ukraine	Russia, Ukraine	USA, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, ICRC, UN, IAEA, Vatican City, Qatar, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Switzerland ¹²
Serbia – Kosovo	Serbia, Kosovo	EU, UN, USA, Germany, France, United Kingdom, Italy
Türkiye (PKK)	Government, PKK, political parties of Türkiye	Political representatives from the Kurdistan Region of Iraq ¹³
MIDDLE EAST		
Iran (nuclear programme)	Iran, France, United Kingdom, Germany, China, Russia, EU, USA	UN, Oman, Qatar
Israel – Lebanon (Hezbollah)	Government of Israel, government of Lebanon, Hezbollah	USA, France, UN
Israel – Palestine	Government of Israel, Hamas, PA	USA, Qatar, Egypt, France, Saudi Arabia, Arab League, UN
Israel – Syria	Government of Israel, government of Syria	UN, USA, United Arab Emirates (UAE), France, Azerbaijan
Palestine	Hamas, Fatah, other Palestinian political groups	Egypt
Syria	Government, political and armed opposition groups, regional actors	UN, USA, France, Saudi Arabia
Yemen	Internationally recognised Yemeni government (backed by Saudi Arabia), Houthis / Ansar Allah, Saudi Arabia	UN, Oman, ICRC
Yemen (Houthis) – USA	Yemen (Houthis), USA	Oman

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

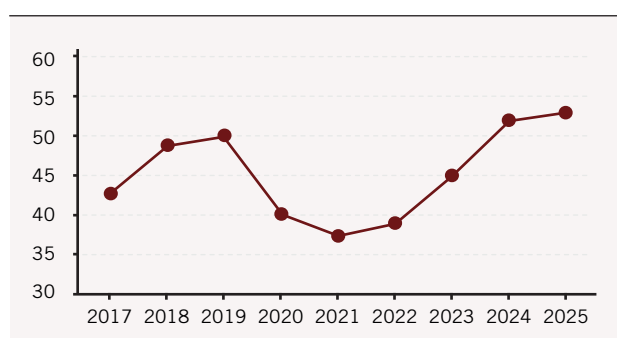
An increase was identified in the number of peace processes and negotiations analysed worldwide in 2025. The year saw the highest number of peace processes and negotiations since 2017, when Escola de Cultura de Pau (ECP) began using its current classification of peace processes and negotiations. Following the drop in the number of processes in 2020 and 2021, the years of the COVID-19 pandemic, with 40 and 37 processes respectively, an upward trend ensued, reaching 53 in 2025. However, between 2024 and 2025, the figure increased by only one new peace process (53 in 2025 compared to 52 in 2024), slowing the growth. This rising trend in peace processes since the pandemic years has not been accompanied by lower levels of violence and global armed conflict and has come amid an increase in

armed conflicts and sociopolitical crises worldwide. In fact, 40 armed conflicts were recorded in 2025, three more than in 2024 and the most since 2011. Since 2021, the trend has been one of continued increase in the number of armed conflicts.¹⁴ Furthermore, despite the relative reduction of high-intensity armed conflicts in 2025, the percentage of conflicts of that type continued to be above those observed in any year between 2007, when ECP began using its current definitions of armed conflicts, and 2020. There were dialogue and negotiating processes in 55% of the active armed conflicts (22 of the 40) in 2025 (see Table 1.2.). This proportion is slightly smaller than in previous years, though with some fluctuation (57% in 2024, 53% in 2023, 58% in 2022 and 56% in 2021). In addition

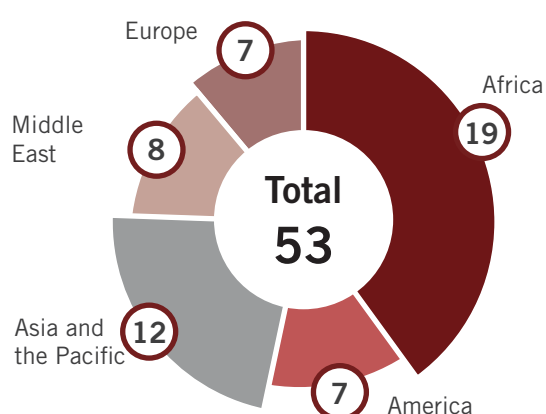
9. Russia's status in the Georgian peace process is subject to different interpretations. Georgia considers Russia a party to the conflict and a negotiating party, while Russia considers itself a third party.
10. Ibid.
11. Since 2023 the 5+2 conference format has remained inactive. In the 5+2 conference Moldova and Transdniestria were negotiators, the OSCE was a mediator, Ukraine and Russia were mediators-guarantors, and the US and the EU were observers. The OSCE-facilitated format between chief negotiators remained active. At least for a time, it was also attended by participants of the 5+2 format.
12. This table includes actors playing roles of mediation/facilitation and support in any of the areas of dialogue active between Russia and Ukraine. They are included regardless of the frequency or scope of their involvement. In addition to the actors included in this table, this chapter analyses and includes other actors that promoted dialogue during the year and are not considered third parties in this yearbook.
13. The dialogue process in Türkiye does not officially have third parties, but political representatives from the Iraqi Kurdistan Region have played roles in support of the process.
14. See chapter 1 (Armed conflicts) in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 206! Report on Conflicts, Human Rights and Peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2026.

[illegible]

Graph 1.1. Trend in the annual number of peace processes since 2017¹⁷



Graph 1.2. Regional distribution of peace negotiations



Yemeni armed group the Houthis and the US, as part of the broader armed conflict that began in 2025: Yemen (Houthis) – Israel, US, UK. Furthermore, Israel and Syria initiated contacts in 2025 to address the crisis between them in relation to Israel's attacks on and occupation of territory in southern Syria.

In contrast to these new processes, or those resulting from previous ones, other peace negotiations ceased to be analysed as such in 2025: Mali, Cameroon, the Ethiopian region of Oromia, Mozambique (Renamo), Venezuela, China (Tibet) and India (Assam). In Mali, the 2015 Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation (known as the Algiers Accords) was not reactivated, having been suspended in 2024 following the resumption of armed clashes. In Cameroon, contacts between the government and the secessionist political and military movements of the English-speaking Northwest and Southwest regions were not resumed and the climate of violence and instability persisted. In Ethiopia (Oromia), there were no negotiations between

the federal government and the Oromo armed group OLA, whilst counterinsurgency operations, irregular violence and inter-communal conflicts predominated. The peace process between the Mozambican government and the former armed group Renamo ceased to be analysed as such due to the formal ending of implementation of the 2019 peace agreement. The political dialogue held in recent years between the government of Venezuela and part of the opposition, facilitated by Norway, which was interrupted following the July 2024 presidential election, was not resumed in 2025. Furthermore, there was no public record of meetings or approaches between the Chinese government and the Tibetan government-in-exile. Finally, talks in the Indian state of Assam took place through ordinary political channels there, and not through peace negotiations, as a result of the dissolution of the armed group ULFA-PTF in the 2023 peace agreement.

As regards the **geographical distribution of processes and negotiations in 2025**, the majority of the cases analysed were concentrated in Africa, which hosted 19 negotiation processes, accounting for 36% of the total (20 processes and 39% of the total in 2024). Asia and the Pacific was the region with the second-highest number of cases, with a total of 12, representing 23% of the negotiations in 2025 (the same figure and percentage as in 2024). The rest of the negotiations were distributed across the Middle East (eight processes and 15% of the total, compared to six cases and 12% in 2024), and the Americas and Europe, with seven cases each, equivalent to 13%, the same as the previous year.

There were dialogue and negotiating processes in 55% of the active armed conflicts (22 of the 40) in 2025, a slightly smaller proportion than in previous years

In all cases, one of the **actors involved in the peace processes and negotiations** was a state government. The state governments involved in dialogue negotiated or maintained contacts directly or indirectly with various kinds of actors, depending on the characteristics of the context, but which generally included armed groups (directly or through political representatives, and in some cases through coalitions of armed groups); a combination of armed groups and political and social actors; representatives of political and military organisations with territorial control; other state and sub-state governments; and political and social opposition groups. To a lesser extent, attempts at dialogue and rapprochement with criminal armed groups were also identified.¹⁸ Overall, the upward trend in the diversity of actors involved in negotiations was maintained.

In 2025, the number of international peace processes rose slightly, involving two or more governments from

17. The year 2017 was when ECP began to use its current classification system for peace processes and negotiations, collected in the first edition of this report, *Peace Talks in Focus: Report on Trends and Scenarios*.

18. In 2025, the dialogue process in Haiti involved three tracks, including attempts at a process with armed gangs seeking recognition and legitimacy to play some role in negotiations over the country's political future. Furthermore, Colombia continued a socio-legal dialogue with the narco-paramilitary group known as the Clan del Golfo, alongside the dialogue processes analysed in this report. See chapter 3 (Peace negotiations in America).

Table 1.2. **Armed conflicts and peace processes in 2025**

Armed conflicts with peace negotiation (22)	Armed conflicts without peace negotiation (18)
AFRICA (7)	AFRICA (10)
CAR -2006-	Burundi -2015-
DRC (east) -1998-	Cameroon (Ambazonia/ North West and South West) -2018-
Ethiopia (Amhara) -2023-	DRC (east – ADF) -2014-
Libya -2011-	DRC (west) -2023-
Somalia -1988-	Ethiopia (Oromia) -2022
South Sudan -2009-	Lake Chad Region (Boko Haram) -2011-
Sudan -2023-	Mali -2012-
AMERICA (2)	Mozambique (North) -2017-
Colombia -1964-	Somalia (Somaliland-SSC Khatumo) -2023-
Haiti -2024-	Western Sahel Region -2018-
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (5)	ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (7)
Myanmar -1948-	Afghanistan -2001-
Philippines (Mindanao) -1991-	India (CPI-M) -1967-
Philippines (NPA) -1969-	India (Jammu and Kashmir) -1989-
Thailand (south) -2004-	India – Pakistan -2025-
Thailand – Cambodia -2025-	Indonesia (West Papua) -2024-
EUROPE (2)	Pakistan -2001-
Russia – Ukraine -2022-	Pakistan (Balochistan) -2005-
Türkiye (PKK) -1984-	MIDDLE EAST (1)
MIDDLE EAST (6)	Iraq -2003-
Israel, EUA – Iran ¹⁹	
Israel – Hezbollah -2023-	
Israel – Palestine -2000-	
Syria -2011-	
Yemen -2004-	
Yemen (Houthis) – Israel, USA, United Kingdom	

different countries or governments and actors from different countries (see Table 1.3). In total, 22 dialogue and peace negotiating processes involved actors from different countries as the main negotiating parties, equivalent to 41.5% (compared to 20 cases in 2024, or 38%). Except in the Americas, where only one of the seven processes was international (Venezuela–Guyana), large proportions of the negotiations were international in all the other regions. The two new peace processes in the Middle East in 2025 were international: Yemen (Houthis)–US, and Israel–Syria, and this type of cases accounted for 62.5% of the processes across the region (five of the eight). In Asia and the Pacific, five of the 12 peace processes were interstate (41.7%) and the remaining seven were internal (58.3%). Seven of the 19 processes in Africa were international (36.8%) and the other 12 were internal (63.2%), although one international case (Sudan–South Sudan) also had an internal dimension relating to inter-community disputes in border areas. In Europe, four of the seven processes had an international dimension (57.1%).

Parallel or complementary negotiating tracks were pursued in some contexts, linked to a global scenario of armed conflicts and sociopolitical crises with highly complex configurations of actors and disputes. The negotiations in the DRC, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Sudan–South Sudan, Yemen, Myanmar and Haiti involved highly complex networks of actors (see Table 1.1.). Furthermore, many peace processes encompassed only some of the actors involved in the armed conflicts or sociopolitical crises, but not all. For example, the negotiations over the armed conflict that began in 2025 and pitted the Houthis against the US, Israel and the United Kingdom only involved the Yemeni armed group and the US.

Whilst it is often possible to clearly identify the **third-parties** involved in mediation, facilitation and dialogue support activities, on other occasions these tasks are carried out in a discreet or non-public manner. In 2025 in 48 of the 53 peace processes (90.5%), at least one third party was involved. This was a higher percentage

19. In this report, the negotiations relating to this case are analysed under the heading 'Iran (nuclear programme)'.

than in the last two years (86% in 2024 and 89% in 2023) and was the same as in 2022. All new peace processes that were begun or transformed in 2025 included third parties: Mozambique (national dialogue); peace negotiations in Colombia with the splinter armed groups Comuneros del Sur, EMBF and CNEB, which had resulted from previous processes with the ELN, EMC and Segunda Marquetalia; Thailand–Cambodia; Israel–Syria; and the negotiations between the Houthis and the US. Once again, third-party support was observed in processes with different formats, both as part of internal negotiations and in international negotiations (see Table 1.3.). Only five of the 53 peace processes had no third parties, four of them in Asia and the Pacific: North Korea–South Korea, North Korea–US, India (Nagaland) and India–China. The remaining process without third parties took place in Africa: the national dialogue initiated in 2025 in South Africa.

In the vast majority of cases involving a third party, more than one actor performed mediation or facilitation tasks (40 of the 48 cases with third parties, equivalent to 83.3%). An immense majority of the cases had a set of actors with mediation, facilitation and dialogue support functions, occasionally with collegiate, complementary and coordinated formulas, and at other times, and increasingly, with fragmentation, coordination difficulties or competition. In the other eight of the 48 cases, only one third party was observed or information emerged about it: Chad, Mozambique, the Philippines (MNLF), the Philippines (NDF), Thailand (south), Türkiye (PKK), Palestine, and Yemen (Houthis)–US.

Most of the peace negotiations in 2025 took place in Africa (36%), followed by Asia and the Pacific (23%), the Middle East (15%) and the Americas and Europe (13% respectively)

In an international context characterised by a multitude of mediating actors, these took various forms, notably **intergovernmental organisations** –such as the UN, the EU, the AU and IGAD, in particular– and states, as well as religious organisations and civil society actors, including specialised centres. Intergovernmental organisations played a predominant role, except in Asia and the Pacific, where their role was smaller. In line with the trend consolidated in recent years, the UN was the main intergovernmental organisation involved in supporting peace processes. In 25 of the 53 processes identified during the year and in 25 of the 48 cases that had at least one third party (47% and 52%), it was present in different formats (primarily special envoys and representatives and missions) and support functions (mediation, co-mediation, verification, ceasefire monitoring, assistance, support or good offices and others). Despite continuing to be the main intergovernmental organisation involved in mediation and facilitation in peace processes, its role as a third party was reduced compared to the previous two years. In 2024 and 2023, the UN had participated as a third party in 58% and 60% of peace processes that involved third parties, respectively; and in 50% and 53% of the

total peace processes in those two years, respectively. Once again, the UN's role in peace processes in Africa stood out, but its participation fell from 11 peace processes there in 2024 to eight in 2025: Libya, Morocco–Western Sahara, the CAR, the DRC, Somalia, Sudan, Sudan–South Sudan and South Sudan. In regions such as the Middle East, the UN's role changed or was diminished by the development of events and decisions that affected its initiatives or the mandate of its missions, among other factors.

Other international and regional organisations also played a prominent role, especially regional organisations in their geographical areas of operation. The EU was the only regional organisation that carried out mediation and dialogue support tasks outside its regional area of operation. The EU performed third-party functions, although with varying degrees and types of involvement, in 13 contexts (the same figure as in 2024). The EU provided support in eight peace processes in Africa (Ethiopia, Ethiopia–Egypt–Sudan, Libya, Mozambique, the CAR, the DRC, Sudan and South Sudan), in addition to all peace processes in Europe, with the exception of the Russia–Ukraine negotiations (where the EU provided

support to Ukraine through other ways) and Türkiye (PKK). The AU was a third party in 10 African peace processes, two fewer than in 2024: Ethiopia (Amhara), Ethiopia (Tigray), Ethiopia–Egypt–Sudan, Libya, the CAR, the DRC, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Sudan–South Sudan. The IGAD continued to be involved in six dialogue and peace negotiation processes: Ethiopia (Amhara), Ethiopia (Tigray), Somalia, Sudan, Sudan–South Sudan and South Sudan. This is the same number as in 2024, but with the difference that in 2024 it was supporting the dialogue process in Ethiopia (Oromia), which ceased to be active in 2025; and, as a new development compared with the previous year, it became involved in supporting the dialogue in the Amhara region of Ethiopia.

The role of the OAS stood out in 2025, as it was involved in four peace processes in 2025: Colombia (Comuneros del Sur), Colombia (EMBF), Colombia (FARC) and Haiti. Other regional organisations such as the OSCE, the SADC, the Arab League, CARICOM, ECOWAS, ASEAN, the CEEAC, the ICGLRL, the EAC, the OIC, the OIF and CELAC played a smaller role, participating as third parties in between one and two peace processes each, but which together amounted to involvement in 12 different ones: Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia), Moldova (Transnistria), Senegal (Casamance), the DRC, Myanmar, Thailand–Cambodia, the CAR, Libya, Sudan, the Philippines (MNLF), Haiti and Venezuela–Guyana. This involvement highlighted the potential of regional organisations in supporting dialogue. However, in some cases, such as the OSCE, geostrategic divisions limited the room

Table 1.3. Internal and international peace processes and negotiations with and without third parties in 2025

Peace processes	INTERNAL					INTERNATIONAL	
	Direct negotiations without third parties (2)	Negotiations with third parties (28)	National dialogues without third parties (1)	National dialogues with third parties (2)	Other formats (0)	Direct negotiations without third parties (3)	Negotiations with third parties (19)
AFRICA							
CAR		x					
Chad ⁱ	x	x					
DRC							x
Ethiopia				x			
Ethiopia (Amhara)		x					
Ethiopia (Tigray)		x					
Eritrea – Ethiopia							x
Ethiopia – Egypt – Sudan							x
Ethiopia – Somalia (Somaliland)							x
Libya		x					
Morocco – Western Sahara							x
Mozambique				x			
Senegal (Casamance)		x					
Somalia		x					
Somalia – Somaliland ⁱⁱ							x
South Africa			x				
South Sudan		x					
Sudan ⁱⁱⁱ		x					
Sudan – South Sudan		x ^{iv}					x
AMERICA							
Colombia (Comuneros del Sur)		x					
Colombia (ELN)		x					
Colombia (EMBF)		x					
Colombia (FARC)		x					
Colombia (CNEB)		x					
Haiti		x					
Venezuela – Guyana							x
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC							
Afghanistan – Pakistan							x
India (Nagaland)	x						
India – China						x	
North Korea – South Korea						x	
North Korea – USA						x	
Myanmar		x					
Papua New Guinea (Bougainville)		x					
Philippines (MILF)		x					
Philippines (MNLF)		x					

i. Two previous initiatives are being implemented in Chad: the Doha peace agreement between part of the Chadian insurgency and the government and the commitments made in the National, Inclusive and Sovereign Dialogue (DNIS). There is also a consultation process for the part of the insurgency that did not sign the Doha agreement facilitated by the Community of Sant'Egidio.

ii. Although the Republic of Somaliland is not officially recognised as an independent state, this peace process is considered international because the region enjoys de facto recognition as an autonomous administration independent of Somalia.

iii. The three peace processes and negotiations that were underway in Sudan in 2018 were consolidated into just one in 2019 due to the end of the national dialogue forum between the government and the opposition following the formation of a transitional government, as well as the merging of the negotiations over Darfur and the “Two Areas” (South Kordofan and Blue Nile) into a single peace process. Since 2023, the negotiations have focused on resolving the national armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces.

iv. This dialogue track refers to negotiations to resolve inter-community disputes in the Abyei region and border areas.

Peace processes	INTERNAL					INTERNATIONAL	
	Direct negotiations without third parties (2)	Negotiations with third parties (28)	National dialogues without third parties (1)	National dialogues with third parties (2)	Other formats (0)	Direct negotiations without third parties (3)	Negotiations with third parties (19)
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC							
Philippines (NDF)		x					
Thailand (south)		x					
Thailand – Cambodia							x
EUROPE							
Armenia – Azerbaijan ^v							x
Cyprus		x					
Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia) ^{vi}							x
Moldova (Transdniestria)		x					
Russia – Ukraine							x
Serbia – Kosovo							x
Türkiye (PKK) ^{viii}		x					
MIDDLE EAST							
Iran (nuclear programme)							x
Israel – Lebanon (Hezbollah)							x
Israel – Palestine							x
Israel – Syria							x
Palestina		x					
Syria		x					
Yemen		x					
Yemen (houtis) – USA							x

v. International negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the normalisation of relations, territorial integrity, border demarcation and transport routes, amongst other issues, took place in 2025 without external mediation in some areas, such as border demarcation, and with external mediation in others.

vi. The nature of the peace processes of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, as well as Russia's role in those conflicts, is subject to interpretation. Georgia considers Russia an actor in the conflict and a negotiating party, while Russia considers itself a third party.

vii. The peace process between Serbia and Kosovo is considered international. Although Kosovo's legal status is still controversial, it has been recognised as a state by over 100 countries. In 2010, the International Court of Justice handed down a non-binding ruling stating that Kosovo's independence did not violate international law or UN Security Council Resolution 1244.

viii. The dialogue process in Türkiye officially has no third parties, but political representatives from the Iraqi Kurdistan Region have played supporting roles in the process.

for manoeuvre in mediation and dialogue support.

Furthermore, alongside intergovernmental organisations, a significant number of **states** became involved as third parties in negotiating processes, often amid the projection of national interests. The growing role of states as third parties was observed in all regions. In Africa, states led or supported dialogue initiatives in most peace processes in 2025, with a particularly active role played by Türkiye, Qatar, the UAE and Saudi Arabia in different negotiations involving Eritrea, Ethiopia, the DRC, Somalia and Sudan, and in previous years, Chad. Türkiye played a notable role in the peace negotiations between Ethiopia and Somalia, whilst Saudi Arabia, the US, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Switzerland and other states were prominently active in the negotiating process between the Sudanese Army and the RSF. Saudi Arabia was also a key third party

The UN remained the main intergovernmental organisation involved in mediation and facilitation work in peace processes, but its role as a third party decreased compared to the previous two years

in the negotiations between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Most

third parties in Asia and the Pacific were states. The two most active countries in that region were Malaysia and China. In the Middle East, countries from the region stood out, such as Oman, the mediator in the ceasefire between the US and the Houthis. Oman also played a significant third-party role in the indirect negotiations between the US and Iran over the latter's nuclear programme. Qatar was involved jointly with Egypt and the US in the Israel–Palestine negotiations. Egypt supported intra-Palestinian dialogue and Saudi Arabia participated to varying degrees in several cases in the region (Israel–Palestine and Syria). The United Arab Emirates was also

involved in the Israel–Palestine peace process. In all peace processes in the Americas, except for Haiti, other governments from the region participated in facilitation tasks (Brazil, Cuba, Venezuela, Mexico, Chile and

Table 1.4. Intergovernmental organisations as third parties in peace processes in 2025

UNITED NATIONS (UN) (25)	
AFRICA (8)	
CAR	UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA) UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for the Central African Republic. The UN is part of the International Support Group for Central Africa (GIS-RCA)
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
Morocco – Western Sahara	UN Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for Western Sahara United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)
Somalia	UN Special Representative for Somalia UN Transitional Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNTAMS)
South Sudan	United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for South Sudan
Sudan	Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for Sudan
Sudan – South Sudan	United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa
AMERICA (6)	
Colombia (ELN)	UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Colombia
Colombia (EMBF)	UN Secretary-General's Deputy Special Representative for Colombia
Colombia (FARC)	United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia
Colombia (CNEB)	United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia
Haiti	United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Haiti
Venezuela – Guyana	UN Secretary-General
ASIA AND PACIFIC (1)	
Papua New Guinea (Bougainville)	Peacebuilding Fund Resident Coordinator Office Mediation Support Unit UNDP
EUROPE (4)	
Cyprus	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cyprus and head of UNFICYP Mission of the Good Offices of the UN Secretary-General in Cyprus Office of the UN Secretary-General's Special Advisor on Cyprus (OSASG) Secretary-General's Personal Representative on Cyprus
Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia)	United Nations Special Representative in the Geneva International Discussions
Russia – Ukraine	Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Liaison Office in Kyiv
Serbia – Kosovo	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Kosovo and head of the UNMIK mission
MIDDLE EAST (6)	
Iran	International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) The UN Secretary-General regularly reports on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2231, which validated the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (2015)
Israel – Lebanon (Hezbollah)	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon (UNSCOL)
Israel – Palestine	UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process
Israel – Syria	United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)
Syria	UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Syria
Yemen	UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA)
EUROPEAN UNION (UE) (13)	
AFRICA (8)	
CAR	The EU is a member of the International Support Group for Central Africa (GIS-RCA)
DRC	The EU delegation in the DRC The EU Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region
Ethiopia	The EU has given support to the national dialogue process

EUROPEAN UNION (UE) (13)	
AFRICA (8)	
Ethiopia – Egypt – Sudan	The EU has given support to AU facilitation efforts
Libya	The EU forms part of the Quartet for the Libyan Political Agreement along with the AU, Arab League and UN
Mozambique	The EU has supported the national dialogue process
South Sudan	The EU is part of the mediation group
Sudan	The EU is part of the mediating actors
EUROPE (5)	
Armenia – Azerbaijan	EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia EU Mission in Armenia (EUMA)
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 (Transnistria)	EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM) ²⁰ EU Delegation to Moldova The EU has an observer role in the OSCE-facilitated 1+1 of the peace process
Serbia – Kosovo	President of the European Council High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice President of the European Commission European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue and other Western Balkan regional issues EU Rule-of-Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX Kosovo)
AFRICAN UNION (UA) (10)	
CAR	The AU leads the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR (the AU with the support of 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 Facilitation of negotiations between DRC and Rwanda (Luanda process)
Ethiopia (Amhara)	The AU has facilitated the peace talks
Ethiopia (Tigray)	AU mediation team led by the AU Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa AU Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mission (AU-MVCM)
Ethiopia – Egypt – Sudan	The AU has made facilitation efforts between the three countries
Libya	The AU forms part of the Quartet for the Libyan Political Agreement along with the EU, Arab League and UN
Somalia	AU High Representative for Somalia African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM)
South Sudan	The AU is part of “IGAD Plus”
Sudan	AU High Level Implementation Panel on Sudan (AUHIP) The AU and its Peace and Security Council (PSC) are part of the mediating group
Sudan – South Sudan	African Union Border Programme (AUBP)
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY ON DEVELOPMENT (IGAD) (6)	
Ethiopia (Amhara)	The IGAD has facilitated the peace talks
Ethiopia (Tigray)	Participation in the AU Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mission (AU-MVCM)
Somalia	IGAD delegation
South Sudan	The IGAD forms part of “IGAD Plus” in South Sudan
Sudan	IGAD is part of the mediating actors
Sudan – South Sudan	IGAD delegation
ORGANISATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS) (4)	
Colombia (Comuneros del Sur)	Mission to Support the Peace Process of the Organization of American States
Colombia (EMBF)	Mission to Support the Peace Process of the Organization of American States
Colombia (FARC)	Mission to Support the Peace Process of the Organization of American States
Haiti	Secretary General of the OAS and Group of Friends of Haiti
ARAB LEAGUE (2)	
Libya	The Arab League forms part of the Quartet for the Libyan Political Agreement along with the AU, EU and UN
Sudan	The Arab League is one of the mediating actors
ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN) (2)	
Myanmar	ASEAN envoy
Thailand – Cambodia	Malaysia held the rotating ASEAN chairmanship in 2025

20. The EUBAM mission concluded its mandate in November 2025.

CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM) (2)	
Haiti	CARICOM Eminent Persons Group
Venezuela – Guyana	CARICOM presidency
ORGANISATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE) (2)	
Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia)	Special Representative of the Rotating Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE for the South Caucasus
Moldova (Transnistria)	Special Representative of the Rotating Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE for the Transnistrian Settlement Process OSCE Mission in Moldova
ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION (OIC) (2)	
CAR	OIC delegation in the CAR
Philippines (MNLF)	The OCI facilitated the 1996 peace agreement between the Government and the MNLF and subsequently accompanied negotiations for its full implementation
COMMUNITY OF LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STATES (CELAC) (1)	
Venezuela – Guyana	Presidency pro-tempore of CELAC
EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY (EAC) (1)	
DRC	Facilitation of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (Nairobi process)
ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF CENTRAL AFRICAN STATES (ECCAS) (1)	
CAR	ECCAS delegation in the CAR
ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS) (1)	
Senegal (Casamance)	Facilitator and guarantor
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE GREAT LAKES REGION (ICGLR) (1)	
DRC	Facilitation of negotiations between DRC and Rwanda (Luanda process)
ORGANISATION INTERNATIONALE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE (OIF) (1)	
DRC	OIF delegation in the DRC
SOUTH AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC) (1)	
DRC	SADC representation in the DRC

Uruguay). In Europe, the role played by countries from the region itself was less significant, with a growing role played by countries from outside the region, such as the US and, in the Russia–Ukraine peace process, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and others. Peace processes in all regions had states from other regions participating in third-party functions to varying degrees, alongside the involvement of countries from the immediate neighbourhood. The role of the US revealed contradictions and tensions in 2025. In the Middle East, it presented itself as a mediating actor whilst providing decisive political and military support to one of the parties involved in most of these conflicts at the same time: Israel. US intervention in peace processes in Europe and the Middle East in 2025 conformed to the emerging concept of ‘transactional peacemaking’. Authors define this as prioritising bilateral approaches, based on interests, as opposed to values and inclusion, and with a focus on short-term agreements.²¹

Local, regional and international third parties became involved through diverse formats, including through support structures. These took different forms and

Many states became involved as third parties in negotiations, often amid the projection of national interests

varying degrees of complexity. Some of them included only states grouped in diverse structures. This was the case with the guarantor countries (Brazil, Cuba, Venezuela, Norway, Mexico and Chile) and the supporting countries (Germany, Sweden, Switzerland and Spain) in the dialogue between the Colombian government and the ELN, as well as the guarantor countries in the peace process between the Colombian government and the EMBF (Ireland, Norway, Switzerland, Venezuela) and between the Colombian government and the CNEB (Norway, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Venezuela and Uruguay). Others included a combination of states and/or intergovernmental organisations and, in some cases, civil society actors. This was the case with the permanent supporters in the Colombia (ELN) and Colombia (EMBF) peace processes, which grouped representatives of the UN and the Catholic Church and, in the negotiating process with the EMBF, representatives of the OAS and the World Council of Churches as well. Another case was the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR (the AU and ECCAS, with support from the UN, the ICGLR, Angola, Gabon, the Republic of Congo and Chad). In Sudan, the structures of the previous dual mediation process were unified: the trilateral mechanism (composed of the

21. Hellmüller, Sara y Salaymeh, Bilal (2025). Transactional peacemaking: Warmakers as peacemakers in the political marketplace of peace processes. *Contemporary Security Policy*, 46(2), 312–342. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2024.2448908>.

UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), the AU and the IGAD) and the Quad (US, UK, Saudi Arabia and UAE), which together formed the Aligned for Advancing Life and Peace in Sudan (ALPS) Group.

Each of the **negotiating agendas** exhibited unique aspects and the details of the issues under discussion did not always become public knowledge. As in previous years, **the pursuit or implementation of truces, ceasefires and cessations of hostilities** was one of the central issues of discussion in several peace processes. This issue was present in peace processes in Africa, such as in the Ethiopian regions of Amhara and Tigray, in Senegal (Casamance), in Sudan and in the DRC, in relation to the armed groups in the east of the country and especially the M23. In Asia and the Pacific, practically all interstate negotiations during the year pivoted mainly on this issue. Thailand and Cambodia met on repeated occasions to try to reduce violence in the border regions, achieving ceasefire agreements twice during the year. Afghanistan and Pakistan initiated negotiations during the year to address the escalation of violence that has occurred between them since the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan in 2021. In Europe, the US, Russia and Ukraine announced ceasefire agreements on energy infrastructure and safe navigation in the Black Sea in March, but they were unsuccessful. Subsequent attempts to negotiate a ceasefire failed. Throughout 2025, various ceasefires were announced in the cases analysed in the Middle East, although the vast majority were characterised by their fragility, recurrent violations or partial scope. Thus, for example, the ceasefire between the US and the Houthis involved only those two parties and not Israel, so hostilities between Netanyahu's government and the Yemeni group continued throughout the year. The ceasefires announced for the Israel–Palestine and Israel–Lebanon (Hezbollah) conflicts were continuously violated by Israeli forces. The widespread appearance of negotiations linked to ceasefires is consistent with analyses highlighting that in the last 15 years, particularly in the MENA region, ceasefire agreements have become more important as a mechanism for addressing armed conflicts alongside a decline in broader and more comprehensive peace processes that address the root causes of conflicts amid the multiplication of actors involved both in the conflicts and in mediation initiatives.²²

Other military-security issues also featured prominently on the agendas, such as the **disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants (DDR)** and security sector reform (SSR). The issues of DDR and SSR were present in most cases analysed in Africa, such as Chad, Ethiopia (Tigray), the CAR, the DRC,

Senegal (Casamance), South Sudan and Libya. DDR also took place in Asia, in the peace processes in the Philippines with the MILF and MNLF. In the Americas, a central issue on the agendas of the negotiations with different Colombian armed groups during 2025 was demobilisation and the establishment of Temporary Location Zones, where combatants will transition from military to civilian life. The handover of weaponry by insurgent groups as part of demobilisation processes was also negotiated. In Europe, the PKK withdrew its forces still present in Türkiye to northern Iraq and initiated a symbolic disarmament. One of the main issues under discussion was the disarmament and future demobilisation and reintegration of the group's combatants. In the Middle East, the disarmament of armed actors was the subject of negotiations affecting Israel–Palestine, with Hamas indicating its willingness to hand over 'defensive weapons', but not 'offensive' ones. Regarding other notable cases in that region, the Lebanese armed group Hezbollah refused to disarm or possibly integrate into the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) until Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon was guaranteed. In Syria, one of the key points of discussion was the possible integration of Kurdish and Druze forces into the new Syrian Armed Forces.

Issues related to **autonomy, self-determination, independence, territorial integration and the recognition of the identity** of different minorities were also prominent. This was true in the peace processes of Ethiopia, Ethiopia (Tigray), Senegal (Casamance), South Sudan, Morocco-Western Sahara, India (Nagaland), the Philippines (MILF, MNLF), Myanmar, Papua New Guinea (Bougainville) and Thailand (South). In Europe, although the issue of self-proclaimed independent disputed territories was crucial, the negotiations tended to postpone it, prioritising other issues first, as in Cyprus, Georgia and Moldova. Meanwhile, some negotiations addressed issues related to **border demarcation, state sovereignty and mutual recognition**. These issues were important in peace processes in Africa between Eritrea and Ethiopia, between Sudan and South Sudan, between Ethiopia and Somalia and between Somalia and Somaliland; in the Americas between Venezuela and Guyana; in Asia between Thailand and Cambodia; and in Europe between Armenia and Azerbaijan, whilst the Serbia-Kosovo case also involved the normalisation of relations. Furthermore, specifically in the Middle East, another issue was **territorial withdrawal**, found on the agendas of Israel–Palestine, Israel–Lebanon (Hezbollah) and Israel–Syria, given Israel's expansion of territorial occupation.

Issues relating to countries' **governance** and political transitions, power-sharing and electoral processes were

22. Poppelreuter, Philip, Qabas al-Musawi and Alexander Bramble, *Gendering Ceasefires in the MENA Region: The Cases of Gaza and Lebanon*, AGDA Insight, Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy e Inclusive Peace, November 2025.

also addressed. Governance-related issues were present in ongoing negotiations in various contexts in Africa, such as Chad, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Libya. In the Americas, much of the content of the negotiations in Haiti revolved around the possibilities of political transition there and the governability of this transition amid intense violence and extreme governmental fragility. Other items on negotiating agendas included **prisoner exchanges**, such as in Russia–Ukraine, Israel–Palestine and Yemen, as well as other humanitarian challenges, including access to aid, and procedural issues, especially in Asian peace processes.

In 2025, most dialogue and negotiating processes followed a trend of encountering difficulties, stagnation and even setbacks. In Africa, the cases of Eritrea–Ethiopia, Ethiopia (Tigray), Ethiopia–Egypt–Sudan, Ethiopia–Somalia, Libya, Morocco–Western Sahara, CAR, Somalia, Somalia–Somaliland, Sudan, South Sudan and Sudan–South Sudan worsened due to impasse, deadlock and in some cases a situation on the brink of collapse. Among other cases, the peace process in the Ethiopian region of Tigray reached its most fragile moment since the Pretoria Peace Agreement was signed in November 2022, affected by factors such as incomplete implementation of the agreement, growing internal political and military fragmentation in Tigray and a deterioration in relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea. In Sudan, peace initiatives were once again unsuccessful and failed to contain violence during a year characterised by the de facto division of the country into two areas of influence, one controlled by the Sudanese Army and the other by the paramilitary RSF, with two parallel governments. In Asia, various dialogue processes also suffered deadlock and even setbacks. The negotiations between the Philippines and the MILF regarding the implementation of the 2014 peace agreement entered a situation considered dangerous in 2025, with trust between the parties at its lowest levels since 2014 and the MILF ordering the suspension of the demobilisation of 14,000 combatants until the government complied with several provisions of the peace agreement. The cases of Thailand (south), India (Nagaland), the Philippines (NDF), Papua New Guinea and the Korean peninsula also faced paralysis or significant difficulties. In the Americas, there was a clear setback in the Colombian peace process involving the ELN, as the negotiations were officially suspended in early 2025 and did not resume for the rest of the year. The rest of the peace processes faced stagnation or significant difficulties, such as the divisions of Colombian armed groups, which led to transformations in several processes. In the Middle East, some peace processes remained deadlocked, such as Yemen, affected by the dynamics of regional upheaval and the interrelationship of conflicts. In Europe, the negotiating processes between Serbia–Kosovo, Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Russia) and Moldova (Transdniestria)

In 2025, most of the dialogue and negotiating processes faced difficulties, impasse and setbacks

remained largely at an impasse, bogged down by internal difficulties and geopolitical divisions.

Many other peace processes trended both ways across all regions, with a combination of difficulties and obstacles and some often limited and fragile progress, as well as the achievement of various agreements (see Tabla 1.5.). This ambivalent evolution occurred in Africa in cases such as Ethiopia (Amhara), in the national dialogue processes in Ethiopia, South Africa and Mozambique and in the DRC, where some diplomatic progress was made when peace agreements were signed between the DRC and Rwanda. However, these agreements did not reduce violence in one of the most critical years in the DRC in the last decade. In various scenarios in Asia and the Pacific, some progress was also made, but it was also relative. In several cases (Afghanistan–Pakistan, Thailand–Cambodia and Myanmar), violence reduction agreements were signed; in some instances these included ceasefires, demilitarisation measures and confidence-building initiatives. Although such agreements led to a reduction in tension, in all three cases high levels of violence were reported in 2025 and the security situation remained volatile and uncertain at the end of the year. In the Americas, several partial agreements stood out, reached during the year between the Colombian government and the armed group Comuneros del Sur. In Europe, a large part of the peace processes trended both ways. The agreement reached between Armenia and Azerbaijan, pending signature, was a historic step towards the normalisation of relations after decades of conflict. Nevertheless, the agreement included problematic aspects from a human rights and transitional justice perspective, such as by withdrawing and discarding proceedings initiated in the judicial sphere, and leaving out issues related to the impacts of the conflict on populations and addressing those consequences. The resumption of political-military negotiations in various formats in the peace process in Russia–Ukraine represented a significant new development compared to previous years, but it advanced with great difficulties, shaped by the antagonistic positions of the warring parties. In the Middle East, the ceasefires reached, notably in the cases of Israel–Palestine and Yemen (Houthi)–US, Syria, or implemented, such as in Israel–Lebanon (Hezbollah), were fragile, partial or subject to continuous violations. These agreements resulted in a partial and relative reduction of violence for civilian populations subjected to extremely severe impacts and, in some cases, limited and insufficient access to humanitarian aid to try to alleviate vast needs.

Finally, with regard to the **gender, peace and security agenda**, as in previous years, the analysis of the different processes in 2025 confirms the obstacles that women face in participating in formal processes and the difficulties in incorporating a gender perspective

Table 1.5. Main agreements of 2025

Peace processes	Agreements
Armenia – Azerbaijan	In March 2025 the two governments separately announced the completion of the final text of an agreement, formally known as the Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and Interstate Relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan. At the end of the year, it was still pending signature and subject to conditions demanded by Azerbaijan. The agreement, comprising 17 points, designates the borders between the former USSR republics as the international borders of the independent states recognised by the international community and enshrines recognition of and respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of international borders and the political independence of both countries (Article 1 of the agreement). The text also commits the parties not to make territorial claims against the other party; to refrain from the use or threats of the use of force against each other's territorial integrity or political independence; and not to interfere in the internal affairs of the other party (Articles 2, 3 and 4). The agreement also includes a commitment not to deploy third-party forces on their shared border (Article 7) and to withdraw and dismiss or resolve disputes and proceedings brought before the courts (Article 15). Besides, at a trilateral meeting in Washington on 8 August between Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and US President Donald Trump, the Azerbaijani and Armenian leaders signed a seven-point joint declaration. The first point endorses and 'initiates' the text of the March agreement and notes mutual recognition of the need for further steps towards its final signing and ratification. As part of these trilateral arrangements, the parties agreed to resolve the issue of the connection between Azerbaijan and its Nakhchivan enclave through a project called the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP), to be operated and exploited by a US-Armenian consortium.
Chad	In April 2025, the government of Chad and the armed group known as the Miski Self-Defence Committee reached a peace agreement involving local figures such as former minister Adoum Younousmi and the government's official mediator and former opposition figure, Saleh Kebzabo. The agreement included an amnesty for combatants and security forces, the temporary suspension of mining activities and a commitment to review the distribution of gold revenues.
Colombia (Comuneros del Sur)	The government of Colombia and the armed group Comuneros del Sur reached several partial agreements during the year, including Agreement No. 6 on memory, truth and the dignity of victims (for the application of the Non-Judicial Mechanism for Contribution to Truth); Agreement No. 7 on the substitution of illegal crops (the transformation of illegal economies in the department of Nariño); Agreement No. 8 on the creation of a Temporary Zone for the Co-Construction of Territorial Peace in the municipality of Mallama; Agreement No. 9 on the comprehensive reintegration of Comuneros del Sur of Nariño for peace and territorial transformation (for the transition to civilian life of members of the armed group); Agreement No. 10 on the strengthening of democracy in the territory; and Agreement No. 11 on the protection of the rights of children and adolescents as part of the table for the shared construction of territorial peace in Nariño.
DRC	On 27 June, the foreign ministers of Rwanda and the DRC signed a US-facilitated agreement in Washington in the presence of US President Donald Trump. Known as the Washington Agreement, it rested on three main pillars: 1) the gradual withdrawal of Rwandan troops from Congolese soil; 2) a security operation conducted through the creation of a joint security coordination mechanism within 30 days; and 3) the establishment of regional economic integration mechanisms within 90 days, closely linked to the exploitation and marketing of strategic minerals, with the direct involvement of US companies. As part of the agreement, the DRC was supposed to facilitate the dismantlement of the FDLR, whilst Rwanda pledged to withdraw its troops and end its support for the M23. However, the agreement did not directly include the M23 or the FDLR. On 4 December, President Tshisekedi and President Kagame met in Washington with US President Donald Trump to ratify the Washington Agreement.
Ethiopia (Amhara)	On 4 December, the Amhara regional government and a Fano militia faction called the Amhara Fano Popular Organisation (AFPO) reached a peace agreement mediated by the AU and the IGAD. The agreement includes formal commitments to a cessation of hostilities, the reintegration of combatants into official security structures under certain conditions and the opening of channels for political dialogue. However, the agreement did not constitute a definitive solution for all actors or for all Fano militia factions because the latter lack a unified chain of command.
Israel – Palestine	Following mediation by Qatar, Egypt and the US, a ceasefire agreement for Gaza was announced on 15 January. The agreement was structured in three phases. The first phase, lasting 42 days, provided for the release of a first group of Israelis held by Hamas in exchange for the release of Palestinians detained by Israel, an increase in humanitarian aid access to the Gaza Strip and an Israeli withdrawal from the most populated areas of Gaza. The second phase, whose duration was not determined, was to involve the exchange of the remaining prisoners held by Hamas for Palestinians detained by Israel and the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza. However, this second phase was not implemented, nor was the third, and Israel broke the ceasefire on 18 March, intensifying its military campaign. It was not until October that the US and Israel jointly announced a 20-point plan for Gaza, presented as an ultimatum to Hamas. Trump's proposal included a ceasefire, new prisoner exchanges, the reactivation of humanitarian aid to Gaza, a phased Israeli withdrawal, the deployment of an international 'stabilisation' force and the establishment of a technocratic government with Palestinian and international figures supervised by a Board of Peace, which would also oversee the reconstruction of Gaza. Despite ambiguities and abundant criticism, Trump's plan for Gaza was endorsed by the UN Security Council through Resolution 2803, adopted in November.

Peace processes Agreements

Senegal (Casamance)	In February 2025, the government of Senegal and the faction of the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) led by César Atoute Badiate, the Provisional Committee of the Unified Political and Combat Wings of the MFDC, reaffirmed their commitment to peace during a meeting held in Bissau, under the mediation of Guinea-Bissau and with the support of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue. The negotiations focused on security, justice and political demands, providing continuity to the disarmament agreement signed in 2022. Though the practical aspects of disarmament remain to be defined, both parties ratified their willingness to move the process forward. The agreement provides for amnesties, pardons and reintegration programmes, making it an important step towards resolving the Casamance conflict for good.
Yemen (Houthis) – USA	On 6 May, US President Donald Trump announced the suspension of the intense aerial offensive that the US had conducted against the Yemeni group in the preceding months. Oman then reported that it had mediated a ceasefire between the parties that committed them not to attack each other. According to reports, the agreement stipulates that Washington halts its military operation and the Houthis cease their attacks on military vessels and vessels linked to US maritime commerce and allow freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. Both parties presented the agreement as a victory. The agreement did not include Israel, so hostilities between the Houthis and the Israeli government continued in the following months until the US announced a 'ceasefire' in Gaza in October.

into negotiations. Peace processes continued to be characterised mostly by the limited participation of women in negotiating and mediation teams. For the most part, **no specific participation mechanisms were designed for women in most negotiations, and a gender approach and the recognition of the rights of women and the LGBTIQ+ population were left out of much of the negotiating agendas.**

The Americas was the only region in which women's participation and leadership was observed in many of the active peace negotiations, but without this implying that gender agendas were in any way pre-eminent. In

that region, two government negotiating delegations were headed by women: the delegation participating in the negotiations with the ELN, led by Vera Grabe since her appointment in 2023, and the government delegation in the negotiations with the EMBF, which came to be headed by Gloria Quiceno following her appointment in 2025. In the Americas, women were involved in all negotiating delegations and also as part of some facilitating actors. Despite the limitations and obstacles encountered in other regions, some initiatives stood out in Libya, Mozambique, Somalia and South Africa regarding the participation of women in negotiating teams and consultation and support spaces

Table 1.6. Peace processes and negotiations in which at least one of the negotiating parties has a National Action Plan 1325²³

Peace processes and negotiations	Country with a National Action Plan 1325 and a negotiator in the peace process
AFRICA (14)	
CAR	CAR (2019-2022)
Chad	Chad (2023-2027)
DRC	DRC (2019-2022)
Ethiopia – Egypt – Sudan	Sudan (2020-2022)
Ethiopia – Somalia (Somaliland)	Somalia (2021-2025)
Morocco – Western Sahara	Morocco (2021-2024) ²⁴
Mozambique	Mozambique (2018-2022)
Senegal (Casamance)	Senegal (2020-2024)
Somalia	Somalia (2021-2025)
Somalia – Somaliland	Somalia (2021-2025)
South Africa	South Africa (2020-2025)
South Sudan	South Sudan (2015-2020)
Sudan	Sudan (2020-2022)
Sudan – South Sudan	Sudan (2020-2022), South Sudan (2015-2020)
AMERICA (5)	
Colombia (CNEB)	Colombia (2024-2034)
Colombia (Comuneros del Sur)	Colombia (2024-2034)

23. Table prepared with data on peace processes collected by Escola de Cultura de Pau, and with data on national action plans from the WPS Focal Points Network and from Security Women. In parentheses, the dates of the period of the last national action plan as of December 2025.

24. The National Action Plan of Morocco (2021-2024) was extended in 2025 for the period 2025-2026.

Peace processes and negotiations	Country with a National Action Plan 1325 and a negotiator in the peace process
AMERICA (5)	
Colombia (ELN)	Colombia (2024-2034)
Colombia (EMBF)	Colombia (2024-2034)
Colombia (FARC)	Colombia (2024-2034)
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (7)	
Afghanistan – Pakistan	Afghanistan (2015-2022)
North Korea – South Korea	South Korea (2024-2027)
North Korea – USA	USA (2023)
Philippines (MILF)	Philippines (2023-2033)
Philippines (MNLF)	Philippines (2023-2033)
Philippines (NDF)	Philippines (2023-2033)
Thailand (south)	Thailand (2024-2027)
EUROPE (6)	
Armenia – Azerbaijan	Armenia (2025-2027)
Cyprus	Republic of Cyprus (2021-2025)
Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia)	Georgia (2022-2024)
Moldova (Transnistria)	Moldova (2023-2027)
Serbia – Kosovo	Serbia (2025-2027), Kosovo (2013-2015) ²⁵
Russia – Ukraine	Ukraine (2021-2025)
MIDDLE EAST (6)	
Iran (nuclear programme)	USA (2023), France (2021-2025) ²⁶ , United Kingdom (2023-2027) ²⁷ , Germany (2021-2024) ²⁸
Israel – Lebanon (Hezbollah)	Lebanon (2019-2023)
Israel – Palestine	Palestine (2020-2024)
Palestine	Palestine (2020-2024)
Yemen	Yemen (2020-2022)
Yemen (Houthis) – USA	Yemen (2020-2022), USA (2023)

for negotiating processes. In Libya, women achieved 35% representation in the initiatives promoted during the year by the UN: the Advisory Committee and the Structured Dialogue, conceived as advisory and consultation forums to help to unblock the country's peace negotiations. In Asia and the Pacific, one of the few exceptions to the practically non-existent participation of women in formal negotiations was the case of the Philippines, where some women held key positions in the negotiating process between the government and the NDF, such as the facilitator of the dialogue and the chair of the NDF's negotiating panel. In Europe and the Middle East, the country delegations continued to have predominantly male leadership. In contrast, intergovernmental bodies in Europe did include women in mediation positions, unlike most mediating states. In the Middle East, one of the few exceptions was UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Jeanine Hennis-Passchaert's involvement in the monitoring mechanism for the Israel–Lebanon (Hezbollah) ceasefire.

In 2025, 38 of the 53 peace negotiations involved at least one negotiating country that had a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, which should promote the participation of women in these processes. Of these 38 processes, 36.8% (14 cases) took in Africa, 18.4% in Asia and the Pacific (seven cases), 15.8% in Europe and the Middle East (six cases each) and 13.2% in the Americas. Twenty-nine countries that were negotiating parties in peace negotiations in 2025 had a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, which should promote the participation of women in such processes. **However, the official implementation period of national action plans had ended in various countries and new generations of plans had not been officially approved.** This was the case in Mozambique, the DRC, the CAR, Senegal (Casamance), Sudan, South Sudan, Afghanistan, Georgia, Kosovo, Germany, Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen and the US. Despite having this tool at their disposal, most peace negotiations continued to exclude women, and the gender perspective was not incorporated into the dynamics of the peace processes

25. Kosovo is included as a negotiating country because, although Kosovo's international legal status remains unclear, it has been recognised as a state by more than one hundred countries. Furthermore, the International Court of Justice issued an advisory opinion in 2010 establishing that Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence did not violate international law. Kosovo's National Action Plan has not been formally renewed, but Kosovo has a Gender Equality Programme (2020-2024), which commits to women's participation in peace negotiation and reconciliation processes.

26. France is a negotiating party in the Iran (nuclear programme) process.

27. The United Kingdom is a negotiating party in the Iran (nuclear programme) process.

28. Germany is a negotiating party in the Iran (nuclear programme) process.

either, calling into question the effectiveness of action plans as tools for inclusive peacebuilding.

Despite the exclusion and obstacles to women's participation, **women's civil society organisations** took action regarding many peace processes, demanding involvement in negotiations, raising demands and recommendations on substantive issues, demanding ceasefires and taking part in multiple initiatives, such as emergency responses to conflicts. Among many other cases, the first Women, Peace and Security Summit was held in Bougainville, during which women's organisations presented a document demanding that Bougainville's future constitution guarantee 50% representation of women at all decision-making levels. Civil society actors

participated in various processes in the Americas, presenting proposals to enrich the negotiating agendas with approaches incorporating a gender and inclusive perspective. At the local level in Africa, networks of women mediators and peacebuilders were consolidated, such as the Somali Women Peace Network, which facilitated community conflict resolution and support for victims of gender-based violence in approximately 17 districts across the country. Kurdish women from Türkiye organised meetings during the year in different parts of the country with various groups of women to share information and expand discussions on the dialogue in the country. Cypriot women's organisations participated in actions aimed at strengthening alliances among themselves and at influencing the peace process.

2. Peace negotiations in Africa

- Nineteen peace processes and negotiations were identified in Africa in 2025, accounting for nearly 36% of the 53 worldwide. Most of them deteriorated, however.
- National dialogues were launched in both Mozambique and South Africa during the year, seeking to incorporate reforms and ease social and political tensions.
- The resolution of the various internal conflicts and regional crises facing Ethiopia was stalled by multiple endogenous and exogenous factors.
- The government of Senegal and a faction of the MFDC reaffirmed their commitment to peace in Casamance.
- The Qatari-US diplomatic initiative between the DRC and Rwanda failed whilst the M23/Rwanda offensive persisted, along with the progressive involvement of Burundi, which could lead to a regional escalation of the conflict.
- The peace agreement in South Sudan teetered on the brink of collapse following the arrest of former Vice President Riek Machar.

This chapter analyses the peace processes and negotiations in Africa in 2025. First it examines the general characteristics and trends of peace processes in the region, then it delves into the evolution of each of the cases throughout the year, including references to the gender, peace and security agenda. At the beginning of the chapter, a map is included that identifies the African countries that were the scene of negotiations during 2025.

Table 2.1. **Summary of peace processes and negotiations in the Africa in 2025**

Peace processes and negotiations	Negotiating actors	Third parties
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
Chad¹	The 18 armed groups that did not sign the Doha Agreement (2022) and that did not participate in the Inclusive and Sovereign National Dialogue (DNIS) formed the Cadre Permanent de Concertation et de Réflexion (CPCR), including FACT and CCSMR. Government and Miski Self-Defense Committee	Community of Sant'Egidio
DRC	Government of the DRC, government of Rwanda, armed group M23, armed groups from the eastern part of the country, political opposition and civil society	AU, SADC, ICGLR, EAC, EU, UN, OIF, USA, Angola, Qatar
Eritrea – Ethiopia	Eritrea, Ethiopia	United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, USA
Ethiopia	Government, political parties, political and social opposition, citizens	UNDP, EU, Germany, Norway, Berghof Foundation
Ethiopia (Amhara)	Ethiopia, Fano militia faction (Amhara Fano Popular Organization, AFPO)	Amhara Peace Council, AU, IGAD
Ethiopia (Tigray)	Federal Government, political and military authorities of the Ethiopian region of Tigray (Tigray People's Liberation Front)	AU, USA, IGAD
Ethiopia – Egypt – Sudan	Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan	AU, World Bank (WB), UAE, EU and USA

1. In the case of Chad, there are two processes: firstly, a consultation process involving the faction of the insurgency that did not sign the 2022 Doha Agreement, facilitated by the Community of Sant'Egidio; and secondly, the negotiations and peace agreement in Miski (Tibesti region) between the Government and the Miski Self-Defence Committee.

Peace processes and negotiations	Negotiating actors	Third parties
Ethiopia – Somalia (Somaliland)	Ethiopia, Somalia	Türkiye, Qatar
Libya	Government of National Unity (GNU), Government of National Stability (GNS), Presidential Council, High State Council (HSC), House of Representatives (HoR), LNA/ALAF	UN, Quartet (UN, Arab League, AU, EU), Germany, France, Italy, UK, USA, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Türkiye, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia (Berlin Process)
Morocco – Western Sahara	Morocco, Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia elHamra and Río de Oro (POLISARIO Front)	UN, Algeria and Mauritania, Group of Friends of Western Sahara (France, USA, Spain, United Kingdom and Russia)
Mozambique	Government, social and political opposition	Instituto para Democracia Multipartidária (IMD)
Senegal (Casamance)	Government, factions of the Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC)	ECOWAS, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD), Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde, Sub-regional Coordinator for Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Casamance (COSPAC)
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, Türkiye, AU
Somalia – Somaliland	Federal Government of Somalia, Republic of Somaliland	Türkiye, Norway
South Africa	Government, social and political opposition	--
South Sudan²	Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) (2018): Government (SPLM), SPLM/A-in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO), and several minor groups (SSOA, SPLM-FD, among others), two independent factions of the SPLM-IO: the Kitwang faction led by Simon Gatwech Dual and the faction headed by General Johnson Olony. Peace talks in Rome-Nairobi (Tumaini Initiative): Non-Signatory South Sudan Opposition Groups (NS-SSOG, previously SSOMA): National Salvation Front (NAS), South Sudan United Front (SSUF), the Real SPLM, South Sudan People's Patriotic Movement (SSPPM).	Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) (2018): IGAD Plus (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, Rome-Nairobi negotiations: Kenya, Community of Sant'Egidio
Sudan	Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF)	'Quad' Mechanism or Quartet (USA, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and UAE), Trilateral Mechanism (UN, AU and the IGAD (Ethiopia, South Sudan, Djibouti, Kenya, Uganda), Switzerland, Türkiye, EU
Sudan – South Sudan	Government of Sudan, Government of South Sudan, Ethnic communities of the Abyei region	IGAD, African Union Border Programme (AUBP), Egypt, Libya, USA, EU, UNISFA, UN

*Those in bold are analysed in chapter 2.1.

2.1 Negotiations in 2025: regional trends

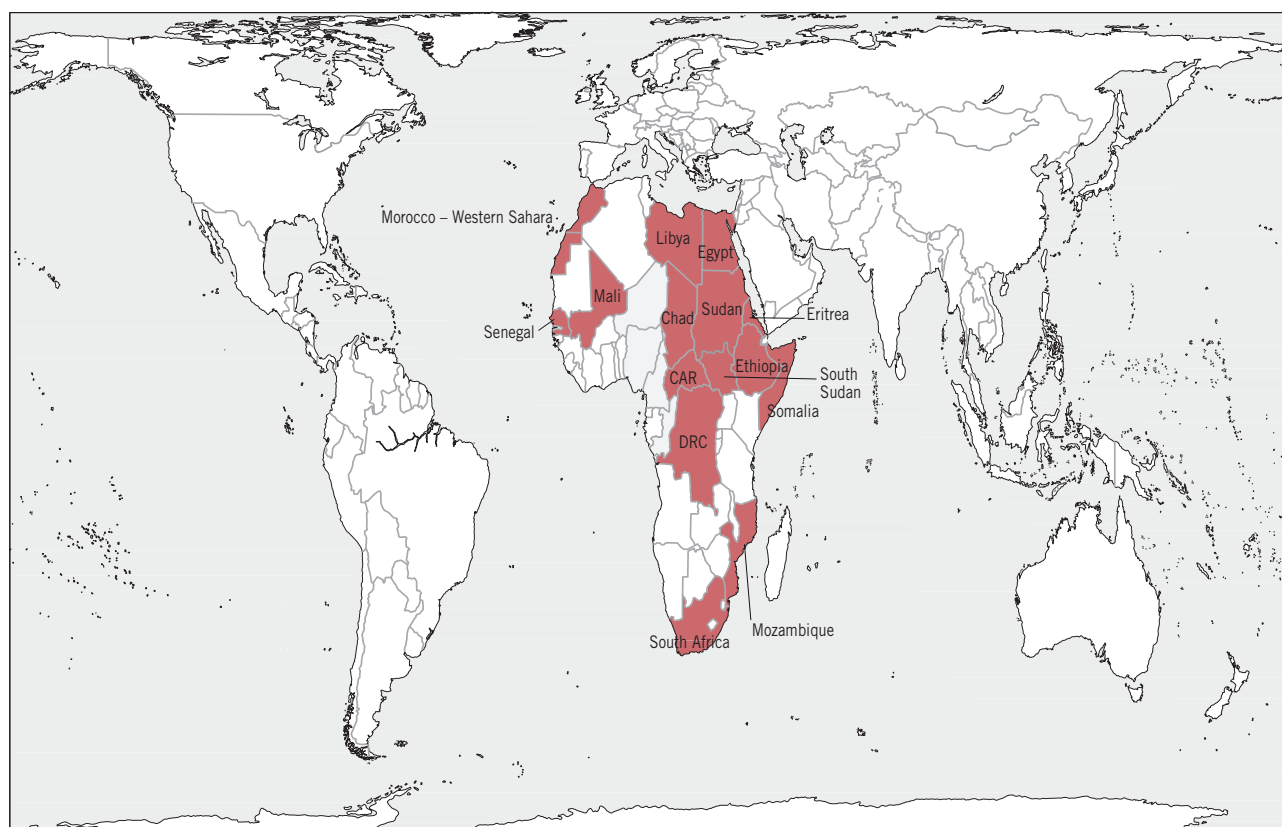
Throughout 2025, there were **19 peace processes and negotiations in Africa**, accounting for 36% of the 53 peace processes identified worldwide. This figure is similar to the one in previous years (20 peace processes and negotiations in 2024, 18 peace processes and negotiations in 2023, 15 in 2022, 12 in 2021, 13 in 2020 and 19 in 2019), though fewer than reported in 2018 (22). Eleven negotiations were located in the Horn of Africa (Eritrea-Ethiopia, Ethiopia, Ethiopia (Amhara), Ethiopia (Tigray), Ethiopia-Egypt-Sudan, Ethiopia-Somalia (Somaliland), Somalia, Somalia-Somaliland, Sudan, South Sudan and Sudan-South Sudan), three in Central Africa (Chad, the CAR and the DRC), one in

West Africa (Senegal (Casamance)), two in North Africa (Libya and Morocco-Western Sahara) and the remaining two in southern Africa, in Mozambique and South Africa. **Three cases ceased to be analysed in 2025 compared to 2024 as a consequence of the lack of contacts and negotiations during the year: Mali, Cameroon and the Ethiopian region of Oromia.**³ Firstly, the **2015 Accord for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali (known as the Algiers Accords) was not reactivated**. It had been suspended by the Malian military junta in early 2024 following the resumption of armed clashes in late 2023 between the Malian Armed Forces, supported by Wagner Group paramilitaries, and the Arab-Tuareg

2. This peace negotiation process includes two distinct spaces: 1) Negotiations on the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) (2018); and 2) Peace negotiations between the Government and armed groups not signatory to the R-ARCSS in Rome and Nairobi. The actors involved in each of these are specified in the "actors" column.

3. See Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Peace Talks in Focus 2024. Report on Trends and Scenarios*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2025.

Map 2.1. Peace negotiations in Africa in 2025



■ Countries with peace processes and negotiations in Africa in 2025

armed groups that had signed it. Furthermore, no negotiations of any kind took place with the armed movements of northern Mali and the security situation actually deteriorated. Secondly, **no progress was made**

towards reopening a negotiating process between the government of Cameroon and the separatist political-military movements of the English-speaking Northwest and Southwest regions since the end of the Swiss track (2019-2022) and Canadian facilitation (2022-2023). The Cameroonian government maintained its approach focused on a security-based response and the limited application of decentralisation measures, without resuming exploratory contacts similar to those promoted between 2022 and 2023. Furthermore, the political context was marked by tensions arising from the presidential election in October 2025, which made Paul Biya the longest-serving head of state in the world, in power since 1982. Thirdly, the **Ethiopian region of Oromia** remained mired in conflict and violence, marked by the **lack of negotiations** between the federal government and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA). The year was dominated by counterinsurgency operations, episodes of irregular violence and inter-communal conflicts, and no formal dialogue process comparable to the exploratory contacts held in Tanzania in 2023 was relaunched. There was no structured peace initiative mediated by third parties involving the OLA

as a whole. Instead, the federal government opted for a **dual strategy of military pressure and selective co-optation**, aimed at exploiting internal divisions within the insurgency. In this regard, in December 2025 the Ethiopian authorities announced the **surrender of over 200 OLA armed combatants in the East Wollega zone, following negotiations with regional and federal authorities**. This event was presented as a success of the government's strategy of combining military pressure with incentives for dialogue.⁴ Furthermore, a fourth case ceased to be analysed due to the **completion of the formal implementation of the 2019 peace agreement in Mozambique**, in relation to the armed conflict with RENAMO. In June 2023, the process was formally completed with the disarmament and demobilisation of the last group of former combatants and the closure of the last military base and its headquarters in Vunduzi, in Sofala province. Nevertheless, some aspects of the peace agreement remained pending, such as the decentralisation process and national reconciliation initiatives, as demonstrated by the post-electoral conflict of 2024 and the dialogue and negotiation initiatives arising from it, which are analysed in the chapter.

Seven of these 19 peace negotiations were linked to armed conflicts: Ethiopia (Amhara), Libya, the CAR, the DRC, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan. The other twelve negotiating processes took place in contexts

4. Kedir, Sadik, *Ethiopian army says over 200 armed fighters surrender in western Oromia*, Anadolu, 21 December 2025.

of socio-political crisis, which in some cases had also suffered episodes of war: Chad, Eritrea-Ethiopia, Ethiopia, Ethiopia (Tigray), Ethiopia-Egypt-Sudan, Ethiopia-Somalia (Somaliland), Morocco-Western Sahara, Mozambique, Senegal (Casamance), Somalia-Somaliland, South Africa and Sudan-South Sudan. Some of the peace processes corresponded to conflicts that began in the last decade –Sudan (2023)–, while others date back to the previous decade, like the CAR (2006), Sudan (2003), South Sudan (2009) and Sudan-South Sudan. Still other conflicts and crisis situations date back to the 1990s, such as the cases of the DRC and Somalia, or even further, as is the case of Ethiopia and Somalia, countries that have historically been at odds and at the same time are inevitably united by many factors, so the initiatives and peace negotiations linked to these conflicts have evolved profoundly since their origin in terms of the actors involved and the causes of the disputes.

The longest-running peace process studied in Africa, which suffers from structural paralysis, is the one between Morocco and Western Sahara, which began after the 1991 ceasefire agreement. Since the fall of Siad Barre in Somalia in 1991 and the self-proclamation of Somaliland as an independent republic that same year, though it was not recognised by the international community, different initiatives have failed to promote reconciliation between both administrations and to reintegrate Somaliland into Somalia. These cases demonstrate that the wounds left open during the colonial and post-colonial periods have continued to shape the present and future of these areas.

In relation to the actors participating in the negotiations, in 2025 only four negotiating processes exclusively involve governments of the respective countries and armed groups or political and military movements. These are the cases of Ethiopia, with the implementation of the agreement between the Ethiopian federal government and the political and military authorities of the Tigray region, as well as the agreement between the Ethiopian federal government and one of the Fano militia factions in the Amhara region; the CAR, between the government and the armed groups that did not abandon the peace process in December 2020, as well as the groups that did abandon it in 2020 and have gradually signed it in recent years; and Senegal, between the government and a faction of the Movement of Democratic Forces in the Casamance (MFDC).

Meanwhile, five of the other 19 peace processes were characterised by a more complex array of actors, including governments, armed groups and the political and social opposition. This was observed in Libya,

Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and the DRC. Other negotiating processes to resolve interstate disputes were led by the governments of neighbouring countries or regional organisations. This was true of the dialogue to settle the disputes between Sudan and South Sudan, Eritrea and Ethiopia and Ethiopia and Somalia, as well as the talks between Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan regarding the management of the waters of the Nile River. Furthermore, national dialogue processes continued to grow between political and social actors in different countries, such as Ethiopia, Mozambique and South Africa.

All the peace processes and negotiations studied in Africa enjoyed third-party involvement and support.

These third parties included international organisations, regional organisations, states, religious and mediation- and facilitation-specialised organisations, with the exception of the national dialogue in South Africa. All these processes and negotiations had more than one actor performing mediation and facilitation tasks, with the UN and the AU playing the predominant role.

States also continued to play a prominent role as third parties in Africa, leading or supporting most of the peace processes and negotiations analysed.

In 2025, Türkiye played a notable role in the peace negotiations between Ethiopia and Somalia. Saudi Arabia, the US, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Switzerland, amongst other states, were involved in the negotiating process between the Sudanese Army and the RSF. Saudi Arabia also assisted the negotiations over the dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Organisations specialised in mediation and facilitation were also important, especially the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, which has played a major role in negotiations in Ethiopia, Libya, the CAR and Senegal in recent years. The same was true of the Community of Sant'Egidio, which worked to support negotiations in Chad, the CAR and South Sudan, just as it has done previously in Mozambique.

As part of this proliferation of mediators, **the participation of third parties in joint formats continued to be frequent, as in previous years**, such as groups of friends and support groups. This was the case with the International Support Group (which includes the UN and the EU) and the African Union Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation, which was involved in the CAR and promoted by the AU and the CEEAC, with support from the UN, ICGLR, Angola, Gabon, the Republic of the Congo and Chad, and coexisted with other mediators in the CAR; other coordination formats included the IGAD Plus, which facilitates dialogue in South Sudan and which consists of the IGAD, the five members

Three cases ceased to be analysed as negotiating processes in 2025 (Mali, Cameroon and Oromia) due to the lack of contacts and negotiations, whilst Mozambique completed the formal implementation of its 2019 peace agreement

of the African Union High-Level Ad Hoc Committee (Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Chad and Algeria). The outbreak of a new armed conflict in Sudan in 2023 was detrimental to the progress achieved thanks to the dual mediation process operational thus far: the trilateral mechanism (made up of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), the AU and the IGAD) and the Quad (which includes the US, the UK, Saudi Arabia and the UAE), which were unified in the Aligned for Advancing Lifesaving and Peace in Sudan (ALPS) Group.

Regarding the **agendas** of the negotiations, there were **cessations of hostilities and ceasefire agreements** in different contexts, like in Libya, in the Ethiopian regions of Amhara and Tigray, Senegal (Casamance), Sudan or the DRC, in relation to the armed groups in the east of the country and especially M23. **Security sector reform** was also a recurrent issue, especially the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants and the reform or creation of new security forces in peace agreements with various types and names, such as mixed units, joint forces or unified national armies. These were found in most of the cases analysed, such as Chad, Ethiopia (Tigray), Mozambique, the CAR, the DRC, Senegal (Casamance), Sudan, South Sudan and Libya. In many of these contexts, **amnesties and pardons** for crimes committed by armed groups and security forces during the conflicts formed part of the negotiating processes and the agreements reached. Issues related to **governance** were also discussed in the ongoing negotiations in various contexts, such as in Chad, Mali, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Libya.

Degrees of self-government and levels of administrative decentralisation, including independence for some areas, were discussed in Ethiopia, Ethiopia (Tigray), Mali, Senegal (Casamance), South Sudan, and Morocco-Western Sahara. Though it was particular, the negotiating process between Somalia and Somaliland would be part of this group. Finally, with regard to the **management of resources and territory**, unfinished border demarcations were another subject of negotiations in Africa, as in the disputes between Eritrea and Ethiopia and between Sudan and South Sudan, the disputes between Ethiopia and Somalia and between Somalia and Somaliland, as well as was the dispute over the management of the waters of the Nile River between Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan.

Peace negotiations generally deteriorated in Africa in 2025, with some lacking any dialogue at all. The only initiative that trended positively during the year took place in Senegal, where the government and a faction of the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) reaffirmed their commitment to peace in the Casamance region. In February, both parties, under the auspices of Guinea-Bissau, the guarantor of the process, and with facilitation from the Centre for

Humanitarian Dialogue, held a meeting in which they renewed their commitment to disarmament, agreed on a presidential pardon for imprisoned rebels, amnesty for combatants and a reintegration programme. However, this commitment only involves one faction of the rebel group, which is also least powerful than the other two, and excludes the more radical faction led by Salif Sadio.

Some cases reported progress, although major challenges and difficulties persisted, such as the signing of some peace agreements with insurgent factions in the Ethiopian region of Amhara and in Chad. Nevertheless, the overall picture in both contexts was one of stagnation, paralysis and persistent violence and instability. There were also open challenges and problems in the national dialogue processes in **Ethiopia, South Africa and Mozambique**. In Ethiopia, the national dialogue made no substantive progress and remained in a prolonged deadlock, despite the formal continuity of the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC). The national dialogue remained marginalised amid an agenda dominated by security-based responses, active armed conflicts and intense political polarisation. However, as early as the beginning of 2025, the dialogue was burdened by structural limitations, including deep distrust among the actors, the exclusion of key armed groups, a lack of minimum security conditions and the widespread perception of a lack of political independence. In March, the government of **Mozambique** and the leaders of the opposition political parties with seats in Parliament agreed to launch a **constitutional reform process by opening a National Dialogue**. Nevertheless, the configuration and format of the National Commission for Dialogue and Reform, the body implementing the dialogue, became the main focus of controversy, due to the lack of transparency in its selection of civil society representatives (three of its 21 members) and owing to the exclusion of central opposition figure Venâncio Mondlane. In fact, Mondlane had been behind the main political force (PODEMOS) staging the popular protests, but due to his subsequent departure from the party, he had no parliamentary representation when the Commission was formed and was not included. Though excluded for the time being, the new party created by Mondlane, ANAMOLA, submitted proposals to the Technical Commission that included revising the Constitution and the electoral body, as well as ensuring its formal inclusion in the process. The government of **South Africa** launched a National Dialogue to seek collective solutions to the social, political, economic and security crisis gripping the country. However, the process was weakened by significant absences, such as that of the Democratic Alliance, the second-largest party in the unity government, as well as criticism that the ANC was attempting to control the Dialogue and use it as a campaign platform ahead of the 2026 local elections. Finally, although the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)** experienced one of the most critical years of the last decade, with the intensification of the

armed conflict in the east, notable diplomatic progress was made at the interstate level, with the signing of the **June and December peace agreements between the DRC and Rwanda**. This did not translate into a sustained reduction in violence, however, and a wide gap opened between diplomatic commitments and the reality on the ground due to the exclusion of the M23 from the interstate agreements and the complete lack of commitment to their implementation. Overall, **events in 2025 confirmed the exhaustion of African mediation frameworks (Luanda and Nairobi)** and the displacement of the diplomatic centre of gravity towards non-African third parties, especially Qatar and the US. Furthermore, the centrality in the agreements of economic interests linked to minerals and the persistence of structural causes, such as weak governance, territorial militarisation and armed fragmentation, severely limited the prospects for credible peace processes.

No progress was made in the rest of the dialogue and negotiation initiatives, including those in Eritrea-Ethiopia, Ethiopia (Tigray), Ethiopia-Egypt-Sudan, Ethiopia-Somalia, Libya, Morocco-Western Sahara, CAR, Somalia, Somalia-Somaliland, Sudan, South Sudan and Sudan-South Sudan. On the contrary, they were marked by paralysis and impasse, and in some cases teetered on the brink of collapse. In this regard, it is worth noting the interrelationships between different negotiating dynamics in Africa and how the negative trend of some processes shaped or influenced the course of others. The serious crisis between Eritrea and Ethiopia harmed the implementation of the 2022 peace agreement in the Ethiopian region of Tigray, a process that was on the verge of falling apart. The deadlock affecting the negotiating process initiated in 2018 between **Eritrea and Ethiopia** reached its most critical point, which triggered initiatives by various countries to promote the reactivation of dialogue between the parties, principally Saudi Arabia and the United States. Riyadh initiated a new mediation process between the two countries to prevent a new conflagration. The peace process in the **Ethiopian region of Tigray reached its most fragile point** since the Pretoria Peace Agreement was signed in November 2022. The year was marked by a combination of incomplete implementation of the agreement, growing internal political and military fragmentation in Tigray and a deterioration in relations between Mekelle and Addis Ababa. From a formal perspective, the Pretoria Peace Agreement remained the framework of reference, but some of the most sensitive structural issues remained unimplemented: the territorial dispute over Western Tigray, the return of displaced persons, the complete withdrawal of non-federal forces, transitional justice and the full political reintegration of the TPLF. Furthermore,

Most peace processes in Africa in 2025 were marked by deterioration, stagnation, impasse and, ultimately, a lack of dialogue

the rivalry between the president of the Interim Regional Administration of the Tigray region at the time, Getachew Reda (appointed by the federal government), and TPLF leader Debretsion Gebremichael, culminated in Reda's dismissal in April and his replacement by Lieutenant General Tadesse Werede, a key figure and commander of the Tigrayan forces. This replacement was validated by the federal government. At the end of the year, tension between Mekelle and Addis Ababa seemed to be close to breaking the agreement and restarting hostilities. Meanwhile, **diplomatic confrontation and negotiating deadlock** persisted between **Egypt and Sudan on one side and Ethiopia on the other** regarding the management of the Nile River and the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) in particular. The tripartite dialogue process was not relaunched and the year was marked by unilateral actions and the growing internationalisation of the dispute.

With regard to the diplomatic tension between **Ethiopia and Somalia**, the signing on 11 December 2024 of the Ankara Declaration,⁵ mediated by Türkiye, put an end to the serious crisis caused by the memorandum of understanding previously signed between Ethiopia and the secessionist region of Somaliland in early 2024. Nevertheless, although some technical meetings were held during the first part of the year, by mid-year various analysts noted that the process had stalled despite Türkiye's efforts to relaunch it. Meanwhile, the crisis between **Somalia and Somaliland** resulting from the aforementioned memorandum of understanding between Ethiopia and Somaliland remained open and dialogue remained completely interrupted; the Ankara Declaration, which did not involve Somaliland, widened the rift between Somalia and Somaliland. The creation of an **inclusive national dialogue platform** was announced in **Somalia**, conceived to align political leaders, clans and civil society against al-Shabaab and to strengthen the state's internal cohesion. The initiative received explicit backing from international partners, including the UN, the EU and the US, which considered it a necessary complement to military pressure. However, it did not translate into a sustained process, nor did it incorporate insurgent armed actors, limiting its impact. Furthermore, the lack of dialogue regarding al-Shabaab persisted, as did tensions around the electoral model, which part of the opposition and several federal states, especially Puntland and Jubaland, viewed as a unilateral attempt by President Mohamud to recentralise power, spiking tension and even causing sporadic clashes to break out in Jubaland between the federal government and regional authorities.

With regard to negotiations in North Africa, the political and institutional fracture in **Libya** persisted alongside acts of violence. Despite being low-intensity since the

5. Republic of Türkiye – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Ankara Declaration by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Federal Republic of Somalia facilitated by the Republic of Türkiye*, 11 December 2024.

2020 ceasefire, this violence underscored the fragility of the situation and the challenges in addressing the political and armed conflict. The various initiatives promoted mainly by the UN during 2025 failed to unblock the Libyan process, despite the population's growing frustration with the status quo. The dialogue between **Morocco and the POLISARIO Front** aimed at trying to reactivate negotiations on Western Sahara remained deadlocked and the main development of the period was the more forceful international support for Moroccan arguments, backed by various countries and leading to the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2797, which in October expressly recognised Rabat's autonomy plan as the basis for negotiations to address the dispute.

In Central Africa, the **Central African Republic (CAR)** continued to experience chronic violence and a stalled peace process. The government maintained an official discourse of commitment to peace, though in practice it prioritised a strategy of military control and authoritarian centralisation supported by external security alliances. Sporadic progress on DDR and the reintegration of some armed groups into the peace agreement coexisted with insurgent fragmentation, the weakness of transitional justice and the prioritisation of coercive control over reconciliation. **The peace initiatives in Sudan were unsuccessful once again and failed to contain violence in the country during a year characterised by its de facto split into two areas of influence.** Following the Sudanese Armed Forces' (SAF) recapture of the capital, Khartoum, in March, which had been held by the paramilitary RSF since the beginning of the conflict, the SAF controlled the central, northern and eastern parts of the country. The paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) controlled the southern and western parts of the country following the capture of El Fasher, the capital of Darfur and the SAF's last bastion in the west, in October. This division was deepened by the formation of two parallel governments: one led by the SAF, internationally recognised and based in Port Sudan, and another headed by the RSF in Nyala, South Darfur.⁶ In this scenario, the peace initiatives failed to make progress during the year. **The severe political and military crisis in neighbouring South Sudan threatened to definitively collapse the fragile Revitalised Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS).** The agreement, which establishes a transitional government of national unity based on power-sharing between President Salva Kiir (SPLM) and First Vice President Riek Machar (SPLA-IO), had managed to maintain relative stability since it was signed, but the fragile balance broke in 2025. The crisis crystallised around three converging dynamics: Kiir's unilateral reshuffling of government positions, armed violence in Upper Nile state and, as a direct consequence, Machar's detention in March.

The peace processes in Africa continued to suffer major shortcomings in incorporating the **gender, peace**

and security agenda, characterised by significant gender gaps, the absence of women's participation in negotiating teams and a lack of architecture that integrates the gender perspective into these processes. However, civil society organisations and especially women's organisations expended notable efforts to try to reverse this situation, as did UN Women and other UN agencies and missions on the ground. These groups remained active in promoting the women, peace, and security agenda in different contexts, demanding women's participation in negotiations and inclusive dialogue between the opposing parties. Some of the processes stand out, including those that took place in **Libya, Mozambique, Somalia and South Africa regarding women's participation in negotiating teams and consultation forums supporting negotiating processes.** In **Libya**, women achieved 35% representation in the initiatives promoted during the year by the UN, the Advisory Committee and the Structured Dialogue, conceived as advisory and consultation forums to attempt to unblock the country's peace negotiations. The 40 women participants out of the 120 members of the Structured Dialogue organised themselves into a group they called the Libyan Women Caucus to ensure that that women's perspectives, priorities and demands were substantively incorporated. In Mozambique, 240 women were trained as part of the 'Peace Sentinels' project of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) initiative, implemented by UN Women and its partners, with financial support from the government of Norway.⁷ The 'Peace Sentinels' are women volunteers who act as mediators, community leaders and human rights defenders in their own communities. Their work is fundamental in areas affected by armed conflict, such as Cabo Delgado, and climate disasters. UN agencies and international partners in **Somalia** supported inclusive consultations in Mogadishu and in several federal states to involve women leaders, including Ubaa Ugaas (in Galmudug state) and Hamdi Adani Amin (in Hirshabelle state), who are members of the Somali Women Peace Network, civil society organisations such as Bilan Media and minorities in discussions on the electoral model and constitutional reform, although these initiatives were limited by the boycott of some regional actors and by insecurity. At the local level, **networks of women mediators and peacebuilders** were consolidated, primarily the Somali Women Peace Network, which facilitated community conflict resolution and support for victims of gender-based violence in approximately 17 districts across the country. Finally, the Department of Social Development in **South Africa** pledged to ensure the equitable representation of women in all structures that support and guide the National Dialogue, incorporating young and older women, women living in urban and rural areas, women from different ethnic and linguistic communities, women with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ women and women expressing sexual diversity.

6. See the summary on Sudan in chapter 1 (Armed Conflicts) in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2026! Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2026.

7. UN Women Africa, "Local Women Lead Peacebuilding and Recovery Efforts in Mozambique", 7 July 2025.

2.2. Case study analysis

Great Lakes and Central Africa

CAR	
Negotiating actors	Government, armed groups belonging to the former Seleka Coalition, Antibalaka militias
Third parties	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, International Support Group (UN, EU, among others), Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue; Russia, Sudan
Relevant agreements	Republican pact for peace, national reconciliation and reconstruction in the CAR (2015), Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities (June 2017), Khartoum Political Accord for Peace and Reconciliation (Bangui, 6 February 2019), Joint Roadmap for Peace in the CAR (Luanda, September 2021),

Summary:

Since gaining independence in 1960, the situation in the Central African Republic has been characterized by ongoing political instability, leading to numerous coups d'état and military dictatorships. After the 2005 elections won by François Bozizé, which consolidated the coup d'état perpetrated previously by the latter, several insurgency groups emerged in the north of the country, which historically has been marginalized and is of Muslim majority. In December 2012 these groups forced negotiations to take place. In January 2013, in Libreville, François Bozizé's Government and the coalition of armed groups, called Séléka, agreed to a transition Government, but Séléka decided to break the agreement and took power, overthrowing Bozizé. Nevertheless, self-defence groups ("anti-balaka), sectors in the Army and supporters of Bozizé rebelled against the Séléka Government, creating a climate of chaos and generalized impunity. In December 2014 a new offensive brought an end to the Séléka Government and a transition Government led by Catherine Samba-Panza was instated. Regional leaders, headed by the Congolese Denis Sassou-Nguesso facilitated dialogue initiatives in parallel to the configuration of a national dialogue process, which was completed in May 2015. Some of the agreements reached were implemented, such as the holding of the elections to end the transition phase. However, the elections did not lead to an inclusive peace process, which fuelled ongoing insecurity and violence. The various regional initiatives came together in a negotiating framework called the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation launched in late 2016 (mediated by the AU and ECCAS and supported by the UN), which established the Libreville Roadmap in July 2017 and that it contributed to reaching the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation of February 2019, in the implementation phase, despite the difficulties. However, in December 2020, representatives of six of the country's most powerful armed groups, including the main groups that signed the 2019 peace agreement (the anti-balaka factions led by Mokom and Ngaïssona, the 3R, a faction of the FPRC, the MPC and the UPC), denounced its breach by the government, withdrew from the process and

created the Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC), after which hostilities resumed throughout the country. In 2021, Angola promoted a process that culminated in the signing of the Joint Roadmap for Peace in the CAR (Luanda Roadmap), which involved the immediate cessation of hostilities and the start of negotiations between the Central African government and the CPC. The talks were held with some of the armed groups that are members of the CPC. Since then, there were two separate peace processes (the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation and the Luanda Roadmap), but they were combined in 2023. A government-backed national dialogue called the Republican Dialogue was held in March 2022. It was not joined by the CPC coalition and the main actors of the political opposition in the implementation phase.

During the year, the Central African Republic (CAR) experienced chronic violence and a stalled peace process. The 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation (APPR) and the 2021 Luanda Roadmap continued to be the formal frameworks of the process, but their effective implementation remained deeply eroded. The government maintained an official discourse of commitment to peace, though in practice it prioritised a strategy of military control and authoritarian centralisation, supported by external security alliances, which reduced the incentives for inclusive negotiation. Sporadic progress on DDR and the reintegration of some armed groups coexisted with insurgent fragmentation, the weakness of transitional justice and the prioritisation of coercive control over inclusive reconciliation. In this regard, inter-communal clashes, violence linked to transhumance and attacks against civilians persisted,⁸ especially in the northwestern, eastern and southeastern parts of the country. The spillover effects of the conflict in Sudan aggravated insecurity in Vakaga and Haut-Mbomou. Joint military operations conducted by the Central African Armed Forces (FACA) and their Russian allies managed to contain armed groups in large urban centres but did not eliminate their capacity to attack in rural areas.

In the first half of the year, **significant progress was made with the formal reintegration of the armed groups 3R (Return, Recovery and Rehabilitation) and UPC (Unity for Peace in the Central African Republic)** into the APPR, following an agreement signed in April in N'Djamena with Chadian mediation. These are two of the most significant insurgencies that had not yet signed the peace agreement. Both leaders, Oumar Abdelkader (3R) and Ali Darassa (UPC), announced the cessation of hostilities and the symbolic dissolution of their movements, which allowed the start of disarmament and demobilisation operations with the support of MINUSCA.⁹ However, this progress had limited reach, as thousands of combatants remained armed and violent incidents occurred involving dissident factions, especially in mining zones and transhumance corridors.¹⁰ One of the main obstacles in 2025 was the **fragmentation of the armed groups**. The Coalition of

8. ACLED, *Central African Republic: Deadly attacks against ethnic Fulani increase*, 7 March 2025.

9. UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on the CAR*, United Nations, S/2025/383, 13 June 2025.

10. Ibid.

Patriots for Change (CPC) ceased to operate as a cohesive structure, giving way to local factions with their own economic agendas and little coordination capacity. At the same time, new armed alliances emerged, such as the Military Coalition for the Salvation of the People and Recovery (CMSPR), led by Armel Sayo, which integrated former combatants from both Séléka and anti-balaka, evidencing the fluidity and volatility of the insurgent landscape.¹¹ This fragmentation hindered any relaunch of meaningful negotiations and favoured a system of informal local agreements and individual co-optation.

On the political front, **dialogue initiatives between the government and the political opposition were subordinated to the electoral calendar**. During 2025, the government advanced preparations for the presidential, legislative, regional and municipal elections scheduled for 28 December, whilst the opposition, grouped in the Republican Bloc for the Defence of the 2016 Constitution (BRDC), condemned the lack of equitable conditions and demanded prior political dialogue. Although a dialogue between the government and the BRDC formally began in September, it quickly stalled due to disagreements over modalities, mediation and the reform of electoral institutions.¹² The electoral process advanced without resolving these disagreements, reinforcing a climate of authoritarian stability.

Gender, peace and security

In 2025, **the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the CAR continued to face significant limitations**, despite some progress at the local level. No female negotiator participation was reported in the main formal spaces of the peace process, nor was there systematic integration of a gender perspective in the implementation of the APPR or in the agreements with armed groups. However, women played a significant role in local reconciliation and social cohesion initiatives, especially in community contexts affected by inter-communal violence and transhumance. With support from the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), UNDP, UN Women and MINUSCA, local peace and reconciliation committees with female representation were strengthened in the northwestern and southeastern regions of the country. According to the UN, since 2021 these structures have helped to reduce community violence by approximately 40% in the intervention zones, addressing conflicts related to land, traditional chiefdoms and displacement. In 2025, the 11 ‘peace circles’ were also

consolidated. These are forums for dialogue that support women’s leadership in community mediation. In March, the president signed a decree appointing 11 new members to the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission, including four women.¹³ Nevertheless, **sexual and gender-based violence remained serious and widespread**, especially in areas affected by the presence of armed groups, military operations and forced displacement.

Chad ¹⁴	
Negotiating actors	The 18 armed groups that did not sign the Doha agreement formed the Cadre Permanent de Concertation et de Réflexion (CPCR), including the FACT and the CCSMR Government, Miski Self-Defense Committee
Third parties	Community of Sant’Egidio
Relevant agreements	Doha Peace Agreement and the Participation of the Politico-Military Movements in the Chadian National, Inclusive and Sovereign Dialogue (2022), National, Inclusive and Sovereign Dialogue (2022)

Summary:
Frequently classified as one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change, Chad has faced a wide, complex and interrelated range of challenges and sources of fragility and instability in recent decades, and has also been the scene of attempts at dialogue and political negotiation. President Idriss Déby died in 2021 and a military junta suspended the Constitution and replaced it with a transition charter and the promise of free elections in 18 months following the holding of a national dialogue and appointed his son, Mahamat Déby, to be the new president during the transition stage. The Transitional Military Council (CMT) promised to promote a national dialogue in December 2021, in which the different insurgent groups active in the country were intended to participate. In 2022, a peace process was held in Doha (Qatar) under Qatari mediation and an agreement was reached on 7 August with 34 of the 52 insurgent groups, which finally gave way to the National, Inclusive and Sovereign Dialogue (DNIS) between 20 August and 8 October. Different actors participated in the DNIS, including the groups that signed the Doha agreement.¹⁵ The Doha peace process and the DNIS ended with the CMT’s mandate being extended for another 24 months under the image of a new government, described as of one national unity, and the continued presidency of Mahamat Déby, eligible to run in the 2024 election, ignoring the promises made to the AU, which has meant perpetuating the constitutional break begun in April 2021. At the end of the transition (which had been extended by the DNIS), historic demonstrations in October 2022 were heavily repressed, causing over one hundred fatalities. The crackdown demonstrated the authoritarian drift of the government and the silencing of the political and social opposition.

11. Corbeau News, *Centrafrique : création d’une nouvelle coalition des groupes armés... la CMSPR*, 19 November 2024.
 12. RFI, *Centrafrique: le BRDC dénonce un «double-jeu» du gouvernement sur l’accord du dialogue politique*, 22 September 2025.
 13. UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the CAR. Op. cit.
 14. In the case of Chad, there are two processes: firstly, a consultation process involving the faction of the insurgency that did not sign the 2022 Doha Agreement, facilitated by the Community of Sant’Egidio; and secondly, the negotiations and peace agreement in Miski (Tibesti region) between the Government and the Miski Self-Defence Committee.
 15. The 2022 Doha Process involved the Transitional Military Council and 52 armed groups (including the Front for Change and Concord in Chad (FACT), the Military Command Council for the Salvation of the Republic (CCSMR), the Union of Forces for Democracy and Development (UFDD), and the Union of Resistance Forces (UFR)). The 18 armed groups that did not sign the Doha agreement formed the Cadre Permanent de Concertation et de Réflexion (CPCR), including FACT and CCSMR. The Inclusive and Sovereign National Dialogue (DNIS) involved the Transitional Military Council, civil society organizations, and 34 of the 52 armed groups that had signed the Doha Process.

In December 2023, a constitutional referendum was held that allowed Déby to run in the 2024 election and to win it, putting an end to the political transition that began in 2021.

During the year, peace and dialogue initiatives in Chad unfolded in a context of growing political closure, authoritarian consolidation of power by President Mahamat Idriss Déby and reconfiguration of the armed insurgencies following the formal end of the transitional period in 2024. Far from advancing towards an inclusive national reconciliation, the year confirmed the absence of a comprehensive peace process in Chad with the various insurgencies. Instead, a dynamic of fragmented peace took hold, based on occasional local agreements and security-based management of the political and armed opposition. In this regard, **dialogue with the insurgent armed groups that did not sign the 2022 Doha Agreement remained blocked and no progress was made in the negotiations with the political and social opposition** (stemming from the 2022 national dialogue). The only achievement was a local agreement in the Tibesti region.

The Tibesti peace agreement was an important local step forward, but it was accompanied by armed fragmentation and deep distrust of the Chadian state

The main progress related to peace initiatives was the **agreement signed in April 2025 between the government and the Miski Self-Defence Committee**,¹⁶ in the northern region of Tibesti, which has historically been conflict-ridden due to struggles to control gold resources, involving local figures such as former minister Adoum Younousmi and the government's official mediator and former opposition figure, Saleh Kebzabo. The agreement included an amnesty for combatants and security forces, the temporary suspension of mining activities and a commitment to review the distribution of gold revenue. However, the process was accompanied by deterrent military manoeuvres, the dismissal of senior officials critical of resource management and the later adherence of new smaller armed groups, which fuelled a widespread perception of fragmentation rather than the establishment of peace.¹⁷

In contrast to the Tibesti agreement, **no progress was made in dialogue with the main Chadian insurgencies that did not sign the 2022 Doha Agreement**, in particular the Front pour l'Alternance et la Concorde au Tchad (FACT), the Conseil de Commandement Militaire pour le Salut de la République (CCMSR), and the Mouvement pour la Paix, la Reconstruction et le Développement (MPRD). During 2025, these groups remained openly hostile to the government and ruled out negotiations, condemning

the failure to implement the Doha Agreement and the exclusionary nature of the political process.¹⁸ In October, FACT organised a strategic political meeting in France with representatives from around 20 rebel and civil society organisations, with the aim of advancing towards a common platform against the Déby regime. At the same time, the CCMSR and MPRD announced a north-south alliance, unusual in Chad's rebel history, presented as a symbolic attempt to overcome regional and ethnic divisions, albeit with limited military and territorial capabilities.¹⁹ Chadian analysts, such as Remadji Hoinathy,²⁰ emphasised that these dynamics reflect both the persistence of armed opposition and the structural difficulties of rebel movements in constituting a unified threat. Furthermore, Chad has been militarily reinforced in recent years with support from the UAE. Unlike in previous years, **there were no new mediation initiatives promoted by the Community of Sant'Egidio** or other actors between the government and the main insurgencies in 2025. No exploratory meetings were reported in Rome nor were any public contacts made with the excluded insurgencies, amid growing mutual distrust and the closure of the internal political space. This absence of mediation contrasted with the regrouping of rebel actors abroad and reinforced the perception of a structural blockage of the national peace process.

On the domestic front, the year was marked by the **deterioration of political dialogue with the civilian opposition**. The arrest of opposition figure Succès Masra in May and his conviction to 20 years in prison in August symbolised the regime's hardening and the criminalisation of political dissent. The legislative elections, held in late 2024 and early 2025, consolidated the ruling party's control and did not generate spaces for political consultation, which could increase the risk that opposition may take on violent forms.

Gender, peace and security

In 2025, **progress on the women, peace and security agenda in Chad remained very limited**. The scant inclusion of women in previous dialogue processes (Doha and the National, Inclusive and Sovereign Dialogue) was not rectified and female representation in the institutions resulting from the elections remained below the 30% target. Although women's and youth organisations continued to play an active role in local social cohesion and conflict prevention initiatives, their

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16. The Miski Self-Defense Committee is a community self-defense militia, originally formed as a local surveillance group, which eventually became an armed movement. It is composed of residents of the town of Miski, in northern Chad (Tibesti region), most of whom belong to the Toubou/Teda ethnic group.
17. Ben Mahfoudh, Nadia, 'Tchad: de nouveaux groupes rejoignent l'accord de paix de Miski dans le Tibesti', *RFI*, 26 September 2025.
18. International Crisis Group, *Chad: Averting the Risk of Posttransition Instability*, ICG, 3 May 2024.
19. RFI, Tchad: réunis en conclave en France, des groupes rebelles poursuivent leur rapprochement, 27 October 2025.
20. RFI, Tchad: deux mouvements rebelles se rapprochent pour combattre un pouvoir accusé de corruption et pillage, 25 October 2025.

contributions did not translate into political reforms or formal peace mechanisms, in a context of restricted freedoms and the weakening of civil society.²¹

DRC	
Negotiating actors	Government of the DRC, government of Rwanda, armed group M23, armed groups from the eastern part of the country, political opposition and civil society
Third parties	AU, SADC, International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), EAC, EU, UN, OIF, USA, Angola, Qatar
Relevant agreements	Sun City Agreement, Pretoria Agreement and Luanda Agreement (2002); Global and Inclusive Agreement on Transition in the DRC (2002); Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region (2013), Comprehensive, Inclusive Peace Accord in the DRC (2016), Luanda Agreement (2022)

Summary:

The demands for democratization in the nineties led to a succession of rebellions that culminated with the coup d'état carried out by Laurent Desiré Kabila between 1996 and 1997 against Mobutu Sese Seko. Later, what is sometimes called the First African World War (1998-2003), broke out what is sometimes called the First African World War (1998-2003) broke out because of the participation of a dozen countries in the region and numerous armed groups. The signing of a ceasefire in 1999, and of several peace agreements between 2002 and 2003, led to the withdrawal of foreign troops, the setting up of a transitional government through an agreement of distribution of political power. However, did not mean the end of violence in this country, due to the presence of dozens of factions of non-demobilised groups and the role of Rwanda, which views the FDLR as a threat, as it was originally created by members of the Hutu community who fled Rwanda after participating in the genocide against the Tutsi community and against members of the Rwandan Hutu community in 1994. Based in the DRC, it is a group with which Rwanda does not intend to engage in dialogue. The breach of the 2009 peace accords between the government and the armed group CNDP led to the 2012 desertion of soldiers of the former armed group CNDP, forming part of the Congolese army, citing threats against the FDLR and the marginalisation of their community and organised a new rebellion called the 23 March Movement (M23), promoted by Rwanda in 2012, formed by members of the Tutsi community. In December 2013, the rebellion was defeated and some of its members fled to Rwanda and Uganda. Nevertheless, the violent and unstable atmosphere persisted and the M23 resumed its attacks in late 2021. The DRC has repeatedly accused Rwanda of supporting the M23, whilst Rwanda has singled out the DRC for continuing its support for the FDLR. Two negotiating processes were activated in 2022: one between the Congolese government and armed groups in eastern DRC, including the M23, known as the Nairobi process; and another between the governments of the DRC and Rwanda, known as the Luanda process, which is mediated by Angola on behalf of the AU. However, fighting persisted despite regional dialogue initiatives and the establishment of regional military operations by the EAC and SADC, whilst attempts to establish a ceasefire failed.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) experienced one of the most critical years of the last decade, including the intensification of the armed conflict in the east, the proliferation of parallel diplomatic initiatives and the growing involvement of regional and international actors. Although notable diplomatic progress was made at the interstate level, especially between the DRC and Rwanda, this did not lead to a sustained reduction in violence, and a deep rift opened between diplomatic commitments and the reality on the ground. Overall, **African mediation frameworks (Luanda and Nairobi) were confirmed as exhausted during 2025** and the diplomatic centre of gravity was displaced towards non-African actors, especially Qatar and the US. However, the exclusion of the M23 from the interstate agreements, the centrality of economic interests linked to minerals and the persistence of structural causes, such as weak governance, the militarisation of territory and armed fragmentation, severely limited the prospects for a credible peace process.

The military capture of Goma and Bukavu in early 2025 by the M23, with Rwandan support, exposed **the failure of previous regional diplomatic initiatives to end the conflict** (promoted by the AU and the EAC). Both diplomatic initiatives were accompanied by regional military operations in support of the Congolese Armed Forces (the EAC Regional Force and SAMIDRC, the SADC Regional Force) alongside the UN Stabilisation Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) in attempts to promote a ceasefire and separate the warring forces. The failure of these two military operations, together with the structural discrediting of MONUSCO, which is carrying out a phased withdrawal agreed since early 2024, and has already left South Kivu, contributed to the power vacuum that the M23 and Rwanda exploited to expand their territorial control. Faced with this situation, **Qatar and the US initiated conversations and opened channels of dialogue between Rwanda, the DRC and the M23 with a view to halting hostilities**. On 18 March 2025, mediated by the Emir of Qatar, Presidents Félix Tshisekedi and Paul Kagame signed a joint declaration in Doha calling for an immediate ceasefire, constituting the first direct contact between both leaders in three years. This marked a symbolic turning point following months of military escalation by the M23, which was backed by Rwanda, and opened the door to greater involvement of extra-African actors in mediating the conflict.

Shortly thereafter, on 25 April, the foreign ministers of both countries signed a ‘declaration of principles’ in Washington under the auspices of the US, committing to reach a peace agreement before 2 May. However, the deadline expired without concrete results, whilst clashes, mass population displacement and sexual violence continued in North Kivu and South Kivu. This sequence once again demonstrated the fragility of diplomatic commitments in the absence of

21. Peacebuilding Fund, *Partner visit to Chad, United Nations*, October 2025.

effective verification mechanisms and the inclusion of relevant armed actors. Finally, on 27 June, the foreign ministers of Rwanda and the DRC signed an agreement in Washington before US President Donald Trump. The pact included three main pillars: 1) the gradual withdrawal of Rwandan troops from Congolese territory; 2) security cooperation, through the creation of a joint security coordination mechanism within 30 days; and 3) the establishment of regional economic integration mechanisms within 90 days, closely linked to the exploitation and marketing of strategic minerals, with direct participation of US companies. Within this framework, the DRC was supposed to facilitate the dismantling of the FDLR, whilst Rwanda committed to withdrawing its troops and ending its support for the M23. However, the agreement did not directly include the M23 or the FDLR, which severely limited its scope and effectiveness.

In July, **the Congolese government and the M23 signed a declaration of principles for a ceasefire in Doha** under Qatari mediation. Despite this progress, violence continued to rage, and subsequent talks in August and October produced no substantive advances. On 7 November, the US announced that Kinshasa and Kigali had begun to develop the regional economic integration framework agreement, but its implementation was blocked by the lack of prior activation of the Concept of Operations (CONOPS),²² agreed in Luanda in October 2024 and considered an indispensable condition for the effective withdrawal of forces and the neutralisation of the FDLR.

Finally, on 4 December, President Tshisekedi and President Kagame met in Washington with President Trump to ratify the June agreement, thereafter known as the Washington Agreement. However, this political gesture coincided with a serious military escalation in South Kivu, demonstrating the disconnect between diplomacy and conflict. Days after the agreement was ratified, hundreds of thousands of people fled intense fighting in South Kivu, especially in Kamanyola and subsequently in Uvira, a strategic city near the triple border between the DRC, Rwanda and Burundi, which

eventually fell into the hands of the M23. Although the group announced its withdrawal from Uvira following the intervention of US mediation, fighting continued in surrounding areas. Approximately 100,000 people fled to Burundi, according to UNHCR. In this regard, various analysts agreed that the conflict was becoming increasingly regionalised as a consequence of Burundi's gradual military involvement in support of the DRC.

The initiatives promoted by Qatar and US in the DRC failed due to the mistrust between the parties, non-existent implementation mechanisms, sustained pressure and the exclusion of the M23

Gender, peace and security

In 2025, **the women, peace and security agenda in the DRC advanced in a highly uneven manner**, with a persistent gap between the political recognition of women's roles and their effective inclusion in peace processes. At the diplomatic and negotiating level, no significant female participation as negotiators was reported in the Doha process, in the DRC-Rwanda talks under US auspices or in contacts with the M23, reproducing a structural exclusion observed in previous years. In 2024, President Tshisekedi's appointment of Judith Suminwa Tuluka as prime minister, presented as a milestone on the path to gender equality, did not lead to the integration of a gender perspective in ongoing negotiations or in security policy, and its real impact on the gender dimension of the conflict remained limited.²³ In this regard, conflict-related sexual violence reached alarming levels, especially in North Kivu and South Kivu, amid mass displacement, territorial occupations by the M23 and clashes between multiple armed actors.²⁴ Women and minors continued to be used as instruments of war, coercion and territorial control.

At the regional level, significant initiatives promoted by the AU and the UN continued, such as the follow-up to the Swakopmund process and the regional women's forums of the Great Lakes region, which continued to advocate for the inclusion of women in track one processes. However, these initiatives had no direct impact on the key negotiations of 2025. Notably, a **continental summit was held in October in Namibia to commemorate the 25th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325, where the Windhoek+25 Declaration was adopted**, reaffirming previous commitments of the Swakopmund process.²⁵

22. US State Department, *Concept of Operations (CONOPS)*, 27 June 2025.

23. Journalists for Human Rights, *KINSHASA: Civil society and media call for women's inclusion in DRC peace processes*, 18 June 2025.

24. UN Women, *Press briefing by UN Women on the situation of women and girls in the Democratic Republic of Congo*, 4 February 2025.

25. African Union, *Windhoek+25 Declaration: '25 Years of 1325, Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda'*, 24 October 2025.

South Sudan	
Negotiating actors	Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) (2018): Government (SPLM), SPLM/A-in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO), and several minor groups (SSOA, SPLM-FD, among others), two independent factions of the SPLM-IO: the Kitwang faction led by Simon Gatwech Dual and the faction headed by General Johnson Olony. Peace talks in Rome-Nairobi (Tumaini Initiative): Non-Signatory South Sudan Opposition Groups (NSSSOG, previously SSOMA composed of: National Salvation Front (NAS), South Sudan United Front (SSUF), the Real SPLM, South Sudan People's Patriotic Movement (SSPPM).
Third parties	Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) (2018): IGAD Plus (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. Peace talks in Rome-Nairobi: Community of Sant'Egidio, Kenya
Relevant agreements	Peace Agreement (2015), Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access (2017), Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) (2018)

Summary:

After years of armed conflict between the Central Government of Sudan and the south of the country, led by the SPLM/A guerrilla, South Sudan became an independent State in 2011, after holding the referendum that was planned in the 2005 peace agreement (Comprehensive Peace Agreement –CPA–) facilitated by the mediation of the IGAD. The Peace between Sudan and South Sudan and achieving independence was not achieved, however, were not enough to end the conflict and violence. South Sudan has remained immersed in a series of internal conflicts promoted by disputes to control the territory, livestock and political power, as well as by neopatrimonial practices and corruption in the Government, all of which has impeded stability and the consolidation of peace. As part of the peace negotiations promoted in April 2013, the President offered an amnesty for six commanders of the rebel groups, but this was not successful initially. However, at a later date, in December 2013, tensions broke out among the factions loyal to President Salva Kiir and those loyal to the former Vice-President Riek Machar, leader of the SPLA-in Opposition (SPLA-IO), which gave way to a new escalation of violence in several of the country's regions. In January 2014, with the mediation of the IGAD, the Government and the SPLA-IO launched peace conversations in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia). Diplomatic efforts were found against many obstacles to achieve effective ceasefire agreements, after signing nine different commitments to the cessation of hostilities and transitory measures between December 2013 and August 2015, which were systematically violated and have rendered it impossible to lay the foundations for a political solution to the conflict. On 17 August 2015, after

strong international pressure and threats of blockades and economic sanctions, the parties signed a peace agreement promoted by the IGAD Plus, although there is still much uncertainty surrounding its implementation, as well as other later agreements. Subsequently, new agreements were reached between the parties, such as the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access (2017) and the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) (2018), which open new paths to try to end the violence. Since 2019, the government has held peace talks in Rome (between 2018 and 2024) and later in Nairobi.

The year 2025 was marked by a severe political and military crisis that threatened to definitively collapse the fragile Revitalised Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS). The agreement, which establishes a transitional government of national unity based on power-sharing between President Salva Kiir (SPLM) and First Vice President Riek Machar (SPLM-IO), had managed to remain relatively stable since it was signed, but in 2025 the fragile balance broke. The crisis crystallised around three converging dynamics: Kiir's unilateral reshuffling of his government, armed violence in Upper Nile state, and, as a direct consequence, Machar's arrest in March.

The year began with some diplomatic hope. **On 20 January, the Tumaini Initiative resumed in Nairobi**, consisting of Kenyan-mediated peace talks aimed at bringing non-signatory opposition groups into the peace agreement. However, the talks were suspended on 20 February with no progress made, at the South Sudanese government's request. Simultaneously, President Salva Kiir continued his pattern of reshuffling the government unilaterally, dismissing two vice presidents, the head of intelligence and several SPLM-IO members, all without consulting Machar, which strained the government coalition. Tensions continued to mount, and on 4 March, a Nuer ethnic militia known as the White Army, linked to Machar's SPLM-IO, seized a South Sudanese Army post in Nasir (Upper Nile). More than 30 soldiers were killed, including a general. In response, Kiir's forces launched retaliatory airstrikes with support from Ugandan troops. Violence spread to the states of Unity, Jonglei and Central Equatoria, as well as to the outskirts of the capital, Juba, displacing at least 50,000 people. The peak of the tension came on 26 March, when **Kiir ordered the house arrest of Machar and his wife, Interior Minister Angelina Teny, in addition to other senior SPLM-IO officials.** Machar's party declared their detention unconstitutional and said that the Revitalised Agreement had been 'abrogated'. The international community also reacted, with UNMISS warning that the conflict could resume and with the IGAD cautioning of the possibility of a full-scale war. The African Union Panel of the Wise (PoW) visited Juba with the intention of mediating in April, but Kiir refused to allow them to meet with Machar. The EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa also failed to gain access. Meanwhile,

the SPLM-IO suffered a wave of defections: more than 3,000 fighters switched to Kiir's side following joint offensives by the South Sudanese Army and Ugandan troops in Central Equatoria. A group of SPLM-IO members appointed Stephen Par Kuol as the interim party president, causing a split that the government used to legitimise its new composition.

In May, the IGAD held an extraordinary summit on South Sudan with AU involvement, but without South Sudanese participation. The body created a ministerial subcommittee to assess pathways for inclusive dialogue. That same month, the UN Security Council extended the arms embargo on South Sudan for an additional year. In June, Kiir reconstituted the high-level special committee for the implementation of the peace agreement, excluding Machar's faction and incorporating only the Par Kuol splinter group, which the SPLM-IO described as illegitimate. In the following months, Kiir continued to purge officials loyal to Machar: in July he dismissed the army chief, the deputy head of security and other senior officials, and in August he expelled a number of SPLM-IO MPs from Parliament, including the interim first vice president of the movement, Oyet Nathaniel Pierino. In response, the SPLM-IO declared that 'the final nail had been hammered into the coffin' of the Revitalised Agreement.

Tension increased further on 11 September, when Kiir's government filed **formal charges of treason, murder and crimes against humanity** against Machar and seven other opposition officials, all members of the Nuer community. The SPLM-IO declared the government illegitimate and promised to seek regime change, urging its forces to mobilise for war. The Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (RJMEC), tasked with monitoring compliance with the peace agreement, warned that the R-ARCSS was at risk of total collapse. In October, South African Vice President Paul Mashatile visited Juba in an attempt to reactivate the peace process but achieved no concrete results. In November, Kiir dismissed his own apparent successor, Benjamin Bol Mel, and placed him under house arrest, adding a new layer of volatility to national politics. Finally, in December, **the government announced its intention to hold elections before December 2026**, despite the lack of progress on fundamental requirements: the drafting of a new constitution and the conduct of a national census. Again the SPLM-IO faction loyal to Machar rejected the announcement. The year ended with all attempts by mediators to meet with Machar blocked by Kiir. The AU Peace and Security Council also repeatedly demanded the immediate and unconditional release of Machar and other detainees, though without success.

The South Sudan peace agreement teetered on the brink of collapse

Gender, peace and security

Despite the overall deterioration, UNMISS and civil society organisations continued to work on the ground in support of the gender, peace and security agenda. Among the most notable initiatives, UNMISS reported that a stakeholders' conference was held in May to move forward the nomination of representatives to the future Truth, Reconciliation and Regeneration Commission, with women activists and human rights organisations participating. In late October, the civil society organisation Community Empowerment for Progress Organization provided training on conflict analysis and mediation to 21 women mediators representing signatory parties to the Revitalised Agreement. This effort was supported by UN Women, the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission and UNMISS. In November, UNMISS organised a high-level dialogue chaired by Vice President Rebecca Nyandeng de Mabior, which brought together women leaders from signatory parties and civil society, who expressed their concern about the escalation of fighting in Upper Nile and Western Equatoria, conflict-related sexual violence, Machar's trial, the stalemate in the peace process and the lack of political will to implement the 35% quota for female participation provided for in the peace agreement.²⁶

Sudan	
Negotiating actors	Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF)
Third parties	'Quad' Mechanism or Quartet (USA, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and UAE), Trilateral Mechanism (UN, AU and the IGAD (Ethiopia, South Sudan, Djibouti, Kenya, Uganda), Switzerland, Türkiye, EU
Relevant agreements	Peace negotiations in Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile: Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) (2006), Road map Agreement (2016), the Juba Declaration for Confidence-Building Procedures and the Preparation for Negotiation (2019), Juba Peace Agreement (2020)

Summary: Different armed conflicts (Darfur, Blue Nile and South Kordofan) remain active in the country, as well as tensions between the government and the opposition which have led to different peace negotiations and a de-escalation of violence. In Darfur, amidst peace talks to resolve the historical dispute between the north and south of the country, which ended with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, various armed groups, mainly the JEM and the SLA, rebelled in 2003 around demands for greater decentralisation and development in the region. The Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) was reached in 2006, which

26. UN Security Council, "The situation in South Sudan. Report of the Secretary-General", S/2026/58, 2 February 2026.

included only one SLA faction, led by Minni Minnawi, while the conflict persisted amidst frustrated attempts at dialogue, mainly promoted by Qatar as part of the Doha peace process, in which the different parties were involved. Furthermore, in the Two Areas (South Kordofan and Blue Nile), the secession of South Sudan in July 2011 and the resulting national reconfiguration of Sudan aggravated tensions between those border regions and the Sudanese government, since both regions had supported the southern SPLA insurgency during the Sudanese armed conflict. The African Union High Level Panel on Sudan (AUHIP) has mediated to seek a peaceful resolution between the parties (government and SPLM/N rebellion) that revolve around three main lines in the peace negotiations: the ceasefire model, the type of humanitarian access to the Two Areas and the characteristics and agenda of the National Dialogue. In early 2014, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir asked all armed actors and opposition groups to join the National Dialogue. From the outset, the proposal involved former South African President Thabo Mbeki and the AUHIP to promote peace negotiations and a democratic transformation. After the fall of the al-Bashir regime in April 2019, the different peace processes and scenarios between the new transitional government and the different rebel groups in the Two Areas and Darfur have merged, achieving the signing of the Juba Peace Agreement in October 2020. However, several armed groups, including the SPLM-N alHilu (Two Areas) and the SLM/A-AW (Darfur), refused to sign the peace agreement, holding the talks separately. In 2022, due to the governance crisis in the country provoked by the military junta's rise to power, talks began between the junta and political and military actors to achieve the political transition, which incorporated a review of the Juba Agreement for Peace. In 2023, the negotiations broke down with the outbreak of a new armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary group Rapid Support Forces (RSF), giving rise to new mediation initiatives.

Peace initiatives were once again unsuccessful and failed to contain violence in the country during a year characterised by the de facto split of the country into two parts. On one hand, following their recapture of the capital, Khartoum, in March, which had been held by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) since the beginning of the conflict, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) seized control of the central, northern and eastern parts of the country. On the other hand, the RSF held sway over the southern and western parts of the country following their capture of El Fasher, the capital of Darfur and the SAF's last bastion in the west, in October. The outcome of both moves was a de facto division of the country, which was deepened by the formation of two parallel governments: one internationally recognised, led by the SAF and based in Port Sudan, and another headed by the RSF in Darfur.²⁷ In this scenario, the year began with worrying signs with regard to the performance of peace initiatives. In January, groups aligned with the RSF held consultations in Nairobi on the possible creation of a parallel government, fuelling fears of state fragmentation. On

***The women's network
SIHA condemned
the state of conflict-
related sexual
violence in Sudan***

22 February, more than 300 representatives signed a constitutive charter in Nairobi, including political parties, civil society organisations and the leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), Abdelaziz al-Hilu, which laid the foundations for a rival administration in RSF-controlled territories. The move was harshly criticised by the UN, the African Union (AU), the US, Saudi Arabia and other actors, which considered it a step towards the balkanisation of the country. Subsequently, in March, whilst the SAF consolidated control of the capital, the RSF and their allies signed a constitutional document paving the way for the formation of parallel governments in their territories. The AU Peace and Security Council blasted the move, warning of the risk of a definitive partition of the country. On 15 April, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the AU and the EU convened a broad diplomatic conference in London to try to unify the peace efforts. However, disputes erupted over the draft joint communiqué between Egypt and Saudi Arabia, which support the SAF, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which backs the RSF, preventing any agreement from being reached. The conference laid bare the size of the rift among external mediators and the nature of the regional proxy war that the conflict had acquired. Later, in May, the US imposed economic sanctions on the SAF-led government over the alleged use of chemical weapons. Simultaneously, the SAF appointed the civilian Kamil Idriss as prime minister in a move aimed at gaining legitimacy before the AU. The RSF, in contrast, rejected him. In June, Idriss announced a 22-member cabinet. At the same time, the Tasees civilian coalition, aligned with the RSF, continued negotiations to constitute its own alternative government, which was finally formed on 26 July, headed by RSF leader Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, commonly known as 'Hemedti', who was appointed prime minister. On 30 August, Hemedti was sworn in as head of the parallel government in Nyala, South Darfur, bringing Sudan closer to de facto partition. Meanwhile, US special advisor Massad Boulos, the father of Donald Trump's son-in-law, held separate talks with both parties in Switzerland in mid-August in an attempt to open a discreet diplomatic channel, though it was ultimately unsuccessful. On 12 September, the US, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the UAE, also known as the 'Quad', announced a joint roadmap including a three-month humanitarian truce, followed by a permanent ceasefire and a nine-month transition to a civilian government. This was the most substantial diplomatic advance of the year, but the escalation of fighting in El Fasher made its viability impossible. On 19 November, US President Donald Trump publicly committed to working to stop atrocities in Sudan following a meeting with the Saudi Crown Prince. The announcement raised hopes of greater US diplomatic pressure. However,

27. See the summary on Sudan in chapter 1 (Armed conflicts) in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2026! Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2026.

General al-Burhan rejected the US truce proposal on 23 November, calling it biased in favour of the RSF. The following day, the RSF unilaterally declared a three-month ceasefire, which they immediately broke with new attacks around Babanusa. At the end of the year, tensions between Saudi Arabia and the UAE heightened, hindering ceasefire efforts. The year ended with al-Burhan travelling to Egypt and Saudi Arabia to shore up regional support and to meet with the envoy Boulos, but without managing to stop the violence.

Gender, peace and security

No significant developments related to gender, peace and security were noted in the ongoing negotiations during the year. However, it was reported that the perpetration of violence against the civilian population (women, girls, men and boys) remains a defining feature of the ongoing atrocity campaign in Sudan. In its report ‘More Than Numbers’, the network Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA) condemned the state of conflict-related sexual violence in Sudan from the outbreak of war in April 2023 to 2025.²⁸ SIHA documented over 1,294 cases of conflict-related sexual violence against women and girls, of which 77% involved rape, and cases where information on the perpetrator was available (808) were attributed primarily to RSF combatants. It was also reported that thousands of women and girls are being abducted and forcibly disappeared into hidden RSF detention centres across the country, where they are subjected to sexual slavery. Furthermore, more than 840 cases were documented of women detained by the SAF accused of collaborating with the RSF.

Sudan – South Sudan	
Negotiating actors	Government of Sudan, Government of South Sudan, ethnic communities of the Abyei region
Third parties	IGAD, African Union Border Programme (AUBP), Egypt, Libya, USA, EU, UNISFA, UN
Relevant agreements	Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) (2005); Cooperation Agreement (2012); Joint Boundary Demarcation Agreement (2019)

Summary:

The armed conflict between Sudan and its southern neighbour (South Sudan) lasted for more than 30 years and was marked by a growing complexity, the nature of which covered several dimensions relating to the culture and history of both countries, affected by two civil wars (1963-1972; and 1982-2005). The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in January 2005 led to a referendum in the south of Sudan to ratify the independence of this region. The consultation happened in January 2011 and following a clear victory of those in favour of independence, in July

2011 South Sudan declared independence and became a new State. However, the separation of the two countries did not bring an end to the disagreements between Khartoum and Juba over the many unresolved issues. Among the main obstacles to stability there is a dispute over the oil-rich enclave of Abyei and the final demarcation of the border between both countries, as well as disagreement with regards to the exploitation of oil resources (with oil fields in South Sudan but pipelines for exportation to Sudan). Both countries accuse one another of supporting insurgency movements in the neighbour country and have contributed to further destabilizing the situation and threaten the peaceful coexistence of these two countries.

No progress was made on the joint political mechanisms between Sudan and South Sudan during the year, but some agreements were reported at the inter-community level. The dialogue channel opened years ago between the governments of Sudan and South Sudan was shaped by the ongoing armed conflict in Sudan and the severe internal political instability in South Sudan resulting from the arrest of Vice President Riek Machar. These events meant that no meetings of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism (JPSM) or of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC) were held throughout the year, interrupting formal channels of bilateral dialogue. The Joint Border Commission (JBC) also failed to meet, paralysing progress on territorial demarcation and cross-border corridors.

However, and in contrast to the high-level political impasse, **progress was made on inter-community dialogues**, mainly between the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities, which both live in Abyei. The UN mission in Abyei, UNISFA, reported that the Joint Community Peace Committee (JCPC) held 16 ordinary and three special sessions in the first period of the year and 14 ordinary and three special sessions in the second, addressing inter-community coexistence, compensation for losses, the presence of the RSF²⁹ and management of the Amiet market. On 20 May, UNISFA facilitated a meeting between the supreme Ngok Dinka chief and the deputy supreme Misseriya chief in Todach, where they committed to coexisting in peace and agreed on mechanisms for compensation for outstanding cases. Subsequently, from 30 May to 2 June, 165 delegates from both communities met in Todach, concluding with the signing of an agreement on reverse migration procedures. On 26 July, a new dialogue in Todach with 42 participants, including the supreme chiefs of both communities, agreed on early warning mechanisms and periodic follow-up meetings in response to the attack in the Amiet market on 21 and 22 July. Furthermore, from 9 to 12 April, 60 youth leaders of the Ngok Dinka and Twic Dinka communities met in Wau (South Sudan) with facilitation from UNISFA, UNMISS and other partners, signing a peaceful coexistence agreement that included

28. SIHA Network, “More than numbers. Report on the State of Violence Against Women and Girls in Sudan - 2023-2025”, December 2025.

29. See UN Security Council reports, “The situation in Abyei: Report of the Secretary-General”, S/2025/269, 1 May 2025; “The situation in Abyei Report of the Secretary-General”, S/2026/649, 15 October 2025; “The situation in Abyei Report of the Secretary-General”, S/2025/58, 2 February 2026.

a cessation of hostilities, the reopening of routes and the fight against disinformation.

Finally, the UN mission in South Sudan, UNMISS, reported that between 7 and 14 November, the Catholic Episcopal Conference of Sudan and South Sudan took place in Malakal, in the state of Upper Nile, making it the first meeting of bishops from both countries. At the meeting, religious leaders pledged to strengthen dialogue, trust and cooperation between different ethnic groups and political trends.³⁰

Gender, peace and security

Some progress was made in inter-community dialogues on gender, peace and security during the year. From 3 to 5 June, UNISFA organised a joint conference of Misseriya and Ngok Dinka women in Todach, bringing together 132 women to discuss their participation in peace and security mechanisms and the rule of law. The result was the creation of a joint women's committee, with a joint communiqué signed by the participants. Likewise, on 26 and 27 June, UNISFA and UNMISS organised a civil society meeting in Wau that brought together 40 Ngok Dinka and Twic Dinka women, who also created a joint women's committee for peace as part of the reconciliation process between the two communities.³¹ However, and in contrast to these initiatives, formal forums for political dialogue had very low female participation: the Joint Community Peace Committee had only two women out of 28 representatives, and the meeting of leaders on 20 May in Todach was composed exclusively of men.

Horn of Africa

Eritrea – Ethiopia	
Negotiating actors	Eritrea, Ethiopia
Third parties	United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, USA
Relevant agreements	Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities (Algiers, 2000), Agreement between the Government of the State of Eritrea and the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia or December Agreement (Algiers, 2000), Decision on Delimitation of the Border between Eritrea and Ethiopia, EEBC (2002), Agreement on Peace, Friendship and Comprehensive Cooperation (2018)

Summary:

Eritrea became independent from Ethiopia in 1993, although the border between both countries was not clearly defined, causing them to face off between 1998 and 2000 in a war that cost over 100,000 lives. In June 2000 they signed a cessation of hostilities agreement, the UN Security Council established the UNMEE mission to monitor it and they signed the Algiers peace agreement in December. This agreement established that both would submit to the ruling issued by the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC), which is in charge of delimiting and demarcating the border based on the relevant colonial treaties (1900, 1902 and 1908) and on international law. The EEBC announced its opinion in April 2002, assigning the disputed border village of Badme (the epicentre of the war, currently administered by Ethiopia) to Eritrea, though Ethiopia rejected the decision. Frustrated by the lack of progress in implementing the EEBC's ruling due to insufficient pressure on Ethiopia to comply, Eritrea decided to restrict UNMEE operations in late 2005, forcing its withdrawal in 2008. A year earlier, the EEBC had ended its work without being able to implement its mandate due to obstructions in Ethiopia. Tensions have remained high since then, with thousands of soldiers on the common border, sporadic clashes and belligerent rhetoric. In 2018, a historic agreement was reached between both governments, facilitated by the UAE and Saudi Arabia, with the support of the United States, beginning the re-establishment of diplomatic relations, with flights resuming and their borders reopening. However, the initial optimism soon faded, and a few months later the border was closed again and many issues remained unresolved. The war between Ethiopia and the political and military authorities of Tigray from 2020 to 2022 brought the former enemies together in an alliance to fight the TPLF, but old grievances and new disputes could threaten to renew the conflict between them.

The deadlock in the negotiating process between Eritrea and Ethiopia that began in 2018 reached its most critical point during 2025, which triggered initiatives by various countries to reactivate it, primarily by Saudi Arabia and the United States. The year was marked by a sustained escalation of political, military and rhetorical tension, particularly around two lines: the Ethiopian aspiration for access to the Red Sea and the development of the political and security crisis in Tigray.

The tactical alliance that both countries had maintained during the Tigray War (2020–2022) unravelled following the Pretoria Peace Agreement (2022), from which Eritrea was excluded. From that moment on, a structural distrust was reinstated, which in 2025 escalated into mutual accusations, military mobilisation and a complete absence of political consultation mechanisms.³² Nevertheless, **diplomatic activity aimed at avoiding an open military escalation and at reopening channels of dialogue between both countries was undertaken during 2025, primarily by Saudi Arabia**

30. UN Security Council, "The situation in South Sudan. Report of the Secretary-General", S/2026/58, 2 February 2026.

31. UN Security Council, "The situation in Abyei. Report of the Secretary-General", S/2025/649, 15 October 2025.

32. See the summary on Eritrea-Ethiopia in Chapter 2 (Socio-political crises) in *Alert 2026! Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding*. Icaria: Barcelona, 2026.

and the United States. In this regard, Saudi Arabia is reported to have initiated a mediation process between the two countries.³³ Notable in this context were separate meetings in late July between Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan and his Eritrean and Ethiopian counterparts, Osman Salih and Gideon Timothewos. Furthermore, delegations from Ethiopia and Eritrea are reported to have held two rounds of talks in Saudi Arabia in July. Neither party made any official statement on this ongoing Saudi mediation effort.³⁴

Secondly, key international actors, particularly Washington, maintained parallel contacts with Asmara and Addis Ababa. In June 2025, the Ethiopian ambassador to the United States met with US President Donald Trump.³⁵ In September 2025, US Advisor for Africa Massad Boulos met with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in Ethiopia and with the Eritrean Foreign Minister during the UN General Assembly, though no public announcements or verifiable commitments resulted from these meetings. In October, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed requested international mediation with Eritrea regarding access to the sea, insisting on an ‘irreversible’ claim to the coastline amid rising tensions between neighbouring countries in the Horn of Africa, and announced that he had held discussions on the issue with the US, Russia, China, the AU and the EU.³⁶

Ethiopia	
Negotiating actors	Government, political parties, political and social opposition, citizens
Third parties	UNDP, EU, Germany, Norway, Berghof Foundation
Relevant agreements	--

Summary:
The Ethiopian administration that has governed since 1991 is facing a series of opposition movements that demand advances in the democracy and governability of the country, as well as a greater degree of self-government. The government coalition EPRDF (Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front) is controlled by the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) party, of the Tigrayan minority, that rules the country between 1991 and 2019 with growing authoritarianism with the consent of the Amhara elite. There is discontent in the country with the ethnic federal regime implemented by the EPRDF which has not resolved the national issue and has led to the consolidation of a strong political and social opposition. Along with the demands for

the democratization of the institutions, there are political-military sectors that believe that ethnic federalism does not meet their nationalist demands and other groups that consider ethnic federalism to be a deterrent to the consolidation of the Nation-State. The changes and territorial expansion of Addis Ababa introduced by the Addis Ababa Master Plan in 2014 were the catalyst for some of these issues, triggering major protests and deadly repression in the country, particularly in the Oromia region. Social protests contributed to the resignation of Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn in early 2018 and the appointment of Abiy Ahmed, who undertook a series of reforms that at easing ethnic tensions in the country, promoting national unity and relaxing restrictions on civil liberties. The changes brought about by Abiy Ahmed’s government have helped grievances to emerge, as well as some of the shortcomings and challenges in terms of governance, which have increased instability and exacerbated simmering conflicts and new cycles of violence, such as the war in Tigray and escalating violence in Oromia and Amhara. One prominent such reform is national dialogue. In 2021, the Ethiopian Parliament approved the mandate of the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC).³⁷ The ENDC began its work in 2022 with a three-year mandate, promoting a process in different phases that will culminate in a national dialogue. The mandate sets out three general objectives: to build a national consensus on the most fundamental national issues, to build trust among ethnic groups and between them and the state and to pave the way for a culture of dialogue. The process has been hindered by many difficulties.

During 2025, the national dialogue in Ethiopia **made no substantial progress** and remained in a **prolonged impasse**, despite the formal continuity of the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC). Various independents sources, such as think tanks, academic analysts, members of civil society and specialised media outlets, agreed that the national dialogue **failed to evolve towards a deliberative or decision-making phase**, nor did it play a significant role in managing the country’s main political and armed conflicts. The ENDC **played a limited and predominantly technical role** and was unable to articulate an effective national political process. The national dialogue remained marginalised amid an agenda dominated by security-based responses, active armed conflicts and profound political polarisation.³⁸ Created in 2021 as one of the flagship reforms of the government of Abiy Ahmed, the ENDC was charged with facilitating an inclusive process to address the ‘fundamental national issues’ dividing the country. However, in early 2025, the dialogue was already burdened by structural limitations, including deep distrust amongst actors, the exclusion of key armed groups, a lack of minimum security conditions and the widespread perception of a lack of political independence.³⁹

33. NewsAddis, *Saudi FM Contacts Ethiopian & Eritrean FMs to Resolve Conflict*, 26 July 2025.
 34. Ibid.
 35. The Ethiopian Herald, *Ethiopia, U.S. Eye Closer Ties in High-Level Meeting*, 19 June 2025.
 36. ArabNews, *Ethiopia calls for international mediation with Eritrea over sea access*, 28 October 2025.
 37. See the website of the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission.
 38. Desalegn Gedebo, Amanuel, ‘Rethinking Ethiopia’s National Dialogue. Navigating Conflict and Growing Repression Ahead of 2026 Elections’, Clingendael, 1 July 2025.
 39. See the summary on Ethiopia in *Peace Talks in Focus 2024. Report on Trends and Scenarios*, Icaria: Barcelona, 2025.

These weaknesses became even more evident throughout the year. Whilst the **ENDC remained institutionally active**, organising meetings and consultations, including contacts with groups in Tigray and with the diaspora, **the process did not advance beyond the preparatory phase**, even after more than three years of operations. A study published by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) in August indicated that the Ethiopian national dialogue ‘has stalled’, emphasising that the Commission remained trapped in gathering inputs without having initiated meaningful national deliberation. According to the ISS, persistent insecurity and armed conflicts in Amhara, Oromia and Tigray had prevented the participation of key actors, whilst the withdrawal or non-inclusion of opposition parties and influential groups has seriously eroded the credibility of the process. The ISS itself questioned the viability of completing a credible dialogue even after the extension of the ENDC’s mandate until 2026.⁴⁰ Ethiopian civil society has levelled similar criticism, as illustrated by a report⁴¹ on the ENDC’s activities that identifies persistent problems of inclusion, representativeness and legitimacy. The report emphasises that the national dialogue does not respond to the immediate priorities of many communities affected by violence, nor does it have any impact on the political and security situations they face.

Gender, peace and security

Despite the deadlock and paralysis of the ENDC, women’s organisations in the country continued to promote forums and initiatives for dialogue to overcome it. In this regard, International Women’s Day brought together key actors to highlight the progress made by the feminist movement and to demand greater political action. The event noted that changes are required for society to function, with greater involvement of those who hold power. The debate was attended by Nechte Felate, the Director of Women’s, Children’s and Youth Affairs of the Ethiopian Parliament, and Zemdena Abebe, the National Coordinator of the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA), as well as other representatives of women’s rights organisations and activists from across the country. Zemdena said that SIHA had played a crucial role in integrating a gender perspective into Ethiopia’s national dialogue process. As part of a local civil society organisation called TIMRAN, SIHA has worked to ensure adequate representation of women in decision-making positions through the national dialogue process and has published policy recommendations to ensure that it is inclusive and free of political influence. To commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration, UN Women Ethiopia organised intergenerational dialogues for women to share visions on gender equality and discuss women’s leadership in

humanitarian action. In September, it delivered training on preventing violence against women in political processes, in cooperation with the Network of Ethiopian Women’s Associations (NEWA). UN Women Ethiopia also published its 2026-2030 strategy, setting out its roadmap for achieving gender equality in the country.

Ethiopia (Amhara)	
Negotiating actors	Ethiopia, Fano militia faction (Amhara Fano Popular Organization, AFPO)
Third parties	Amhara Peace Council, AU, IGAD
Relevant agreements	--

Summary:
During the demonstrations between 2015 and 2018 that brought Abiy Ahmed to power, there was a resurgence of nationalism among the Amhara, groups within it denounced their marginalisation during this stage of the country’s transformation and lives mostly in the Amhara region. The escalation of violence and repression in 2023 dates back to the peace agreement signed in 2022 by the federal government of Ethiopia and the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) to end the war (2020-2022). The agreement raised concerns among the Amhara community, which had been excluded from the talks even though the nationalist Fano militias and the Amhara special forces (a paramilitary group linked to the regional government) fought on the side of the Ethiopian Army, as did Eritrea, which was also shut out of the agreement. All the actors involved committed crimes against humanity against the population of the Tigray community during the conflict in Tigray. Perceptions of betrayal spread throughout the Amhara region, especially after Abiy announced plans to dismantle the special forces in each of Ethiopia’s 11 ethnic regions. The prime minister proposed integrating the special forces combatants into the Ethiopian Army and police to promote interethnic unity and prevent regional forces from being used as political tools and from getting drawn into conflicts, as was the case in Tigray. However, many Amhara regarded his plan with alarm, arguing that it would leave them vulnerable to attacks from neighbouring Tigray, their historical rivals in Ethiopia, as well as from the Oromo community, Ethiopia’s largest ethnic group, followed by the Amhara. The Oromo armed group OLA has also been accused of committing widespread atrocities against Amhara people in Oromia, raising fears that it wants to drive them out of the region. Although some Amhara special force soldiers did agree to join the Ethiopian Army and police, many deserted and joined the Fano militias. Furthermore, this Amhara nationalist movement took advantage of the war in the Tigray region, using these paramilitary militias to regain and occupy two historically disputed territories that are part of Tigray (Western and Southern Tigray, called Welkait-Tsegede and Raya by Amhara nationalists, respectively), where a provisional Amhara administration was established that the federal government of Ethiopia banned after the conflict ended. In 2024, a council of community elders, religious leaders, and the Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia convened to facilitate dialogue between the warring parties and the international community. They held a peace conference in Bahir Dar (the Amhara capital), which led to the creation of the Amhara Peace Council. This body has

40. Simie Meteka, Tadesse, ‘Ethiopia’s National Dialogue needs time and an interim report’, ISS, 27 August 2025.
 41. Bekele, Girma, ‘Ethiopia’s National Dialogue Commission: Last Chance for Peace or Another Lost Cause?’, ReligionUnplugged, 9 October 2025.

since been calling on the AU and IGAD to facilitate peace negotiations. The main Fano platforms demanded a review of the Pretoria Agreement (2022), constitutional guarantees regarding disputed territories (Welkait, Raya, Metekel), and collective protection mechanisms for the Amhara population. Meanwhile, the federal position was limited to a DDR process and the recognition of the state's monopoly on the use of force.

During 2025, an **agreement was reached between the regional government and a Fano militia faction**. Nevertheless, **the armed conflict in the Ethiopian region of Amhara devolved into a chronic and fragmented insurgency**, characterised by periodic spikes of violence, an intensification of the state's use of drones and serious abuses against the civilian population. In this regard, on 4 December **a peace agreement was signed between the Amhara regional government and a Fano militia faction**, the Amhara Fano Popular Organization (AFPO), which was mediated by the AU and the IGAD.⁴² Through AU Commission Deputy Chairperson Selma Malika Haddadi, the AU declared that the agreement was not only positive for Ethiopia, but also an example for all of Africa. The IGAD was represented by Deputy Executive Secretary Mohamed Abdi Ware. Officially announced by the authorities, this agreement was presented as a historic milestone. It included formal commitments to a cessation of hostilities, the reintegration of combatants into official security structures under certain conditions and the opening of channels for political dialogue. However, the agreement did not constitute a definitive solution for all actors or for all Fano militia factions, because there is no unified chain of command. On the contrary, other commanders were sceptical of the agreement and said that they would only agree to negotiate with international support.⁴³ Various analysts noted that its impact will be limited unless Addis Ababa addresses the full range of grievances that triggered the conflict.

Gender, peace and security

In 2025, the gender, peace and security agenda in the Amhara region was marked by **the intensification of the armed conflict alongside the emergence of local resilience initiatives led by women**. The prolongation of the Fano militia factions' insurgency and the state's counterinsurgency operations exposed women and children to high levels of violence, including displacement, food insecurity and gender-based violence. In this context, the issue of protection continued to dominate the agenda, though no women were included in the incipient negotiating processes. Nevertheless, grassroots organisations and programmes driven by

international actors continued to give impetus to activities at the local level. Initiatives supported by UN Women and Ethiopian organisations such as Progynist have promoted women's community leadership in situations of crisis, building capacities in community mediation, conflict management and responses to gender-based violence. These experiences have helped to articulate informal forums for dialogue and social cohesion, though they have had no effect on the formal processes linked to the partial agreement reached in December 2025.⁴⁴ More structurally, various analysts indicated that **women remain persistently excluded from formal negotiations in Ethiopia**, despite their active role in community-focused peacebuilding.⁴⁵ In Amhara, this gap revealed a fragmented women, peace and security (WPS) agenda that was dynamic and expanding at the local level, but still marginal at the formal political level.

Ethiopia (Tigray)	
Negotiating actors	Federal Government, political-military authorities of the Ethiopian region of Tigray (Tigray People's Liberation Front)
Third parties	AU, USA, IGAD
Relevant agreements	Agreement for a Lasting Peace through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (Pretoria, 2022), Executive Declaration on the Modalities of Implementation of the Agreement for a Lasting Peace through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities (Nairobi, 2022)

Summary:
The region of Tigray (a state in northern Ethiopia, bordering Ethiopia and with a Tigray -majority population) has been the scene of an armed conflict and attempts at dialogue initiatives since 2020. The inauguration of Abiy Ahmed as the new prime minister of Ethiopia in early 2018 brought about important and positive changes internally and regionally in Ethiopia. However, since his rise to power, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) party and the leadership of the Tigray community, once the solid core of the ruling coalition (EPRDF), have seen their government decision-making powers evaporate. Furthermore, the conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia between 1998 and 2000 had its origin in border disputes between the two countries. As a border state where decisions related to the agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia must be implemented, such as the border demarcation and status of the town of Badme, Tigray was marginalised from the peace process between both governments. Added to this was the gradual marginalisation of the TPLF from central power, contributing to growing tension that culminated in the outbreak of an armed conflict between the Ethiopian security forces and the security forces of the Tigray region. The crisis took on regional dimensions due to the involvement of Eritrea, as well as militias and security forces from the neighbouring Ethiopian region of Amhara. Since the beginning of the

42. FANA, Ethiopia's Amhara Regional Gov't, Amhara Fano Popular Organization Sign Permanent Peace Deal, 4 December 2025.
43. The Africa Report, Ethiopia's Amhara region, Fano faction sign breakthrough agreement, 5 December 2025.
44. Progynist, Impactful Collaboration for Women's Empowerment in Amhara Region!, 21 May 2025.
45. Anonymous, Confronting the Exclusion of Women in Ethiopia's Peace Processes: A Background Paper, European Institute of Peace, 2025.

armed conflict in November 2020, the international community, and especially the AU, have tried to promote peace negotiations between the parties, which the Federal Government of Ethiopia rejected. Between March and August 2022, a humanitarian truce was in force, after which there was a new escalation of violence. In late October 2022, peace negotiations were formalised in Pretoria (South Africa) under the auspices of the AU, which led to the signing of a cessation of hostilities agreement in November. The peace agreement has been implemented since then, though not without difficulties.

During 2025, the peace process in the Ethiopian region of Tigray reached **its most fragile moment since the signing of the Pretoria Peace Agreement** in November 2022. Although full-scale war did not resume, the year was marked by **a combination of incomplete implementation of the agreement, growing internal political and military fragmentation in Tigray and a deterioration in relations between Mekelle and Addis Ababa**. From a formal perspective, the Pretoria Peace Agreement remained the framework of reference for the peace process. Some of its core elements were maintained, such as the large-scale cessation of hostilities and the partial integration of Tigray into federal structures. However, the most sensitive structural issues remained unimplemented: the territorial dispute over Western Tigray, the return of displaced persons, the complete withdrawal of non-federal forces, transitional justice and the full political reintegration of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF).

One of the most significant issues of 2025 was the **acute internal political crisis in Tigray**. The rivalry between the President of the Interim Regional Administration at the time, Getachew Reda, and TPLF leader Debretsion Gebremichael, culminated in Reda's dismissal in April and his replacement by Lieutenant General Tadesse Werede. This power struggle weakened regional institutional authority, paralysed governance and eroded the capacity for coherent dialogue with the federal government, thereby affecting the peace process.⁴⁶ At the same time, the cancellation of the TPLF's legal status by the National Election Commission in May was a negative turning point. This decision de facto excluded Tigray's main political actor from the elections scheduled for 2026 and revived fears of a repeat of the political cycle that had preceded the 2020 war. Various analysts warned that the cancellation undermined the principle of inclusivity in the peace process and aggravated distrust between Tigray and the federal government.⁴⁷

On the security front, 2025 was marked by new dynamics of internal instability. The **Tigray Peace Force (TPF) emerged and consolidated** as an armed faction composed of former combatants disaffected with the TPLF and perceived by Mekelle as close to Addis Ababa. Clashes between the TPF and Tigrayan forces, as well as incidents on the border with Afar, revealed a dangerous drift towards conflicts within Tigray's political and military opposition that the Pretoria Peace Agreement had neither foreseen nor contained, and which could undermine it.⁴⁸ Another key element was the **persistence of the territorial conflict in Western Tigray**. The refusal of the Amhara authorities to withdraw, and the absence of a clear mechanism to resolve the dispute, left tens of thousands of displaced persons in a prolonged limbo. Reports from late 2025 documented deaths from starvation in displacement camps, underscoring the direct link between political blockage, territorial insecurity and the humanitarian crisis.⁴⁹ Finally, various analysts warned that developments in Tigray during 2025 had broader implications for Ethiopian and regional stability. The growing tension between Ethiopia and Eritrea, partly linked to Tigrayan dynamics and alleged TPLF realignments, increased the risk of an indirect escalation that could overflow the framework of the peace process.

The Ethiopian region of Tigray reached its most fragile moment since the signing of the Pretoria Peace Agreement in November 2022

Gender, peace and security

During 2025, the gender, peace and security agenda in Tigray reflected the **contradictions of an incomplete post-conflict scenario**, where the partial implementation of the Pretoria Peace Agreement coexisted with high levels of structural violence and political exclusion.

Women remained one of the groups most affected by the legacy of the conflict, particularly in relation to sexual and gender-based violence, whose massive prevalence during the war continued to shape transitional justice and reconciliation processes.⁵⁰ In this context, the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda was primarily linked to the pillars of **justice, reparations and social reconstruction**, with a central role played by women-led organisations in providing services to survivors and rebuilding the community fabric. Nevertheless, these initiatives operate in an environment characterised by **institutional constraints, a lack of funding and limited inclusion in formal decision-making frameworks**.

At the same time, the internal political crisis in Tigray (2025) and the exclusion of the TPLF from the elections strengthened a dynamic of **political closure that also affects women's participation**, reducing spaces for

46. See the summary on Ethiopia (Tigray) in chapter 2 (Socio-political crises) in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2026! Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding*, Icaria: Barcelona, 2026.

47. Plaut, Martin, The TPLF statement on the implementation of the Pretoria Peace Agreement, 16 April 2025.

48. ADF-Magazine, *New Rebel Group Threatens Ethiopia's Fragile Peace*, 9 December 2025.

49. Warecho, *Tigray Post-War Recovery Progresses Slowly Three Years After Peace*, 18 August 2025.

50. GIWPS, *Women, Peace and Security Conflict Tracker: November Updates-Spotlight: Ethiopia*, 26 November 2025.

inclusive dialogue. In the meantime, despite previous gains in women's political representation, reports revealed that the conflict has significantly reversed these achievements. For example, after reaching a historic 50% level of representation in the regional parliament, there is now only one woman in the 27-member transitional cabinet.⁵¹

Thus, in 2025 the gender agenda in Tigray was characterised by women's leadership in social recovery, but had little impact on the political architecture of the peace process. More structurally, various analysts emphasised that **the exclusion of women from formal negotiations remains a persistent feature in Ethiopia**, despite their active role in peacebuilding at the community level.⁵²

Ethiopia – Egypt – Sudan ⁵³	
Negotiating actors	Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan
Third parties	AU, World Bank (WB), UAE, EU and USA
Relevant agreements	Anglo-Egyptian Treaty (1929) and its amended version, the Agreement between the Republic of Sudan and the United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria) for the utilisation of the Nile waters (Cairo, 8 November 1959); Nile Basin Initiative that opens the Cooperative Framework Agreement process (1999, signed by seven countries and ratified by four of them, as of December 2023); Cooperative Framework Agreement (Entebbe, 14 May 2010); Khartoum Declaration (also called the Nile Agreement; Khartoum, 23 March 2015).

Summary:
The Nile, the longest river in Africa and the second longest in the world, has been at the centre of disputes for decades. At the heart of the conflict are Egypt and Ethiopia, the two main regional actors. The construction since 2011 of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) by Ethiopia on the Blue Nile, a tributary of the Nile in Ethiopian soil, has exacerbated tensions between Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan. Egypt depends on the Nile for virtually its entire water supply, so its control is strategic. Its main tributary, the Blue Nile, runs from Lake Tana in Ethiopia and joins the White Nile in Sudan, where it provides around 85% of the water of the main Nile. Thirty-two per cent of Ethiopia's territory is located in the Nile basin, where about 40% of Ethiopia's population resides. The Nile runs throughout Sudan from south to north and provides around 77% of the country's fresh water.⁵⁴ The agreements of the colonial period, which favoured Egypt and Sudan, ignored the needs of the rest of the coastal countries, including Ethiopia. There have been constant attempts to build a multilateral management

framework and in 1999 the 11 countries of the basin created the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), whose objective was to establish a multilateral treaty. Egypt and Sudan participated in the process, but they rejected the agreement. In the last decade, different initiatives have been promoted, such as in 2015, when the three countries signed the GERD Declaration of Principles, though it has yielded no results to date. In 2019, the World Bank promoted meetings with US observers and between 2020 and 2021 it facilitated EU-supported tripartite talks, which stalled. The reservoir then began to get filled, precipitating the escalation of militarised tension. Cairo announced that the GERD posed a threat to its security and warned that a conflict could break out if the UN did not intervene to prevent it. The UAE facilitated peace talks in Abu Dhabi in August 2022, though they were not met with success.

During 2025, relations between **Egypt and Sudan** on one side and **Ethiopia** on the other regarding the management of the Nile River and particularly the **Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)** remained dominated by diplomatic confrontation and negotiating deadlock, with no relaunch of the tripartite dialogue process. Far from opening a dynamic of détente, the year consolidated a situation of unresolved political conflict, marked by harsh rhetoric, unilateral actions and growing internationalisation of the dispute.

Throughout the year, **Egypt and Sudan strengthened their bilateral coordination**, articulated through mechanisms such as the '2+2' format between foreign and irrigation ministers. In September 2025, both countries issued joint statements condemning unilateral operation of the dam and reaffirming that their water security is 'indivisible'. However, **this common front did not lead to formal contacts with Ethiopia**, but rather to a strategy aimed at increasing external diplomatic pressure.⁵⁵ In this regard, 2025 was marked by an **intense internationalisation of the conflict**. Egypt repeatedly brought the matter to the UN Security Council and sought support in Arab and African forums. Cairo attempted to reframe the dispute as a threat to regional stability, especially following episodes of flooding in Egypt and Sudan in October, which caused destruction and inundation of crops in both countries, as well as the displacement of 1,200 families in Sudan, all of which both states blamed on Ethiopia's mismanagement of the GERD. Ethiopia rejected these claims, arguing instead that exceptional monsoon rains were the cause.⁵⁶ Ethiopia also rejected any resumption of negotiations under external pressure and argued that the GERD should be governed by the principles of equitable use. Analysts underscored that Addis Ababa focused on consolidating regional

51. Shenkut, Manyingerew, *Breaking Barriers: Women's Participation in Peace and Decision-Making Across Ethiopia*, IGAD, 12 December 2025.
 52. Anonymous, *Confronting the Exclusion of Women in Ethiopia's Peace Processes: A Background Paper*, European Institute of Peace, 2025.
 53. See "The Nile Basin: cooperation or conflict?" in chapter 5 (Risk scenarios) in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2021! Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2021.
 54. Nile Basin Initiative. Accessed December 10, 2024.
 55. Egypt Today, *Egypt, Sudan say Ethiopia's unilateral filling, operation of GERD violates international law*, 3 September 2025.
 56. Sakr, Dina and Ezz, Mohamed, 'Surging Nile waters inundate Egypt and Sudan, revive dispute over Ethiopian mega-dam', *Reuters*, 6 October 2025.

support and on presenting the conflict as a technical, not political, issue, thereby minimising incentives for substantive tripartite dialogue in 2025.⁵⁷

This escalation of the situation coincided with a new diplomatic shift. In an interview in October, Massad Boulos, senior advisor to US President Donald Trump for African, Arab and Middle Eastern affairs, and the father of Trump's son-in-law, said that Washington would now support a technical approach to the dispute, not through political pressure, a position indicating a reorientation of US engagement that would prioritise data transparency, operational coordination and joint risk mitigation, rather than coercive diplomacy.⁵⁸ Subsequently, President Trump sent a letter to his Egyptian counterpart on 16 January 2026 thanking him for his role in the Gaza dispute and offering to mediate in the Nile River dispute.

One of the most notable milestones of the year was Ethiopia's official opening of the GERD on 9 September 2025. Though this event was not attended by Egypt or Sudan, it did receive representatives of neighbouring countries, including the presidents of Somalia and Kenya. Amid great celebration, Addis Ababa presented the dam as a sovereign project and a driver of regional development, whilst Cairo and Khartoum blasted the 'unilateral' nature of the decision and considered it a violation of international law. The opening did not trigger direct contacts to de-escalate the situation; on the contrary, it **accentuated diplomatic polarisation**. Notably, Pietro Salini, the CEO of the Italian company Webuild, responsible for the dam's construction, remarked that he understood Egypt's concern but emphasised that water regulation from the dam would generate additional benefits for Ethiopia's neighbours.⁵⁹ In this regard, Abdullah Abderrahman, the administrator of the Sudanese Roseires Dam, located a few dozen kilometres from the GERD, noted that the new dam has helped to control the overflow of water at Roseires, which had been extremely high before it was built. He also said that there has been a significant reduction in the amounts of silt and trees that the rainy season used to bring to Roseires, which frequently reduced Roseires' storage capacity by one third.⁶⁰

Ethiopia – Somalia (Somaliland)	
Negotiating actors	Ethiopia, Somalia
Third parties	Türkiye, Qatar
Relevant agreements	Ankara Declaration (11 December 2024)

Summary:

The conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia dates back to the 14th century, when the rulers of the Christian highlands of Ethiopia carried out military expeditions in the coast where Islam dominated, particularly in what is now northern Somalia, to open commercial routes giving them access to the sea. Later, in the late 19th century, Ethiopian Emperor Menelik II conquered the Somali city of Harar and announced an ambitious expansion programme in 1891. After the First Italo-Ethiopian War (1895-1896), in which it defeated colonial Italy, Ethiopia won recognition of its independence from the colonial powers. In response to Menelik's expansionist threat, many clans in what became British Somaliland accepted British protection. After Ethiopia's defeat in the Second Italo-Ethiopian War by Mussolini's Italy and due to Ethiopian positioning in the Second World War, in the late 1940s Ethiopia arranged for the British Empire to give it the Somali region of Ogaden, to the dismay of the Somalis. After Somalia's independence in 1960, both countries fought several wars (1964, 1977-1978, 1982) in which Somalia was defeated. The Somali Civil War of the late 1980s and the collapse of Somalia in 1991 put Ethiopia at a clear military and economic advantage and made Somalia a national security issue for Ethiopia. As such, Addis Abeba intervened in Somali internal affairs to promote peace and security in Somalia in defence of its own interests, which do not always align with Somali interests. Ethiopia supported some political and military actors at the expense of others, upheld a permanent unilateral and non-public military presence and later participated in multilateral frameworks (AMISOM, ATMIS and currently AUSSOM), which the Somali armed group al-Shabaab has used to partly justify its armed campaign. Following the crisis between the two countries resulting from the agreement signed in January 2024 between Addis Ababa and the secessionist Somali region of Somaliland regarding Ethiopian access to the Red Sea, a process of dialogue and rapprochement between Somalia and Ethiopia took place during the year, culminating in December 2024 with the achievement of an agreement between the two countries mediated by Türkiye, which is pending implementation.

The year 2025 was marked by a **reduction in diplomatic tension** between Ethiopia and Somalia following the signing of the Ankara Declaration on 11 December 2024.⁶¹ Mediated by Türkiye, this document put an end to the serious crisis caused by the memorandum of understanding previously signed between Ethiopia and

57. Melcangi, Alessia, 'The Nile at a crossroads: Navigating the GERD dispute as Egypt's floodwaters rise', *Atlantic Council*, 10 November 2025.

58. Ekanem, Solomon, 'Ethiopia's mega dam wins U.S. backing for a technical fix amid tensions with Egypt', *Business Insider Africa*, 20 October 2025.

59. Located 14 km from the Sudanese border, the dam is 1.8 km wide and 145 metres high. Its construction began in 2011 and has cost 5 billion USD (borne mostly by the public treasury, but part of its financing has come from small contributions from millions of Ethiopians, through donations and loans) and will produce 6,000 MW of electricity. *Al-Jazeera*, *Ethiopia inaugurates GERD dam amid downstream tensions with Egypt, Sudan*, 9 September 2025, and Ali, Faisal, 'From Haile Selassie to crowdfunding, how Ethiopia's GERD dam was born', *Al-Jazeera*, 9 September 2025.

60. Ibid.

61. Republic of Türkiye – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Ankara Declaration by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Federal Republic of Somalia facilitated by the Republic of Türkiye*, 11 December 2024.

the secessionist region of Somaliland in early 2024. However, despite the formal restoration of bilateral relations, **a fully operational peace process did not come together in 2025**. Instead, a **phase of conflict containment** took place, with limited progress made in implementing the agreement and many unresolved questions. The Ankara Declaration was based on a delicate balance: Somalia obtained Ethiopia's explicit commitment to its territorial integrity, whilst Addis Ababa obtained recognition of the principle of secured access to the sea under Somali sovereignty, through future commercial agreements, leases or similar formulae. The parties agreed to open technical negotiations before the end of February 2025, with Turkish facilitation and a four-month deadline to achieve concrete results.

During the first few months of 2025, significant but essentially symbolic political gestures were observed. In January, the two countries announced the **full restoration of diplomatic relations**, and their leaders maintained bilateral contacts, including meetings related to the coordination of Ethiopian troops in the new African Union mission in Somalia (AUSSOM), which formally began on 1 January 2025. Nevertheless, **material implementation of the agreement advanced slowly**. Although technical channels were confirmed as open, **no concrete progress was made public** regarding Ethiopian access to the sea or alternative port projects to replace the initial agreement with Somaliland.⁶² As early as December 2024, some analysts had warned that the agreement deliberately left the practical mechanisms ambiguous, postponing the most sensitive decisions to avoid a premature collapse of the understanding.⁶³ Other analysts noted in July that the process was stalled, as no meetings had been held since April. According to reports in Somali media, the issue of recognition of Somaliland also arose during earlier conversations, although Ethiopia had neither publicly endorsed nor rejected the idea.⁶⁴ A **key element was the exclusion of Somaliland from the process**. There were no official contacts with the authorities in Hargeisa either during the 2024 negotiations or throughout 2025. This omission persisted throughout the year and produced latent tensions, especially following Israel's recognition of Somaliland in late 2025, which both Somalia and Eritrea criticised harshly. The lack of a channel of dialogue with Somaliland means that the agreement between Ethiopia and Somalia **did not resolve the political core of the dispute**, but merely froze it temporarily.

Somalia	
Negotiating actors	Federal Government, leaders of the federal and emerging states (Puntland, HirShabelle, Galmudug, Jubaland, Southwest), political-military movement Ahlu Sunna Wal-Jama'a, clan leaders and sub-clans, Somaliland
Third parties	UN, IGAD, Türkiye, AU
Relevant agreements	Road map to end the transition (2011), Kampala Accord (2011), Provisional Federal Constitution (2012), Mogadishu Declaration of the National Consultative Forum (2015), Electoral Agreement on Somalia (27 May 2021)

Summary:

The armed conflict and the absence of effective central authority in the country have their origins in 1988, when a coalition of opposing groups rebelled against the dictatorial power of Siad Barre and three years later managed to overthrow him. Since 1991, more than 15 peace processes with different types of proposals were attempted to establish a central authority. Of note were the Addis Ababa (1993), Arta (2000) and Mbagathi (2002-2004) processes. The centrality of the Somali state had led to a high degree of authoritarianism during Barre's rule, and the different proposals intended to establish a State that did not hold all of the power, a formula widely rejected by Somali society. However, some clans and warlords rejected the federal or decentralized model because it represented a threat to their power. The resolution of the conflict has been complicated by several issues: the power of some warlords who have turned conflict into a way of life; the issue of representation and the balance of power used to establish the future government between the different stakeholders and clans that make up the Somali social structure in conflict for years during Siad Barre's dictatorship; interference by Ethiopia and Eritrea; and the erratic stance of the international community. The rise of political Islam as a possible governing option through the Islamic courts, and the internationalization of the conflict with the arrival of foreign fighters in the armed wing of the courts, al-Shabaab, as well the Ethiopian invasion and the U.S. role in the fight against terrorism, have all contributed to making the situation more difficult. The Transitional Federal Government, which emerged from the Mbagathi peace process (2004), came to an end in 2012 and gave way to the Federal Government. However, the actions of the federal government and Parliament, marked by their inefficiency and corruption, and their re-election, have been the cause of dispute and successive negotiations between the federated states and opposition groups within the respective states as well as between the different clans that make up the social structure of the country.

During 2025, **peace and dialogue initiatives in Somalia unfolded in a particularly adverse context**, marked by the military reactivation of al-Shabaab, the start of the new African Union mission (AUSSOM) and intense internal political polarisation surrounding reform of the electoral system.

President Mohamud nevertheless launched a broader political initiative. In March 2025, he announced the

62. Arab News, Ethiopia and Somalia hold a first round of technical talks in Türkiye toward resolving their dispute, 18 February 2025.
 63. Soylyu, Ragip, 'Inside the Turkey-backed Somalia-Ethiopia deal', *Middle East Eye*, 12 December 2024.
 64. Horn Daily, Ethiopia-Somalia Sea Access Talks Collapse as Regional Tensions Resurface, 1 August 2025.

creation of an **inclusive national dialogue platform**, conceived to align political leaders, clans and civil society against al-Shabaab and to strengthen the state's internal cohesion. The initiative received explicit backing from international partners, including the UN, the EU and the US, which considered it a necessary complement to military pressure.⁶⁵ However, the initiative did not translate into a sustained process or incorporate insurgent armed actors, limiting its impact.

The main arena for dialogue initiatives in Somalia during 2025 was the political conflict over the electoral model. The federal government pushed for a transition towards the principle of 'one person, one vote' as a step prior to national elections scheduled for 2026. This agenda was perceived by a significant part of the opposition and by several federal states, especially Puntland and Jubaland, as a unilateral attempt to recentralise power. Throughout the year, intermittent attempts at dialogue took place between Mogadishu, the opposition organised in the Somali Salvation Forum, and regional governments. In April, voter registration was formally launched in the capital, which the government presented as a milestone towards democratisation. However, doing so deepened the mistrust of critical actors, who complained of the lack of prior consensus and boycotted several dialogue sessions. The government attempted to remedy the situation by convening the **National Dialogue Forum** scheduled for June 2025. The forum was significantly diminished when Puntland, Jubaland and part of the opposition refused to attend, reducing its political reach and exposing its limits.⁶⁶ Furthermore, the persistence of armed clashes between federal and regional forces, particularly in Jubaland, demonstrated the failure of dialogue.

Despite the deadlock, **partial agreements were reached** in the second half of the year. In August 2025, President Mohamud reached an understanding with a group of dissident opposition leaders from the Somali Salvation Forum on key aspects of the electoral process, moderating some of the most controversial reforms, such as the direct election of the president. Although this agreement was presented as a step forward, it failed to rebuild national consensus, as the main dissident actors remained on the sidelines. Important opposition figures within the Somali Salvation Forum, not party to the agreement, continued to reject the reforms or boycott

the process, citing security and political reasons and thereby leaving Somalia's transition to a 'one person, one vote' system incomplete.⁶⁷

Furthermore, there were no direct or indirect negotiations between the federal government of Somalia and al-Shabaab in 2025, as in previous years. The authorities consistently maintained a policy of explicitly rejecting any dialogue with the group, which they continued to refer to as 'Khawarij',⁶⁸ and prioritised a military solution. Analysts agree that, despite occasional calls for deradicalisation, no credible political channels involving factions of the insurgent movement existed. Nevertheless, during a conference in Oslo in June 2024, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud emphasised his willingness to engage in dialogue, and countries such as Qatar and Türkiye have repeatedly offered to provide such a space.⁶⁹

Gender, peace and security

In 2025, **modest and uneven progress was made in the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda in Somalia** amid the intensification of insecurity, political polarisation around the elections and the persistence of very high levels of gender-based violence. The implementation of the **National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2023-2027)** continued to receive support from the United Nations, and specifically from the UN Transitional Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNTMIS)⁷⁰ and UN Women, particularly to promote the effective participation of women in governance and constitutional review processes, though female representation remained below the 30% target established in electoral legislation and reaffirmed during the political reform process of 2024-2025. Despite being a significant step forward, its implementation continued to face barriers such as persistent insecurity, forced displacement and conservative social norms that limit women's autonomy.⁷¹ On the political front, UN agencies and international partners supported inclusive consultations in Mogadishu and in several federal states to involve women leaders, including Ubax Ugaas (in Galmudug state) and Hamdi Adani Amin (in Hirshabelle state), who are members of the Somali Women Peace Network,⁷² civil society organisations such as Bilan Media and minorities in discussions on the electoral model and

65. Hiraan Online, *International partners back Somali president's push for national dialogue against al-Shabaab*, 7 April 2025.

66. European Union Agency for Asylum, 'COI QUERY – Somalia – Major political, security, and humanitarian developments', *EUA*, 13 August 2025, p. 2.

67. International IDEA, 'Somalia reaches deal with opposition defectors on electoral model', August 2025.

68. This concept is a historical and Islamic term that is nowadays used in a political and delegitimizing way in contexts such as Somalia. It would refer to a heretical and extremist actor, with whom negotiating would be theologically and politically unacceptable, as they are considered outside the true Islam.

69. Cok, Corrado, 'React, rinse, repeat: How Europe can help break Somalia's cycle of conflict', *ECFR*, 2 May 2025.

70. UNSOM completed its mandate on 31 October 2024 and was replaced by the UN Transitional Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNTMIS), with an initial mandate of two years.

71. UNTMIS, *Somalia / Women Inclusion*, United Nations, 31 October 2025.

72. UNDP Somalia, *Women trailblazers redefining peace & protection in Somalia*, 7 September 2025.

constitutional reform, although these initiatives were limited by the boycott of some regional actors and by insecurity, according to various analysts.⁷³

At the local level, **networks of women mediators and peacebuilders** were consolidated, principally the Somali Women Peace Network, including alliances supported by the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and by joint programmes of UNDP and UN Women, which facilitated community conflict resolution and support for victims of gender-based violence in approximately 17 districts across the country. Nevertheless, the situation of sexual and gender-based violence remained extremely serious, especially among internally displaced women and girls.

Somalia – Somaliland	
Negotiating actors	Federal Government of Somalia, Republic of Somaliland
Third parties	Türkiye, Norway
Relevant agreements	--

Summary:
The territory of the current self-proclaimed Republic of Somaliland received its name when the British Empire took control of the Egyptian administration in 1884. After signing successive treaties with the ruling Somali sultans in the region, it established a protectorate called British Somaliland. In 1960, when the protectorate became independent from Britain, it was called the State of Somaliland. Four days later, on 1 July 1960, Somaliland joined Italian Somalia, forming the State of Somalia. In the mid-1980s, resistance movements supported by Ethiopia emerged throughout the country. Notable among these was the Somali National Movement (SNM), which rose up in Somaliland, leading to the Somaliland War of Independence, which toppled the Siad Barre regime and started the Somali Civil War in 1991, which continues to this day. On 18 May 1991, the northern clans proclaimed the independence of the Republic of Somaliland, comprising the administrative regions of Awdal, Woqooyi Galbeed, Togdheer, Sanaag and Sool. Somaliland is not internationally recognised, but it has its own Constitution (2001), currency and government, as well as greater political stability than Somalia, helped by the influence of the dominant Isaaq clan (80% of the population). The multiparty elections of 2005 were internationally observed and represented a push for international recognition as a sovereign state, though it remains limited. Somaliland's independence has not been officially recognised by any UN member state or international organisation, ceding leadership to the AU in the decision. The AU has been considering Somaliland's application for membership in the bloc and its approach as an “exceptional case”, although the AU itself has expressed fear that formal recognition of Somaliland would encourage other secessionist movements in Africa. Over 15 peace processes have been held in Somalia, including the Somaliland dispute. At the 2012 London International Conference, actors from

the international community proposed to hold negotiations to resolve the dispute between Somalia and Somaliland. Since then, six rounds of negotiations have been held (in London, Dubai, Ankara, Djibouti and twice in Istanbul). The seventh (Istanbul III) failed in January 2015 and the process was interrupted. Türkiye has been encouraging attempts at rapprochement between the sides since then. However, in January 2024 Ethiopia and Somaliland signed a memorandum of understanding that included international recognition of Somaliland in exchange for facilitating Ethiopian access to the sea via Somaliland, amongst other issues, which blocked dialogue between Somalia and Somaliland and aggravated the relationship between them.

During 2025, the dialogue between **Somalia** and **Somaliland** not only **experienced no significant progress** but entered a **phase of regression and breakdown**, shaped by adverse regional dynamics and by growing political and territorial confrontation in northern Somalia. The Turkish-mediated agreement reached on 11 December 2024 between Ethiopia and Somalia in Ankara constituted a turning point for Somaliland, which found itself formally excluded from the pact despite being the actor directly implicated in the origin of the crisis. The authorities of Somaliland reacted with open hostility to the Ankara Declaration. Hargeisa interpreted the joint declaration between Addis Ababa and Mogadishu as an explicit way to delegitimise Somaliland as its own entity, as Ethiopia reaffirmed respect for the ‘unity and territorial integrity of Somalia’ without making any mention of Somaliland. Analysts and spokespersons of the Somaliland government complained that the agreement sought to resolve a crisis created at its expense without involving it, strengthening the narrative that Mogadishu uses regional dialogue to block Somaliland's aspirations for international recognition.⁷⁴ Throughout 2025, Somaliland simultaneously reinforced its sovereigntist rhetoric and its strategic rapprochement with Ethiopia, emphasising that the memorandum of understanding signed in January 2024 between Ethiopia and Somaliland remained valid from its perspective, regardless of the subsequent understanding between Ethiopia and Somalia. This position helped to consolidate the perception that the Ankara Declaration further hardened Somaliland's position, whilst de-escalating the confrontation between Addis Ababa and Mogadishu.

On the bilateral front, 2025 was marked by the **formal rupture of the few existing dialogue channels**. In April 2025, the Somaliland government **officially suspended all dialogue with the federal government of Somalia**, following the historic visit in April of Somali Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre to **Las Anod**, a disputed territory in the Sool region and the epicentre of the 2023-2024 clashes. Hargeisa described the visit as

73. UN Women, *Somalia Country Brief on Women Peace and Security (2025) Based on the Report of the Secretary-General on Women Peace and Security (S/2025/556)*, United Nations, 2025.
74. Tyson, Kathryn and Karr, Liam, ‘Ankara Declaration Reduces Ethiopia-Somalia Tensions but Leaves Unresolved Gaps’, *AEI*, 18 December 2024; and Walaaleeye, Maxamuud, ‘Somaliland Accuses Somalia of Undermining Dialogue Principles, Signals Stronger Ties with Ethiopia’, *The Horn Tribune*, 10 July 2025.

a form of ‘provocation’ and a direct violation of its sovereignty, claiming that it nullified the minimum basis for any future negotiation.⁷⁵ This decision resulted in the de facto **complete freezing of the Somalia-Somaliland dialogue process**, which had already been operating intermittently for years without substantive progress. The conflict in Las Anod and Mogadishu’s recognition of the SSC-Khaatumo administration as a new federal entity aggravated the rupture, which Somaliland perceived as a deliberate strategy to undermine its territorial control and its negotiating position.⁷⁶ Unlike previous stages, there were no international initiatives to relaunch talks between Somalia and Somaliland in 2025 and no clear prospects to reactivate them in the short term. Turkish mediation concentrated exclusively on the Addis Ababa-Mogadishu relationship, intensifying Somaliland’s sense of political isolation.

Maghreb – North Africa

Libya	
Negotiating actors	Government of National Unity (GNU), Government of National Stability (GNS), Presidential Council, High State Council (HSC), House of Representatives (HoR), LNA/ALAF
Third parties	UN, Quartet (UN, Arab League, AU, EU), Germany, France, Italy, UK, USA, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Türkiye, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia (Berlin Process)
Relevant agreements	Libyan Political Agreement or Skhirat Agreement (2015), Ceasefire Agreement (2020)

Summary:

After the fall of Muammar Gaddafi’s regime in 2011, Libya has experienced a transition process characterized by multiple political, economic, social, institutional and security challenges and by the presence of numerous armed groups and the intervention and projection of the interests of different foreign actors. Since 2014, the North African country has been the scene of increasing violence and political instability, which led to the formation of two major poles of power and authority. Given the developments in the country, mediation efforts led by the UN have tried to find a solution to the crisis. Negotiations have confronted several obstacles due to disputes of legitimacy, the diversity of actors involved, multiple interests at stake and the persistent climate of violence in the country, among other factors. In late 2015, the Libyan Political Agreement or the Skhirat Agreement was signed under the auspices of the UN amidst a climate of persistent divisions and scepticism due to the foreseeable problems in implementing it. In October 2017, the United Nations submitted a new plan to start the political transition and facilitate implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement. As part of the Berlin Process

(which began in 2019 with the participation of a dozen countries, in addition to the UN, the Arab League, the EU and the AU), intra Libyan negotiations were launched around three components in 2020: security issues (the responsibility of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission), political affairs (managed by the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum, or LPDF) and economic aspects. An International Monitoring Committee was also activated. In late 2020, a permanent ceasefire agreement was made official, and a roadmap was announced that led to the formation of a unity government and provided for presidential and parliamentary elections to be held in December 2021. The elections were not held in a context of divisions and power struggles that led to the reformation of two parallel governments, opening a new stage of uncertainty in the country.

During 2025, the political and institutional fracture in **Libya** persisted alongside acts of violence. Despite being low-intensity since the 2020 ceasefire, this violence still underscored the fragility of the situation and the challenges in addressing the political and armed conflict.⁷⁷ The main poles of power continued to revolve around the internationally recognised Government of National Unity (GNU) in the west, led by Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Mohamed Dbeibah, and the Government of National Stability (GNS) in the east, led by Prime Minister Osama Hamad and supported by Commander Khalifa Haftar, the leader of the armed group Libyan National Army. The United Nations remained the actor that played the most prominent role in mediation initiatives, primarily through the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and the UN Secretary-General’s representative for Libya. In January 2025, this position was assumed by former Ghanaian Foreign Minister **Hanna Tetteh, who promoted a series of initiatives to try to unblock the political process**, affected, among other factors, by the indefinite postponement of general elections since 2021. **Despite the range of processes launched in 2025, the deadlock persisted at the end of the year.**

In December 2024, UNSMIL, led at the time by the acting UN Secretary-General’s representative, US diplomat Stephanie Koury, announced that a technical committee of Libyan experts would be set up to identify alternatives for addressing some of the main disputed issues. The purpose was to overcome obstacles and make headway on a political agreement. Thus, in February 2025, the formation of an Advisory Committee was announced whose members were selected for their knowledge of constitutional, legal and electoral matters, their ability to reach compromises and their understanding of Libya’s challenges, among other criteria. UNSMIL emphasised that the establishment of the committee was necessary given the scenario of

75. Hiiraan, Prime Minister Barre launches eight major development projects in Las Anod town, 14 April 2025; Somaliland, Tensions Soar as Somaliland Suspends Dialogue with Somalia, 17 April 2025.
76. See chapter 1 (Armed conflicts) in *Alert 2026! Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2026; e International Crisis Group, *Somalia-Somaliland: A Halting Embrace of Dialogue*, 6 August 2020.
77. See the summary on Libya in chapter 1 (Armed conflicts) in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2026! Report on conflicts human rights and peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2026.

deep division and political paralysis and the growing popular dissatisfaction with the status quo, which was aggravated by deteriorating economic conditions.

Composed of 20 personalities, including 35% women,⁷⁸ the Advisory Committee held many working meetings over the following three months, including with other actors that had been involved in previous talks to address the electoral issue, such as the 6+6 committee, composed of representatives of the two main poles of power in the country. In May, **the Advisory Committee completed its mandate and presented its recommendations in a report that identified and analysed four possible scenarios for ending the transition phase:** (1) holding presidential and legislative elections simultaneously; (2) holding legislative elections first, followed by the adoption of a permanent Constitution; (3) adopting a permanent Constitution before any elections; (4) or establishing a political dialogue committee, based on the Libyan Political Agreement (2017) to finalise electoral laws, executive authority and the text of the Constitution.⁷⁹ The process received some criticism, including complaints that all the options considered the participation of discredited institutions, such as Parliament (elected in 2014) and the High Council of State (elected in 2012), revealing a certain distrust that the UN could manage to drive a substantive process after so many years of trying.⁸⁰

The Advisory Committee's report led to a series of contacts with various actors from Libyan society. In the meantime, UNSMIL and Germany promoted **a new meeting of the International Follow-Up Committee of the Berlin Process** to try to coordinate external actors involved in the Libyan process. Held in Berlin in June, the meeting was the first plenary session since 2021 and brought together 19 states and three regional organisations, which repeated their commitment to supporting the political process in the North African country.⁸¹ The decision by foreign governments to engage with one or both Libyan sides and to prioritise their own interests over collective diplomacy has helped to entrench the status quo, dimming prospects for a political solution to the crisis. In this context, and building on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and dialogue on the proposal with other actors, **UNSMIL and Tetteh presented a new roadmap to be implemented within a period of 12 to 18 months.** The initiative was structured around three pillars: the adoption of a viable electoral framework to hold presidential and parliamentary elections, the unification of institutions under a new unity government and a structured dialogue to facilitate broad participation and

address critical issues. The roadmap was received with scepticism by sectors of Libyan society and questioned by some power actors, such as General Haftar, who chose to discredit the UN initiative and promote the search for alternative solutions to address the crisis in the country.

By the end of the year, no progress had been made on the first two pillars of the roadmap. The parties remained divided over the legal framework to be applied to the elections and the commission responsible for organising them, as well as over the formation of a unified government. Additionally, Libyan political institutions presented alternative plans to that of the UN, contributing to a sense of confusion. Nevertheless, **in mid-December it was decided to advance the third pillar of the roadmap, and the first session of the 'Structured Dialogue' was convened.** Composed of 120 people (40 of them women, equivalent to 35% of the total), it was conceived as an inclusive forum for consultation, and not as a decision-making body, to build consensus on four key areas (governance, security, economy and reconciliation and human rights) and to pave the way for elections.⁸² The fact that it was a forum for dialogue held inside Libya was praised by some analysts, despite scepticism from other quarters. Some sceptics stressed that Libya's political transition has been repeatedly hindered by elites, militias and other actors that benefit from the status quo.

In October, the UN Security Council renewed UNSMIL's mandate for another year following a report presented by the UN Secretary-General that conducted a strategic review of the mission. Amongst the recommendations were that UNSMIL should prioritise support for a political solution in Libya, and that it should lead and support the working groups established under the Berlin Process, the negotiating framework that led to the current ceasefire. Another recommendation was to streamline the mission's involvement in the security sphere, moving from ceasefire implementation to confidence-building and the reunification of military and security institutions. Türkiye also mediated in response to several episodes of violence between rival groups in Tripoli to prevent escalation during the year.

Gender, peace and security

As mentioned above, **Libyan women enjoyed 35% representation in the initiatives promoted during the year by the UN.** This was the case in the Advisory Committee and later in the Structured Dialogue. The 40

78. UNSMIL, *UNSMIL announces the establishment of the Advisory Committee*, Press Release, 4 February 2025; Libya Herald, *UNSMIL'S Advisory Committee completes its mandate and submits final report*, 7 May 2025.

79. UNSMIL, *UNSMIL shares Advisory Committee recommendations, prepares for public consultation*, Press Release, 20 May 2025.

80. Mustafa Fetoury, *Is the UN helping or hindering a solution to the Libyan crisis?*, The New Arab, 28 May 2025; Lawyers for Justice in Libya, *New plan, same mistakes? Four priorities for UNSMIL's Advisory Committee to advance elections*, 24 February 2025.

81. Security Council Report, *Libya: August 2025 Monthly Forecast*, 30 July 2025.

82. UNSMIL, *Structured Dialogue*.

women participants in the latter organised themselves into a group they called the Libyan Women Caucus, with the intention of ensuring that women's perspectives, priorities and demands were substantively incorporated. In the months prior to the launch of the Structured Dialogue, Libyan women from various regions, as well as some living outside the country, participated in consultations facilitated by UNSMIL to identify some of their priorities, which were compiled in the 'Libyan Women's Charter' (December 2025).⁸³ The text reflects thinking and action identified in previous documents and processes, including those from Libyan women who participated in the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF). Among other demands, the Libyan Women's Charter calls for the establishment of mechanisms to ensure meaningful female participation in political and executive positions, elections and security institutions, with a minimum representation of 35%, among other areas, as well as the establishment of a new unified government and a constitutional review. In 2025, UNSMIL's leaders were all women, and three women in senior UN diplomatic positions (Hanna Tetteh, Stephanie Koury and Rosemary DiCarlo, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs) played a prominent role in supporting the Libyan process.

Morocco – Western Sahara	
Negotiating actors	Morocco, Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro (POLISARIO Front)
Third parties	UN, Algeria, Mauritania, Group of Friends of Western Sahara (France, USA, Spain, United Kingdom and Russia)
Relevant agreements	Ceasefire agreement (1991)

Summary:
 The attempts to mediate and find a negotiated solution to the Western Sahara conflict led to a cease-fire agreement in 1991. Since then, and despite the existence of a formal negotiations framework under the auspices of the UN, the Western Sahara peace process has failed. The successive proposals and the many rounds of negotiations has not led to an agreement between the parties, all of which maintain their red lines: Morocco insists on its territorial claims and is only willing to accept a status of autonomy, whereas the POLISARIO Front claims there is a need to hold a referendum that includes the option of independence. Negotiations on Western Sahara –recognised as a territory which is yet to be decolonised– have been determined by the large asymmetry between the actors in dispute, the inability of the UN to set up a consultation on the future of this territory, and regional rivalry between Morocco and Algeria –a key support for the POLISARIO front– and by the support given to Rabat by some key international actors, such as the USA or France. This, in real terms, has meant a prevalence of the Moroccan thesis when approaching the conflict. In late 2020, following incidents with Morocco in Guerguerat area, the POLISARIO Front terminated the ceasefire agreement.

Diplomatic initiatives continued in an attempt to reactivate negotiations on Western Sahara in 2025, though without succeeding in re-establishing a dialogue between Morocco and the POLISARIO Front. The main development was the more forceful international support for the Moroccan position, which materialised in various countries' support and in the approval of a UN resolution in October that expressly recognised Rabat's autonomy plan as the basis for negotiations to address the dispute. As in previous years, the UN played a prominent role in mediation efforts. **Coinciding with 50 years since the beginning of the conflict and in a scenario of low-intensity hostilities, the activity of the UN Special Envoy for Western Sahara, Staffan de Mistura, concentrated in the first months of the year on trying to reactivate negotiations for a political solution and restore the ceasefire** (in force between 1991-2020). The diplomat carried out new rounds of travel to the region and met with key actors in March and September. At the same time, the US became more actively involved in addressing the conflict, from a position openly aligned with Morocco's interests. US President Donald Trump, who during his first term (2017-2021) recognised Western Sahara as Moroccan territory, publicly reiterated his support for the Moroccan autonomy plan. **Washington also intensified its political and diplomatic activities, increasing pressure on Algeria to convince the POLISARIO Front to accept the Moroccan plan and insisting on the need to reduce both the contingent and the mandate of the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).** Some in both the US and Morocco called for the complete dismantling of the mission and for the POLISARIO Front to be declared a terrorist group. In mid-2025, a bill was introduced in the US House of Representatives with the aim of criminalising the POLISARIO Front through its designation as a 'Foreign Terrorist Organization' (FTO).

An international environment more favourable to Morocco's interests was demonstrated throughout the year by the explicit support of new countries, including the United Kingdom, Kenya, Portugal and Guatemala, for the autonomy plan presented by Rabat in April 2007, which excludes the Sahrawi independence option advocated by the POLISARIO Front. These states' support for Rabat's plan therefore joined that of major European countries in recent years, such as France, which declared that the Moroccan autonomy plan was 'the only way' to achieve a political solution to the Western Sahara conflict in 2024; Spain, which described Rabat's initiative as 'the most serious, credible and realistic option' for resolving the dispute in 2022; and Germany, which also backed the plan in 2022. In practice, four of the five countries that make up the Group of Friends of Western Sahara (the US, Spain, France and the United Kingdom) have openly aligned themselves with Morocco's positions, with the exception of Russia.

83. UNSMIL, *Libyan Women's Charter*, December 2025.

In this scenario, **the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2797 marked a new milestone in the history of the conflict.** The text of the resolution was drafted by the US and approved by 11 votes in favour and none against, with China, Pakistan and Russia abstaining, and with the absence of Algeria, the main international backer of the POLISARIO Front, which did not participate in the vote. The draft resolution presented by Washington had initially proposed extending MINURSO's mandate for only three months and demanded that the UN develop recommendations to transform or terminate the mission. Finally, after intense negotiations, the usual one-year extension of MINURSO was approved. However, the most innovative and significant element of Resolution 2797 is that it explicitly **urges the parties to enter into negotiations on the future of Western Sahara 'on the basis of Morocco's autonomy proposal, with a view to achieving a definitive and acceptable solution'.** Additionally, the text recognises that **'genuine autonomy could be the most feasible outcome'**.⁸⁴ The express reference to the plan presented by Rabat nearly 20 years ago stood in contrast to the omission of the positions defended by the POLISARIO Front, which had presented a revised and expanded proposal in October. According to reports, this new initiative by the Sahrawi group proposed including an autonomy plan similar to that presented by Morocco as one of the alternatives in a referendum in which the Sahrawi population would also have the option to choose independence.

Algeria, which participated in negotiations on the draft resolution, declared that the text did not reflect the legitimate aspirations of the Sahrawi people. Some analysts said that Algeria had decided to abstain because voting in favour of the resolution would have been interpreted as an endorsement of the autonomy plan and voting against it would be seen as a rejection of the extension of MINURSO's mandate, which entails the possibility of a referendum. Voting openly against the resolution would also have pitted Algeria against the US, which promoted the text, jeopardising Rabat's relative rapprochement in bilateral relations with Washington since Donald Trump's return to power.⁸⁵

In the months that followed, the UN Special Envoy stressed that the Moroccan plan was just a framework and did not necessarily anticipate the outcome of the negotiations. In this context, the UN and the US both urged the parties to return to dialogue and resume the negotiations. Morocco announced that it was updating and expanding its proposal, and it emerged that Rabat

was taking the Spanish system of autonomous regions as a reference, among other models. By the end of the year, no details of this expanded proposal had been made public. The King of Morocco publicly thanked the countries that supported his approach and said that the resolution represented a turning point in the consolidation of the Moroccan identity of the Sahara. At the same time, Morocco continued to strengthen its diplomatic, economic and military relations with Washington, including with multimillion-dollar contracts for the purchase of weaponry. Both before and especially after the adoption of UN Resolution 2797, internal differences and debates were reported within the POLISARIO Front over the strategy to follow. The Sahrawi group faced the dilemma between being accused of spoiler behaviour or accepting to negotiate despite the new terms established, in a context of growing international isolation. Formally, the group welcomed the extension of MINURSO and repeated that it was willing to participate constructively in an UN-led process but rejected participation in a political process that would legitimise the Moroccan military occupation of Western Sahara and deprive the Sahrawi population of its inalienable right to self-determination.

In November, groups in favour of discontinuing the negotiations met in the Tindouf refugee camp and demanded a change of leadership. Some analysts also warned of growing frustration among some

Sahrawi refugee youth, who in the current scenario have called for an intensification of the armed struggle.⁸⁶ From a human rights and international law perspective, UNSC Resolution 2797 was criticised for supporting a plan that does not lay out an option of independence, provide for reparations or guarantee that the Sahrawi population can freely decide on its political status. Organisations such as Human Rights Watch highlighted these aspects and recalled that an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the UN's main judicial organ, reaffirmed the right to the self-determination of the Sahrawi population as far back as 1975.⁸⁷

The adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2797 marked a turning point by recognising Morocco's autonomy plan as the basis for negotiations on the future of Western Sahara, whilst Algeria abstained from the vote and the POLISARIO Front faced internal divisions over whether to accept the new framework for dialogue

84. UN Security Council, *Resolution 2797 of the Security Council of the United Nations*, S/RES/2795(2025), Paragraph 3.

85. Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, *What Next for the Western Sahara? The Repercussions of Security Council Resolution 2797*, Series: Situation Assessment, 13 November 2025.

86. International Crisis Group, *A Window for Diplomacy in Western Sahara*, Briefing no. 96, Middle East & North Africa, 20 October 2026.

87. Human Rights Watch, *UN: Western Sahara Peoples' Self-Determination at Risk*, HRW Report, 25 March 2026.

Southern Africa

Mozambique	
Negotiating actors	Government, political and social opposition
Third parties	Instituto para Democracia Multipartidária (IMD)
Relevant agreements	Political Commitment Law for an Inclusive National Dialogue (2025)

Summary:

The 1974 coup d'état against the Portuguese dictatorship and the guerrilla war waged by the Marxist-Leninist insurgency Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) led Mozambique to gain independence from Portugal in 1975. Thereafter, Mozambique was shaken by a civil war that pitted the FRELIMO government against the armed group Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO), which was supported by the ruling white minorities in former Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe) and apartheid South Africa, within the context of the Cold War. The parties reached a peace agreement in 1992, seen as an example of reconciliation, mediated by the Community of Sant'Egidio, which ended 16 years of a war that caused one million deaths and forcibly displaced five million people. The agreement ushered in a period of political stability and economic development, albeit with high levels of inequality. Armed clashes with RENAMO resumed in the centre of the country in April 2013 and a new peace agreement was signed in August 2019. In late 2017, a new armed conflict emerged in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, which continues to the present day. At the same time, mounting allegations of fraud and irregularities in successive elections, some corroborated by international observers, have been accompanied by growing authoritarianism and repression of the opposition, as well as FRELIMO'S capture of the state, the media and the economy. The controversial general elections of October 2024 resulted in the official victory of the ruling FRELIMO party's candidate, Daniel Chapo, but were plagued by allegations of fraud and violent crackdowns that left hundreds dead and thousands injured and detained. In their wake, the country has attempted to channel discontent through the creation of what it calls the Inclusive National Dialogue.

The Inclusive National Dialogue process began during the year, which sought deep constitutional reform following the social and political crisis the country suffered as a result of the October 2024 general elections. The year began with Daniel Chapo assuming the presidency of the republic in January, putting an end to the turbulent electoral period that had taken a tragic toll of hundreds of people dead and thousands detained by late 2024, as well as a new breakdown of trust between citizens and state institutions. Chapo presented himself with a message of renewal, committed to launching reforms to stabilise the country facing the challenge of mediating between civil society's demands for openness and the pressures of the hardline factions within his own party, FRELIMO, which have been reluctant to cede power or allow genuine accountability for the violence carried out during the protests.

In March, the government and the leaders of opposition parties with representation in Parliament agreed to launch a constitutional reform process by opening a national dialogue. One month later, the Assembly of the Republic unanimously approved the Political Commitment for an Inclusive National Dialogue, focusing on state reform, justice and electoral systems.⁸⁸ This legal instrument seeks to establish a roadmap for social peace based on three fundamental pillars: (a) the creation of an Inclusive National Dialogue and Reform Commission, (b) a review of the Mozambican Constitution to adapt the political system to new realities and demands for decentralisation and transparency and (c) transparency and accountability measures aimed at investigating the abuses committed and providing a response to the victims.

The Commission will supervise the work of 10 thematic subgroups, formed by political parties and members of different state institutions, which are focused on various issues, including constitutional reform, fiscal reform, political system reform and reconciliation. The decisions of the thematic subgroups will be reviewed by the Commission and subsequently presented to the Assembly of the Republic and the country's executive branch. Despite the progress made, the format of the Commission quickly became the main focus of controversy. The law stipulated that it would be composed of 21 members: 18 representing political parties with parliamentary or municipal representation (two per party) and three representing civil society. However, the composition was harshly criticised due to the lack of transparency in the selection of civil society representatives and because of the exclusion of Venâncio Mondlane, the country's central opposition figure. In fact, Mondlane had driven the main political force (PODEMOS) of the public protests, but due to his subsequent departure from the party, he had no parliamentary representation when the Commission was formed and was not included. Thus, on 10 September, the Inclusive National Dialogue process formally began in the country, which in principle is scheduled to continue until November 2026.⁸⁹ The registration could allow the eventual participation of ANAMOLA and, consequently, of Mondlane, in the reform proposals. Even whilst excluded for the time being, ANAMOLA submitted proposals to the Technical Commission, including the revision of the Constitution and the electoral body, as well as its formal inclusion in the same.⁹⁰

Furthermore, whilst different Mozambican governments had previously refused to engage in peace talks with the insurgency in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, in September President Chapo and other officials spoke for the first time of a possible dialogue to complement military efforts to resolve the conflict. Along the same lines, Valige Tauabo, the governor of Cabo Delgado,

88. *Ley de Compromiso Político para un Diálogo Nacional Inclusivo*, 2 April 2025. Published in the Boletim da República, 11 April 2025.

89. Alberto Massango, "ANAMOLA officially launched", Agência de Informação de Moçambique, 22 September 2025.

90. ANAMOLA, "As Propostas do Partido ANAMOLA para a Reforma Constitucional e Eleitoral em Moçambique", 25 November 2025.

went further and invited the jihadist insurgents to express their grievances through the Inclusive National Dialogue, which includes nationwide consultations with civil society representatives. Former President Armando Guebuza has also insisted that the spirit of the national dialogue must be extended to the insurgency in the north to achieve complete peace in the country.⁹¹

Gender, peace and security

As part of the 25th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325, in October UN Women joined forces with the government of Mozambique, backed with funding from Norway, to officially launch the project ‘She Leads Peace: Strengthening the Meaningful Participation and Leadership of Women and Girls in Peace, Security and Recovery (2025-2027)’. The project seeks to strengthen the leadership and participation of women and girls in peace, security and recovery processes in 14 districts of the provinces of Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Manica and Sofala.⁹² Earlier, in July, UN Women reported that 240 women from the ‘Peace Sentinels’ project received training as part of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) project, implemented by UN Women and its partners, with financial support from the government of Norway.⁹³ Furthermore, UN Women Mozambique reported that on 11 November a webinar was held with female representatives from the justice system and civil society to promote an inclusive and urgent dialogue on how to achieve a more accessible and effective justice system that better responds to women’s needs.⁹⁴

South Africa	
Negotiating actors	Government, political and social opposition
Third parties	--
Relevant agreements	--
Summary: More than three decades after the end of apartheid (1948–1994), South Africa faces high levels of poverty and inequality, crime and corruption, as well as one of the highest unemployment rates in the world at 33.2%. In addition, the historically important African National Congress (ANC) lost its absolute majority for the first time in the May 2024 elections and was forced to make a deal with 10 other political parties. In this context, President Cyril Ramaphosa convened a National Dialogue to address various themes	

(employment, social cohesion, governance, gender-based violence, agrarian reform and economic transformation) and forge a new social pact to underpin a 30-year National Development Plan, though it faces criticism for its lack of inclusiveness and controversial financing.

The South African government launched a National Dialogue process to seek collective solutions to the social, political, economic and security crisis affecting the country. On 10 June, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced the convening of the National Dialogue, which aims to foster unity and find collective solutions to the country’s many challenges by addressing the following themes: poverty, inequality and hunger; economic transformation and job creation; social cohesion and nation-building; gender-based violence and security; governance, accountability and participatory democracy; and agrarian reform and food security.⁹⁵

The National Dialogue was structured through several bodies: an Eminent Persons Group to provide high-level guidance; an Inter-Ministerial Committee chaired by the deputy chair to coordinate the government’s role; a Steering Committee to oversee the programme of action; and a Secretariat to manage daily operations. Similarly, a Preparatory Task Team was created for the National Dialogue, tasked with mobilising civil society and establishing several working committees. The preparatory committee reported that approximately 700 million rand (approximately 39 million USD) would be needed to finance the process, which sparked criticism from some opposition parties. In this regard, Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana reported that he had included the National Dialogue as one of six unfunded spending priorities.⁹⁶

The dialogue initiative, which has been under discussion for years, seeks to involve a wide variety of social groups. Finally, on 15 August, it began with a two-day convention at the University of South Africa (UNISA) in Pretoria, which brought together approximately 1,000 representatives from the government, most political parties, civil society organisations and the public at large. Whilst Ramaphosa described the dialogue as a ‘nation-building’ effort, it was weakened by significant absences, such as that of the Democratic Alliance, the second-largest party in the unity government, and accusations that the ANC was attempting to control the dialogue and use it as a campaign platform ahead of the 2026 local elections. As a result of the First Convention,

91. DW África, “Cabo Delgado: Insurgentes convidados ao diálogo político”, DW, October 10, 2025.
 92. ONU Mulheres Moçambique, 30 October 2025. Post Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1231758012328311&set=a.555566466614139>
 93. UN Women Africa, “Local Women Lead Peacebuilding and Recovery Efforts in Mozambique”, July 7, 2025.
 94. ONU Mulheres Moçambique, 10 November 2025. Post Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1240913101412802&set=a.555566466614139>
 95. Republic of South Africa, “State of the Nation 2026. National Dialogue”.
 96. Mthobisi Nozulela, “R770 million National Dialogue bill sparks uproar: final say lies with finance minister”, *IOL*.

and following review by the Eminent Persons Group, in December 2025 President Ramaphosa confirmed the nominations of representatives from 33 social groups to form the Steering Committee of the National Dialogue, thereby formalising what had been agreed in August. Later, in early 2026, UNISA hosted the formation of the Steering Committee.⁹⁷ A second National Convention, scheduled for March 2026, will consolidate proposals from the various commitments into a national vision and an implementation programme. The agenda will extend over eight months across various spaces in the country (schools, community centres, places of worship, media outlets and digital platforms)⁹⁸ with the aim of forging a new social pact to drive a 30-year National Development Plan.⁹⁹

Gender, peace and security

The South African government's Department of Social Development pledged to ensure the equitable representation of women in all structures that support and guide the National Dialogue, incorporating the mobilisation of young and older women, women living in urban and rural areas, women from different ethnic and linguistic communities and women with disabilities, in addition to including LGBTIQ+ sexual diversity. This commitment stems from one of the points addressed in the 2024 Pre-National Dialogue of South African Women, convened by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, which emphasised that the National Dialogue process must focus on all issues affecting women and that all South African women's diverse perspectives and priorities must be reflected. Similarly, the government promised to ensure the integration of a gender perspective and approach in the proposals and solutions that the Dialogue implements.¹⁰⁰

West Africa

Senegal (Casamance)	
Negotiating actors	Government, factions of the Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC)
Third parties	ECOWAS, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD), Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde, Sub-regional Coordinator for Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Casamance (COSPAC)
Relevant agreements	General Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Senegal and the MFDC (Ziguinchor Agreement) (2004)

Summary:

Casamance is a southern Senegalese region geographically separated from the rest of the country by the Gambia River, which is surrounded by the nation of The Gambia. The Casamance region has a distinct culture and language because it was under Portuguese administration during part of the colonial period. Since 1982, the Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) has demanded its independence. Clashes between the Senegalese Armed Forces and the MFDC became most violent during the 1990s, concluding in 2004 with the signing of peace agreements by the MFDC's top leader, Diamacoune Senghor. Following Senghor's death in January 2007, the MFDC split into three main armed factions, led by Salif Sadio, César Badiate and Mamadou Niantang Diatta, respectively. Since then, low-intensity fighting has continued between the different factions that do not recognise the agreement reached with the government and are vying to increase their control over the territory. In the meantime, efforts are under way to conduct peace negotiations with these actors to put an end to the violence.

The government of Senegal and a faction of the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) reaffirmed their commitment to peace in the Casamance region. On 21 and 22 February, a delegation of the government of Senegal, represented by the Ad Hoc Committee for Peace in Casamance, met in Bissau with a delegation of the Provisional Committee of the Unified Political and Combat Wings of the MFDC. The meeting was held under the auspices of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, the guarantor of the process, and facilitated by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, which has supported the Casamance peace process between the government and the three MFDC factions since 2014. This new round of negotiations was based on previous talks between Dakar and the faction led by César Atoute Badiate, which culminated in the signing of a Declaration of Mutual Commitment on the Terms of Disarmament on 4 August 2022 in Bissau. Following two days of intense negotiations, focused mainly on security, justice and political demands, both delegations reaffirmed their commitment to disarmament, though the practical modalities remain to be defined.¹⁰¹ The renewed commitment to peace, which according to local media would include a presidential pardon for imprisoned rebels, amnesty for combatants and a reintegration programme, was signed in Bissau on 23 February in the presence of Guinea-Bissau President Umaro Embaló and Senegalese Prime Minister Ousmane Sonko, who hailed the agreement as 'a major step towards lasting peace in Casamance', underscoring the priority that Dakar places on resolving the conflict. As an additional sign of Senegal's commitment to the region, last year President Bassirou Diomaye Faye presented

97. University of South Africa, "The National Dialogue Steering Committee entrusted with helping to reimagine South Africa's future", 19 January 2026.
 98. For more information see official website: <https://nationaldialogue.co.za/>
 99. Jakie Cilliers, "South Africa's National Dialogue: putting the cart before the horse", *ISS*, ISS Today, 24 June 2025.
 100. Department of Social Development, "The National Dialogue must be a place for women to raise their voices", 11 August 2025.
 101. Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, "The State of Senegal and the Provisional Committee of the Unified Political and Combat Wings of the MFDC Take a Major Step in the Casamance Peace Process", 28 February 2025.

a plan to invest 53 billion CFA francs (approximately 88 million USD) in clearing landmines from the area and supporting economic development. According to the government, the plan is an important step in peacebuilding, seeking to restore the state's presence in Casamance through the construction of schools, health centres and government offices.¹⁰² Whilst the agreement signed with the Badiate faction represents an important step towards peace, analysts noted that it involves only one faction of the rebel group, and the least powerful of the three, and excludes the more radical faction led by Salif Sadio.¹⁰³

The government of Senegal and an MFDC faction reaffirmed their commitment to peace in Casamance

held a meeting in Ziguinchor on 21 September, the International Day of Peace, in which two central themes were analysed: 1) security challenges and problems for peacebuilding in Casamance and 2) the empowerment of women in the context of the return of displaced populations. The PFPC also reported that to mark the 25th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325, an interregional exchange took place on 21 November on the theme 'Women and Peacebuilding'. Organised jointly by the embassies of Ireland and Colombia in Dakar, and in collaboration with the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and the national office of UN Women for Senegal, women from Ireland, Colombia and Senegal drew on their first-hand experiences in their countries' peace processes to hold an interactive discussion on the legacy of UNSC Resolution 1325 and how to advocate for its implementation.¹⁰⁴

Gender, peace and security

The Women's Platform for Peace in Casamance (PFPC) reported on its social media accounts that it

102. ADF, "Peace Agreement Offers Hope in Senegal's Casamance Region", *ADF*, 18 March 2025.

103. Babacar Dione and Baba Ahmed, "Senegal has signed a deal with separatist rebels. But will it end one of Africa's longest conflicts?", *Independent*, 28 February 2025.

104. Plateforme des Femmes pour la Paix en Casamance, Post published on September 21 and November 21, 2025 on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/pfpcsenegal/>

3. Peace negotiations in America

- In the Americas, there were seven negotiating processes in 2025, accounting for 13% of the world total.
- In Colombia, the group Comuneros del Sur agreed to hand over war materiel and begin to demobilise.
- Negotiations between the ELN and the Colombian government were officially suspended in January as a result of the resurgence of violence in Catatumbo and were not resumed for the rest of the year.
- The Colombian government and the armed group Coordinadora Nacional Ejército Bolivariano reached more than 10 partial agreements at the negotiating table.
- The main coalition of armed gangs in Haiti, Viv Ansanm, expressed its desire to enter into some form of dialogue with the government regarding the political transition in the country.
- Caracas continued to insist on bilateral negotiations to resolve the dispute between Venezuela and Guyana over the Essequibo region, whilst Georgetown insisted on arbitration by the International Court of Justice.

This chapter provides an analysis of the main peace processes and negotiations in the Americas in 2025, both the general characteristics and trends of the negotiations and the development of each case on both continents throughout the year, including references to the gender, peace and security agenda. In addition, at the beginning of the chapter there is a map identifying the countries in the Americas that hosted peace negotiations during 2025.

Table 3.1. Summary of peace processes and negotiations in America in 2025

Peace processes and negotiations	Negotiating actors	Third parties
Colombia (Comuneros del Sur)	Government, Comuneros del Sur	Netherlands, OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia, Episcopal Conference of Colombia
Colombia (ELN)	Government, ELN	Guarantor countries (Brazil, Cuba, Venezuela, Norway, Mexico and Chile); permanent supporters (Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Colombia, Episcopal Conference of Colombia); supporting countries (Germany, Sweden, Switzerland and Spain)
Colombia (EMBF)¹	Government, Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frente (EMBF)	Permanent supporters (Episcopal Conference of Colombia, World Council of Churches, Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Colombia, OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia), guarantor countries (Ireland, Norway, Switzerland, Venezuela)
Colombia (FARC)	Government, Comunes	UN Verification Mission in Colombia, International Verification Component (Technical Secretariat of the Notables, University of Notre Dame's Kroc Institute), OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia
Colombia (CNEB)²	Government, Coordinadora Nacional Ejército Bolivariano (CNEB)	Guarantor countries (Norway, Netherlands, Switzerland, Venezuela and Uruguay); permanent supporters (UN Verification Mission and the Episcopal Conference of Colombia)
Haiti	Government, political and social opposition	CARICOM (Eminent Persons Group), United Nations (BINUH and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General), OAS (including the Group of Friends of Haiti)
Venezuela – Guyana	Venezuela, Guyana	CELAC, CARICOM, Brazil, United Nations Secretary-General

1. The negotiations between the Colombian government and the armed group Estado Mayor Central (EMC) shifted to involve the Government and the Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frente (EMBF, which arose from EMC).
2. The negotiations between the Colombian government and the Segunda Marquetalia insurgency evolved in 2025 into negotiations between the government and the Coordinadora Nacional Ejército Bolivariano (CNEB, a group that originated from Segunda Marquetalia).

Map 3.1. Peace negotiations in America in 2025



■ Countries with peace processes and negotiations in America in 2025

3.1 Negotiations in 2025: regional trends

There were seven negotiating processes in the Americas in 2025. This is the same number as the previous year, but not the same negotiations. Colombia was the scene of five processes, the highest number in the region. Three resulted from previous processes that evolved as a consequence of the fragmentation of armed groups and the appearance of new factions. This was the case with the negotiations with Comuneros del Sur, which emerged from the process with the ELN, with Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frente (EMBF), which arose from negotiations with Estado Mayor Central (EMC), and with Coordinadora Nacional Ejército Bolivariano (CNEB), which originated from Segunda Marquetalia. Moreover, the negotiating process between Venezuela and Guyana over the disputed Essequibo region remained active. Finally, talks in Haiti continued to try to usher in a completed transition process. The Norwegian-facilitated political dialogue that the Venezuelan government had held with part of the opposition through the Unitary Platform in recent years was interrupted following the presidential election of July 2024, in which the opposition denounced massive fraud and claimed a decisive victory for opposition candidate Edmundo Urrutia. Meanwhile, Norway's facilitation of the dialogue gradually faded until, in September, it issued a statement openly criticising the political and human rights situation in Venezuela. Shortly after opposition figure María Corina Machado won the Nobel Peace Prize in October,

Caracas closed Norway's embassy in the country. Thus, the seven negotiating processes that took place in the Americas accounted for 13% of the total worldwide.

All the peace processes in 2025 involved national governments as one of the negotiating **actors**. Nevertheless, the negotiations in the region were characterised by the great diversity of the actors that led them. Active armed groups were involved in four, all in Colombia: Comuneros del Sur, the ELN, EMBF and CNEB. These four groups were represented at the negotiating table by delegations. Three of these groups (Comuneros del Sur, the ELN, EMBF and CNEB) sat for peace talks with the Colombian government as a result the splitting and fragmenting the Colombian insurgency, which added complexity to the negotiating scenario and demonstrated the serious obstacles faced by the Total Peace policy. In the negotiations over the implementation of Colombia's 2016 peace agreement, the Colombian government's counterpart was the Comunes party, which emerged from the transformation of the armed group FARC-EP. The remaining negotiating processes involved different social and political actors and the governments of different states. Three dialogue processes took place in Haiti: the internationally-supported intra-Haitian dialogue between political actors in the country; international negotiations regarding UN support to address the country's humanitarian and security situation; and attempts at a process with armed gangs seeking recognition and legitimacy to play some role in negotiations on Haiti's political future. Finally,

the governments of Venezuela and Guyana engaged in international dialogue. Alongside these processes, Colombia also approached criminal and narco-paramilitary armed groups.

Third parties were involved in all the peace processes that took place in the Americas, performing support, facilitation and mediation roles, among other tasks. The mediating actors enjoyed continuity with those of previous years, meaning that most facilitating actors were international. Their main task was to bring the disputing parties closer together, favouring negotiating processes to end the different active conflicts. A significant number of international actors were other Latin American countries. With the exception of Haiti, other Latin American governments facilitated all the negotiating processes in the Americas, including Brazil, Cuba, Venezuela, Mexico, Chile and Uruguay. In Haiti, this facilitation was not carried out by individual states, but through regional organisations such as CARICOM and the OAS. Several European states also provided support, like Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, Norway, Ireland and the Netherlands. Some countries participated in several peace processes simultaneously, such as Norway, Switzerland, Brazil and Venezuela.

The most active international organisation was the UN, which was involved in several of the peace processes that took place in Colombia (the ELN, EMBF, FARC and CNEB) and also participated in the dialogues in Haiti and between Venezuela and Guyana. The UN's facilitation work was carried out by the UN Secretary-General in the dialogue between Venezuela and Guyana, by his special representatives in Colombia and Haiti and by the missions deployed on the ground: the Verification Mission in Colombia and the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH). Other regional organisations involved were CARICOM, the OAS and CELAC. Finally, other facilitating actors in Colombia included religious ones, such as the Episcopal Conference and the World Council of Churches, in addition to the International Verification Component and the University of Notre Dame's Kroc Institute from the US. Once again, third parties in the Americas participated and performed different roles in the negotiating processes under a wide variety of formats, including by coordinating as guarantor countries (in the negotiations with the ELN, EMBF and CNEB), as supporting countries (in the talks with the ELN), as permanent supporting countries (dialogues with the ELN and EMBF), the CARICOM Eminent Persons Group (EPG) in Haiti and the international verification component for implementing the 2016 Peace Agreement in Colombia.

In keeping with the variety of conflicts and tensions they were trying to address, as well as the characteristics and types of both the actors and the processes, the negotiating agendas were also characterised by heterogeneity. Thus, the issues addressed ranged from possible ceasefires and cessations of hostilities to electoral issues and others related to political

transitions, as well as interstate agreements to address disputed territories. The negotiations in Haiti were related to the possibilities of a political transition in the country and the governability of this transition amidst intense violence and enormous governmental fragility. Even though most negotiations in Colombia were with active armed groups and were pursued as part of the Colombian government's public policy known as Total Peace, which helps us to identify some similarities between the different processes, each process had peculiar features. The most unique process was the dialogue for implementing the 2016 peace agreement, as it was related to the application of an agreement that had already been signed. The issue of the ceasefire was central to the negotiations with the ELN, though kidnappings and the participation of civil society were also significant matters that occupied a central place on the agenda. The ceasefire was also fundamental in the negotiations with EMC, to which were added the issues of deforestation and the environmental agenda. A five-point agenda was created for the negotiations with Segunda Marquetalia: de-escalation of the conflict and the preparation of peace territories; the construction of peace territories; victims as a transformative social subject; conditions for peaceful coexistence; implementation and verification. Later, when the process changed after some factions left, a new agenda was agreed upon: territorial transformation; security in territories and for communities; measures and routes of legal security for members of guerrilla structures; and political participation. In the negotiations between the Venezuelan government and the opposition, the central issue was related to different aspects of the elections (registration, observation and timetable), though no agreement was reached on the matter. Finally, the dispute between Venezuela and Guyana revolved around the status of the territory of Essequibo. Both countries claim sovereignty over the region, which is currently being administered by Guyana.

In keeping with the variety of conflicts and tensions they were trying to address, as well as the characteristics and types of both the actors and the processes, the negotiating agendas were also characterised by heterogeneity. Thus, the issues addressed ranged from possible ceasefires and cessations of hostilities to electoral issues and others related to political transitions, as well as interstate agreements to address disputed territories. Much of the content of the negotiations in Haiti were related to the possibilities of a political transition in the country and the governability of this transition amidst intense violence and enormous governmental fragility. Specifically, the central themes of the negotiations revolved around elections, the reform of the 1987 Constitution and the design of governance structures following the end of the mandate of the Presidential Council. Even though most negotiations in Colombia were with active armed groups and were pursued as part of the Colombian government's public policy known as Total Peace, which helps us to identify some similarities between the different processes, each process had

peculiar features. The most unique process was the dialogue for implementing the 2016 peace agreement, as it was related to the application of an agreement that had already been signed. A central pillar of the negotiations with different Colombian armed groups during 2025 was the question of demobilisation and the establishment of Temporary Location Zones, as the sites are called where combatants will transition from military to civilian life. The handover of weaponry by insurgent groups as part of demobilisation processes was also negotiated. Finally, the dispute between Venezuela and Guyana revolved around the status of the territory of Essequibo. Both countries claim sovereignty over the region, which is currently being administered by Guyana.

The **trends of the negotiating processes varied**, although overall progress was limited among widespread deadlock. At the start of the year, the Colombian government officially called off its peace negotiations with the ELN, the main active armed group in the country. The talks were not resumed and the crisis worsened as a consequence of the escalation of violence in the Catatumbo region. Several of the peace negotiations that took place in Colombia underwent a profound transformation due to the fragmentation and division of many armed groups, which gave rise to several negotiations with groups that had split from their parent organisations. This was the case with Comuneros del Sur, which emerged from the ELN, Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frente (EMBF), which arose from EMC, and Coordinadora Nacional Ejército Bolivariano (CNEB), which originated from Segunda Marquetalia. All these organisations initiated peace talks with the government, whilst the original organisations either abandoned the negotiations (such as EMC and Segunda Marquetalia) or else the negotiations came to an end due to violence and difficulties encountered during them. Thus, the active peace processes in Colombia mostly involved small groups with limited territorial reach, restricting the positive impacts of the different active processes. The implementation of the 2016 agreement with the FARC moved ahead with great difficulty and significant delays, both in the implementation of the agreement as a whole and especially with regard to the gender perspective, where the delays were most notable. No significant progress was made in the political dialogue in Haiti, which remained stalled and without notable results. Nor did the attempts at dialogue promoted by armed gangs in the country bear any fruit, given the government's refusal to talk with criminals. International progress was made, however, with the approval of the deployment of the new mission known as the Gang Suppression Force (GSF). No progress was observed in the negotiations between Venezuela and Guyana to resolve their dispute over the Essequibo region.

Women's participation and leadership was observed in a large part of the peace negotiations in the Americas, though this did not mean that the **gender, peace and security agenda** and its implementation were

especially pre-eminent. Two government negotiating delegations were headed by women: the Colombian government panel in the negotiations with the ELN, led by Vera Grabe since her appointment in 2023, and the government delegation in the negotiations with EMBF, which were headed by Gloria Quiceno following her appointment in 2025. Furthermore, women participated in all delegations and helped to represent some of the international facilitating actors. Nevertheless, most negotiating delegations were overrepresented by men to the detriment of gender equality. Moreover, the partial agreements reached in the different processes incorporated very vague allusions to women's rights and the incorporation of a gender perspective or, in most cases, included no allusion to it whatsoever. Civil society was actively involved in different processes, presenting proposals to enrich the negotiating agendas through the inclusion of a gender and inclusive perspectives.

Finally, alongside the negotiating processes analysed in this chapter, the Colombian government continued the socio-judicial dialogue with the narco-paramilitary group known as Clan del Golfo as part of Total Peace, a public policy that seeks to build peace in the country by involving all active armed actors.

3.2 Case study analysis

North America, Central America and the Caribbean

Haiti	
Negotiating actors	Government, political and social opposition
Third parties	CARICOM (Eminent Persons Group), United Nations (BINUH and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General), OAS (including the Group of Friends of Haiti)
Relevant agreements	--

Summary:

In recent years, especially after former President Jean Bertrand Aristide left the country in February 2004 and the subsequent deployment of the UN peacekeeping mission (MINUSTAH), there have been several attempts at consultation and dialogue between various political and social sectors to cope with the institutional fragility, political-social polarisation and economic and security crisis facing the country. Yet none of these initiatives, most of which agreements or have led to permanent or stable spaces or mechanisms for negotiation. Though President Jovenel Moïse's mandate has been controversial since its inception after he was accused of electoral fraud in the 2015 election, his attempts to create a national dialogue in 2019 came in response to the deepening crisis in mid-2018 and the outbreak of protests and episodes of violence in 2019.

There were three interrelated dialogue and negotiating processes in 2025. The first was the intra-Haitian dialogue on the country's political transition, which was

facilitated and supported by several international actors. The second process was connected to the international negotiations on UN support to address the dramatic humanitarian and security situation that the country has suffered for years. The third process was linked to attempts by the armed gangs operating in the country to gain a certain degree of political recognition and legitimacy and to play some kind of role in negotiations on the country's political future. **No significant progress was made in the intra-Haitian dialogue, which focused mainly on holding elections, reforming the 1987 Constitution and especially on designing governance structures after the mandate of the Transitional Presidential Council expired on 7 February 2026. This dialogue was facilitated primarily by CARICOM, and mainly through its Eminent Persons Group, made up of the former prime ministers of Saint Lucia, Jamaica and the Bahamas. This intra-Haitian dialogue met regularly with Haitian social and political organisations during the year. However, other international actors also supported the negotiating process, including the UN (primarily through the good offices of the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative and BINUH), the OAS (including the Group of Friends of Haiti) and the International Contact Group on Haiti. Of particular note was the presentation in August of the Roadmap for Stability and Peace in Haiti by the OAS, a strategic framework for the 2025-2028 period agreed with the Haitian government, the UN, CARICOM, the inter-American system, civil society, international donors and the Haitian diaspora. The roadmap, which recognises CARICOM's primacy in facilitating the political dialogue, is based on five pillars: 1) strengthening security and local capacities to combat gang violence; 2) restoring constitutional order and strengthening democratic institutions; 3) holding fair and transparent elections; 4) responding to the humanitarian crisis; and 5) promoting sustainable economic development. The roadmap also provides for a monitoring and implementation mechanism (the Coordination Group Mechanism, made up of the OAS, the UN, CARICOM, the government, the Group of Friends of Haiti and international donors) and the designation of an OAS Special Representative. The roadmap received considerable support from international organisations and governments, but many civil society organisations were sceptical, wary that any such international intervention could undermine the country's sovereignty.**

After several months of international negotiations that also involved the Haitian government on the widespread violence and humanitarian crisis in the country, on 30 September 2025 the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2793, presented by the United States and Panama, which transformed the Multinational Security Support Mission (MSS, created in October 2023) into the Gang Suppression Force (GSF). This force will

have greater strength (up to 5,500 military personnel), offensive capability, territorial coverage, funding and operational autonomy from the Haitian authorities. In addition, both the OAS and the UN announced their commitment to become much more decisively involved in the mission's work through the creation of a UN Office of Support in Haiti (UNSOH) to provide logistical and operational support to the GSF and the Haitian government. They also announced the creation of a Standing Group of Partners, comprising countries such as the Bahamas, Canada, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Kenya and the United States, to mobilise troops and funds for the mission. Furthermore, in December, diplomat Jacques Christofides was appointed Special Representative for the GSF, a role he will hold alongside the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of BINUH, Carlos Ruiz Massieu, who was appointed in August.

Finally, on several occasions during the year **the main coalition of armed gangs in the country, Viv Ansanm, expressed its desire to enter into some form of dialogue with the government and its willingness to participate in negotiations on the political transition in Haiti.** In August, Viv Ansanm even wrote to the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative in Haiti, Carlos Ruiz Massieu, arguing that the country's crisis could only be resolved through dialogue and by presenting its coalition as a unified negotiating partner. According to some analysts, as their power and territorial control have expanded, some gang leaders have adopted openly political messaging, presenting themselves as actors fighting for local justice and against corrupt elites and oligarchies, appealing to Haiti's history of resistance and appearing in public with their faces uncovered. Along these lines, a Crisis Group report³ noted that the armed gangs are seeking political recognition and amnesty and warned that the country's instability and the expiration of the Transitional Presidential Council's mandate in February 2026 created opportunities for the gangs to expand their influence within state institutions and promote the appointment of people who can protect their interests. However, in December, Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aimé ruled out any negotiations with these gangs and insisted that the state would take a firm stance against armed groups seeking to destabilise Haiti.

Gender, peace and security

The first edition of the Women's Leadership Forum was held in January, attended by around 800 people representing the Haitian government, civil society and the business community, as well as other governments and international organisations. The aim of the conference was to promote gender equality and greater

3. International Crisis Group, *Undoing Haiti's Deadly Gang Alliance*, Report 110, 15 December 2025.

influence for women in Haiti's economic and political spheres, including greater participation in the future constitutional reform and the upcoming elections. Specifically, participants in the forum called for women's full participation in the national dialogue process and the upcoming elections, including those from the diaspora. The forum issued a declaration demanding not only respect for the constitutional precept to guarantee at least 30% of women at all levels of national life, particularly in public administration, but also the achievement of full parity between men and women in any future constitutional reform. Finally, the declaration called for action to combat gender-based violence, including systemic barriers, political violence and the cultural prejudices and stereotypes that keep women away from public affairs or limit their professional ambitions.

South America

Colombia (Comuneros del Sur)	
Negotiating actors	Government, Comuneros del Sur
Third parties	Netherlands, OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia, Episcopal Conference of Colombia
Relevant agreements	--
Summary: The peace negotiations with the armed group Comuneros del Sur began as part of the peace process between the Colombian government and the ELN that has been under way since 2022. In 2024, whilst the government was negotiating with the ELN, it launched a parallel dialogue with the ELN structure operating in the department of Nariño, known as Comuneros del Sur. This triggered a crisis in the negotiations between the ELN and the government, leading to the split of Comuneros del Sur and the start of a separate peace process.	

The peace negotiations with the armed group Comuneros del Sur (which split off from the ELN) moved ahead positively and several agreements were reached. The peace process with Comuneros del Sur was the most advanced of all those that the government of Gustavo Petro is holding with the different armed groups active in the country, although its scope is limited because it is a regional process confined to the group's area of operations in Nariño and because it is not aimed at reaching a national agreement or at addressing the structural causes of the armed conflict, but rather at finding a way out for the armed group and a means to reduce violence in the territory affected by the insurgency's activity. In February, an agreement was reached to begin the destruction of war materiel and the group's gradual disarmament in Nariño. The destruction of war materiel had initially been scheduled to begin before December 2024, but the agreement was delayed. The protocol for the destruction of war

The armed group Comuneros del Sur agreed to hand over war materiel and begin its demobilisation in Colombia

materiel was signed with the participation of the OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process (MAPP-OAS), representatives of the Netherlands, the Episcopal Conference of Colombia, the Colombian Ministry of Defence, military observers, police observers and the technical teams of the negotiating delegations. Thus, in exchange for handing over their weapons, the approximately 100 members of the armed group began their demobilisation and reintegration into civilian life. Several further agreements were reached during the year related to truth, memory and recognition of victims' dignity; the substitution of illicit crops; the creation of a Temporary Zone for the Co-Construction of Territorial Peace; the comprehensive reintegration of Comuneros del Sur members for peace and territorial transformation; the strengthening of democracy in the territory; and the protection of the rights of children and adolescents. Particularly important was the negotiation on the Temporary Location Zones (ZUTs) intended for members of armed groups to make the transition to civilian life, the design of which affected negotiations with other armed organisations such as the Clan del Golfo, the Coordinadora Nacional Ejército Bolivariano (CNEB) and Frente 33 of the Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frente dissident group. The Colombian government held a consultation with more than 1,000 people from the Gran Mallama Indigenous Reservation, where the ZUT agreed with Comuneros del Sur would be located, to ensure that it would not affect either the territory or indigenous self-government.

Gender, peace and security

The negotiating delegations that took part in the peace process included female delegates and signatories of the various agreements reached during the year. There was also female representation among the facilitating actors. Furthermore, some of the agreements reached referred to the gender perspective, though such references were neither exhaustive nor systematic. For instance, the agreement on comprehensive reintegration included an intersectional approach by mentioning the incorporation of differential approaches, with special attention paid to gender, ethnicity, disability and older persons. The agreement on the protection of the rights of children and adolescents included a specific mention of girls, though it did not specifically note the importance of a gender perspective. The agreement on the substitution of illicit crops also included a reference to differential approaches regarding ethnicity, gender and diversity, the life cycle and territorial focus. Alongside the peace negotiations, women's civil society organisations developed a peace agenda as part of the Rumbo a la Paz project, led by UNDP and the Alianza Iniciativa de Mujeres Colombianas por la Paz (IMP), with proposals aimed at contributing to the peace negotiations with Comuneros del Sur and other armed

groups such as Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frente (EMBF) in Catatumbo, Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra Nevada in Santa Marta and the ELN.⁴ The framework for the proposals was UNSC Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and a territorial agenda was built to improve the living conditions of women affected by the armed conflict in areas such as infrastructure, the economy and inclusion in negotiations.

Colombia (ELN)	
Negotiating actors	Government, ELN
Third parties	Guarantor countries (Cuba, Venezuela, Norway, Mexico and Chile) United Nations Verification Mission, Catholic Church, supporting countries (Germany, Sweden, Switzerland and Spain)
Relevant agreements	“Heaven’s Door” Agreement (1988)

Summary:
Since the ELN emerged in 1964, various negotiating processes have tried to bring peace to the country. The first negotiations between the Colombian government and the ELN date from 1991 (Caracas and Tlaxcala). In 1998, both parties signed a peace agreement in Madrid that envisaged holding a national convention. That same year, the “Puerta del Cielo” agreement between the ELN and civil society activists was signed in Mainz, Germany, focused on humanitarian aspects. In 1999, the Colombian government and the ELN resumed meetings in Cuba, which ended in June 2000. The government of Álvaro Uribe resumed peace negotiations with the ELN in Cuba between 2005 and 2007, though no results were achieved. At the end of 2012, the ELN showed its willingness to open new negotiations with President Juan Manuel Santos, appointing a negotiating commission, and exploratory meetings were held. Formal peace negotiations began in 2017, which broke off in 2019 after a serious attack by the ELN in Bogotá.

Bogotá officially pulled out of the peace negotiations it had been holding with the ELN on 17 January as a result of the intensification of violence in the Catatumbo region. The negotiations were not resumed for the rest of the year. Colombian President Gustavo Petro announced that the government was leaving the talks following fighting between the ELN and the armed group Frente 33 of Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frente, a group that emerged as a dissident faction of the demobilised FARC-EP. Petro described the armed clashes as war crimes that claimed the lives of over 20 civilians and four former FARC combatants who had signed the peace agreement. Both the head of the government negotiating delegation, Vera Grabe, and negotiator Iván Cepeda cited the constant obstacles that the ELN had placed in the way of the negotiations’ progress. Vera Grabe said that the suspension of the negotiations did not mean

that communication channels with the armed group would be closed, and also noted that humanitarian agreements would be maintained, but she did reiterate that the suspension was due to the rise in violence. The negotiations had been deadlocked since May 2024, with no renewal of the ceasefire agreement between the armed group and the Colombian government having been achieved. Several episodes of violence were reported during this period, which made it difficult to resume the talks. On several occasions during the year, representatives of both negotiating delegations made public statements regarding a possible resumption of the dialogue. President Gustavo Petro addressed the issue of a possible resumption of negotiations during an official visit to the Vatican in May, suggesting to Pope Leo XIV that the Vatican could host them, though there was no immediate response from the Holy See in this regard. The ELN’s chief negotiator, Pablo Beltrán, called for the talks to resume in September by releasing a video in which he said that for changes to occur within the armed group, it was necessary to achieve ‘agreements, end the armed conflict, agree on transformations and include society’ in the process and to respect the framework agreements signed with the Santos administration in 2016 and with Petro in 2023. Weeks later, Gustavo Petro made a new call for dialogue through a message on the social media platform X, but armed clashes persisted and the negotiations were not resumed. However, no rapprochement between the government and the ELN was achieved during the year, although in December the armed group published an interview in its media outlet *Insurrección* with the ELN’s First Commander, Antonio García, saying that the group was willing to resume the talks under certain conditions, building on what had already been agreed and continuing with the progress that had been made thus far.⁵ García said that they understood that the agreements had not been made with any particular government, but with the state, which should allow for continuity of issues on which progress had been made.

Colombia (EMBF) ⁶	
Negotiating actors	Government, Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frente (EMBF)
Third parties	Permanent supporters (Episcopal Conference of Colombia, World Council of Churches, Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Colombia, OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia), guarantor countries (Ireland, Norway, Switzerland, Venezuela)
Relevant agreements	Ceasefire agreement (2023)

4. Colombia+20, “Los llamados de las mujeres para que sus apuestas lleguen a procesos de paz de Petro”, *El Espectador*, 12 May 2025.
5. ELN, “Retomar diálogos no puede ‘ser borrón y cuenta nueva’”, *Insurrección* no. 1030, 15 December 2025.
6. In July 2024, the peace negotiations between the Colombian government and the armed group EMC became negotiations with Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frente (EMBF), which includes the EMC factions Comandante Jorge Suárez Briceño and Comandante Gentil Duarte Magdalena Medio and Frente Comandante Raúl Reyes de las FARC-EP, following the withdrawal of some EMC factions from the process.

Summary:

Estado Mayor Central (EMC) emerged as an armed group made up of members of the FARC led by Iván Mordisco and Gentil Duarte, who abandoned the peace process before the 2016 peace agreement was signed between the Colombian government and the FARC. The group was later joined by other dissident groups that left the FARC after the agreement was signed, then it expanded further by recruiting new members who had no previous links to the FARC. After Gustavo Petro took office as president of Colombia in 2022, he announced the launch of Total Peace, a public policy aimed at building peace in the country by involving all active armed actors. As part of this policy, a peace negotiating process with the EMC began in 2023. In July 2024, the negotiations with the EMC become negotiations with Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frente (EMBF), which includes the EMC factions Comandante Jorge Suárez Briceño and Comandante Gentil Duarte Magdalena Medio and Frente Comandante Raúl Reyes de las FARC-EP, following the withdrawal of some EMC factions from the process.

The dialogue remained active between the Colombian government and the armed group Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frente (EMBF), which split off from the group Estado Mayor Central, itself a dissident faction of the FARC-EP. However, at the end of the year, the negotiating process underwent a major crisis that threatened its continuity. In May, the negotiating table agreed to establish a Temporary Location Zone (ZUT) in the rural area of the municipality of Tibú, Norte de Santander, for the members of Frente 33 of the EMBF. The ZUT is the location where combatants of armed groups are stationed to carry out their demobilisation and transition to civilian life. The most significant progress at the negotiating table took place in November, when a set of five agreements was reached between the government and the insurgency. The agreements addressed the following issues: territorial and land transformations; the environment, bioeconomy and revitalisation of the Amazon Rainforest; de-escalation and acts of peace; the Joint Legal Commission; and electoral guarantees. The agreements reached were aimed at de-escalating the conflict and building peace, prioritising the protection of civilians and the commitment not to recruit minors, along with the strengthening of state programmes for their protection. They also included measures for access to land, rural development and the creation of Peasant Reserve Zones, as well as the recognition of territorial rights and environmental conservation, proposing actions to halt deforestation, substitute illicit crops and protect natural parks. In addition, they provided for the reactivation of a commission to address the situation of people deprived of their liberty as a result of the conflict and to guarantee clear democratic conditions for the 2026 elections, ensuring political equality. The agreement included promoting citizen participation in processes promoted by the negotiating table and strengthening public trust in the peace process. However, despite the progress made in the dialogue and the agreements, a scandal broke out in November that threatened the negotiations after the media revealed a series of documents that established links between the

insurgency and a general and an intelligence official. The files had been intercepted from members of the armed group a year earlier at a security checkpoint and indicated links through shell companies, as well as evidence of classified information being shared between the insurgent leader and negotiator Calarcá Córdoba, Colombian Army General Juan Miguel Huertas and Wilmar Mejía, an official of the National Intelligence Directorate (DNI).

Gender, peace and security

In September, the government appointed Gloria Quiceno as the new chief negotiator, putting her in charge of the government delegation in the negotiations with the EMBF. Two other women out of a total of 11 negotiators participated in the government delegation, Geny Calvo Olmos and Luz Dary Landázuri. The armed group's delegation included two women, Erika Castro and Tania Mendoza, out of a total of nine negotiators. The accompanying teams and facilitators also had female negotiators. The agreements did not include specific references to the inclusion of a gender perspective or to the rights of women and LGBTIQ+ people. Alongside the peace negotiations, women's civil society organisations developed a peace agenda as part of the Rumbo a la Paz project, led by UNDP and the Alianza Iniciativa de Mujeres Colombianas por la Paz (IMP), with proposals aimed at contributing to the peace negotiations with the EMBF and other armed groups such as Comuneros del Sur in Nariño, Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra Nevada in Santa Marta and the ELN. The framework for the proposals was UNSC Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and a territorial agenda was built to improve the living conditions of women affected by the armed conflict in areas such as infrastructure, the economy and inclusion in negotiations.

Colombia (FARC)	
Negotiating actors	Government, Comunes
Third parties	UN Verification Mission in Colombia, International Verification Component (Technical Secretariat of the Notables, University of Notre Dame's Kroc Institute), OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia
Relevant agreements	The Havana peace agreement (2016)

Summary:

Since the founding of the first guerrilla groups in 1964 there have been several negotiation attempts. In the early 1990s several small groups were demobilized, but not the FARC and the ELN, which are the two most important. In 1998, President Pastrana authorized the demilitarization of a large region of Colombia, around the area of San Vicente del Caguán, in order to conduct negotiations with the FARC, which lasted until 2002 and were unsuccessful. In 2012,

and after several months of secret negotiations in Cuba, new talks began with the FARC in Cuba based on a specific agenda and including citizen participation mechanisms. After four years of negotiations, a historic peace agreement for the Colombian people was signed in late 2016.

Various challenges were identified that hindered the timely implementation of the peace agreement reached with the FARC-EP in 2016. This situation led President Petro to raise the possibility of extending the temporary legal framework to complete the full implementation of the agreement. Various analysts warned of the difficulties and delays in implementing different aspects of the peace agreement, as well as the deterioration of security conditions in many areas of the country following the demobilisation of the FARC and the emergence of new insurgencies. The Kroc Institute's Barometer Initiative continued its monitoring of the implementation of the 578 provisions of the final agreement and noted that, as of November 2024, 34% of the agreed measures had been fully implemented, 19% were at an intermediate stage of implementation, 38% had made minimal progress and 9% had not yet begun implementation.⁷ Some points of concern, highlighted by the UN, included the fact that only around 500,000 hectares of land had been restored to victims out of the 13.2 million hectares envisaged by the 2011 Victims' Law, and that the UN verified 45 murders of former combatants in 2025, an 36% increase compared to 2024.

Furthermore, **the government of Gustavo Petro announced that the Peace Agreement Implementation Unit would once again have the status of a Presidential Advisory Council in order to overcome the institutional deadlock** and thereby provide greater hierarchy to the government institution responsible for guaranteeing compliance with the 2016 agreement. This came in response to a ruling by the Constitutional Court urging a review of the Unit's situation, given the slow pace of implementation. Another obstacle that arose during the year was the reduction of the mandate of the UN Verification Mission, established to monitor compliance with the agreement. Although the mission was extended until 2026, its mandate was reduced due to Washington's vote against, which led to the elimination of two core tasks of the mission: the verification of restorative sanctions imposed by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) and the monitoring of the ethnic chapter, significantly diminishing the UN's contributions to the implementation of the agreement. In addition, it was noted that funding cuts from USAID would have a serious impact on the implementation of the agreement, as the US had provided 42% of foreign aid for the

agreement's implementation between 2018 and 2024 (approximately 1.26 billion USD), including support for agrarian reform and the transitional justice system.

Gender, peace and security

Difficulties and delays persisted in the implementation of the gender perspective provided for in the peace agreement. As documented by the Kroc Institute, at the end of 2024, 17% of the provisions with a gender perspective had not yet been initiated, 51% were at a minimal stage of implementation, 19% were at an intermediate stage and 13% had been fully implemented.⁸ The implementation gap between the agreement as a whole and the provisions with a gender perspective remained, for whilst 34% of the general provisions had been fully implemented, only 13% of the gender provisions had completed their implementation. Furthermore, the work of the Special Body of Women for the Gender Perspective in the Peace Agreement continued, and it released its analysis of the implementation of the peace agreement in a report on outstanding implementation debts and women's diversity⁹ that highlighted the progress made in the application of the agreement, but also the many persistent challenges. These included the failure to guarantee substantive participation or real control by women over rural resources; the fact that women (especially indigenous, Afro-Colombian, rural women and LGBTI people) continue to face structural barriers that prevent them from participating in political decision-making; and the reality that women continue to encounter structural obstacles to accessing land, taking ownership of productive projects, receiving protection from violence and participating effectively in decision-making. Furthermore, an increase in violence was observed in the country, both in rural areas and in semi-urban areas and cities, with significant gender impacts.

Colombia (CNEB)

Negotiating actors	Government, Coordinadora Nacional Ejército Bolivariano (CNEB)
Third parties	Guarantor countries (Norway, Netherlands, Switzerland, Venezuela and Uruguay); permanent supporters (UN Verification Mission and the Episcopal Conference of Colombia)
Relevant agreements	--
Summary:	Peace negotiations with the armed group Coordinadora

7. Peace Accords Matrix. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, *Navegando las aguas de la paz: avances, retos y oportunidades en el octavo año de implementación diciembre 2023 a noviembre 2024*, Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, November 2025.
8. Ibid.
9. Special Body of Women for the Gender Perspective in the Peace Agreement, *Las deudas de la implementación: balance de las mujeres en sus diversidades. Informe de la Instancia Especial de Mujeres Periodo 2024-2025*, Special Body of Women for the Gender Perspective in the Peace Agreement, 2025.

Nacional Ejército Bolivariano (CNEB) began as part of the peace process with the armed group Segunda Marquetalia that the Colombian government has been carrying out since 2022. The armed organisation Segunda Marquetalia emerged after the peace agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC was signed in 2016. Iván Márquez, who had been the FARC's chief negotiator in that process and later became a senator as a result of the peace agreement, announced that he was resuming the armed struggle in 2019, together with several former FARC leaders, creating the group Segunda Marquetalia, which operates in the border area with Venezuela, the country where its bases are thought to be located. In 2022, as part of the Total Peace policy promoted by the government of Gustavo Petro, the group indicated its willingness to begin a negotiating process that was made public in 2024. However, deep internal divisions within the armed organisation hindered the negotiations and the split between the different factions was formalised in November 2024 after Iván Márquez publicly withdrew his support for the process in a letter. The dialogue continued with two other factions of the armed group, Comandos de la Frontera and Coordinadora Guerrillera del Pacífico, grouped under the name Coordinadora Nacional del Ejército Bolivariano. After this split, a new negotiating agenda was agreed, consisting of four points: territorial transformations; security in territories and for communities; measures and pathways to legal security for members of guerrilla factions; and political participation.

After the breakdown of the talks between the Colombian government and Segunda Marquetalia, the **process continued with the Coordinadora Nacional Ejército Bolivariano (CNEB)**, a Segunda Marquetalia dissident group. Segunda Marquetalia had originally been formed as a split from the FARC-EP. The CNEB was formed as a grouping of Comandos de la Frontera and Coordinadora Guerrillera del Pacífico, represented at the negotiating table by a guerrilla leader going by the alias of 'Walter Mendoza'. **During the year, more than 10 partial agreements were reached addressing various issues on the negotiating agenda**, including those relating to the substitution of illicit crops and the creation of Temporary Location Zones (ZUTs) in Nariño and Putumayo. The latter agreement, reached in May, was especially important, as it also provided for the armed group to surrender their weapons. In October, the government announced the temporary and focused suspension of offensive military operations and special police operations in specific areas of up to 25 square kilometres in rural areas of Nariño and Putumayo, with the aim of enabling the armed group to hand over 14 tonnes of war materiel, as agreed between the parties. The suspension took place between 9 October and 3 November, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace was designated as responsible for organising and supervising the handover of war materiel by the armed group, to be subsequently safeguarded by the Colombian Ministry of Defence with international verification from the OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process (MAPP-OAS). With regard to the ZUTs, it was agreed that recognised members of the CNEB would receive physical, economic and legal security guarantees, and

an agreement was made 'to begin the gradual process of disuse, handover and destruction of weapons, and to begin the transition to full citizenship'. The ZUTs will be temporary and transitional in nature, with no intention of permanence, and their implementation will be carried out gradually and progressively, with monitoring and verification. The armed group pledged to respect the elections scheduled for May 2026. Regarding the role of third parties, in May an agreement was signed on the functions of the guarantor countries and supporting entities, in which the parties defined the role they should play as depositories and witnesses of the agreements, providing support to the general dynamics of the negotiating table and the development of deliberations, and physically accompanying the CNEB delegation on transfers, insertions or extractions, as well as the government delegation if required. In December, it was announced that Uruguay had joined the peace process as a guarantor country.

Gender, peace and security

Women's participation in the peace negotiations was very limited, with the notable exception of civil society spokesperson María Yaneida Arboleda, who signed some of the partial agreements reached. The government included one woman, Gloria Arias, in its negotiating delegation, which consisted of three people in total, and there was also female participation in the international delegations and supporters of the process. On the CNEB side, Olga Ochoa, Luisa Burbano, María Isabel León and Jessica Guerrero were included as facilitators in some sessions. Some agreements included references to a multidimensional and differential approach, without specifying its constituent elements. Civil society also developed proposals as part of UNSC Resolution 1325 to contribute to the negotiating agenda and to demand greater participation for women in the peace negotiations.

Venezuela – Guyana	
Negotiating actors	Government, political and social opposition
Third parties	CELAC, CARICOM, Brazil, United Nations Secretary-General
Relevant agreements	Joint Declaration of Argyle for Dialogue and Peace between Guyana and Venezuela

Summary:

Essequibo is a territory formally controlled and administered by Guyana, but whose sovereignty is historically disputed by Venezuela. Covering almost 160,000 km2 and rich in minerals and other natural resources, this territory was part of the Captaincy General of Venezuela and was integrated into the new state of Venezuela once it obtained independence from the Spanish Crown in the 19th century.

The British Empire later colonised the region, establishing British Guiana, now Guyana. Given the lack of agreement on defining the border between the British Empire and Venezuela, an Arbitration Award issued in Paris in 1899 handed the disputed territory to the British Empire. This decision was not recognised by Venezuela, which argued that there had been bias and cartographic manipulation during the judicial process. In the early 1960s, the United Nations decided to admit Venezuela's territorial claim, opening the door to the 1966 Geneva Agreement between Venezuela and the United Kingdom (in consultation with the government of Guyana, which gained independence from the United Kingdom that same year). Under this agreement, the parties undertook to resolve the dispute through friendly negotiations. Although Venezuela viewed the Geneva Agreement as annulling the Paris Award, it also maintained the status quo of the territory (administered by Guyana) until the final resolution of the dispute. In 2018, Guyana raised the resolution of the case to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), but Venezuela does not recognise its jurisdiction or competence to resolve the dispute, alleging that the Geneva Agreement is the only valid mechanism to deal with it. In 2020, the ICJ declared itself competent to resolve and hand down a ruling on the merits of the issue. It ratified its position in 2023, but at the same time it did not prohibit (as Guyana had requested) the referendum on Essequibo organised by Caracas in December 2023 shortly after the government of Guyana granted several companies concessions to explore for hydrocarbon deposits in waters disputed with Venezuela.

Political, diplomatic and military tension between Guyana and Venezuela simmered over the disputed Essequibo region in 2025 and no significant progress was made in the process to resolve the dispute. As in previous years, both countries held opposing views regarding the mechanism for resolving the conflict. The Guyanese government maintains that the International Court of Justice (ICJ) must issue a binding ruling validating the borders approved by the 1899 Arbitral Award. In contrast, the Venezuelan government insists that the only valid legal instrument for reaching a practical and satisfactory settlement for both parties is the 1966 Geneva Agreement, which was signed before Guyana gained independence from the United Kingdom and laid the foundations for a negotiated solution. Although both countries remained steadfast in their positions in 2025 and military tension in the region intensified, both Caracas and Georgetown showed a certain predisposition towards cooperation. Despite emphasising on several occasions that Guyana's territorial integrity would not be negotiated outside the ICJ, Guyanese President Irfaan Ali expressed his

Although Venezuela and Guyana remained steadfast in their positions in 2025 and military tension in the region intensified, both countries showed a certain predisposition towards cooperation

willingness to keep communication channels open to avoid an escalation towards war. Similarly, despite not recognising the ICJ's jurisdiction to issue a binding ruling on the dispute, in August Venezuela's vice president at the time, Delcy Rodríguez, submitted 50 volumes of 'proof and evidence' of Venezuela's rights to the ICJ as the final document of the written phase of the litigation. Guyana welcomed Caracas' decision, as it allows the court to have all the arguments before its final ruling. Previously, in May, the ICJ ordered Venezuela to refrain from holding regional elections in Essequibo on 25 May, rejecting Caracas' unilateral alteration of the status quo in the disputed territory.

Alongside the legal proceedings within the ICJ, both governments continued to meet bilaterally as part of the Joint Commission of Foreign Ministers and Technicians, established following the 2023 Argyle Declaration.

These meetings were facilitated and supported by the government of Brazil, CELAC, CARICOM and the UN Secretary-General. Although no progress was made on the substantive resolution of the dispute between the two countries in 2025, the Joint Commission discussed issues such as border security and the exploitation of resources in undelimited areas; the prevention of military escalation arising from minor border incidents; and technical issues related to the final hearings at the ICJ, scheduled for May 2026. Regarding this latter issue, Venezuela confirmed its participation in those hearings to present its historical arguments.

In addition to CELAC's support for the implementation of the Argyle Declaration and bilateral dialogue between Guyana and Venezuela, it also held several meetings and summits during the year to ensure that Latin America and the Caribbean remains effectively a 'zone of peace', committing its 33 members to resolving disputes diplomatically and renouncing the use of force, among other things. On several occasions, such as the Ninth CELAC Summit in April, the Extraordinary Meeting of Foreign Ministers in September and the Fourth EU-CELAC Summit in November, the regional body urged Guyana and Venezuela to avoid any action that could escalate the conflict. Finally, in April, China's chargé d'affaires in Guyana, Huang Rui, publicly appealed for both countries to resolve the dispute through 'friendly consultations and negotiations'. The Guyanese described these statements as interference and recalled that the case is under the exclusive jurisdiction of the ICJ, stressing and that it would not accept dialogue outside that framework.

4. Peace negotiations in Asia and the Pacific

- In Asia and the Pacific there were 12 negotiation processes, 23% of the total cases in the world.
- Different armed groups in Myanmar held negotiations with the military junta due to pressure from China to de-escalate the armed conflict.
- The new South Korean president took some conciliatory measures and offered to resume unconditional dialogue based on ‘peaceful coexistence’.
- The US and North Korean governments highlighted the good personal relationship between the leaders of both countries and expressed their willingness to resume dialogue under certain conditions.
- In the Philippines, the body monitoring the implementation of the peace agreement warned that trust between the government and the MILF was at its lowest point since the agreement was signed and that the negotiating process was at a dangerous juncture.
- Faced with the outbreak of the most serious border armed conflict in decades, Cambodia and Thailand signed several truces with the assistance of third parties such as ASEAN, the US and China.
- The governments of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville signed the Melanesian Agreement, a roadmap to complete the peace process begun in the 1990s and determine the political status of Bougainville Island.

This chapter provides an analysis of the main peace processes and negotiations in Asia and the Pacific in 2025, both the general characteristics and trends of the negotiations and the development of each case on the continent throughout the year, including references to the gender, peace and security agenda. In addition, at the beginning of the chapter there is a map identifying the countries in Asia and the Pacific that hosted peace negotiations during 2025.

Table 4.1. Summary of peace processes and negotiations in Asia and the Pacific in 2025

Peace processes and negotiations	Negotiating actors	Third parties
Afghanistan – Pakistan	Afghanistan, Pakistan	Qatar, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia
India (Nagaland)	Indian government, NSCN-IM, NNPG: GPRN/NSCN (Kitovi Zhimomi), NNC, FGN, NSCN(R), NPGN (Non-Accord) and NNC/GDRN/NA, ZUF	--
India – China	India, China	--
Myanmar	Government; armed groups that have signed the ceasefire agreement (NCA): DKBA, RCSS/SSA-South, CNF, KNU, KNLA, ALP, PNLO, ABSDF, NMSP and LDU; armed groups that have not signed the NCA: UWSP, NDAA, SSPP/ SSA-N, KNPP, NSCN-K, KIA, AA, TNLA and MNDAA	China, ASEAN
North Korea – South Korea	North Korea, South Korea	--
North Korea – USA	North Korea, USA	--
Papua New Guinea (Bougainville)	Government, Autonomous Bougainville Government	United Nations, Jerry Mateparae
Philippines (MILF)	Government, MILF, Interim Government of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao	Malaysia, Third Party Monitoring Team, Independent Decommissioning Body, International Contact Group
Philippines (MNLF)	Government, MNLF (factions led by Nur Misuari and Muslimin Sema)	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
Philippines (NDF)	Government, NDF (umbrella organisation of various communist organisations, including the Communist Party of the Philippines, which is the political arm of the NPA)	Norway

Peace processes and negotiations	Negotiating actors	Third parties
Thailand (south)	Government, BRN	Malaysia
Thailand – Cambodia	Thailand, Cambodia	ASEAN, USA, China

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

4.1 Negotiations in 2025: regional trends

There were 12 peace negotiations in Asia and the Pacific in 2025, the same number as in 2024. However, there were also two new cases, Thailand-Cambodia and Afghanistan-Pakistan, and two others ceased to be considered negotiating processes: China (Tibet) and India (Assam). Following the deadliest border clashes in recent decades, Thailand and Cambodia met on several occasions throughout the year with the facilitation of third parties to try to lower levels of violence in the disputed border regions. In Afghanistan and Pakistan, the escalation of violence between both countries prompted the start of talks aimed at easing tensions, with the facilitation of several countries. With regard to the cases that ceased to be analysed as negotiating processes, in China there was no public record of meetings or approaches between the Chinese government and the Tibetan government-in-exile. In the Indian region of Assam, the dissolution of the armed group ULFA-PTF as a result of the 2023 peace agreement shifted the negotiations to the ordinary political channels of the state of Assam.

In March 2025, the presidents of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan signed a historic border demarcation and delimitation agreement, following decades of tension and several violent crises in 2021 and 2022. The agreement, ratified by both parliaments, includes the exchange of territory and the shared management and use of water resources and infrastructure, as well as a commitment that no heavy military equipment or auxiliary forces will be stationed along the border, nor will drones be flown. The two countries resumed flights and reopened the two border crossings that had been closed since 2021. Some analyses highlighted the historic opportunity presented by the agreement, but also the lack of transparency and participation of civil society from communities in the border areas during the negotiations.¹ Moreover, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan signed a trilateral border delimitation agreement in March for the intersection zone of all

three states, which covers the Fergana Valley. In January 2025, China and the Philippines resumed formal dialogue through the Tenth Meeting of the Bilateral Consultation Mechanism on the South China Sea (BCM), held in the Chinese city of Xiamen, in Fujian province. At the meeting, both countries agreed to resolve their political differences and maritime incidents peacefully, and to boost their cooperation in science, marine technology and environmental protection. China and the Philippines also reiterated the importance of cooperating with other ASEAN members to achieve a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. Meanwhile, several Southeast Asian member nations of ASEAN continued negotiations on the aforementioned Code of Conduct. In the case of China and Tibet, the head of the Central Tibetan Administration, Penpa Tsering, stated that informal communication channels to send messages between the parties were still being maintained, whilst also admitting that indirect, confidential and sporadic talks with China had not led to any progress in recent years.

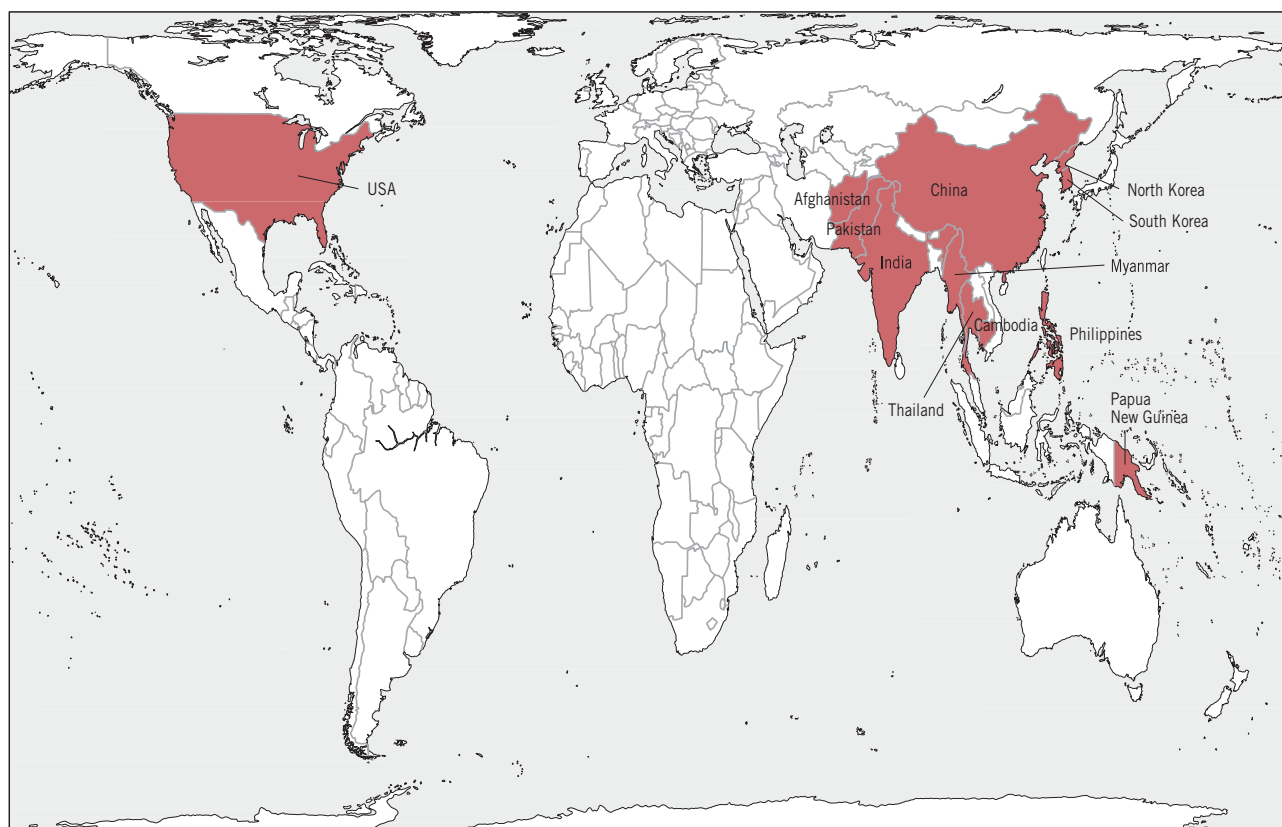
Twelve negotiating processes were reported in 2025 in Asia and the Pacific, the same number as in 2024

By **region**, half of the negotiations in Asia took place in Southeast Asia: the Philippines (MILF, MNLF and NDF), Myanmar, Thailand (South) and Thailand-Cambodia. Three were held in South Asia: Afghanistan-Pakistan, India (Nagaland) and India-China. Two occurred in East Asia: China (Tibet), North Korea-South Korea and North Korea-US. Finally, one was held in the Pacific region: Papua New Guinea (Bougainville). Half of the negotiations were linked to active armed conflicts (the Philippines (NDF, MILF and MNLF), Myanmar, Thailand (South) and Thailand-Cambodia), whereas the other half involved internal sociopolitical crises (India (Nagaland), Papua New Guinea (Bougainville), Afghanistan-Pakistan, North Korea-South Korea, North Korea-US and India-China).

With regard to the **type** of the negotiations, five of the 12 negotiating processes were **interstate**: Afghanistan-Pakistan, North Korea-South Korea, North Korea-US and India-China. The remaining seven cases were **internal**. Although the Asia and the Pacific region had

1. Turgunbaeva, Aigerim, "Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan Resolve Final Border Dispute: A Historic but Fragile Peace", *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, 15 May 2025; Human Rights Watch, "Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan: Put Rights at Center of Border Deal", HRW, 28 de mayo de 2025.

Map 4.1. Peace negotiations in Asia and the Pacific in 2025



■ Countries with peace processes and negotiations in Asia and the Pacific in 2025

the second-highest number of active negotiations in the world, in some cases they were based on **exploratory talks or initiatives to bring positions closer together or build confidence**, sometimes with no public record of direct meetings between the parties during the year (North Korea-South Korea, North Korea-US, Philippines (NDF)). Furthermore, several negotiations hinged mainly on the follow-up to diplomatic agreements (India-China) or the implementation of peace agreements reached previously, such as the Philippines (MILF and MNLF), India (Nagaland) and Papua New Guinea (Bougainville). However, the negotiations over Bougainville's political status are a consequence of one of the main points of the 2001 peace agreement (a self-determination referendum, which was already held in 2019).

The **actors** involved in all the different negotiating processes included their respective governments. In some cases, the negotiations were held **directly with armed groups**, such as the NSCN-IM in Nagaland, the BRN in Thailand and the MNDAA or TNLA, amongst other groups, in Myanmar, as well as with **political organisations representing insurgent groups**, as in the case of the Philippines, where Manila negotiates with the National Democratic Front (NDF) on behalf of the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the NPA. On other occasions, **the negotiations were held between**

governments and armed groups that, though not fully disarmed or demobilised, no longer maintain regular and sustained armed activity, such as the MILF and MNLF in the Philippines, and the Naga armed groups in Nagaland (India). In Myanmar, the government also maintained dialogue with umbrella armed organisations, such as the Three Brotherhood Alliance, composed of the MNDAA, the TNLA and the AA. Other talks took place between

central and regional governments, as was the case with the negotiations between the Philippine government and the regional government of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, and the dialogue between the government of Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Bougainville Government. Although it was the Indian central government that led talks with various armed and political groups in Nagaland, the state government was also involved to some extent in a negotiated solution to the conflict, urging New Delhi to accelerate the negotiating process.

Finally, there were talks and initiatives to bring positions closer together **between governments of various states**, such as North Korea and South Korea, North Korea and the US, India and China, Thailand and Cambodia and Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In half of the negotiations, the **main topics** on the substantive agenda of the dialogue were related to issues such as **autonomy, self-determination, independence,**

Half of the negotiations in the region were related to issues such as autonomy, self-determination, independence and recognition of the identity of national minorities

territorial integration and recognition of the identity of different regions and/or national minorities, as in the cases of India (Nagaland), the Philippines (MILF, MNLF), Myanmar, Papua New Guinea (Bougainville) and Thailand (South). Another important item on substantive agendas in a significant number of negotiations in Asia and the Pacific during the year was the **reduction of tensions and levels of violence, including ceasefires**. In fact, virtually all interstate negotiations during the year pivoted mainly on this issue. Thailand and Cambodia met on repeated occasions with the assistance of third parties, such as ASEAN, the US, Malaysia and China, in attempts to reduce violence in the border regions, achieving ceasefire agreements twice during the year. India and China maintained contacts to try to follow up on the 2024 border patrol agreement, which lowered conflict levels and led to a certain normalisation of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Afghanistan and Pakistan initiated negotiations during the year to address the escalation of violence that has occurred between both countries since the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan in 2021, which entailed strengthening the relationship between the Afghan Taliban and the Pakistani Taliban. South Korea made some unilateral and unreciprocated gestures to reduce conflict between the two countries. Some internal negotiations also focused their efforts on violence reduction initiatives. The Burmese government reached several ceasefire agreements with different insurgent armed groups and announced a widespread ceasefire following the earthquake that took place on 28 March. In Thailand, both parties held several meetings to achieve a ceasefire agreement during Ramadan and devoted much of the year to addressing one of the main points of the negotiating framework agreed by the parties (the Joint Comprehensive Plan towards Peace): an end to the violence. Several meetings held by both the governments of the Philippines and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, as well as the peace implementation panels of Manila and the MILF, focused on reducing violence in the region. Some of the issues addressed in these negotiations included the neutralisation of armed groups opposed to the peace process and criminal gangs operating in the BARMM, as well as the reduction of weapons circulating in the region.

Another issue in several negotiating processes was the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants. In the Philippines, the MILF and the government negotiated the implementation of the final phase of the disarmament and demobilisation process of 40,000 former MILF combatants, as provided for in the 2014 peace agreement. As part of the commitments that it assumed in the 1996 peace agreement with the MNLF, Manila promoted reintegration programmes for former MNLF combatants and socioeconomic development for their communities of origin in several regions of Mindanao. As part of the reintegration of combatants, in 2025 Manila promoted the programme granting amnesty to thousands of former NPA combatants and, to a lesser extent, to MILF and MNLF combatants.

Finally, **certain procedural aspects in Asia and the Pacific linked more to the design and methodology of the negotiating processes than to their substantive issues gained importance during 2025.** In Nagaland, several organisations signed the Ungma Declaration, in which, amongst other issues, they called for unity among all Naga groups to promote a shared political vision of their political and historical rights. Along the same lines, both the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and the Philippine government continued to promote the convergence and rapprochement of positions between the two main MNLF factions, as well as the harmonisation between the 1996 peace agreement with the MNLF and the 2014 peace agreement between Manila and the MILF. Also in the Philippines, the government and the NDF remained committed to very different negotiating frameworks. The NDF repeated that the only way to end the conflict is through negotiations with international facilitation (specifically, by Norway), in accordance with the roadmap jointly agreed by both parties in 1992. Manila insisted on offering incentives for surrender, amnesty and subsequent reintegration of combatants, and on promoting Local Peace Engagements, which involve NPA combatants and Communist Party of the Philippines cadres at the local and community level. On the Korean peninsula, Pyongyang indicated its willingness to resume dialogue with Washington, but under certain conditions: an end to the demand for total denuclearisation and recognition of North Korea as a nuclear state. Given Pyongyang's rejection of the offer of dialogue and confidence-building measures extended by the new government in Seoul, the South Korean president urged US President Trump to act as mediator between both countries. In Thailand, the BRN lamented Bangkok's lack of political will to channel the conflict through dialogue, criticising the government for not even having designated a negotiating panel. Bangkok insisted on the need for members of the BRN negotiating panel to be able to make decisions on the group's armed operations. Finally, the governments of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville province signed the Melanesian Agreement, urging both parliaments to decide jointly on the methodology for legislative deliberation and voting on Bougainville's political status, with one of the main elements of dispute being whether the decision should be approved by simple majority or by a qualified two-thirds majority.

In comparative terms, Asia and the Pacific was the region with the least third-party participation in dialogue facilitation. One third of the negotiations were directly bilateral with no support or external facilitation. Specifically, the cases in which the parties held direct talks without external facilitation were North Korea-South Korea, North Korea-US, the Indian state of Nagaland, the Philippines (MNLF) and China-India. Furthermore, compared with other regions of the world, mediation in Asia and the Pacific was relatively straightforward and characterised by one or few third parties. The cases with greater complexity in terms of third parties were the Philippines and Afghanistan-Pakistan. In addition to the negotiations between

the Philippine government and MILF panels with facilitation from Malaysia and the interactions between Manila and the Bangsamoro autonomous government, the implementation of the 2014 peace agreement is supported by the Third Party Monitoring Team, tasked with overseeing the implementation of agreements signed between the MILF and the government, the International Decommissioning Body, which oversees the demobilisation of 40,000 former MILF combatants, and the International Contact Group, which is composed of four states and four NGOs. In the case of Afghanistan-Pakistan, three countries (Qatar, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia), facilitated several dialogue initiatives aimed at reducing violence between the two countries, sometimes through parallel channels, which crystallised in a ceasefire agreement in October.

In comparative terms, Asia and the Pacific was the region with the least third-party participation in dialogue facilitation

Most of the **third parties** in Asia and the Pacific were states. The two most active countries in the region were Malaysia, which for years has facilitated negotiations between the Philippine government and the MILF and between the Thai government and the BRN in southern Thailand, and China, which participated in the ceasefire agreement between the Burmese government and the Kokang armed group Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA). Malaysia was also involved in the negotiations between Thailand and Cambodia. As mentioned above, Qatar, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia facilitated dialogue between Afghanistan and Pakistan, whilst Norway has facilitated negotiations between the Philippine government and the NDF for decades. Finally, the US government and president played a major role in the negotiations between Thailand and Cambodia. In line with the scarce involvement of third parties in facilitating or supporting dialogue in Asia, the role of **international or regional organisations** was also minor, and far lower than in other regions. The United Nations supported Jerry Mateparae's mediation in the negotiations between the government of Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Bougainville Government to determine Bougainville's political status. In recent years, ASEAN has been promoting a way out of the political crisis in Myanmar following the 2021 coup. In 2025, the organisation was very active in facilitating dialogue between Thailand and Cambodia and in overseeing the ceasefire agreements that both countries signed at various points during the year. The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation also played a supporting role in negotiations between the Philippine government and the MNLF, as well as in relations between that group and the MILF.

With regard to the **trend** of the peace negotiations in Asia and the Pacific, progress was noted in some areas. In several cases (Afghanistan-Pakistan, Thailand-Cambodia and Myanmar), agreements were signed to

reduce violence, which in some instances included ceasefires, demilitarisation measures and confidence-building initiatives. Although such agreements eased tensions, high levels of violence were reported in all three cases in 2025 and the security situation remained

volatile and uncertain at the end of the year. Significant steps were also reported in other negotiating processes. Following an impasse lasting nearly a year and a half in the negotiations in Thailand (south), they officially resumed in December and the BRN revealed its political plan to resolve the armed conflict for the first time since talks started in 2013. The Melanesian Agreement was signed in June, which provides greater clarity on how the national Parliament of Papua New Guinea will take the final decision on Bougainville's political status, including the possibility of secession. The Philippine government and the MNLF expressed satisfaction with progress in the reintegration and socioeconomic support programme for thousands of former MNLF combatants, as well as their families and communities. The Indian government's authorisation for Naga leader Thuingaleng Muivah to return to his home village in Nagaland for the first time in 60 years was interpreted as an attempt at rapprochement. The US president and the leader of North Korea expressed their willingness to resume diplomatic relations and even negotiations under certain conditions. Although dialogue between North Korea and South Korea remained interrupted and relations between the two countries experienced one of the most complex moments in recent years, the new South Korean president took some conciliatory steps and extended confidence-building measures, saying that pragmatic and unconditional dialogue could resume based on 'peaceful coexistence'.

With regard to the trend of the peace negotiations in Asia and the Pacific, several contexts experienced stagnation, paralysis and even setbacks

Despite these signs of progress, several negotiating processes suffered **stagnation**, paralysis and even setbacks. Perhaps the most obvious example were the negotiations between the Philippine government and the MILF on the implementation of the 2014 peace agreement, which went through serious difficulties to the point that the body overseeing the implementation of the agreement warned that trust between the parties had hit its lowest point since 2014 and that the negotiating process

had reached a dangerous juncture. As a consequence of the tension and growing distrust between the parties, in middle of the year the MILF ordered the suspension of the process to demobilise around 14,000 combatants until the government complied with several provisions of the peace agreement, such as the provision of socioeconomic assistance to the 26,000 combatants that had already begun the disarmament process. In other cases, dialogue remained paralysed or experienced significant difficulties, as in Thailand (south), India (Nagaland), the Philippines (NDF), Papua

New Guinea and the Korean peninsula. Ten years after the Framework Agreement was signed between the Indian government and the NSCN-IM, the negotiations in Nagaland remained at an impasse on the points that have prevented progress over the last decade, mainly the issue of a separate constitution and flag for Nagaland. The talks between the Philippine government and the NDF remained stalled, with no public record of formal meetings or contacts between the parties, and with Manila claiming a ‘strategic victory’ over the communist movement and prioritising Local Peace Engagements and reintegration and amnesty projects for former combatants over peace negotiations with the NDF. The president of the Autonomous Bougainville Government accused the central government of Papua New Guinea of a lack of political will in recognising the results of the 2019 self-determination referendum, in which an overwhelming majority voted for independence. On several occasions, he declared his intention to declare Bougainville’s independence on 1 September 2027 if no progress was made in the negotiating process. Finally, no meetings or official contacts were reported between North Korea and the US on the one hand and between North Korea and South Korea on the other.

Finally, no significant progress was made in the implementation of the **gender, peace and security agenda**, with nearly zero female participation in negotiating processes. One of the few exceptions was in the Philippines, where some women held key positions in the negotiating process between the government and the NDF, such as the facilitator of the dialogue and the head of the NDF negotiating panel. However, some initiatives related to the women, peace and security agenda were carried out in 2025. In Bougainville, the first Women, Peace and Security Summit was held, during which women’s organisations submitted a document demanding that Bougainville’s future constitution guarantee 50% representation of women at all decision-making levels. The Philippine government guaranteed that the women, peace and security agenda will remain one of ASEAN’s main priorities while the Philippines assumes its presidency in 2026 and announced the strengthening of the Philippine WPS Centre of Excellence, the first in the country and second in Southeast Asia. Progress was also made in the Bangsamoro Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, which aims to institutionalise gender-responsive governance to guarantee the protection and empowerment of all women and girls in Bangsamoro. Along the same lines, alongside the approval of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security, the Thai government and UN Women announced the establishment of Women’s Networks, Focal Points and Empowerment Centres in Thailand’s border provinces with Malaysia for the purpose of strengthening women’s leadership in governance and peacebuilding.

4.2 Case study analysis

4.2.1. Asia

East Asia

DPR Korea – USA	
Negotiating actors	North Korea, USA
Third parties	--
Relevant agreements	Singapore Statement (June 2018)

Summary:

The US and other countries of the international community began to express their concern about the North Korean nuclear programme in the early 1980s, but the tensions that it produced were mainly channelled through several bilateral or multilateral agreements: in 1985, Korea North ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; in 1991 the US announced the withdrawal of about 100 South Korean warheads under the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START); and in 1992 North Korea and South Korea signed the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, in which both countries pledged not to produce, store, test or deploy nuclear weapons and to allow verification through inspections. Nevertheless, there was a major diplomatic crisis in 1993 due to Pyongyang’s decision not to allow inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and to pull out of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, though it eventually stayed its hand after the talks it held with the United States and the United Nations. After a trip to the Korean peninsula by former President Jimmy Carter in 1994, in which he met with North Korean leader Kim Il-sung to resolve diplomatic tensions and seek rapprochement, the US and North Korean governments signed an agreement in Geneva (known as the Agreed Framework) in which, among other things, Pyongyang promised to freeze its nuclear programme in exchange for aid and the relaxation of international sanctions. George W. Bush’s inauguration as president of the United States led to a change in policy towards North Korea. Shortly after it was included in the so-called “Axis of Evil”, Pyongyang expelled several IAEA inspectors, withdrew from the Non-Proliferation Treaty and announced that it already possessed nuclear weapons. In light of this new situation, six-party multilateral talks between North Korea, South Korea, the United States, Japan, China and Russia began in 2003. Though they led to some important agreements in 2005 and 2008, this negotiating format came to an end in 2009. Despite direct contact between North Korea and the US since then, including an agreement reached in 2012 in which Pyongyang committed to a moratorium on ballistic and nuclear tests, the tension between both countries rose after Kim Jong-un came to power in 2011 and the North Korean weapons programme intensified. In mid-2018, Kim Jong-un and US President Donald Trump held a historic summit in Singapore where they addressed the normalisation of relations between both countries and the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula.

Although no direct negotiations were reported between the two countries, both Washington and Pyongyang highlighted the good personal relationship between their respective leaders and expressed their willingness to resume diplomatic relations and even negotiations under certain conditions. In February, shortly after

taking office as the new US president, Donald Trump announced his intention to build diplomatic relations with North Korea and declared that he had a good personal relationship with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, with whom he met three times during his first term (2017-2021), in Singapore, Hanoi (Vietnam) and the Demilitarised Zone between the two Koreas. Later, at a joint press conference with the South Korean prime minister at the White House, **Trump stated that he would like to hold a meeting with Kim Jong-un before the end of 2025.** Kim Jong-un also publicly declared that he had fond memories of President Trump and even expressed his willingness to resume dialogue with Washington in a speech to Parliament in September, but under certain conditions. Firstly, he demanded that the US abandon its requirement for total denuclearisation and that negotiations instead focus on arms control. Secondly, he urged the recognition of North Korea as a nuclear state in exchange for peaceful coexistence. Before delivering that speech, in July, Kim Jong-un's sister and senior regime official, Kim Yo-jong, said that while the relationship between her brother and Trump was 'not bad', any attempt to use their personal relationship to promote the country's denuclearisation would be interpreted as 'mockery'. Kim Yo-jong also called on the US not to repeat past mistakes, to abandon its pretension of achieving the country's denuclearisation and instead accept North Korea's 'irreversible' status as a nuclear state. **Kim Yo-jong argued that any eventual rapprochement or dialogue between the two countries in the future should be based on the recognition that both Pyongyang's capabilities and the geopolitical environment had changed radically in recent years.** These statements came after an anonymous White House official claimed that Trump was willing to talk with Kim Jong-un to achieve a 'fully denuclearised' North Korea.

In this vein, some media outlets highlighted that Trump had publicly referred to North Korea as a 'nuclear power' or 'a kind of nuclear power', and that some US strategic documents had omitted concepts such as 'denuclearisation', denoting a certain shift from the historical US position towards Pyongyang. Other media outlets noted that the US government had unsuccessfully attempted to arrange a meeting between Trump and Kim Jong-un during a trip by Trump in late October. According to these sources, North Korea's refusal to hold such a meeting demonstrates its greater confidence in its own weapons capabilities and its much stronger international position thanks to its strategic alliance with Russia. According to some analysts, US acceptance of Pyongyang's conditions for dialogue, to include recognising North Korea as a nuclear power, ending the goal of achieving its complete, irreversible and verifiable denuclearisation and focusing instead on arms control or moratoriums on nuclear or ballistic tests, could have regional implications, such as discrediting the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, incentivising other countries to begin their own nuclear programmes or

strengthen the ones already in existence, or triggering an arms race in the region by countries that might feel threatened by the North Korean nuclear arsenal, such as South Korea or Japan.

North Korea – South Korea	
Negotiating actors	North Korea, South Korea
Third parties	--
Relevant agreements	Panmunjom Declaration (April 2018)

Summary:

Alongside rising tensions between the governments of North Korea and South Korea, not only did they fail to hold any meetings or negotiations, but their diplomatic relations and dialogue on possible reunification and other issues were suspended in 2023. In fact, in his end-of-year speech, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un declared that the relationship between the two Koreas had become one of two hostile and belligerent countries, so his government would no longer seek any kind of dialogue about reunification and reconciliation. Along the same lines, Kim Jong-un said that it made no sense to pursue talks with a country (referring to South Korea) that treated its neighbour as its main enemy and only seeks its collapse and what he called "unification by reabsorption". In the same speech, Kim Jong-un said that the North Korean Armed Forces would totally annihilate the US and South Korea if Pyongyang were provoked. A few days after his speech, Kim Jong-un also asked the legislative assembly to rewrite North Korea's Constitution to eliminate the idea of a shared state between two countries divided by war, to define South Korea as North Korea's "main enemy" and to specify that North Korea will seek to "occupy, subjugate and claim" South Korea as part of North Korean territory if another war breaks out in the Korean Peninsula. Kim Jong-un also ordered the elimination of symbols of inter-Korean reconciliation. For example, he demanded the removal of a monument in honour of the quest for reunification in Pyongyang and the abolition of concepts such as "reunification", "reconciliation" and "compatriots" from the nation's history. Along the same lines, North Korea also cut off cross-border railways and abolished government agencies managing relations and dialogue with South Korea, such as the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland, the main body for inter-Korean affairs since its creation in 1961, and the National Economic Cooperation Bureau and the Kumgangsan International Tourism Administration, which were responsible for managing joint economic and tourism projects, such as a joint industrial park in the North Korean border city of Kaesong. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres expressed concern about the reduction in contacts and relations between both countries and said that dialogue and diplomatic engagement remained the only possible path to sustainable peace and complete and verifiable denuclearisation on the Korean Peninsula.

In 2025, no official meetings or contacts were recorded between the two countries, but the rise to power of Lee Jae-myung as the new president of South Korea in June brought a substantial change in the policy of the previous South Korean government. After taking office, Lee Jae-myung took some conciliatory or confidence-building measures and offered to resume pragmatic and unconditional dialogue based on 'peaceful coexistence',

but Pyongyang firmly rejected any rapprochement with South Korea. In June, for example, Lee Jae-myung issued an order to finally halt the broadcasting of news, propaganda or songs via loudspeakers from the border, something that had historically been criticised by Pyongyang. Later, in August, the South Korean Army physically dismantled such loudspeakers as a ‘gesture of goodwill’ to try to restore trust and dialogue. Along the same lines, in December, after it was revealed that the previous government of Yoon Suk-yeol had allegedly covertly sent drones and leaflets to provoke a reaction from North Korea and thereby justify emergency action, Lee issued an order to prosecute those who launched balloons carrying propaganda leaflets, and the National Assembly amended a law to grant the police legal authority to block such launches.

Throughout 2025, Lee Jae-myung continued to explain and develop his policy of peaceful coexistence with North Korea. In August, during his Liberation Day speech, he set out the three guiding principles of his foreign policy towards North Korea: recognition of and respect for North Korea as a legitimate political system; an explicit renunciation of any attempt to absorb North Korea in a hostile or forced manner; and a commitment to cease provocations and hostile acts (such as propaganda via loudspeakers or leaflet launches). In mid-September, during the UN General Assembly, Lee further detailed his political objectives with respect to North Korea and revealed the END initiative, an acronym for its three fundamental pillars: Exchange, Normalisation and Denuclearisation. The initiative seeks the gradual expansion of economic, cultural and humanitarian cooperation and exchanges to restore trust; active support for the normalisation of North Korea’s relations with the international community, including the US; and denuclearisation through a three-stage roadmap: suspension or freezing, reduction and complete dismantlement of the North Korean nuclear programme. However, the reunification of the Korean peninsula remains one of the cornerstones of the South Korean Constitution, which stipulates that the Republic of Korea encompasses the entire Korean peninsula.

Meanwhile, the North Korean government categorically rejected any rapprochement with South Korea and expressed that it had no interest in meeting or talking with Seoul. Kim Yo-jong, the sister of the North Korean leader and a senior official in his administration, said that Lee’s policies were no different from those of his predecessor, criticised the persistence of joint military exercises with the US and described Seoul’s conciliatory measures as a deceptive ‘farce’. Faced with Pyongyang’s refusal, at a meeting at the White House in late August, Lee urged US President Trump to act as a mediator on the Korean peninsula, arguing that he was the only person capable of making progress on North Korean denuclearisation.

South Asia

Afghanistan – Pakistan	
Negotiating actors	Afganistán, Pakistán
Third parties	Qatar, Türkiye y Arabia Saudit
Relevant agreements	--

Summary:

Afghanistan and Pakistan began a negotiating process in 2025 facilitated by Qatar, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia to address the tense and violent situation between both countries. The violence had escalated after the Taliban returned to power in Afghanistan in 2021 as a consequence of the strengthening of relations between the Afghan and Pakistani Taliban. Since 2021, the Pakistani Taliban armed group TTP has intensified its armed activity in the Pakistani tribal areas and established bases in the neighbouring country. Pakistan accused Afghanistan of providing logistical and political support to the Pakistani Taliban insurgency, causing the relations between both countries to deteriorate and triggering more violence, particularly after 2024. Since the peace negotiations between the Pakistani government and the Pakistani Taliban insurgency broke down in 2023 and tensions rose between Afghanistan and Pakistan, both countries had maintained contacts aimed at improving bilateral relations, but these efforts failed, leading the situation to escalate. The talks initiated in 2025 aimed to reduce violence and restore diplomatic relations between them.

Afghanistan and Pakistan carried out several dialogue initiatives during 2025 aimed at reducing tension between them and ending the violence, which increased markedly during the year.²

The talks, which were facilitated by Qatar, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia, achieved a ceasefire agreement in October between the parties, which was maintained with great difficulty and with some episodes of violence that highlighted the fragility of the pact, but no progress was made towards a broader settlement that would end hostilities between both countries for good. The escalation that took place in October, which claimed the lives of dozens of soldiers, with Pakistani airstrikes in Paktika province that also reached Kabul, and to which Afghanistan responded, was followed by a ceasefire announced by both countries on 15 October. Initially planned to last 48 hours, the ceasefire led to a first meeting in Doha with mediation from Türkiye and Qatar on 19 October. At this meeting, it was agreed to continue the ceasefire and the dialogue process to ensure its sustainability. This first meeting in Doha was followed by a second meeting in Istanbul, which took place between 25 and 30 October and was aimed at consolidating the ceasefire agreement. Afghanistan and Pakistan announced that they had also agreed on the establishment of a monitoring and verification mechanism that would impose penalties on any party that violated the agreement. The details of the mechanism were to be agreed at a subsequent meeting,

2. See the summary on Afghanistan – Pakistan in Chapter 2 (Socio-political crises) in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2026! Report on Conflicts, Human Rights and Peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2026.

and it was noted that follow-up meetings would take place.³ Despite the mediation and rapprochement efforts, no agreement beyond the initial ceasefire was achieved. After a third meeting on 6 November, Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said that the talks had ended for the time being and accused Afghanistan of having come to the meeting with no agenda or willingness to sign any written agreement. Asif stated that the Afghan delegation claimed they would only respect verbal agreements, which Pakistan refused to accept, so the talks were concluded. Asif reassured that the ceasefire agreement remained in place, but he also insisted that Pakistan would respond if Afghanistan violated it. Furthermore, he reiterated that Pakistan's sole demand was an end to attacks launched from Afghan soil. From the start of the talks, Pakistan had said that for any agreement to succeed, it was essential for Afghanistan to dismantle TTP bases in Afghanistan and terminate its support for the Pakistani Taliban insurgent group. In the November round, various modalities for the verification and monitoring mechanism were scheduled to be discussed. Several analysts highlighted the importance of Türkiye's mediation, given its closeness to Pakistan and the fact that it is one of the few countries that maintains diplomatic ties with Afghanistan, even though Türkiye does not formally recognise it. Afghanistan upgraded its representative in Türkiye to ambassador in June.

A meeting took place in Saudi Arabia in December alongside those facilitated by Türkiye and Qatar. It was reportedly attended by delegations very similar to those that met in Doha and Istanbul. Pakistan rejected Riyadh's proposal to reopen cross-border trade alongside continued negotiations on cross-border terrorism. Trade between the two countries has been paralysed since October, and border crossings remain closed. The discussions were held behind closed doors and ended with no progress made towards rapprochement between both countries. Thus, the year ended with a fragile ceasefire in place and multiple warnings about the possibility of a return to hostilities.

India (Nagaland)	
Negotiating actors	Indian government, NSCN-IM, NNPG: GPRN/NSCN (Kitovi Zhimomi), NNC, FGN, NSCN(R), NPGN (Non-Accord) and NNC/GDRN/NA, ZUF
Third parties	--
Relevant agreements	Framework agreement (2015)
Summary: The Indian state of Nagaland has suffered armed conflict and a socio-political crisis since the 1950s as a result of much of the Naga population's unfulfilled aspiration to win independence and create a sovereign state. There have been different attempts at negotiation since the 1960s,	

but it was not until 1997 that a ceasefire agreement was reached with the NSCN-IM group, one of the main actors in the conflict. Although the agreement has remained in force to date, the negotiations have not made significant progress on the central issues. In 2012, however, the peace process received a boost from greater involvement from the Naga government and state MPs. Alongside the negotiations with the NSCN-IM, in 2001 the government reached another ceasefire agreement with the NSCN-K insurgent organisation. However, these negotiations have also failed to make significant progress. In 2015, the Government and the NSCN-IM reached a framework pre-agreement, considered a preamble to the final resolution of the conflict. However, that same year, the ceasefire agreement with the NSCN-K was broken, and violent clashes began again.

Peace negotiations in Nagaland remained stalled in 2025, 10 years after the Framework Agreement was signed between the Indian government and the NSCN-I,

the impasse persisted on the same points that have blocked progress on the agreement for the past decade: the issue of a constitution and a flag for Nagaland, a non-negotiable point for the Naga insurgency and one on which New Delhi has never shown any willingness to soften its stance. Nevertheless, new rounds of negotiations took place during the year between the Indian government and various political and armed actors in Nagaland, including the NSCN-I and the Naga political groups (NNPG). The latter insisted on distinguishing the 2015 Framework Agreement from the 2017 Agreed Position, reached by six armed groups, which points out that the Naga history of struggle for recognition is much longer than what is reflected in the Framework Agreement. **Several other events significant to the peace process occurred during the year.** In August, a meeting of dozens of Naga social and tribal groups took place, including 16 Naga political groups, 34 Naga tribal *hohos* (the tribes' internal coordinating bodies) from Nagaland, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, and the Naga Reconciliation Forum. At the meeting, the participating organisations signed the Ungma Declaration, which, among other things, called for unity among all Naga groups to promote a shared political vision of their political and historical rights. October saw a historic event with the first visit in 60 years by the NSCN-IM Secretary General and chief negotiator, 91-year-old Thuingaleng Muivah, to his home village of Somdal in Manipur, from which Muivah had left to join the Naga opposition. The Indian government's decision to allow Muivah's return was interpreted as a gesture of rapprochement as it had previously blocked his return. The Naga leader was greeted by thousands of people with Naga anthems and flags, demonstrating the enduring influence of his people. During the welcoming ceremony, Muivah reiterated that Naga sovereignty and its symbols are inalienable. Meanwhile, the Political Affairs Committee of the Nagaland government called on New Delhi to appoint a political interlocutor with ministerial rank for high-level negotiations, with the aim of boosting and accelerating the peace process.

3. Joint Statement on the Talks Between Afghanistan and Pakistan Through the Mediation of Türkiye and Qatar, 30 October 2025.

South East Asia

Myanmar	
Negotiating actors	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 that have not signed the NCA: UWSP, NDAA, SSPP/ SSA-N, KNPP, NSCN-K, KIA, AA, TNLA and MNDAA
Third parties	China, ASEAN
Relevant agreements	Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (October 2015)
Summary: Since the armed conflict between the Armed Forces of Myanmar and ethnic-based insurgent groups began in 1948, several negotiations have taken place in an attempt to end the violence. Beginning in the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s, many armed groups have reached ceasefire agreements with the Burmese Government. Although definitive peace agreements were never reached, violence did decrease significantly as a result of these pacts. In 2011 there was a change in the Administration as a result of the 2010 elections and the new Government made several overtures to the armed insurgency that brought about the start of peace negotiations and the signing of agreements with most of the armed groups operating in different parts of the country. By mid-2012 the Government had signed a ceasefire agreement with 12 insurgent organizations. In 2013, talks began with different insurgent groups aimed at reaching a nationwide ceasefire agreement and promoting political talks. In 2015, the government and eight armed opposition groups signed a ceasefire agreement (NCA), taking the first steps towards political dialogue. In 2016, State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi convened the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong, which brought the government together with the armed opposition groups, beginning a new phase in the peace process. The conference has been convened several times in subsequent years.	

The armed conflict in Myanmar continued to rage with very high levels of violence. However, the Burmese government reached several ceasefire agreements with different insurgent armed groups during the year and announced a widespread ceasefire following the earthquake that took place on 28 March. In January, the Burmese government and the Kokang armed group Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) signed a ceasefire agreement, which was due to take effect on 18 January and was facilitated by China. The agreement came after seven rounds of negotiations, which took place in the Chinese city of Kunming. In March, after the devastating earthquake that devastated the Sagaing region in the centre of the country, the National Unity Government (NUG) announced that the People's Defence Force (PDF) would begin to observe ceasefires to facilitate the rescue of victims and humanitarian efforts. Shortly afterwards, the Three Brotherhood Alliance (comprising the MNDAA, the TNLA and the AA) followed suit with

another ceasefire. These announcements made by the armed opposition received a response on 2 April, when the Burmese government also announced a ceasefire aimed at facilitating reconstruction tasks, initially until 22 April and later extended until 30 April. However, the opposition denounced continuous violations of the agreement, and airstrikes by the military junta were reported between 19 and 20 April, which killed over 40 people in several parts of the country. According to some reports, between 28 March and 24 April, the Burmese Armed Forces conducted 207 attacks, including 140 airstrikes. Some analysts suggested that the government was taking advantage of the earthquake to improve its image abroad and regain military control over areas lost in recent years.⁴

In October, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) announced a ceasefire agreement in Shan State that had been promoted by China. The agreement came ahead of elections scheduled for December 2025 and January 2026 amid the constant bombing of TNLA positions. The agreement provided for an end to the airstrikes in exchange for the handover of two cities that the armed group had seized: Mogok, the epicentre of ruby mining in Mandalay region, and Mongmit. Following Operation 1027, the armed groups took control of significant areas of Shan State, including the trade routes with China, which pushed the neighbouring country to promote negotiations between the Burmese government and the armed groups to prevent them from expanding their areas of operation and control. Early in the year, the TNLA had stated that it would continue to battle against the government, despite having made a ceasefire offer in November 2024 under pressure from China. Nevertheless, the group indicated that the offer still stood. The military advances that various armed groups had made since the start of Operation 1027 were significantly slowed down by the pressure that China exerted on the insurgents to negotiate ceasefire agreements.

No significant progress was made on the talks between ASEAN and the Burmese government on the return of democracy to the country after the 2021 coup. During the 47th ASEAN Summit in October, the regional organisation refused to support the elections scheduled for December, and there was speculation about the possibility of appointing a special envoy for the country with a longer-term mandate, which would implicitly constitute a recognition of the failure of the annual rotation system. ASEAN also expressed concern about the lack of progress on the Five-Point Consensus: an end to violence, inclusive dialogue, humanitarian access, the appointment of a special envoy and meetings between that envoy and all parties.

4. Tharaphi Than, *Myanmar military's 'ceasefire' follows a pattern of ruling generals exploiting disasters to shore up control*, The Conversation, 4 April 2025.

Gender, peace and security

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325, the women's organisation Women's League of Burma (WLB) blasted the exclusion of women from peace negotiations and issued a call to action. Among other issues, it called on UN member states and the UN Security Council to impose targeted sanctions and a global arms embargo on the junta, to refer Myanmar to the International Criminal Court (ICC), to guarantee civil society briefings during UN Security Council meetings and to strengthen the integration of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda into all mandates. Furthermore, it demanded that ASEAN and neighbouring countries recognise refugees and facilitate safe and voluntary returns, deliver humanitarian aid independently without channelling it through the military junta and cooperate with legitimate local and ethnic organisations rather than with the junta. It demanded that the international community condemn the military coup and refuse to recognise the junta's authority; support efforts to restore democracy and legitimate representation; urge the ICC to investigate and prosecute junta leaders for crimes against humanity and war crimes; and ensure that women's rights organisations and civil society are meaningfully included in all decision-making processes. The WLB made all these demands in compliance with the provisions of Resolution 1325.

Philippines (MILF)	
Negotiating actors	Government, MILF, Interim Government of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
Third parties	Malaysia, Third Party Monitoring Team, Independent Decommissioning Body, International Contact Group
Relevant agreements	Agreement for General Cessation of Hostilities (1997), Agreement on Peace between the Government and the MILF (2001), Mutual Cessation of Hostilities (2003), Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro (2012), Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (2014), Organic Law for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (2018)

Summary:

Peace negotiations between the Government and the MILF, an MNLF splinter group, started in 1997, just months after Fidel Ramos's Administration had signed a peace agreement with the MNLF. Since then, the negotiating process has been interrupted three times (in 2000, 2003 and 2008) by outbreaks of high intensity violence. Despite this, in the over 30 rounds of talks that have taken place since the late 1990s some agreements on security and development have been reached, as well as a ceasefire agreement that has been upheld, for the most part. In October 2012 both parties signed the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro and in March 2014 the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro, which plans to replace the current Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao with a new public body (called

Bangsamoro) with a larger territorial scope and broader self-government competences. Since 2014, the peace process has been focused on the drafting and congressional approval of the Organic Law for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, which incorporates the main contents of the two aforementioned peace agreements and was approved by Congress in 2018. Following its ratification in a plebiscite in early 2019, the peace process has hinged on the implementation of the peace agreements, the institutional development of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (governed temporarily by the leader of the MILF) and the disarmament of the MILF.

The negotiating process between the Philippine government and the MILF on the implementation of the 2014 peace agreement faced serious difficulties during the year, to the point that the Third Party Monitoring Team (TPMT), which monitors the implementation of the agreement, warned that trust between the parties was at its lowest level since the agreement was signed and that the negotiating process was at a dangerous juncture. Some of the causes of the erosion of trust and the mounting tensions between the government and the MILF, identified by both the TPMT and other analysts, included President Ferdinand Marcos' unilateral proclamation in March of a senior MILF leader, Abdulrauf Macacua (the MILF military chief and governor of Maguindanao del Norte), as Interim Chief Minister of Bangsamoro, replacing historical MILF leader Ebrahim Murad. Marcos also appointed only 35 of the 41 names proposed by the MILF for the renewing the Bangsamoro Parliament, losing the assembly majority stipulated in the 2014 peace agreement. The MILF condemned both decisions as taken unilaterally and without prior consultation, as a form of interference in the MILF's internal affairs and as a violation of both the 2014 peace agreement and the Bangsamoro Organic Law. In addition to increasing mistrust between Manila and the MILF, this decision created some distance between Murad and Macacua and fuelled the risk of factionalism within the armed group, with some commanders expelled for failing to obey the directives of the group's Central Committee.

The second factor hindering progress in the peace process was related to the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of the 40,000 combatants provided for in the 2014 peace agreement. In July, the MILF ordered the suspension of the demobilisation process for around 14,000 combatants until the government complied with several provisions of the peace agreement, such as the one giving socio-economic assistance to the 26,000 combatants who had already begun the disarmament process. Later, in August, the MILF prohibited its members from participating in any demobilisation-related activity organised by the government without prior authorisation from Murad Ebrahim.

The third factor fuelling difficulties in the peace process were the national and local elections held in May, due to high levels of electoral violence and the decision made

by some MILF members not to contest the elections under the MILF-backed party, the UBJP. Furthermore, the delay of the first elections in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), which should have ended the BARMM transition period, also strained relations between Manila and the MILF. These elections should have been held in the first half of 2022, but have been postponed four times for various reasons, the most recent being the Supreme Court's decision to exclude Sulu province from the BARMM on the grounds that the majority of the province's population had voted against forming part of the BARMM in the 2018 plebiscite approving the Bangsamoro Organic Law. As a result of this ruling, the seats corresponding to Sulu province in the Bangsamoro Parliament were left vacant, requiring the necessary legislative adjustments to be made.

Despite these difficulties, both the negotiations between the government and MILF peace implementation panels and the meetings between the central government and the Bangsamoro government continued to take place with a certain degree of institutional normality. Furthermore, both parties continued to maintain regular contact with the official dialogue facilitator, representing the government of Malaysia, as well as with some of the national and international actors supporting the process, such as the Third Party Monitoring Team, the International Monitoring Team, the International Decommissioning Body and the International Contact Group. In 2025, the implementation of the 2014 peace agreement was negotiated within the Intergovernmental Relations Body, which is responsible for coordinating government and legislative action between the Philippine government and the BARMM, and the peace implementation panels of the Philippine government and the MILF. Some of the progress reported in negotiating rounds 36 and 37, held in January and December, respectively, included the possible reactivation of the International Monitoring Team, greater proactivity shown by the International Contact Group (with more active participation in the negotiations), the acceleration of amnesty applications by former MILF combatants, the implementation of programmes for the reduction of small arms and light weapons and for the destruction and deactivation of those already handed over, the approval of the structure and composition of the Joint Security Assessment regarding the redeployment of the Philippine Armed Forces in the BARMM, the approval of the Framework for the Transition Plan of the Joint Peace and Security Teams (joint teams between state security forces and former MILF combatants) and, especially, the approval of the Roadmap on Transitional Justice and Reconciliation. Based on the principles of the right to truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition, this roadmap describes the action to be taken by the national and Bangsamoro governments, civil society and other actors to address human rights violations and the historical grievances of the Moro people, such as land dispossession. One of the main

objectives of this roadmap is the creation in the Philippine Parliament of the National Commission on Transitional Justice and Reconciliation for Bangsamoro.

Gender, peace and security

In October, around 600 people, including representatives of the Philippine government, civil society, international organisations and ASEAN, participated in the Philippine Conference on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), organised by the government and the Philippine Commission on Women, with the support of UNDP and UN Women. At the conference, the government guaranteed that the Women, Peace and Security agenda would remain one of ASEAN's top priorities whilst the Philippines holds its presidency in 2026, recognised the fundamental role of Filipino women in resolving armed conflicts and local disputes and announced the strengthening of the Philippine WPS Centre of Excellence, the first in the country and second in Southeast Asia. A side event was also held during the conference in which the chairperson of the Bangsamoro Women's Commission outlined the BARMM government's policies for localising the global Women, Peace and Security agenda through its Regional Action Plan and reiterated its commitment to inclusive peacebuilding and gender-responsive governance.

Philippines (MNLF)	
Negotiating actors	Government, MNLF (factions led by Nur Misuari and Muslimin Sema)
Third parties	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
Relevant agreements	1996 Final Peace Agreement

Summary:

After five years of high intensity armed hostilities between the Government and the MNLF, both parties signed a peace agreement in 1976 in Tripoli under the auspices of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which, shortly before, had recognized the MNLF as the legitimate representative of the Moro people. However, the unilateral implementation of this agreement by the dictatorial regime of Ferdinand Marcos caused the armed conflict to re-ignite. After the fall of Marcos and the recovery of democracy in 1986, peace negotiations resumed and in 1996 a new peace agreement was reached for the full implementation of the 1976 Tripoli agreement. Nevertheless, both the MNLF and the OIC considered there were substantial elements of the new peace agreement that had not been implemented, so since the year 2007 a tripartite process to revise the peace agreement started. Despite the advances achieved with that process (the so-called '42 points of consensus'), the attack launched by the MNLF on the town of Zamboanga in September 2013, the search and arrest warrant against the founder of the MNLF, Nur Misuari, the criticism by the MNLF of the peace agreement signed by the Government and the MILF in March 2014 and the differing interpretations between the Government and the MNLF on the conclusion or not of the revision of the agreement led the peace negotiations to a standstill at the end of 2013.

With Rodrigo Duterte arriving in power in mid 2016, the conversations resumed with Nur Misuari, who was granted a temporary judicial permit for this purpose. Nevertheless, the majority faction of the MNLF decided to include the main demands of the MNLF in the peace process with the MILF, which led to three of its representatives being included into the Bangsamoro Transition Commission, in charge of drafting the Bangsamoro Basic Law (a new political entity foreseen in the 2014 peace agreement with the MILF and which should replace the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao).

Notable progress was made in the negotiations between the Philippine government and the MNLF in 2025, with frequent meetings between the negotiating panels of both parties, greater unity of action among the different MNLF factions, intensified involvement shown by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in supporting the process and the approval of a roadmap for 2026-2028 concerning the main object of the peace negotiations, the MNLF Transformation Programme. Officially launched in 2023, this programme aims to achieve the full reintegration and socio-economic support of thousands of former MNLF combatants and their families and communities. Of the 7,000 former combatants that the programme aims to cover, by mid-2025 it was estimated that the profiling of approximately 2,500 had been processed. Under the 1996 peace agreement, around 5,750 MNLF combatants should have been integrated into the Philippine Armed Forces and another 250 into auxiliary units. The agreement also provided for the possible integration of the maximum number of remaining MNLF forces into the Special Regional Security Force. The MNLF Transformation Programme runs in parallel to the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process for around 40,000 MILF combatants, as provided for in the 2014 peace agreement between Manila and the armed organisation.

Throughout several meetings during the year between the Philippine government and MNLF Management Committees and Peace Implementation Committees, a roadmap was agreed for the MNLF Transformation Programme for the next two years, including four main dimensions: security (validation and verification of combatants, as well as documentation and monitoring of their firearms); socio-economic (financial assistance, health insurance, university scholarships, employment training and civil registration assistance); confidence-building (peace education and the government's amnesty programme); and reconciliation (psychosocial support for communities affected by decades of conflict). Only 646 of the 16,000 applications received by the National Amnesty Commission by early 2026 had been submitted by MNLF members. Although the period for MNLF members to submit their applications expired on 4 March 2026, President Marcos extended the period by two years, until 2028. The roadmap for the MNLF Transformation Programme agreed by both parties until 2028 is not solely focused on individual former MNLF

combatants, but it also has a community and 'second generation' dimension. For example, the plan includes educational scholarships for more than 6,000 children of former combatants for the 2025-2026 school year. At the community level, in 2025, 158 projects were implemented in 55 MNLF communities, including the construction of rural roads and bridges, drinking water systems and electrification.

On a more political note, there was greater unity of action between the MNLF factions led by Muslimin Sema and Nur Misuari. Although both factions formally maintain separate negotiating and dialogue structures, in 2024 they agreed to jointly manage the implementation of the outstanding points of the 1996 peace agreement and the Tripartite Review Process between the Philippine government, the MNLF and the OIC (2007-2016), leading to the '42 consensus points' that have guided the negotiations between Manila and the MNLF in recent years. Furthermore, the OIC was more proactive in its support for the negotiating process in 2015. During the 51st Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers in Istanbul in June, the organisation issued a resolution reaffirming its full support for the implementation of the 1996 peace agreement and urging the MNLF and the MILF to settle their differences to ensure the success of Bangsamoro autonomy. Also in 2025, several meetings were held between the Philippine government, the MNLF and the OIC to activate the Tripartite Implementation Monitoring Committee, which is responsible for overseeing the outstanding points of the peace agreement, and the Bangsamoro Development Assistance Fund, which aims to finance socio-economic projects in MNLF communities.

Gender, peace and security

In April, women leaders from the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and representatives of the national government of the Philippines attended the Bangsamoro Women Leaders' Forum, an event organised by UN Women and the Bangsamoro Women's Commission with the aim of advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The chairperson of the Bangsamoro Women's Commission, former MNLF leader Hadja Bainon Karon, highlighted the progress made by the Bangsamoro Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, especially with regard to the Bangsamoro Gender and Development Code (BGAD), which she described as a crucial step towards institutionalising gender-responsive governance to ensure the protection and empowerment of all women and girls in Bangsamoro. The draft law, which underwent public consultations in 2024 and 2025, is based on Islamic principles and national laws and covers women's rights in education, healthcare, employment and protection from gender-based violence.

Philippines (NDF)	
Negotiating actors	Government, NDF (umbrella organisation of various communist organisations, including the Communist Party of the Philippines, which is the political wing of the NPA)
Third parties	Norway
Relevant agreements	The Hague Joint Declaration (1992), Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (1995), Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (1998)

Summary:

Negotiations between the Government and the NDF began in 1986, after the fall of Ferdinand Marcos' dictatorship. Since then, many rounds of negotiations have taken place, but agreement has only been reached on one of the four items listed in the substantive negotiation agenda of The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992, namely human rights and international humanitarian law (an agreement was signed in 1998). No agreement has been reached on the other three items: socio-economic reforms; political and constitutional reforms; and cessation of hostilities and disposition of armed forces. Since 2004, the Government of Norway has been acting as a facilitator between the Government and the NDF, the political organisation that represents the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing (the NPA) in the peace talks. In addition to the significant differences that exist between the Government and the NDF with regard to which socio-economic and political model is best for the Philippines, one of the issues that has generated the greatest controversy between the parties in recent years is that of the security and immunity guarantees for the NDF members involved in the peace negotiations.

In 2025, the negotiating process between the Philippine government and the NDF remained stalled, with no public reports of formal meetings or contacts between the parties. On several occasions, Manila stated that, in compliance with the 2018 executive order institutionalising the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ECLAC), it continued to prioritise conducting counterinsurgency operations against the NPA, offering incentives for the surrender, amnesty and subsequent reintegration of combatants and promoting Local Peace Engagements, which consist of local and community-level dialogue with NPA combatants and cadres of the Communist Party of the Philippines. During his State of the Nation address in July, President Ferdinand Marcos declared that all guerrilla groups in the country had been dismantled, adding that the NPA's 89 fronts had been taken apart or weakened and that the NPA had only around 780 active members, far from the 25,000 it had in the 1980s. Moreover, these fewer members were dispersed in remote areas with no capacity for centralised planning or territorial control. Along the same lines, in early January 2026, the Philippine Armed Forces declared that it had neutralised 2,018 NPA members in 2025 alone, of whom 127 were killed in military operations, 93 were arrested and 1,798 surrendered or gave themselves up.

The government attributed its 'strategic victory' over the communist movement to several factors, including the focus on Local Peace Engagements; support projects for former combatants, their families and communities; and amnesty programmes for combatants. Manila noted that the vast majority of amnesty applicants by the end of 2025 (5,755 out of 7,171) were former NPA members. In May, the government publicly unveiled the National Action Plan on Peace, Unity and Development 2025-2028, which emphasises ending the communist insurgency and accelerating amnesty for former combatants.

The NDF expressed its willingness to resume peace talks through both negotiating panels, but complained that the government lacks the political will to address the root and structural causes of the conflict and firmly opposed the Local Peace Engagement approach, arguing that it is a counterinsurgency strategy that does not seek to resolve the conflict but rather to force the surrender of its combatants and to divide and weaken the communist movement. The NDF reiterated that the only way to achieve a negotiated end to the conflict is with international facilitation, in this case provided by Norway, in accordance with the roadmap and substantive negotiating agenda to which both parties jointly agreed in 1992 and with the agreements that the government and the NDF have signed to date.

Faced with the paralysis of the dialogue and mutual accusations between the parties, during the year some civil society organisations, such as the Council of Leaders for Peace Initiatives (CLPI) and the Philippine Ecumenical Peace Platform, staged demonstrations and pursued activities in favour of resuming the negotiations, whilst condemning the standstill since the Oslo Joint Declaration was signed in November 2023, which itself broke a previous six-year impasse. The declaration committed both parties to resolve the conflict through a dialogue facilitated by a third party that would address the social, economic, political and environmental causes of the conflict to achieve a just and lasting peace.

Gender, peace and security

Juliet de Lima is the current interim chair of the NDF negotiating panel, which includes another female negotiator, Coni Ledesma. Furthermore, Kristina Lie Revheim is Oslo's special envoy to the peace process, as it is facilitated by Norway.

Thailand (south)	
Negotiating actors	Government, BRN
Third parties	Malaysia
Relevant agreements	--

Summary:

Since 2004, the year when the armed conflict in the south of Thailand reignited, several discreet and exploratory informal conversations have taken place between the Thai government and the insurgent group. Some of these dialogue initiatives have been led by non-government organizations, by the Indonesian government or by former senior officials of the Thai State. After around one year of exploratory contacts between the Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and some insurgent groups, at the start of 2013, formal and public conversations started between the Government and the armed group BRN, facilitated by the Government of Malaysia. These negotiations were interrupted by the coup d'état in March 2014, but the military government in power since then resumed its contacts with several insurgent groups towards the second half of the year. In 2015 negotiations between the Government and MARA Patani –an organization grouping the main insurgent groups in the south of the country– were made public. Although the insurgency wanted to discuss measures that might resolve the central points of the conflict (such as recognizing the distinct identity of the Patani people or granting some level of self-government to the provinces of Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat), the main point discussed during the initial stages of the process was the establishment of several security areas to reduce the level of violence and thus determine the level of representativeness of MARA Patani and the commitment of insurgent groups (especially the BRN) with the process of dialogue.

After an impasse lasting nearly a year and a half in the negotiating process, the talks officially resumed in December. Then, for the first time since the process began in 2013, the BRN publicly revealed its political proposal to resolve the armed conflict in southern Thailand. However, the dissolution of Parliament in mid-December and the subsequent calling of new elections for early 2026 cast uncertainty over the scope and continuity of the negotiating process. During the first 10 months of the year, virtually no significant progress was made. At the beginning of the year, some expectations were revived that the negotiations would resume after the government lifted the state of emergency in one of the districts of Yala province and after Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra visited Yala and Narathiwat provinces, including an Islamic traditional school known as a *pondok*. Some analysts thought that this visit carried significant symbolic weight, since part of the conflict since the early 20th century has been linked to successive Thai governments' attempts to impose an education system to the detriment of the centrality and importance historically held by these Islamic schools. Furthermore, the visit came just weeks after the BRN issued a statement questioning the state's political will to resolve the conflict and anticipating the possibility of withdrawing from the peace process. Along the same lines, in late February, shortly after an informal meeting in Malaysia between BRN chief negotiator Ustaz Anas Abdulrahman and the Secretary-General of the National Security Council and former head of the government negotiating panel, Chatchai Bangchud, the government issued a statement that several analysts interpreted as a unilateral ceasefire declaration during Ramadan to create an atmosphere conducive to peace.

The BRN presented its proposal for a cessation of hostilities during Ramadan, which included demands for the release of some prisoners, a reduction in the number of days in the truce to 15, the appointment of a team of international experts to monitor the truce and authorisation for some local NGOs to participate in this initiative. However, faced with the government's rejection of the proposal, in early March the BRN carried out a major attack in Sungai Kolok district and stepped up its attacks. In the following months, both parties expressed their willingness to resume dialogue on several occasions, but both set conditions or expressed criticism at the same time. The BRN lamented Bangkok's lack of political will and concrete measures to resolve the conflict through dialogue, complaining that the government had not even appointed a negotiating panel. Meanwhile, Bangkok insisted on a reduction in violence by the BRN and on the need for members of the negotiating panel to have decision-making power over the group's armed operations, whilst making it clear that the independence of the Patani region was completely off the table in the negotiations.

The dialogue between both parties resumed after new Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul took office in early September as a result of the political crisis that ended with the dismissal of Paetongtarn Shinawatra. In October, the Thai government appointed a negotiating panel headed by General Somsak Rungsita and later announced the establishment of peace committees in each province. Meanwhile, the new prime minister (the seventh since 2023) visited the southern Muslim-majority provinces and expressed his willingness to resume the talks. In mid-November, at a meeting in Kuala Lumpur facilitated by the Malaysian government, which is facilitating the dialogue, the BRN and the government committed to resuming official negotiations in December.

The eighth round of official negotiations took place on 8 December, under the auspices of the Malaysian facilitator, Datuk Mohd Rabin Basir, and with the support of an international expert. During this round, the parties pledged to keep negotiating under the principles of the framework on which they had agreed (Joint Comprehensive Plan towards Peace), including the end of violence, public consultations and participation and political resolution of the conflict. One of the main new developments was the inclusion of cross-border drug trafficking on the dialogue agenda, which came at Bangkok's proposal. The government and BRN negotiating panels were headed by General Somsak Rungsita and Ustaz Anas Abdulrahman, respectively. Three days later, the BRN issued a statement via YouTube advocating for a model of self-government in legislative, administrative and judicial matters, including the application of Sharia law in matters relevant to the Muslim population of the region; legislative autonomy in fiscal, cultural and linguistic matters; and a government structure and education

system aligned with the distinctive cultural identity of the Patani people. The fact that the BRN explicitly specified its political objectives for the first time was well received by the Thai government and generated certain expectations, but just hours later the prime minister dissolved Parliament and called early elections for February 2026 amid a political crisis triggered by the loss of the government's parliamentary majority and the possibility of a no-confidence motion against him, in addition to escalating violence with Cambodia. Although the BRN did not comment on the situation, at the end of the year various analysts expressed scepticism about the future of the peace talks under such circumstances.

Gender, peace and security

Alongside the Thai government's approval of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security, UN Women and Bangkok announced the establishment of Women, Peace and Security Networks and Focal Points and Women's Empowerment Centres in Thailand's provinces bordering Malaysia. The objective of these structures and platforms is to strengthen women's leadership in governance and peacebuilding and to support coordination among female leaders, civil society organisations and local governments in implementing and monitoring the aforementioned NAP. By the end of 2025, four regional Women, Peace and Security Networks and nine Women's Empowerment Centres had been established in the country's border regions. More specifically regarding the situation in the southern Muslim-majority provinces, during the year, Pattani Governor Patimoh Sadiyamu, the first Muslim female governor in Thailand, expressed her commitment to advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda. According to some, the new NAP and the networks and focal points established in southern Thailand could lead to greater participation of women in peace negotiations between Bangkok and insurgent groups in the southern part of the country, where such participation has been almost non-existent to date.

Thailand – Cambodia	
Negotiating actors	Thailand, Cambodia
Third parties	ASEAN, US, China
Relevant agreements	--

Summary:

Attempts to resolve the border conflict between Thailand and Cambodia since the early 20th century have been pursued primarily before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), with rulings in 1962 and 2013 concerning the sovereignty of the Preah Vihear temple and its surroundings, as well as through bilateral negotiations on border demarcation as a whole, which took place from the late 1990s until 2012 and were formally resumed in 2025. In the first ruling, in 1962, the ICJ determined that the Preah Vihear temple was situated in

territory under Cambodian sovereignty and ordered Thailand to withdraw all its forces from the temple. In a further interpretative judgment in 2013, the ICJ awarded Cambodia sovereignty over all the territory surrounding the temple. Bilateral negotiations on border demarcation began in 1997 and led to the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Recognition and Demarcation of the Land Border, by which both countries agreed not to make any physical alterations in disputed border areas until the official boundaries had been fully defined by technical experts. To this end, the Joint Border Commission was established, which met regularly between 2000 and 2012. However, differing interpretations of early 20th-century maps, the high number of anti-personnel mines on both sides of the border and increased political and military tension after Cambodia entered the Preah Vihear temple into the World Heritage List in 2008 hampered negotiations between both countries. Following an escalation of violence in 2011 and Cambodia's formal complaint to the United Nations against Thailand for 'armed aggression', the UN Security Council urged both parties to exercise maximum self-restraint and formally delegated mediation to ASEAN, endorsing its facilitation efforts. Under the rotating presidency of Indonesia in 2011, ASEAN attempted to actively mediate in an armed conflict between two of its members for the first time. However, both attempts to reach common ground between Thailand and Cambodia on border demarcation and to deploy ASEAN military observers to the border ultimately failed. In the meantime, UNESCO sent special good offices missions to try to persuade both countries to decouple the border dispute from the preservation of cultural heritage. Neither ASEAN's nor UNESCO's intervention prevented clashes between Thailand and Cambodia from continuing to occur in subsequent years.

Faced with the outbreak of the most serious armed conflict on the border in decades, Cambodia and Thailand held several negotiations in 2025 with the assistance of third parties such as ASEAN, the US, Malaysia and China.

In late July, after several days of intense fighting on the border in which dozens of people were killed and hundreds of thousands more were forced to flee their homes, both parties signed the Putrajaya Agreement in Malaysia, which included an immediate and unconditional ceasefire on the border, accompanied by the creation of a 72-hour humanitarian corridor to evacuate trapped civilians, a commitment to hold military meetings to coordinate the de-escalation of the situation and the gradual reopening of closed border crossings. Furthermore, in Putrajaya, the foundations were also laid for the creation of an ASEAN Observation Team, coordinated by Malaysia and tasked with verifying compliance with the ceasefire and assisting both parties, specifically the General Border Committee (GBC) and the Regional Border Committee (RBC), in maintaining open communication channels.

Then, in late October, as part of the 47th ASEAN Summit in Malaysia, the prime ministers of Cambodia (Hun Manet) and Thailand (Anutin Charnvirakul) signed the Kuala Lumpur Peace Agreement, a declaration of 13 commitments that sought to consolidate the cessation of hostilities in July. In this agreement, both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to peace and security, repeated their promise to refrain from the threat or use

of force and pledged to seek to resolve their disputes peacefully. The agreement also stipulated the withdrawal of heavy weapons from border areas, the carrying out of joint demining operations, the restoration of diplomatic relations and the promotion of confidence-building measures such as the release of prisoners of war by Thailand. The signing ceremony for the declaration was attended by Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim and US President Donald Trump. Although this declaration was described as historic, just weeks later, on 10 November, Thailand suspended the agreement after two Thai soldiers were injured by a mine explosion while patrolling the common border.

Following the large-scale resumption of border fighting in December, ASEAN again facilitated talks between Thailand and Cambodia, which culminated in a new ceasefire agreement on 27 December as part of a special meeting of the General Border Committee (GBC). In addition to the cessation of hostilities against civilians, infrastructure and military targets on both sides of the border, both armies committed to maintaining their positions without engaging in new troop movements or reinforcements. Thailand also agreed to repatriate 18 Cambodian soldiers who had been captured during the clashes in July 2025.

Faced with persisting tension and mistrust between the parties following the signing of the truce, the Chinese government sponsored new meetings in Yunnan province, which culminated on 29 December in the signing of the Fuxian Consensus, an agreement aimed at consolidating the ceasefire, restoring communication and trust between the parties, in addition to outlining a roadmap towards lasting peace. In addition to facilitating these negotiations, China committed to providing financial support for the ASEAN observation mission, as well as for demining tasks and humanitarian assistance for people displaced by the conflict.

4.2.2. The Pacific

Papua New Guinea (Bougainville)	
Negotiating actors	Government of Papua New Guinea, government of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville
Third parties	United Nations, Jerry Mateparae
Relevant agreements	Bougainville Peace Agreement (2001)
Summary: The armed conflict between the government of Papua New Guinea and the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (1988-1998), which some sources consider to have been the deadliest in Oceania since the Second World War, ended with a cessation of hostilities in 1998 and the signing of a peace agreement in 2001 in Arawa (the largest city in Bougainville). Among other matters, the agreement provided for the establishment of the Autonomous Region of	

Bougainville (ARB), the disarmament and demobilisation of combatants and the holding of a non-binding independence referendum within a maximum period of 15 years after the election of the first ARB government, which finally took place in 2005. After several years of negotiations between the national and regional governments, in 2018 the Agreement's Joint Supervisory Body created the Post-Referendum Planning Working Group and former Irish President Bertie Ahern was elected chair of the Bougainville Referendum Commission, making him responsible for preparing the census and other logistical preparations for the referendum. After several delays, the referendum was finally held between 23 November and 7 December 2019, with a binary question in which voters could choose between greater autonomy or independence for the region.

During 2025, some progress was made in the negotiations between the government of Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Bougainville Government to determine the political status of the island of Bougainville.

The Melanesian Agreement was signed in June 2025, a kind of roadmap for the culmination of the peace process begun in the 1990s. Facilitated by the dialogue mediator, Jerry Mateparae, and supported by the United Nations, the agreement was ratified after several days of closed-door negotiations in Burnham, New Zealand, a location described by both parties as the spiritual cradle of the peace process, as it had hosted some of the negotiations that led to the signing of the 2001 Bougainville Peace Agreement. According to the Melanesian Agreement, both parties recognise the legitimacy of the results of the 2019 referendum and commit to accepting the decision on Bougainville's political status by the National Parliament of Papua New Guinea, as specified in the 2001 Bougainville Peace Agreement and the Constitution. Regardless of Parliament's final decision and Bougainville's ultimate political status, the Melanesian Agreement commits both parties to jointly explore the creation of a framework for relations based on a close, peaceful and lasting relationship. The agreement states that the legislative bodies of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville must jointly decide on the methodology for deliberation and voting within Parliament, with one of the main points of dispute hinging on whether the decision should be approved by a simple majority or a qualified two-thirds majority. In December 2025, following a meeting of the Joint Supervisory Body, the main negotiating forum between the parties, convened to begin the implementation of the Melanesian Agreement, Papua New Guinean Prime Minister James Marape announced that the session in which Parliament should decide on Bougainville's political status would take place before the end of the first half of 2026. Also in December, the National Bicameral Committee on Bougainville concluded the national consultation process on the content of the negotiations with Mateparae's assistance. This was one of the key requirements for the process to move forward.

Alongside the signing and implementation of the Melanesian Agreement, another important development for the future prospects of the peace process in 2025 was the sweeping victory of Bougainville President Ishmael Toroama in the elections held in September. According to several media outlets, his victory legitimises the objectives and strategy of the Bougainville government in the negotiations. A former BRA combatant, Toroama has maintained that independence means separation from Papua New Guinea and the establishment of a new state recognised by the United Nations since the 2019 referendum, ruling out any other possibilities such as increased levels of self-government or the establishment of a free association model. Toroama has stated on several occasions that he intends to declare Bougainville's independence on 1 September 2027, and some close to him have speculated about the possibility of a unilateral declaration of independence if Parliament does not ratify the island's secession. Given this prospect, in 2025 the Autonomous Bougainville Government continued to prepare for the transition to full sovereignty, including the formation of a Bougainville Constituent Assembly after several years of a consultative and participatory process and the promotion of a Nation-Building Strategy until 2052.

Finally, the peace process is receiving notable International support. In September, UN Secretary-General António Guterres travelled to Papua New Guinea and met with Marape and Toroama, praising the Bougainville dialogue process as a model for peace negotiations for other countries. Guterres was the first UN Secretary-General to travel to Papua New Guinea. He emphasised the United Nations' continued support since the end of the armed conflict, including for the disarmament and demobilisation of combatants, the establishment of an autonomous government in Bougainville, the organisation and supervision of the self-determination referendum, the facilitation of dialogue between both governments since 2019 and support for Mateparae's mediation work, whilst also guaranteeing continued support for the dialogue process. Along the same lines, in 2025 the two main intergovernmental

organisations in the Pacific, the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), showed greater willingness to become involved in resolving the Bougainville conflict than in the past, when they had been reluctant to interfere in the internal affairs of their member states. In April, PIF Secretary-General Baron Waqa declared that the organisation would address conflict resolution if formally requested by official bodies in Bougainville. Around the same time, MSG Director-General Ilan Kiloe also said he was willing to provide assistance to Bougainville and noted that the reason that the MSG was initially established was to promote the collective interests of Melanesian countries and to support them in their goal of becoming independent nations.

Gender, peace and security

In May, the first Bougainville Women, Peace and Security Summit was held in the town of Arawa. Involving more than 200 women, it was aimed at promoting women's leadership and advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda in Bougainville. Some of the topics addressed at the summit were gender-based violence, conflict resolution and the role that women have played in ending the conflict in 1997, in negotiating the 2001 Bougainville Peace Agreement, in the subsequent maintenance and consolidation of peace in the region and in the negotiations on Bougainville's political status that began after the self-determination referendum was held in 2019. During the summit, several women's organisations presented a document demanding that the future constitution of Bougainville guarantee 50% representation of women at all levels of decision-making, surpassing the current situation, in which three seats (out of a total of 40) are reserved for women. The summit was organised by the government of Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Bougainville Government, the Bougainville National Council of Women, the Bougainville Women's Federation (BWF) and other women's civil society groups, with the support of UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA, OHCHR and the Peacebuilding Fund.

5. Peace negotiations in Europe

- In 2025, seven of the 53 peace processes in the world (13%) took place in Europe.
- In 2025, negotiations between Russia and Ukraine were resumed in different formats and with US government mediation, though they faced multiple obstacles.
- Armenia and Azerbaijan reached a peace and normalisation of relations agreement, though it had not yet been signed and was subject to conditions demanded by Baku at the end of the year.
- The peace process in Cyprus gained some momentum in 2025 through informal meetings and some confidence-building measures, but formal negotiations were not resumed.
- The peace process in Türkiye yielded some significant military-related results, such as the PKK's decision to dissolve and end its armed struggle.

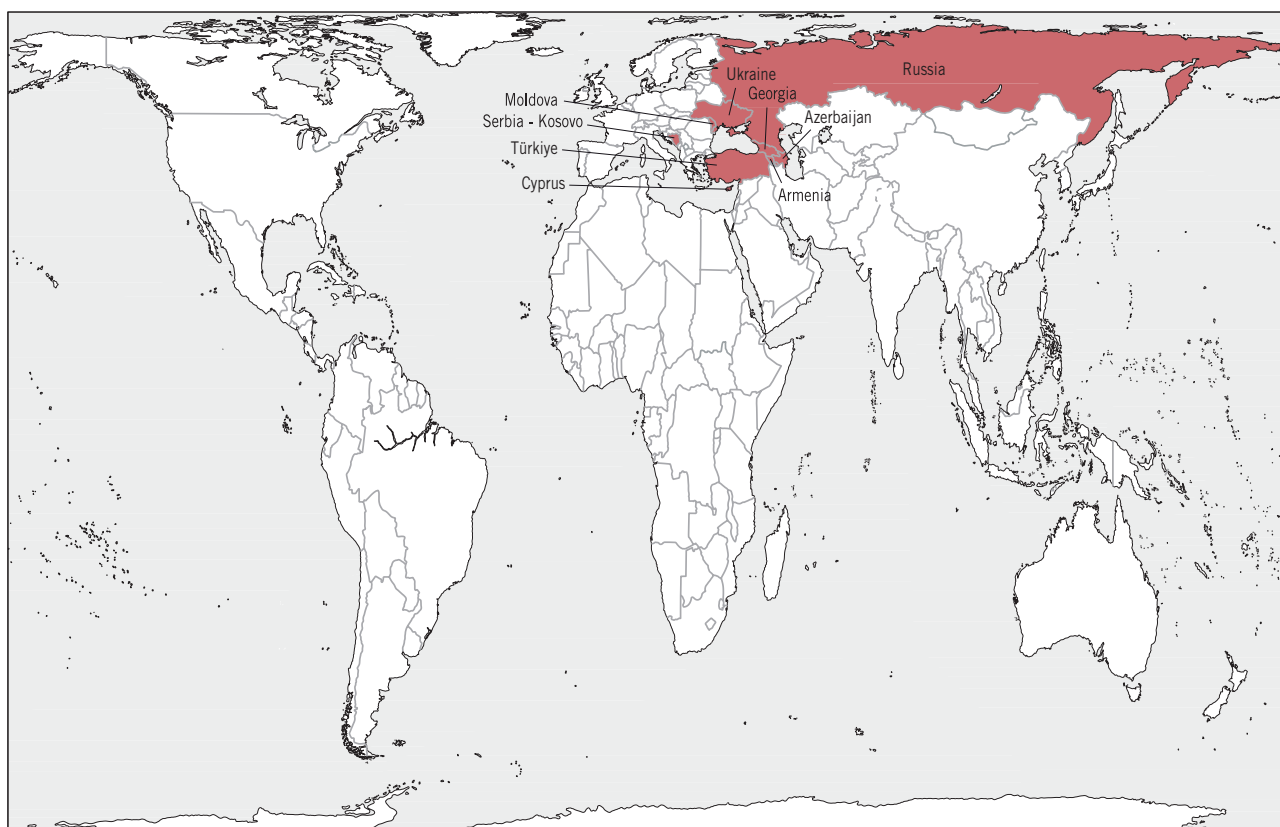
This chapter provides an analysis of the main peace processes and negotiations in Europe in 2025. Firstly, the main characteristics and general trends on the dialogue processes in the region are presented, followed by the analysis on the evolution of each specific context during the year, including in relation to the gender, peace and security agenda. In addition, at the beginning of the chapter there is a map identifying the countries in Europe that hosted peace negotiations during 2025.

Table 5.1. Summary of the peace processes and negotiations in Europe in 2025

Peace processes and negotiations	Negotiating actors	Third parties
Armenia – Azerbaijan ¹	Armenia, Azerbaijan	USA, EU ²
Cyprus	Republic of Cyprus, self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus	UN, EU, guarantor countries (Türkiye, Greece and United Kingdom)
Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia)	Government of Georgia, representatives of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, government of Russia ³	OSCE, EU, UN, USA, Russia ⁴
Moldova (Transdniestria)	Moldova, self-proclaimed Republic of Transdniestria	OSCE, Ukraine, Russia, USA, EU ⁵
Russia – Ukraine	Russia, Ukraine	USA, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, ICRC, UN, IAEA, Vatican City, Qatar, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Switzerland ⁶
Serbia – Kosovo	Serbia, Kosovo	EU, UN, USA, Germany, France, United Kingdom, Italy
Türkiye (PKK)	Government, PKK, political parties of Türkiye	Political representatives from the Kurdistan Region of Iraq ⁷

1. Starting with the 2024 edition, this yearbook stopped using the designation “Armenia – Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)” to refer to the negotiating process between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan's military offensive in 2023 resulted in the military takeover of Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijan gained full control over the region and the self-proclaimed administration of Nagorno-Karabakh ceased to exist in January 2024. In 2023, Armenia agreed to recognise the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. All this led to the final exclusion of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue from the negotiations between both countries.
2. The negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2025 were conducted without third-party mediation at some levels/areas, whilst they received external support in others, including US mediation support in 2025.
3. 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.
4. Ibid.
5. Since 2023 the 5+2 conference format has remained inactive. In the 5+2 conference Moldova and Transdniestria were negotiators, the OSCE was a mediator, Ukraine and Russia were mediators-guarantors, and the US and the EU were observers. The OSCE-facilitated format between chief negotiators remained active. At least for a time, it was also attended by participants of the 5+2 format.
6. This table includes actors playing roles of mediation/facilitation and support in any of the areas of dialogue active between Russia and Ukraine. They are included regardless of the frequency or scope of their involvement. In addition to the actors included in this table, this chapter analyses and includes other actors that promoted dialogue during the year and are not considered third parties in this yearbook.
7. The dialogue process in Türkiye does not officially have third parties, but political representatives from the Iraqi Kurdistan Region have played roles in support of the process.

Map 5.1. Peace negotiations in Europe in 2025



■ Countries with peace processes and negotiations in Europe in 2025

5.1 Negotiations in 2025: regional trends

This chapter analyses seven peace processes that took place in Europe in 2025 and that account for 13% of all peace processes worldwide in the last year. Unlike 2024, the year was marked by the resumption of political-military negotiations between Russia and Ukraine, with US mediation. These talks complemented the dialogue on humanitarian issues, although both continued to face significant obstacles and no ceasefire was achieved. Furthermore, the peace process launched in 2024 between the government of Türkiye and the Kurdish armed group PKK developed in 2025 into a more consolidated negotiating process, yielding significant military-related results, including the announcement of the group's dissolution, though the future trajectory and scope of the process remained unclear. Alongside these two negotiating processes in Europe linked to active armed conflicts, the other five were related to situations of prolonged socio-political crises of varying intensity in the South Caucasus (Armenia–Azerbaijan and Georgia in relation to Abkhazia and South Ossetia), Eastern Europe (Moldova in relation to Transdniestria) and Southern Europe (Serbia–Kosovo and Cyprus).

*Peace processes
in Europe in 2025
accounted for 13% of
all cases worldwide*

In all the processes analysed, at least one of the **negotiating actors** was the government of a country involved in the conflict. In addition to involving states, five of the seven negotiating processes also involved self-proclaimed states (Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Transdniestria, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and Kosovo) whilst only Kosovo has received broad international recognition.⁸ Two of the peace processes remained primarily interstate in nature (Armenia–Azerbaijan and Russia–Ukraine), whilst the process in Türkiye (PKK) continued to be the only one involving an active armed insurgency, although the armed group announced the end of armed struggle and its dissolution in 2025. The weight of regional and international factors remained evident in many negotiating processes, as did the influence of broader geopolitical dynamics, especially the confrontation between Russia and the United States, NATO and the European Union, which continued to project itself across several scenarios, particularly Moldova, Georgia and the Russia–Ukraine conflict itself.

With regard to **third parties**, all the processes in the region involved external parties to varying degrees in roles supporting the dialogue, including mediation and facilitation, including Türkiye (PKK), which included

8. Around 100 countries have recognised Kosovo as an independent state. In 2010, the International Court of Justice issued an advisory opinion establishing that Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence did not violate international law.

indirect forms of regional support. The authorities of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq performed some supportive roles in Türkiye's peace process, in coordination with the Turkish government.

There was a trend towards greater variety in the types of third parties and a reduction in the space and resources of intergovernmental bodies in 2025. On the one hand, the EU, the OSCE and the UN continued to play leading roles in some peace processes. This was the case with the EU in the Serbia–Kosovo process and as co-facilitator in what are known as the Geneva International Discussions (GID), which involve Georgia, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Russia, along with its role as a stakeholder in the Cypriot dialogue. The OSCE continued to be the mediating actor in the Moldova–Transdniestria negotiating process and a co-facilitator in the GID. The UN continued to provide good offices in the Cyprus dialogue process, co-facilitated the GID and provided secondary support to the EU-facilitated Serbia–Kosovo process through the functions of the UNMIK mission. However, 2025 was the year in which Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to jointly ask the OSCE to dissolve the OSCE Minsk Process and its associated structures, a mediation architecture whose elimination Azerbaijan had been demanding. Furthermore, as part of the UN80 Initiative, a UN reform process leading to the reorganisation, merger and reduction of bodies and positions amid funding constraints, plans were made to shrink the Office of the United Nations Representative for the Geneva International Discussions (UNRGID).

In contrast, **the role of states as third parties increased in Europe in 2025.** The role of the US stood out. Under the administration of Donald Trump, Washington became involved in the Armenia–Azerbaijan process, which continued to have a relevant direct bilateral negotiating dynamic that it supported, as well as in the Russia–Ukraine peace process. In both cases, the US intervened by promoting its own state and private corporate interests, reflected in advantageous bilateral economic and commercial agreements reached with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Ukraine during the year. The US approach in the Russia–Ukraine negotiations included fluctuations in approaches and priorities and pressure directed mostly towards Ukraine. Overall, its involvement in these processes followed a transactional approach, in line with the emerging concept of 'transactional peacemaking', with the prioritisation of

bilateral, interest-based approaches –rather than values and inclusion– and with a focus on short-term deals.⁹ Other states were also involved in supporting dialogue in the Russia–Ukraine negotiations, such as Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Switzerland.

All the processes in Europe involved external parties to varying degrees in roles supporting the dialogue, including mediation and facilitation

The **negotiating agendas** remained diverse, based on the circumstances and characteristics of each process and the demands of the different actors involved in the conflict. The issues on the negotiating agendas were diverse and the details on the various elements and status of discussions of each round were not always public. In both processes linked to active armed conflicts, Türkiye (PKK) and Russia–

Ukraine, the issue of **ceasefires and military-related topics** played a predominant role in 2025. In Türkiye, the PKK declared a unilateral ceasefire in March. In May, it announced the dissolution of its organisational structure and the end of armed struggle, and in the second half of the year it made symbolic disarmament gestures and withdrew its forces in Türkiye to northern Iraq. The government did not reciprocate with a formal ceasefire, but it did offer some military de-escalation, whilst demanding the dissolution of all armed groups linked to the PKK at the same time, including in Iraq and Syria. Some analysts noted that both actors kept up militarisation in northern Iraq.¹⁰ In any case, the peace process between the government and the PKK unfolded without transparency regarding the possible terms of negotiation on military issues. In the Russia–Ukraine process, the parties debated a potential ceasefire promoted by the US, though it was unsuccessful. In March, the US, Russia and Ukraine announced ceasefire agreements on energy infrastructure and safe navigation in the Black Sea, but these also failed. Subsequent attempts to negotiate a ceasefire ran aground and the US moved towards the Russian position of ruling out any need for a ceasefire in the negotiations. As part of the political and military negotiations resumed in 2025, Russia and Ukraine addressed issues related to the terms for an agreement to end the armed conflict, including **military, political and territorial issues**, in direct and indirect formats with US mediation.

Furthermore, the negotiating process between Georgia, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Russia continued for another year, addressing issues such as the non-use of force, though the parties could not come to an agreement. This was also an issue introduced in 2024

9. Hellmüller, Sara and Salaymeh, Bilal (2025). 'Transactional peacemaking: Warmakers as peacemakers in the political marketplace of peace processes'. In *Contemporary Security Policy*, 46(2), pp. 312–342. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2024.2448908>.

10. See the summary on Türkiye (PKK) in chapter 1 (Armed conflicts) in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2026! Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2026.

in the Moldovan peace process, when Transdniestria called for reaching a written commitment on peaceful means of conflict resolution. No concrete results were achieved in this area in 2025. Moldova emphasised that any parameters for a settlement of the conflict can only be based on respect for Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity. As in previous years, Moldova and Transdniestria addressed a wide array of issues in meetings facilitated by the OSCE, including the energy crisis.

In other peace processes, the agendas were also varied. Armenia and Azerbaijan, and Serbia and Kosovo, negotiated different issues framed within processes seeking the **normalisation of relations**. From that perspective, Baku and Yerevan reached a peace agreement still pending ratification that included elements such as the recognition and respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity, the abstention from the use of force against territorial integrity and political independence, non-interference in internal affairs, the withdrawal of proceedings initiated in the judicial sphere and others. Supported by US mediation, they also addressed issues of rail, road, pipeline and gas pipeline connections. Serbia and Kosovo continued to tackle disagreements relating to the normalisation of relations. In the Cypriot process, the negotiations focused on the discussion of confidence-building measures in 2025. Several negotiating processes dealt with **humanitarian issues**. Among other cases, Russia and Ukraine held negotiations and reached some agreements on the exchange of prisoners and the repatriation of the deceased and, to a lesser extent, on the return of minors who had been forcibly deported to Russia or areas under occupation.

No uniform **trend** was observed in the negotiations. Ambivalent progress was made in Armenia-Azerbaijan and Türkiye and there was some renewed momentum in Cyprus. On a positive note, the agreement reached between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which is still pending ratification, stood out as a historic step towards the normalisation of relations after decades of conflict. Nevertheless, the agreement included problematic aspects from a human rights and transitional justice perspective, such as the withdrawal and removal of proceedings initiated in the judicial sphere, and omitted issues related to the impacts of the dispute on populations. The peace process in Türkiye (PKK) made progress in the military sphere, with the announcement of a ceasefire and dissolution of the PKK, the withdrawal of guerrillas from Türkiye to northern Iraq and symbolic disarmament gestures, indicating the start of a different phase in the conflict. However, the process was advancing slowly, heavily influenced by geopolitical dynamics in the region, with little transparency and with questions over the scope that the process will have in subsequent phases and whether it will include action related to the root causes of the conflict. At

the same time, the Cyprus case experienced some momentum, with the reactivation of informal contacts and the adoption of confidence-building measures. These helped to create a more constructive dynamic, although the process continued to encounter obstacles to the resumption of negotiations at the highest political level. In the case of Russia-Ukraine, the resumption of political-military negotiations in various formats was a significant new development compared to previous years, but the process advanced with great difficulties, shaped by antagonistic positions, demands from Russia considered maximalist and the persistence of armed confrontation, which reduced the prospects for a short-term agreement.

Other peace processes continued to be characterised by impasse or the lack of any substantial progress. The Serbia-Kosovo peace process remained largely deadlocked due to the persistence of structural disagreements, the lack of implementation of previous agreements and mounting tension, especially in northern Kosovo, which eroded trust between the parties. The processes in Georgia and Moldova also continued without making significant progress, framed in contexts of high political and geopolitical complexity, where the dynamics of confrontation between international actors and internal disputes limited the possibilities for progress.

The peace processes continued to be characterised by a lack of formal mechanisms for civil society **participation and inclusiveness**. Even so, civil society organisations continued to demand avenues for participation. Third countries took various approaches to their participation.

The UN was actively involved in consultations with civil society actors, as in Cyprus. OSCE representatives held meetings with civil society actors, although no information emerged on the degree of follow-up to the consultations and their impact. In contrast, the United States' mediation approaches focused on elites. In the Türkiye process, there were some opportunities for civil society involvement through hearings organised by the parliamentary peace process commission. Furthermore, in the Cypriot process, the possibility of creating a civil society advisory body was discussed.

Finally, with regard to the **gender perspective**, most processes continued to show significant shortcomings in women's participation and in the integration of this perspective into formal negotiating agendas. Only the negotiating process in Cyprus had a gender-specific mechanism in the formal negotiating process, the Technical Committee on Gender Equality. Nevertheless, this committee continued to face obstacles to the implementation of its action plan. In the peace processes in Europe the delegations of the parties to the conflict continued to have predominantly male leadership. In contrast, intergovernmental bodies did include various

Negotiating processes in Europe did not follow any uniform trend and made ambivalent progress in some cases, such as Armenia-Azerbaijan and Türkiye, and suffering impasse and failure in others

women in mediation or facilitation positions in different processes in the region. The negotiating agendas did not include aspects related to the gender impacts of the disputes, nor to the human rights of women and the LGBTIQ+ population. Women's organisations mobilised in different contexts to demand greater participation and to present demands on specific issues. Among many other cases, women from Armenia expressed concern about the lack of mechanisms for female participation in the peace process with Azerbaijan and the absence of transitional justice mechanisms, warning how Article 15 of the March agreement requires the parties to renounce the use of international justice mechanisms.¹¹ At the same time, women's organisations from diverse backgrounds participated in women's dialogue initiatives. For instance, Cypriot women's civil society organisations participated in actions aimed at strengthening alliances amongst themselves. There were also some closed-door meetings between Kurdish and Turkish politicians from different parties in Türkiye, promoted by the women's wing of the pro-Kurdish DEM party, as part of the negotiating process in the country. Furthermore, the DEM Women's Assembly organised meetings during the year in different parts of the country with different groups of women, including female journalists, women from different religious groups and women's organisations. The purpose was to broaden the spread of information and expand discussions on the negotiating process.

Finally, although they fall outside the scope of this yearbook as they are not regarded as peace processes, other conflict situations of various kinds across the continent were the scene of political dialogue. Fresh progress was made in the process to normalise relations between **Türkiye and Armenia** in 2025. Originally launched in 2022, it was driven by the rapprochement between Armenia and Azerbaijan and the impetus for regional connectivity with US support.¹² New meetings took place between the special representatives of Türkiye and Armenia, in addition to a historic visit by Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan to Türkiye, where he met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The parties addressed issues such as the possible future reopening of borders, the reactivation of railway connections and air connectivity. Nevertheless, Türkiye reiterated that it would not open its land border with Armenia until a final peace agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan was signed. In relation to **Türkiye-Greece**, dynamics of dialogue and episodes of tension continued to coexist in 2025. Throughout the year, political and technical contacts were maintained as part of the structured process initiated in 2023, aimed at reducing the risks of escalation

Negotiations in Europe continued to be characterised by the absence of formal mechanisms for civil society participation

and improving bilateral communication mechanisms. In relation to the political conflict in **Catalonia**, the Catalan independence party Junts, which was the governing Catalan party during the independence referendum and is currently in opposition, announced that it was breaking off its relations with the PSOE in October. The PSOE is the main party leading the coalition government in Spain, and the announcement came following a year of tension and criticism levelled by Junts against the PSOE for non-compliance with the November 2023 agreements. Before Junts ended its relations with the PSOE, both parties had held periodic meetings in Switzerland since late 2023 as part of the late-2023 agreement on a dialogue table and a coordination and verification mechanism through Salvadoran diplomat Francisco Galindo Vélez. According to media reports in 2023, this mechanism was linked to the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, though they were not officially confirmed.¹³ Media outlets reported that the rupture of relations with the PSOE announced by Junts implied the end of negotiations both in Switzerland and in the Congress of Deputies. According to the media, nineteen meetings had been held in Switzerland between December 2023 and the breaking off of relations in 2025.

There was no detailed public information on the agenda or commitments of the 2025 meetings in Switzerland. In February 2025, Junts had withdrawn the processing of a motion of no confidence against Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez as a gesture of confidence towards Salvadoran diplomat Francisco Galindo. During the year, Junts focused on issues such as the lack of progress in making Catalan an official language in the EU, the failure to apply the amnesty law to its leader, Carles Puigdemont, and its demands for the delegation of powers in immigration matters.

Furthermore, talks continued between the PSOE and the ERC, a Catalan party that was a coalition partner in the Catalan government during the Catalonia referendum and currently in opposition. In 2024, both parties had temporarily suspended meetings involving an international verifier due to upcoming Basque, Catalan and European elections. Both parties maintained dialogue and negotiations during the year, including on issues that are part of the investiture agreement they reached following the 2023 state parliamentary elections, such as the transfer of the Rodalies commuter rail service, the financing system for Catalonia and the state's cancellation of a portion of Catalonia's debt. Some of these issues involved bilateral negotiations and negotiations with the Catalan government, but others were also addressed as measures for the autonomous communities as a whole. At the end of the year, the

11. See the summary on Armenia-Azerbaijan in this chapter.

12. See the summary on Armenia-Azerbaijan in this chapter.

13. Europa Press, "La fundación Henry Dunant, mediador en el desarme de ETA, será el verificador del PSOE y Junts en Ginebra", *EP*, 30 November 2023.

PSOE and the ERC were finalising the agreement on the new regional financing model. At the same time, dialogue and negotiations went on with the ERC expressing a certain degree of tension and discontent. In early January 2026, Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez and the leader of ERC, Oriol Junqueras, held a meeting at the presidency headquarters, at the ERC's request, in which they addressed the continuity of the legislature and the 2023 agreements, among other issues. It emerged that they had held two private meetings prior to that encounter. The January meeting was the first public meeting since Junqueras was released from prison in 2021 following a partial pardon of the ERC leader and other former ministers that year.

Furthermore, in 2025 the Spanish Constitutional Court upheld the amnesty law, approved in 2024 by the Congress of Deputies, with 177 votes in favour and 172 against. The court's ruling, with six votes in favour and four against, establishes that the amnesty law is consistent with the Constitution, is not arbitrary and responds to a legitimate, explicit and reasonable purpose. The ruling endorses the bulk of the law and rejects the appeal of unconstitutionality filed by the People's Party (PP) but partially upholds three precepts considered minor. During 2025, the Constitutional Court rejected other appeals filed against the law in 2024.

5.2 Case study analysis

Eastern Europe

Moldova (Transdniestria)	
Negotiating actors	Moldova, self-proclaimed Republic of Transdniestria
Third parties	OSCE, Ukraine, Russia, USA, EU ¹⁴
Relevant agreements	Agreement on the Principles for a Peaceful Settlement of the Armed Conflict in the Dniester Region of the Republic of Moldova (1992), Memorandum on the Bases for Normalization of Relations between the Republic of Moldova and Transdniestria (The Moscow Agreement) (1997)
Summary: Transdniestria is a 4,000 km ² enclave with half a million inhabitants that are mostly Russian-speaking. Legally under	

Moldovan sovereignty, but with de facto independence, since the 1990s it has been the stage for an unresolved dispute regarding its status. The conflict surfaced during the final stages of the breakup of the USSR, when fears increased in Transdniestria over a possible unification between the independent Moldova and Romania, which have both historical and cultural links. Transdniestria rejected Moldovan sovereignty and declared itself independent. This sparked an escalation in the number of incidents, which eventually became an armed conflict in 1992. A ceasefire agreement that same year brought the war to an end and gave way to a peace process under international mediation. One of the main issues is the status of the territory. Moldova defends its territorial integrity but is willing to accept a special status for the entity, while Transdniestria has fluctuated between proposals for a confederalist model that would give the area broad powers and demands full independence. Other points of friction in the negotiations include cultural and socio-economic issues and Russian military presence in Transdniestria. Since the beginning of the dispute there have been several proposals, partial agreements, commitments and confidence-building measures in the framework of the peace process, as well as important obstacles and periods of stagnation. Geostrategic international disputes also hover over this unresolved conflict, which has deteriorated due to the Russian invasion and war in Ukraine.

In 2025, the negotiating process remained active at the level of chief negotiators and joint working groups, but no meetings were held between the political leaders. It continued to face difficulties, influenced by a regional context of geopolitical disputes. **A single trilateral meeting was held between the OSCE and the chief negotiators** in April, facilitated by the head of the OSCE mission in Moldova, Kelly Keiderling. The new special representative of the OSCE Chairpersonship, Thomas Lenk, also attended the meeting, in which differences and obstacles were noted. Regarding the commitment for a document on peaceful means of conflict resolution, introduced as a new development by Transdniestria in 2024, the Moldovan representative stated that the parameters for a settlement of the conflict can only be based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova. Furthermore, the Transnistrian delegation accused Moldova of blocking the resumption of the 5+2 negotiating format.¹⁵ Moldova raised other issues relating to the human rights situation in Transdniestria and the infrastructure of unauthorised posts within the 'security zone', amongst others.¹⁶ The OSCE special representative praised how the parties had interacted in the preceding months, including in relation to the energy crisis, and expressed confidence that this would pave the way for more stable dialogue between the chief negotiators, as well as the work of the joint

14. In 2023, the 5+2 conference format remained inactive, in which the OSCE was a mediator, Ukraine and Russia were mediators-guarantors, and the US and the EU were observers. The OSCE-facilitated 1+1 format was active and was also attended by participants in the 5+2 format.

15. See the previous footnote.

16. See further topics addressed in the Government of Moldova, "Political and OSCE representatives discussed in Bender the most current topics that concern both banks of the Nistru River", 8 April 2025.

working groups. On a positive note, the parties agreed that the working groups would activate meetings in the short term. Prior to the April trilateral meeting, there were separate meetings between OSCE representatives and each of the parties, including visits to Moldova by the OSCE Chairperson, Finnish Foreign Minister Elina Valtonen, in January, and by the new OSCE special representative in February.

During the year, **the Moldovan government reaffirmed its refusal to resume the 5+2 negotiating format whilst the Russian invasion of Ukraine continues.** The Moldovan authorities stated that they were open to restarting dialogue between senior political leaders (1+1), either in person or virtually, provided that the meeting venues alternated and included the Moldovan capital, Chisinau, on the grounds that the meetings had taken place in Bender and Tiraspol in 2024 and 2025. Since 2023, the Transnistrian authorities have alleged a lack of guarantees, restrictions and pressure arising from the reform of Moldova's criminal code introduced that year, which provides for sanctions in cases of financing and incitement of separatism and conspiracy against Moldova. **No other joint meetings were held between the chief negotiators, nor were any meetings held between the political leaders.** The only meetings held were between OSCE representatives and each of the conflicting parties separately, with no concrete agreements reached. In July, the head of the OSCE mission, Kelly Keiderling, completed her mandate, and in the second half of the year the interim head of mission, Izabela Sylwia, assumed the main interlocutor role in these meetings. Some meetings of joint working groups were held, such as on education and economic affairs, for example.

The negotiating process was influenced by the general context of parliamentary elections in Moldova during the year, marked by divisions between pro-EU positions and approaches favouring rapprochement with Russia, within a broad electoral cycle (previous presidential elections in 2024 and a referendum that year on including EU integration as a strategic objective in the Constitution). The ruling Party of Action and Solidarity (PAS) won the elections, carrying 55 out of 101 seats (50.1% of the vote), compared to the Patriotic Bloc –considered close to Russia– which obtained 24.2% in total, but was predominant in Transnistria and the autonomous region of Gagauzia. The elections were considered competitive by the OSCE, although its election mission noted an unprecedented level of hybrid attacks, including illicit financing, disinformation campaigns

and cyberattacks originating from Russia, as well as structural deficiencies in the Moldovan system and the relocation of some polling stations from Transnistria to territory under Moldovan control.¹⁷ **Following the elections and the formation of the new government, diplomat and former Moldovan ambassador to Ukraine Valeriu Chiveri was appointed as the new Deputy Prime Minister for Reintegration,** a position that includes the functions of chief negotiator in the negotiating process.

At the end of the year, new Moldovan Prime Minister Alexandru Munteanu announced that **the Moldovan government was preparing a plan for the reintegration of the country and that it was being discussed with the EU and the US.** No details of the plan emerged, and Chiveri stated that work was underway and that the roadmap would be presented at the appropriate time. Analysts noted that the EU was pressuring Moldova to make progress on the reintegration of Transnistria into Moldova and that Brussels would no longer be willing to accept the country's integration into the bloc in two phases, in contrast to previous years when the EU left that door open.¹⁸

Gender, peace and security

The negotiating delegations of the parties to the conflict continued to be led by male chief negotiators, with Oleg Serebrian (until October) and Valeriu Chiveri (from October) for Moldova, and Vitaly Ignatiev representing the Transnistrian government. At the level of third parties, the head of the OSCE mission, Kelly Keiderling, completed her mandate and the interim head of mission, Izabela Sylwia, assumed the main interlocutor role. Thomas Lenk, the new special representative of the OSCE Chairpersonship, took over from the previous representative, Thomas Mayr-Harting. The informal Women's Advisory Board (WAB) for Sustainable Peacebuilding continued to operate with the support of UN Women. In January 2025, the WAB held a meeting with representatives of UN Women Moldova, in which they discussed challenges and opportunities for collaboration between populations on both banks of the Dniester River, as well as priorities for 2025, with the support of the Swedish Embassy. Furthermore, during her visit to Moldova in January, OSCE Chairperson and Finnish Foreign Minister Elina Valtonen held meetings with civil society actors, but the OSCE did not specify which organisations she had met with or whether they included any women's organisations.

17. ODIHR EOM, *Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions*, 28 September 2025.

18. Solovoy, Vladimir, "Transnistria Reemerges as an Obstacle to Moldova Joining the EU", *Carnegie*, 12 December 2025.

Russia – Ukraine	
Negotiating actors	Russia, Ukraine
Third parties	UN, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, ICRC, UN, IAEA, Vatican City, Qatar, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Switzerland ¹⁹
Relevant agreements	Initiative on the Safe Transportation of Grain and Foodstuffs from Ukrainian Ports (22th July 2022, ended in July 2023)

Summary:

Russia launched an invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, resulting in the military occupation of southern and eastern parts of the country and affecting other areas with bombings and attacks that had serious impacts on human security, such as mass forced displacement, extrajudicial executions, disappearances, sexual violence, food and energy insecurity and other crises. The invasion was preceded by previous cycles of conflict, including Russia's 2014 seizure and annexation of Crimea, the war in eastern Ukraine between Russian-backed local militias and Ukrainian security forces, and deadlocked negotiations, all following the change of government in Ukraine caused by the Maidan uprising between late 2013 and 2014. In contravention of international law, Russia's invasion and war targeted Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The antagonism between the US, the EU and NATO on one side and Russia on the other, as well as a failed security architecture in Europe, also influenced the context of the conflict and the prospects for resolution. Shortly after the invasion began, Ukraine and Russia began peace talks in various formats, addressing different topics. Facilitated by Türkiye, the political and military negotiations reached a certain degree of rapprochement around a possible permanent neutrality agreement with respect to NATO, security guarantees and postponement of the Crimean issue, to be resolved through diplomatic channels in 15 years. However, the negotiations broke down in April 2022. Russia annexed four regions in September 2022, despite not controlling them in their entirety, and stated that any negotiations should recognize this new situation. Ukraine defended its position to regain control of the entire territory, including Crimea and Donbas. The talks on humanitarian issues, nuclear safety and grain exports continued.

In 2025, negotiations between Russia and Ukraine were resumed in different formats and with US government mediation, though they faced multiple obstacles. Nevertheless, at the end of the year, some progress was reported in the discussions. Overall, the return of US President Donald Trump brought about substantive changes in the process due to its push for a coercive diplomatic path, with fluctuations in approaches and priorities, whilst the armed conflict continued to have severe impacts.²⁰ At the beginning

of the year, US President Trump and his Vice President JD Vance publicly clashed with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky during a meeting at the White House in February. The dispute led to the temporary suspension of US military and intelligence assistance, though it was partially lifted the following month. This contrasted with greater fluidity between the US and Russia, including a phone call between Trump and Putin and a meeting of delegations in Saudi Arabia in February. In the first few months of the year, the discussions focused on a possible 30-day unconditional ceasefire promoted by the US, which Ukraine accepted on 11 March following negotiations with the US in Saudi Arabia, whilst Russia rejected it and demanded conditions. Further calls took place between Trump and Putin and between Trump and Zelensky, as well as separate negotiations in Saudi Arabia from 23 to 25 March. On 25 March, the US, Russia and Ukraine announced ceasefire agreements on energy infrastructure and safe navigation in the Black Sea, but they did not succeed.²¹ Meanwhile, Russia continued to question the legitimacy of the Ukrainian government and presidency.

Negotiations continued in multiple formats, including meetings that US special envoy Steve Witkoff held with the Russian president and the Russian negotiator and director general of the Russian Direct Investment Fund, Kirill Dmitriev, and discussions between representatives of the US, Ukraine and European countries. Ukraine also held talks with European partners on security guarantees under a 'coalition of the willing', though they were divided over a possible deployment of European troops in the event of a peace agreement. In April, the US presented an unpublished peace proposal that prevented Ukraine from becoming a member of NATO and provided de jure US recognition of Russia's sovereignty over Crimea, as well as de facto recognition of Russian control over the areas of the four regions occupied by Russia. According to some analysts, the plan did not offer US security guarantees to Ukraine but opened the door to the deployment of European forces. Ukraine and countries such as the United Kingdom, France and Germany expressed disagreement, especially over Crimea. Russia continued to demand sovereignty over all four regions in their entirety and opposed the deployment of European forces in Ukraine, amongst other points. Furthermore, the US and Ukraine signed an agreement in April on the extraction of rare earths and critical raw materials.

19. This table includes actors playing roles of mediation/facilitation and support in any of the areas of dialogue active between Russia and Ukraine. They are included regardless of the frequency or scope of their involvement. Beyond the actors included in this table, the chapter analyses and includes other actors that promoted dialogue during the year and that are not considered as third parties in this yearbook.
20. See the summary on Russia-Ukraine in Chapter 1 (Armed conflicts) at Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2026, Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria.
21. The ceasefires on energy and the Black Sea were announced in separate communiqués from the US (one concerning Russia and the other Ukraine), Russia and Ukraine. For more information on the negotiations, Russian conditions and difficulties around these agreements, see Escola de Cultura de Pau, "Rusia-Ucrania: Acuerdo de alto el fuego en el sector energético y el Mar Negro, pero persisten las hostilidades de alta intensidad" in *Escenarios de Riesgo y Oportunidades de Paz*, N° 6, April 2025; and Escola de Cultura de Pau, "Rusia-Ucrania: Moscú intensifica su ofensiva militar", in *Escenarios de Riesgo y Oportunidades de Paz*, N° 7, July 2025.

Delegations from Ukraine and Russia met in Istanbul on 16 May, in the first direct negotiations since 2022.

In a context of mistrust, they only agreed to a prisoner exchange of 2,000 prisoners of war and agreed to meet again and share their positions on a ceasefire in writing. In a second round in Istanbul on 2 June, they reached some humanitarian agreements and exchanged memoranda but made no substantive progress. The Russian memorandum defended international recognition of the annexed regions, Ukrainian withdrawal from these areas, neutrality with respect to NATO, limits on the Ukrainian Army and a prohibition on the deployment of foreign military forces in Ukraine, amongst other points.²² Furthermore, it made a 30-day ceasefire conditional on Ukrainian withdrawal, the suspension of military and intelligence assistance to Ukraine and the end of martial law, which precludes holding elections in Ukraine. Analysts described it as maximalist.²³ Ukraine submitted a memorandum that did not demand recovery of its internationally recognised borders.²⁴ Putin and Trump subsequently held a telephone conversation, but it yielded no specific results. A third round in Istanbul on 23 July ended without progress and with results only on the humanitarian front. Trump threatened Russia with secondary tariffs but then announced a summit with Russia as the date of his ultimatum approached.

In 2025, negotiations between Russia and Ukraine were resumed in different formats and with US government mediation, though they faced multiple obstacles

Trump and Putin met in Alaska with their political delegations in August. In their subsequent statements, they alluded to ‘agreements’ and ‘agreed points’, but without providing details.²⁵ Analysts noted that as a result of the summit, Trump abandoned his recent ultimatum position on a ceasefire and threats of sanctions against Russia, whilst instead moving closer to Moscow’s position that a ceasefire must be part of a wider agreement and not a prior step.²⁶ Trump reiterated that a ceasefire was not necessary again in a meeting with Zelensky at the White House days later. Both leaders met again during the UN General Assembly in September. The US president alluded to the possibility that Ukraine could recover all its territory with the support of the EU. There was another meeting between Trump and Zelensky at the White House in October, but it yielded no concrete results. It was preceded by a telephone conversation between Trump and Putin, in which they agreed to hold another bilateral summit that was ultimately cancelled. Amid the rising tension, Washington imposed sanctions on Russia’s two main

oil companies (Rosneft and Lukoil), justifying them because Russia refused to end the war. The US also returned to the idea of pressing for a ceasefire.

Diplomatic efforts intensified in the last two months of the year. In mid-November, it emerged that the US and Russia had drawn up a 28-point peace plan.

The proposal included points such as limits on the size of the Ukrainian Army and the explicit inclusion in Ukraine’s Constitution and in NATO’s statutes of Ukraine’s non-adherence to the Atlantic alliance. Other points included the recognition of Russia’s de facto sovereignty over Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk in their entirety; Ukraine’s withdrawal from the areas of those last two regions that it still controls and the establishment of a demilitarised zone that would nevertheless be recognised as part of Russia, in addition to the freezing of front lines in Kherson and Zaporizhzhia. The proposal also included the prohibition of any deployment of NATO forces in Ukraine, ‘reliable security guarantees’ for Ukraine, elections in Ukraine within 100 days, the lifting of sanctions on Russia, full amnesty for the parties for their actions during the war and a commitment not to submit future claims or complaints.²⁷ The plan was criticised as being pro-Russian.

Following meetings between representatives of the US, Ukraine and European countries in Geneva (23-24 November), a new 20-point plan was reported, thought it was not published. Weeks of negotiations followed in different formats and cities (a meeting between Witkov and Putin in Moscow; meetings in Florida between Ukrainian negotiators and US envoys; meetings between Zelensky and European leaders in London and virtually; a summit in Berlin with Zelensky, European leaders and US envoys; indirect negotiations between Ukrainian and Russian delegations in Miami; and a meeting between Zelensky and Trump in Miami, including a telephone conversation with European leaders and NATO). In mid-December, a statement from several European leaders indicated their commitment alongside the US to work on ‘robust’ security guarantees, including a European multinational force, supported by the US, to assist the Ukrainian Army, protect Ukrainian airspace and support safe waters, as well as a binding legal commitment to respond, which could include the use of armed force in the event of a future attack on Ukraine.²⁸

22. Xinhua, “Russia’s draft memorandum calls for Ukraine’s neutrality, non-nuclear status”, Xinhua, 3 June 2026.

23. Baunov, Alexander, “Russia’s Show of Peace Talks is Designed to Please Putin –and Trump”, Carnegie, 6 June 2025.

24. Ibid.

25. President of Russia, “Joint news conference by the President of Russia and the President of the United States”, 16 August 2025.

26. Baunov, Alexander, “Alaska Summit Leaves Ukraine a Hostage to Russia’s Demands of the West”, Carnegie, 17 August 2025.

27. Shamim, Sarah, “Trump’s 28-point Ukraine plan in full: What it means, could it work?”, *Aljazeera*, 24 November 2025.

28. European Council, “Leaders’ statement on Ukraine”, 15 December 2025.

On 23 December, Zelensky explained the 20 points of the modified peace plan supposedly agreed by Ukraine and the United States and sent to Russia. The proposal included ‘robust’ security guarantees equivalent to NATO Article 5, provided to Ukraine by the US, NATO and European countries, and elections to be held in Ukraine following the signing of the agreement, amongst other points.²⁹ There was no agreement on the territorial issue, nor on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. With regard to territory, the US proposed a demilitarised zone or a free economic zone in the areas of Donetsk still controlled by Ukraine. Kyiv agreed to study this but demanded Ukrainian oversight and a reciprocal withdrawal by Russia. Following the meeting between Trump and Zelensky on 28 December in Miami, Zelensky stated that both countries agreed on around 90% of the plan, with total agreement on US security guarantees, and that the joint strategy of US and European guarantees was nearly agreed. Russia continued to reject several aspects, including European guarantees, and alleged that the plan presented by Zelensky differed from the ‘understanding’ reached between Russia and the US in Alaska. Furthermore, Putin continued to demand total control of Donetsk.

South Caucasus

Armenia – Azerbaijan ³⁰	
Negotiating actors	Armenia, Azerbaijan
Third parties	USA, EU ³¹
Relevant agreements	Bishkek Protocol (1994), Ceasefire agreement (1994), Statement by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and President of the Russian Federation (2020), cessation of hostilities agreement between Azerbaijan and the self-proclaimed republic of Nagorno-Karabakh (2023)

Summary:

The armed conflict going from 1992 to 1994 between Azerbaijan and Armenia over the status of Nagorno-Karabakh – an enclave of Armenian majority belonging to Azerbaijan that declared independence in 1992 – ended with a ceasefire agreement in 1994, after causing more than 20,000 dead and one million displaced people as well as the military occupation by Armenia of several districts around Nagorno-Karabakh. Baku and Yerevan carried out various stages of

negotiations, including around some basic principles (Madrid Principles, 2007) proposed by the OSCE Minsk Group for resolving the conflict (withdrawal of Armenia from the occupied territories around Nagorno-Karabakh, provisional status to Nagorno-Karabakh, the right for displaced persons to return, an eventual decision on the final status of the territory through a binding expression of will, international security safeguards, corridor linking Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh). Over the years, the negotiating process faced deadlock, a fragile ceasefire line, belligerent rhetoric, an arms race and geostrategic disputes. War broke out again in September 2020 and in November the parties reached an agreement that entailed a complete change of the status quo (control by Azerbaijan of the districts adjacent to Nagorno-Karabakh and a part of Nagorno-Karabakh, along with the deployment of Russian peacekeeping forces), but left the political status of Nagorno-Karabakh unresolved, with an Azerbaijani military offensive resulting in Baku's seizure of districts adjacent to Nagorno-Karabakh and part of the enclave, a fragile ceasefire and the deployment of Russian peacekeeping forces. In 2023, Azerbaijan seized control of all of Nagorno-Karabakh through military means, prompting its Armenian population to flee. The self-proclaimed republic was dismantled. The process between Baku and Yerevan moved to a focus on the normalisation of relations (the delimitation of borders, the recognition of sovereignty and territorial integrity, transport routes), influenced by Azerbaijan's position of hegemony in a regional and global context affected by the war in Ukraine and geostrategic competition.

Armenia and Azerbaijan reached a provisional peace and normalisation agreement in 2025, although at the end of the year it was still pending signature and subject to conditions demanded by Azerbaijan. Following limited progress in 2024, in March 2025 the two governments separately announced the completion of the final text of an agreement, formally known as the Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and Interstate Relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan. The full texts of the 17-point agreement³² was made public days after a trilateral summit on 8 August in Washington between Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and US President Donald Trump. At the meeting, the Azerbaijani and Armenian leaders signed a seven-point joint declaration that endorsed and ‘initiated’ the March agreement whilst recognising the need for further steps for the final signing and ratification of the agreement, among other things.

The March agreement was achieved after months of bilateral negotiations between both governments.³³

29. See the 20-point proposal at: “Revised 20-point peace plan presented by President Zelenskyy, Dec. 23, 2025”; Harmash, Olena, “The 20-point peace proposal Zelenskyy will discuss with Trump”, Reuters, 28 December 2025.

30. Starting with the 2024 edition, this yearbook has stopped using the designation “Armenia – Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)” to refer to the negotiating process between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan's military offensive in 2023 resulted in the military takeover of Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijan gained full control over the region and the self-proclaimed administration of Nagorno-Karabakh ceased to exist in January 2024. In 2023, Armenia agreed to recognise the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. All this led to the final exclusion of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue from the negotiations between both countries.

31. The negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2025 were conducted without third-party mediation at some levels/areas, whilst they received external support in others, including US mediation support in 2025.

32. Version published by the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and version published by the Azerbaijani Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

33. See Escola de Cultura de Paz, *Peace Talks in Focus 2024. Report on Trends and Scenarios*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2025.

The agreement designates the borders between the former USSR republics as the international borders of the independent states recognised by the international community and enshrines **recognition of and respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of international borders and the political independence of both countries** (Article 1 of the agreement). The text also commits the parties not to make territorial claims against the other party; to refrain from the use or threats of the use of force against each other's territorial integrity or political independence; and not to interfere in the internal affairs of the other party (Articles 2, 3 and 4). The agreement also includes a commitment not to deploy third-party forces on their shared border (Article 7) and to withdraw and dismiss or resolve disputes and proceedings brought before the courts (Article 15). Analysts noted that Armenia's acceptance of these two articles (7 and 15), on which disagreements had persisted, had greatly facilitated the conclusion of the agreement.³⁴ The agreement also provides for the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries and stipulates that the parties may reach cooperation agreements in areas of mutual interest, such as the economy, transit and transport, the environment, humanitarian affairs and culture (Article 10).

Despite the milestone that the agreement represented, **the level of trust between the parties remained very low** ('close to zero', as the Azerbaijani president said in March). After the announcement, Armenia said it was ready to set a date and place to sign the peace agreement, whilst Azerbaijan put forward two further demands prior to ratification. These referred to conditions demanded by Baku in 2024³⁵ and include changes to Armenia's Constitution, as Baku believes that it contains territorial aspirations regarding Azerbaijan, and a demand for the dissolution of the OSCE Minsk Group, a structure co-chaired by the US, Russia and France under the umbrella of the OSCE that historically mediated in negotiations between the parties. Another area of disagreement, concerning transport and connection routes and particularly the establishment of a connection between Azerbaijan and its Nakhchivan enclave through Armenian territory, had been removed from the draft negotiations in 2024, with the parties agreeing to address it separately from the peace agreement negotiations in later phases.

The second major boost to the process came in the second half of the year. At a trilateral meeting in Washington on 8 August between Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and US

President Donald Trump, **the Azerbaijani and Armenian leaders signed a seven-point joint declaration**.³⁶ The first point endorses and 'initiates the text of the March agreement and notes mutual recognition of the need for further steps towards its final signing and ratification. Other points of the declaration included a reference to the joint request by Armenia and Azerbaijan regarding the closure of the OSCE Minsk Process and its associated structures, and affirmation of the importance of opening communications between both countries on the basis of respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and the jurisdiction of states and, specifically, the connection between Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan enclave through Armenia. The text also sets out principles for the establishment of good neighbourly relations between both countries, including the inviolability of international borders, the rejection of the use of force for the acquisition of territory and the rejection of any 'attempt at revenge'. As a new development, the parties **agreed to resolve the issue of the connection between Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan enclave through a project called the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP), to be operated and exploited by a US-Armenian consortium**. The TRIPP will include rail and road connections, oil and gas pipelines, fibre optic networks and electricity infrastructure. According to the implementation framework document released in early 2026,³⁷ the US and Armenia will establish a joint venture, in which the US will hold a 74% stake and exploitation rights and Armenia will hold the remaining 26% for 49 years. After that initial period has elapsed, the parties may extend the agreement for a further 50 years, during which Armenia's stake would reach 49%. Alongside the August declaration, bilateral memoranda were signed with the US on the economy, trade, border control and defence. Trump announced the end of the blockade on military cooperation with Azerbaijan.³⁸

In the final months of the year, both governments took further steps towards rapprochement, including meetings of the border commissions, meetings between the two political leaders at several international summits and Azerbaijan's lifting of restrictions on passage through its territory or exports of certain goods destined for Armenia, including Russian and Kazakh wheat and Azerbaijani petrol. The US and Armenia also held consultations on technical planning for the future construction of the TRIPP.

Some analysts assessed the steps taken in 2025 as historic breakthroughs in the region, but they also mentioned shortcomings, including the elitist nature of

34. De Waal, Thomas, "Armenia and Azerbaijan's Major Step Forward", *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 17 March 2025.

35. See Escola de Cultura de Paz, *Peace Talks in Focus 2024. Report on Trends and Scenarios*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2025.

36. See the Joint Declaration and other agreements at US Department of State, "United States Publishes Documents from Historic Armenia and Azerbaijan Meeting", 29 August 2025.

37. Full text of the implementation framework at Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, *Joint Statement on the Publication of the Armenia-U.S. Implementation Framework for the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP)*, 14 January 2026.

38. See the Joint Declaration and other agreements at US Department of State, "United States Publishes Documents from Historic Armenia and Azerbaijan Meeting", 29 August 2025.

the process and the lack of attention paid to issues related to coexistence between the populations and the return of refugees.³⁹ In that regard, human rights organisations and independent analyses warned of Azerbaijan's continued criminalisation and persecution of activists and academics promoting peace and reconciliation with Armenia, human rights defenders and organisations and independent journalists. According to Human Rights Watch, the Azerbaijani government has intensified repression against these groups since 2023.⁴⁰ Analysts warned of further prison sentences and harassment in 2025.⁴¹ Furthermore, in relation to the prospects for the negotiating process, analysts noted the agreements' potential to advance the normalisation of relations and prevent the use of force, but also identified challenges related to the internal difficulties Armenia may face in a constitutional referendum process and risks associated with the geopolitical context.⁴²

Gender, peace and security

The negotiating process took place without the involvement of women negotiators or the integration of the gender perspective. The agreement reached in March and endorsed in the joint declaration of August did not include any clause or reference to the gender impacts of the conflict or to the participation of women in subsequent steps of the process. Whilst the Armenian feminist organisation Women's Resource Center (WRC) of Armenia welcomed any step aimed at ending the protracted conflict, it also voiced serious concerns about the peace process and the terms of the March agreement and the August joint declaration.⁴³ They criticised the lack of mechanisms for women's participation in the process, despite the role played by women in Armenia and Azerbaijan in conflict resolution and community reconstruction and the absence of transitional justice

mechanisms, and warned of how Article 15 of the agreement forces the parties to renounce the use of international justice mechanisms. In response to these shortcomings, they urged the Armenian government to negotiate the implementation of transitional justice mechanisms before ratifying the agreement. They also highlighted the importance of listening to women living in border regions, especially in the Syunik region, and raised doubts and warned of risks regarding US control of the future TRIPP for stability, in light of the consequences that US strategic involvement has brought in the past to other countries affected by conflicts.

At the institutional level, the Armenian government presented its third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. In its address to the 94th Joint Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation, which focused on the women, peace and security agenda, the delegation of the permanent mission of Armenia placed emphasis on gender equality in the defence sector, without addressing issues related to women's participation in the peace process.⁴⁴ There were also no references made in this area in the Armenian foreign minister's speech at the Fourth Ministerial Conference on Feminist Foreign Policy, though he did refer to women's participation in more general areas, such as diplomacy (44.4% of women in the diplomatic service) and Parliament (36%), among others.⁴⁵ Azerbaijan also approved a National Action Plan on Gender Equality (Equality of Women and Men) 2026–2028, whose implementation is led by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs. Among other aspects, the plan seeks to promote the formation of 'new' NGOs. In contrast, human rights organisations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch continued to report state hostility against women and LGBTIQ+ people in Azerbaijan.⁴⁶

39. Shiriyev, Zaur and Gamaghelyan, Philip, "Strategic Directions for Building Sustainable Peace Between Armenia and Azerbaijan", *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 4 December 2025

40. Geybullayeva, Arzu, "Trump Should Raise Rights Issues with Azerbaijan Leader", *HRW*, 7 August 2025.

41. Geybullayeva, Arzu "Handshake in Washington, handcuffs in Baku", *Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso Transeuropa*, 20 August 2025.

42. Caprile, Anna and Przetacznik, Jakub, *Armenia and Azerbaijan: Lasting peace in sight?*, European Parliamentary Research Service, October 2025.

43. Women's Resource Center, "A Call for Inclusive and Justice-Centered Peace", 14 August 2025.

44. Permanent Mission of the Republic of Armenia to the OSCE, *Statement by the Delegation of Armenia at the 94th Joint Meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Permanent Council Security Dialogue: Women, Peace and Security Agenda: towards women's equal and full participation in peace and security governance*, 15 March 2025.

45. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, *Opening remarks by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan at the Fourth Ministerial Conference on Feminist Foreign Policy*, 22 October 2025.

46. Amnesty International, "Azerbaijan" in *The State of the World's Human Rights 2025/2026*, AI, 21 April 2026; Geybullayeva, Arzu, "Azerbaijan's Imprisoned Women Journalists", *HRW*, 7 March 2025.

Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia)	
Negotiating actors	Government of Georgia, representatives of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Government of Russia ⁴⁷
Third parties	OSCE, EU, UN, USA, Russia ⁴⁸
Relevant agreements	Agreement on Principles of Settlement of the Georgian–Ossetian Conflict (Sochi Agreement) (1992), Agreement on a Ceasefire and Separation of Forces (1994) [agreement dealing with conflict on Abkhazia], Protocol of agreement (2008), Implementation of the Plan of 12 August 2008 (2008)

Summary:

The war between Georgia and Russia in August 2008, which began in South Ossetia and spread to Abkhazia and territory not disputed by Georgia, ended in a six-point peace agreement mediated by the EU. The peace plan included the start of international talks on security and stability in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, two small territories in the northwest and north-central Georgia bordering Russia that are internationally recognised as regions of Georgia, though de facto independent since the end of the wars between Abkhaz and Georgian forces (1992–1994) and between Ossetian and Georgian forces (1991–1992) regarding their status. The 2008 agreement gave way to the start of talks known as the Geneva International Discussions (GID), which bring together representatives of Georgia, South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Russia under international mediation (the OSCE, EU and UN, with the US as an observer). According to the agreement, the talks were supposed to focus on provisions to guarantee security and stability in the region, the issue of the refugees and displaced populations and any other issue agreed by the parties, so the disputed status of the territories was not explicitly addressed. After the 2008 war, Russia formally recognised the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and established agreements and a permanent military presence there despite Georgian opposition. The post-2008 phase involved the dismantling of previous dialogue and observation mechanisms, including the OSCE and the UN missions, and replaced the previous separate talks with a single format covering both disputed regions. An EU observation mission was also authorised, though it was given no access to the disputed territories. The GID have two working groups (on security and humanitarian issues) and under its aegis one Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism was created for each region in 2009, facilitated by the EU and OSCE. Amidst a context of geopolitical rivalry between Russia and Western political, economic and military players (the US, EU and NATO), aggravated since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, and chronic antagonism between the disputed regions and Georgia, the negotiating process faces many obstacles.

The negotiating process involving Georgia, the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and Russia remained active, but largely without any progress being made. The Geneva International Discussions (GID), co-chaired by the EU, the UN and the OSCE, remained the main

forum for the negotiating process, with three rounds in 2025 (the 63rd in March, the 64th in June and the 65th in November). All rounds took place in Geneva, despite criticism from Russia in 2025 and 2024 against Switzerland, alleging a supposed loss of Swiss neutrality after it imposed international sanctions against Russia linked to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The GID format maintained its two customary working groups: one focused on issues relating to security, stability and peace; and the other focused on humanitarian issues.

The parties maintained their positions and disagreements from previous years, including on the question of the non-use of force, addressed in Working Group I. Georgia demanded compliance with the points of the 2008 ceasefire agreement, whilst Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Russia called for bilateral agreements on the non-use of force between Georgia and each of the two disputed regions. In the June round, the co-mediators noted that there had been substantive exchanges on the question of the principle of the non-use of force, but no progress or specific results were announced in this regard. **Following the November round, the co-mediators stated in their subsequent communiqué that the parties had reiterated their willingness to explore a possible political statement on the non-use of force,** as a step that could reflect their commitment to that principle. Nevertheless, no concrete public results emerged.

In the 2025 rounds of the GID, the Georgian delegation condemned ‘illegal militarisation’ by Russia, criticising the construction of a Russian naval base in Ochamchire, on the Abkhazian Black Sea coast, the launch of an electric train between Abkhazia and Russia, a new maritime route between both regions and a Russian company’s reconstruction of the airport in the Abkhazian capital, Sukhumi, which subsequently reopened after having been closed since the war in the 1990s. In the March round, the Georgian delegation also criticised the presidential election held in Abkhazia and Putin’s meeting with Abkhazian leaders as steps towards annexation and a violation of Georgia’s territorial integrity. Furthermore, some analysts noted the complexity of Russian-Georgian relations, with Russia showing greater openness to the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Georgia, alongside Moscow’s consolidation of its occupation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.⁴⁹ Georgia continued to make the resumption of relations conditional on Moscow reversing its recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states, and yet economic relations between the two countries increased.⁵⁰

As in previous years, **in the rounds of Working Group II (humanitarian issues), Russia, Abkhazia and South**

47. 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.

48. Ibid.

49. International Institute for Peace, “What Peace Means in the South Caucasus: Reflections on 2025 and Prospects for 2026”, *IIP*, 30 December 2025.

50. Ibid.

Ossetia blocked the parts of the session relating to the right of return of displaced and refugee populations. In the Working Group II rounds, the parties addressed different issues such as border crossings, documentation, cultural heritage, education, freedom of movement, external mobility and missing persons. According to the co-mediators, in the November round, drawing on discussions from previous rounds, the parties addressed in detail the issue of freedom of movement and external mobility and recognised the need to achieve practical solutions to guarantee mobility within and outside the region.⁵¹

Meanwhile, the other format of the dialogue, the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms (IPRMs), remained partially active. Co-facilitated by the EU and the OSCE, the IPRMs bring together representatives of Georgia, Russia and South Ossetia. Specifically, the Ergneti IPRM was active during the year, but the Gali IPRM, which involves Abkhazia, was not, as it was suspended in 2018. The Ergneti IPRM continued to function regularly in 2025, with seven rounds (the 123rd to 129th) held during the year. The agenda was focused on practical issues that gave rise to disputes or possibilities for cooperation, including detentions, unilateral measures imposing the border line, freedom of movement, irrigation, wastewater, stray livestock, energy infrastructure, cultural heritage and the needs of communities near the Administrative Boundary Line. In several rounds, the IPRM co-facilitators (OSCE and EUMM) expressed concern about the continued practice of detentions. In the April round, the co-facilitators advocated for a relaxation of movement restrictions for Orthodox Easter, but no agreements on this matter emerged.⁵² However, in various IPRM rounds, the parties and the co-facilitators welcomed cooperation in the field of irrigation.

The negotiating process involving Georgia, the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and Russia remained active, but largely without any progress being made

Middle East, Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific and for Peace Operations. In his functions as co-chair of the GID, he will be supported by Kayoko Gotoh, the Director of the DPPA Division for Europe and Central Asia. This change is part of the UN reform process (the UN80 Initiative), which, amongst other elements, is leading to the reorganisation, merger and reduction of bodies and positions amid funding constraints. Within the framework of the UN80 Initiative, one of the actions envisaged was the 'rationalisation of the Office of the United Nations Representative for the Geneva International Discussions (UNRGID)', which includes 'optimising staffing resources' and 'streamlining support structures'.⁵³ It remains to be seen how the reduction of

UNRGID staff will affect the promotion of the women, peace and security agenda in the negotiating process. Furthermore, the EU co-chair in the GID was Magdalena Grono, the EU representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia, who took up her post in November 2024. On the OSCE side, the GID co-chair in 2025 was Christoph Späti, who was appointed in January as special representative for the South Caucasus of the OSCE Chairpersonship. He took over from the previous representative, Viorel Mosanu. In the Ergneti IPRM, this mechanism was co-facilitated in 2025 by the head of the EUMM mission, Bettina Patricia Boughani, and by the OSCE special representative for the South Caucasus, Christoph Späti.

On the other hand, the 2025 monitoring report published by UN Women on the 2022-2024 National Action Plan on women, peace and security noted that **civil society organisations consider that gender-balanced participation remains a challenge in both the GID and the IPRM**, and that women's participation is often limited to the identification of specific needs, with low participation in decision-making processes.⁵⁴ According to the report, women and young people affected by the conflict continued to face socio-economic difficulties, such as limited or insufficient access to state resources and services. Likewise, analysts noted a **trend of restrictions and hostility against civil society by the government**, including through detentions and legislation that hinders the work of organisations.⁵⁵ Furthermore, in 2025 the Georgian government approved the removal of the terms 'gender' and 'gender equality' from all laws and abolished the Parliamentary Gender Equality Council, as reported by Human Rights Watch (HRW).⁵⁶

Gender, peace and security

In relation to the third parties in the negotiating process, **in 2025 the term of the GID co-mediator, Cihan Sultanoglu, who had held this role for seven years, came to an end.** Participants in the GID praised Sultanoglu's performance. In January 2026, the co-chair functions of the United Nations in the GID were assumed by the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), and specifically by Khaled Khiari, the Assistant Secretary-General for the

51. OSCE, "Press communiqué of the Co-Chairs of the Geneva International Discussions", 12 November 2025.

52. OSCE, "124th Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism meeting takes place in Ergneti", OSCE, 3 April 2025.

53. United Nations, *United to Deliver: UN80 Initiative. Action Plan*, 24 November 2025, p.48

54. UN Women, *Monitoring Report of the 2022-2024 National Action Plan of Georgia for the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security*, 2025.

55. De Waal, Thomas, "Time for EU Decisions on Georgia", *Carnegie Europe*, 4 September 2025; Human Rights Watch, "Georgia" at *World Report 2026*, 2026.

56. Human Rights Watch, "Georgia" at *World Report 2026*, 2026.

Southern Europe

Cyprus	
Negotiating actors	Republic of Cyprus, self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
Third parties	UN, EU, Guarantor Countries (Türkiye, Greece and United Kingdom)
Relevant agreements	13 February agreement (2004)

Summary:

Inhabited by a Greek majority, a Turkish population and other minorities, the island of Cyprus faces a situation of long-lasting unresolved conflict. Preceded by the violence of the 1950s, followed by independence in 1960, Cyprus was affected by a crisis in which the Turkish Cypriot population was displaced from power, calling into question the distribution of power stipulated in the Constitution and triggering new violent incidents, which led to the deployment of the UNFICYP peacekeeping mission in 1964. There was an underlying confrontation between the aspirations of *enosis* (union with Greece) of the Greek Cypriot population and *taksim* (partition) by Turkish Cypriot population. A coup in 1974 with the aim of promoting unification with Greece triggered a military invasion of the island by Türkiye. The crisis led to population displacement and the division of the island between the northern third under Turkish Cypriot control and two-thirds in the south under Greek Cypriot control, separated by a demilitarised zone known as the buffer zone or “Green Line”, supervised by the UN. Since the division of the island there have been efforts to find a solution, such as high-level dialogues in the 70s and initiatives in the following decades promoted by successive UN Secretaries-General. The Annan Plan for a bizonal bicomunal federation was approved in referendum in 2004 by the Turkish Cypriots and rejected by the Greek Cypriots. After the failure of the Christofias-Talat dialogue (2008-2012), a new phase of negotiations began in 2014. An international negotiating conference in Switzerland in 2017 ended without an agreement between the parties. Since then, the process has remained stalled at the highest political level.

A certain momentum was achieved in the Cyprus peace process in 2025, through informal meetings and some progress made on confidence-building measures, yet without the resumption of formal negotiations. One of the main events was an informal meeting on 17 and 18 March in Geneva (Switzerland), sponsored by the UN Secretary-General, which brought together Greek Cypriot leader Nikos Christodoulides and Turkish Cypriot leader Ersin Tatar, as well as representatives of the guarantor countries (Greece, the United Kingdom and Türkiye). It was preceded by preparatory visits in February by the UN Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, who held separate meetings with the parties to the conflict and the guarantor countries. The informal summit in March did not achieve agreements on the resumption of formal negotiations, but **the parties did agree on a package of confidence-building measures**, to include the opening of four border crossings, the establishment of a bicomunal technical committee on youth, environmental cooperation, demining and

cemetery restoration. Both the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot leaders were pleased with the summit.

The commitments made at the March summit were followed up in the following months in subsequent meetings at different levels. In May, the bicomunal technical committee on youth was launched, the first new committee in a decade. Progress was made in agreed areas, such as the restoration of cemeteries. However, disagreements and difficulties on the issue of border crossings became evident, whilst tensions also increased between the parties due to differences on property issues.

In May, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres reappointed María Ángela Holguín Cuéllar as his personal envoy for Cyprus. A former Colombian Foreign Minister and former negotiator in the Colombian peace process with the FARC, Holguín Cuéllar had previously held the position of special envoy between January and July 2024. She held separate meetings with the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders in May, as well as with the foreign ministers of Türkiye and Greece, which served as preparatory work for a new informal meeting in an expanded format to follow up on the March summit. This new summit, convened by the UN Secretary-General, took place in New York in July (16-17), with the participation of the two leaders of the island, Türkiye, Greece and the United Kingdom. **Guterres said that the discussions had been constructive and that four of the six initiatives agreed in March had been achieved: the creation of the Youth Technical Committee, environmental and climate initiatives, restoration of cemeteries, and an agreement on demining**, although the latter point was pending technical details. According to the UN announcement, a common vision was reached for new initiatives at the informal July summit, including **the creation of a civil society advisory body, cultural exchanges, improved air quality monitoring and action against microplastic pollution**. However, no agreement was reached on new crossing points or on solar energy infrastructure in the buffer zone. Guterres announced that a new meeting in an expanded informal format was planned for the end of the year, though it did not ultimately take place in 2025. In September, the UN Secretary-General held a trilateral meeting with the two leaders of the island during the UN General Assembly, which had already been anticipated at the July summit. No concrete results from the meeting were announced, and it was preceded by separate meetings between the personal envoy and the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot leaders.

A significant local change occurred in October with the election of Tufan Erhürman, an advocate of a solution based on federal reunification, as the new president of the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Erhürman won with 62.8% of the vote in a ballot that saw 65% turnout. The outgoing leader, Ersin Tatar, an advocate of a two-state solution, carried nearly

36% of the vote. Despite the change in local leadership, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan maintained his firm defence of a two-state solution.

Christodoulides and Erhürman met for the first time in November and agreed to work towards reactivating talks under UN auspices. The new Turkish Cypriot leader set out a document with four points that he considers prerequisites for the resumption of the formal process: explicit guarantees of political equality, a negotiation methodology with a defined timetable, respect for past agreements and guarantees that it cannot return to starting positions that threaten continuity or equality once the process has begun. Erhürman also presented a package of 10 confidence-building measures to create favourable conditions to restart negotiations.⁵⁷

In December, the two leaders held a trilateral meeting with the Secretary-General's personal envoy. **According to the UN, the two leaders agreed that the objective is a solution to the Cyprus question with political equality, based on the provisions of Security Council resolutions.**⁵⁸ Likewise, the leaders agreed to prioritise reaching agreements as soon as possible on confidence-building measures, including on new crossing points, amongst others.⁵⁹ In the UN statement following the meeting, it noted the leaders' commitment to participating in a forthcoming informal meeting in an expanded format, their willingness to meet as often as necessary and the instructions given to their representatives to continue meetings at that other level.

Gender, peace and security

The presidential elections in the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus brought to power a new male elected leader, Tufan Erhürman. At the end of the year, no chief negotiator had yet been designated by the Turkish Cypriot side, although Erhürman appointed the diplomat and Deputy Presidency Minister Mehmet Dâna as supervisor of the process. Thus, **the peace process continued to be led by two male presidencies and two male chief negotiators/supervisors.** Furthermore, the new bicomunal technical committee on youth, which was launched in May, had 32 members from different backgrounds and achieved gender parity. Overall, **the bicomunal technical committees as a whole**

maintained gender parity (52% men, 48% women, with a total of 200 members), according to UN data.⁶⁰ The UN noted that the Technical Committee on Gender Equality faced difficulties in implementing its action plan.⁶¹ This observation had previously been made in 2024. Regarding third parties, María Ángela Holguín Cuéllar was reappointed as the UN Secretary-General's personal envoy for Cyprus. During her previous term in this role between January and July 2024, Holguín Cuéllar was notable for her participatory approach to her mandate, with consultations across broad sectors of civil society, including women's organisations. Furthermore, the Special Representative and head of the UNFICYP mission, Colin Stewart, was succeeded by another man, Khassim Diagne, as the new representative in September.

A certain momentum was achieved in the Cyprus peace process in 2025, through some progress made on confidence-building measures, yet without the resumption of formal negotiations.

Women's civil society organisations were active during the year in advocating for the resumption of the peace process and for the equal and substantive participation of women. In February, women's organisations submitted recommendations to the UN Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, in a joint meeting held during DiCarlo's visit to the island. The meeting was attended by organisations such as the Cyprus Women's Bicomunal Coalition (CWBC), the Centre for History and Gender

Equality, the Gender Advisory Team (GAT), Hand Across the Divide, the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network (Cyprus Branch) and Women Walk and Talk. The recommendations submitted by the CWBC included that a bicomunal women's group should have its own seat at the negotiating table to broaden dialogue, bring new perspectives and strengthen the legitimacy of any eventual agreement; formal channels for civil society and, specifically, for women's groups to provide input on security, governance and human rights; and mechanisms to guarantee progress in negotiations and prevent setbacks, amongst others.⁶²

That meeting led to a follow-up meeting, with the participation of women's organisations and various UN representatives (the Special Representative and head of UNFICYP, Colin Stewart; the senior political affairs officer, Sherry Holbrook; and the political affairs officer of the Office of the Special Adviser on Cyprus, Solveig Knudsen). According to the CWBC, **the organisations presented their consolidated joint recommendations, including the integration of a gender perspective at all**

57. See the list of the 10 trust-building measures in Greek Cypriot media and Turkish Cypriot media.

58. UN, "Press Statement By The Un Spokesperson In Cyprus", UN, 11 December 2025.

59. See other areas agreed as priorities in UN, "Press Statement By The Un Spokesperson In Cyprus", UN, 11 December 2025.

60. UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus*, S/2025/448, 3 July 2025.

61. UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus*, S/2025/448, 3 July 2025.

62. Cyprus Women Bi-Communal Coalition, "Specific recommendations submitted by the Cyprus Women Bicomunal Coalition (CWBC) during the meeting with UN USG Rosemary DiCarlo", CWBC, 10 February 2025.

levels of negotiations to contribute to a lasting solution to the Cyprus question. The meeting also aimed to strengthen alliances between women's organisations and articulate steps to ensure female participation in the peace process. Amongst many other activities during the year, Hand Across the Divide organised a 'Peace Bus', with a bicommunal bus trip to the town of Potamia, which has both Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot populations.

Serbia – Kosovo	
Negotiating actors	Serbia, Kosovo
Third parties	EU, UN, Germany, France, United Kingdom, Italy
Relevant agreements	Military Technical Agreement between the International Security Force (KFOR) and the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia (1999), First agreement of principles governing the normalization of relations between the republic of Kosovo and the Republic of Serbia (Brussels Agreement) (2013), Agreement on the path to normalisation between Kosovo and Serbia (2023) and its associated annex (2023)

Summary:
 Since the end of the 1998-1999 war between Serbia and the Kosovar Albanian armed group KLA, with the participation of NATO, the status of Kosovo has remained in dispute. This Albanian-majority land has historically been part of the Ottoman Empire, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and more recently the Republic of Serbia in Yugoslavia (as an autonomous region and autonomous province, successively). Following an interim international administration for Kosovo with a mandate from the UN Security Council (Resolution 1244, of 1999), a process to discuss its status began in 2006 under the aegis of the United Nations. Kosovo supported the proposal made by the UN Secretary-General's special envoy, Martti Ahtisaari, entailing internationally supervised independence for Kosovo and decentralisation for its Serbian minority, though Serbia rejected it. This was followed by fresh attempts at dialogue facilitated by a troika (USA, EU, Russia) that also failed. In 2008 Kosovo unilaterally proclaimed its independence and pledged to implement the Ahtisaari plan. The start of a new process of dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo in 2011 under facilitation of the EU (Brussels Process) opened the doors to rapprochement on technical and political issues. Since its inception there was some progress, including the agreement to dismantle parallel political, judicial and security structures of the Serb-inhabited areas of Kosovo; as well as to create an association/community of Serb municipalities in Kosovo. However, the negotiating process faces many problems due to substantive disagreements on pending issues and the failure to implement previous agreements. Other challenges include intercommunity tensions and strain between Kosovar institutions and the Kosovo Serb population, as well as shortcomings in transitional justice.

The negotiating process remained stalled, affected by the opposing positions of the parties in the dialogue, as well as by tensions between Serbia and Kosovo and in northern Kosovo. **The process unfolded in 2025 mainly at the level of chief negotiators**, with Besnik Bislimi for Kosovo and Petar Petković for Serbia, under the facilitation of Danish diplomat Peter Sørensen as the new EU Special Representative (EUSR). Sørensen was appointed as the new EUSR in January, replacing Miroslav Lajčák, with an initial mandate of 13 months.⁶³ Local and regional contextual dynamics dampened the process. On the one hand, Kosovo continued unilaterally to dismantle parallel structures and institutions funded by Serbia in areas with a Serbian majority in northern Kosovo, as it had already done in 2024.⁶⁴ In 2025, such actions included the closure of post offices, social and sports centres, pension funds, health insurance funds, employment services and water supply in some places. **The Serbian government heightened its criticism of Kosovo over these unilateral actions and accused it of seeking to spread terror among the Serbian population in Kosovo and to displace them from the territory.** Amongst other expressions of protests, Serbia did not send its chief negotiator to the first meeting of the commission on missing persons in Brussels in January.

Kosovo's unilateral actions drew criticism from the EU and the UN. The Special Representative and head of UNMIK, Caroline Ziadé, warned of their impact on the daily lives of the population in the Serbian areas of Kosovo and the risk of further erosion of trust between Kosovo and local communities. The EU and the UN urged Kosovo to address the issue of parallel structures in the EU-facilitated dialogue. **The negotiating process also deteriorated following the arrest in July by the Kosovo police of Igor Popović, the Deputy Director of the Serbian Office for Kosovo and Metohija, accused of inciting hatred** for describing the former armed group, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), as 'terrorist' and 'criminal'. Serbia condemned the situation as unacceptable and warned of serious consequences for bilateral relations. In August, Popović pleaded guilty and his six-month prison sentence was commuted to a fine. Serbia denounced pressure by Kosovo on Popović. Bilateral tension eroded the climate and prospects of the negotiating process throughout the year.

In 2025, the EU Special Representative held several separate meetings with the chief negotiators, both in the capitals and in Brussels. The first took place in March, during exploratory visits in which he met with Prime Minister Albin Kurti and President Vjosa Osmani; and, in the case of Serbia, with President Aleksandar Vučić, Foreign Minister Marko Đurić and the Director of the Serbian Office for Kosovo and Metohija, Petar

63. Council of the EU, “Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue: EU appoints a new Special Representative”, *Council of the EU*, 27 January 2025.
 64. See the summary of Serbia–Kosovo socio-political crisis during 2024 in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2025! Report on conflict, human rights and peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2025.

Petković. Kosovo demanded full implementation of the 2023 agreement and the Ohrid Annex through a sequencing that was fair. Osmani also rejected the draft statute of the Community/Association of Serbian-majority municipalities, considering it unconstitutional. **Serbia expressed concern over the situation of the Serbian population in northern Kosovo in light of Kosovo's unilateral actions and defended the creation of the Community of Serbian Municipalities as a precondition** for the start of substantive normalisation relations with Kosovo.

In addition to the bilateral meetings between the EU Special Representative and the chief negotiators, **two trilateral meetings were held at that level, in June and September in Brussels, but achieved no positive results.** The parties maintained their disagreements. Serbia continued to demand the implementation of the Community/Association of Serbian-majority municipalities in Kosovo. Kosovo maintained the preconditions it had set out in 2024: both sides had to sign and formalise the Brussels Agreement and Ohrid Agreement of 2023, a letter sent by former Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic to the EU in December 2023 had to be rescinded, as it described the declaration resulting from the EU-Balkans summit as political, non-binding and only acceptable without de facto or de jure recognition of Kosovo, and Serbia had to hand Milan Radojcic, who pleaded guilty to the 2023 military ambush in Banjska/Banjskë over to the Kosovar justice system. **The disagreements prevented the resumption of negotiations at the highest political level. Stalemate and mutual accusations predominated.** The political crisis in Kosovo produced uncertainty for virtually the entire year due to the inability to form a government following the parliamentary elections in February and the situation in Serbia of a caretaker government until April. At the end of the year, the EU announced the gradual lifting of sanctions imposed on Kosovo following the 2023 crisis,⁶⁵ justifying this by the local elections held and the peaceful transfer of power in the Serbian-majority municipalities in the north.

Gender, peace and security

The dialogue process continued without formal mechanisms for civil society participation, including women's organisations. Furthermore, the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation of Relations between Kosovo

and Serbia (2023) and its associated annex (2023), around which the current negotiation revolves, do not include specific clauses on the gender dimension, women's participation or women's rights, and only contained a general reference to 'the protection of human rights and non-discrimination' as principles of the UN Charter (alongside others, such as the sovereign equality of all states, respect for their independence, autonomy and territorial integrity and the right to self-determination) that guide the parties in the negotiating process.⁶⁶

At the same time, **analysts noted that there has been no monitoring related to the implementation of the women, peace and security objectives of the EU's Kosovo plan** (the EU Country Level Implementation Plan for Kosovo 2021-2025, CLIP) derived from the third Gender Action Plan (GAP III). The CLIP country plan recognised the underrepresentation of women in the Serbia-Kosovo dialogue and established the promotion of the women, peace and security agenda as one of the thematic areas of EU engagement, to take place through political dialogue and programmes.⁶⁷ **There was no evidence of regular meetings by the EU Delegation or the EU Special Representative and co-facilitator of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue with women's organisations related to the development of the negotiating process in 2025, but only occasional meetings.** In October, Peter Sørensen met with the chair of the Regional Women's Lobby for Peace, Security and Justice in Southeast Europe (RWLSEE), Edita Tahiri. According to the RWLSEE, they discussed the importance of women's participation in the formal peace process and implementation processes. The organisation also noted that Sørensen gave his support to the RWLSEE's monitoring of the implementation of the agreements through a mechanism that the organisation planned to establish.⁶⁸

Türkiye (PKK)	
Negotiating actors	Government, PKK, political parties of Türkiye
Third parties	Political representatives from the Kurdistan Region of Iraq ⁶⁹
Relevant agreements	--
Summary:	Negotiating initiatives at different stages have tried to resolve

65. See the summary of Serbia–Kosovo socio-political crisis during 2024 in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2024! Report on conflict, human rights and peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2024.

66. See the full agreement at EEAS Press Team, “Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue: Agreement on the path to normalisation between Kosovo and Serbia”, EEAS, 27 February 2023; and see the associated Annex at: EEAS Press Team, “Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue: Implementation Annex to the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation of Relations between Kosovo and Serbia”, EEAS, 18 March 2023.

67. European Union Office in Kosovo and European Union Special Representative, *Gender Action Plan III – 2021-2025 Country Level Implementation Plan for Kosovo*, Ref. Ares (2021)5675782 - 16/09/2021

68. Regional Women's Lobby in Southeast Europe, “Edita Tahiri, RWLSEE Chair met Peter Sorensen”, *RWLSEE*, 1 December 2025.

69. The dialogue process in Turkey does not officially have third parties, but political representatives from the Iraqi Kurdistan Region have played roles in support of the process.

the armed conflict between Türkiye and the Kurdish armed group PKK, which has been active since 1984. In the 1990s, the PKK evolved from a guerrilla group aimed at establishing an independent Kurdish state into an armed movement demanding decentralisation within Türkiye, cultural and political rights and constitutional recognition for the Kurdish population. The arrest and imprisonment of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in 1999 intensified this transition and the search for ways to end the conflict. Turkish state actors held meetings with the PKK in the 1990s, but they yielded no results. Between 2008 and 2011, the government and the PKK held a non-public dialogue known as the “Oslo Talks”. This was publicly accompanied by the government initiative “Kurdish Opening”, which included limited measures such as the restoration of Kurdish place names and the lifting of some obstacles to using the Kurdish language. The Oslo Talks were cancelled, but between 2013 and 2015 a new phase of dialogue was publicly announced between the government, Öcalan and the PKK, with the participation of the pro-Kurdish political party HDP. The process was cut short in 2015 when the parties traded accusations. The breakdown was influenced by local and regional factors, including the war in Syria, the expansion of control of Syrian territory by Kurdish militias with links to the PKK (YPG/YPJ) and Türkiye’s position towards the Kurds of Syria, who established an autonomous regional administration. In later years, the armed conflict pitted Türkiye against the PKK (and related armed actors), primarily in northern Iraq and Syria. A new dialogue initiative began in Türkiye in 2024.

The steps initiated in 2024 led to a negotiating process between the government and the PKK in 2025, making it the first since the failed attempt of 2013-2015. The process produced some significant military results, whilst suffering from a lack of concrete measures relating to the historical causes of the Kurdish issue, such as guarantees of political, linguistic and cultural rights for the Kurdish population. The process adopted a non-transparent architecture, with no official negotiating table, but with non-public conversations between state representatives and PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, in prison since 1999, which also involved the PKK leadership. The process also included meetings between a delegation of the pro-Kurdish DEM party and Öcalan, and subsequent rounds of consultations between that delegation and political parties with parliamentary representation. Regarding the architecture, a multi-party parliamentary commission on the process was also established in August. One of the difficulties of the process was linked to the regional dimension of the conflict, due to the links between the Kurdish militias in Syria (YPG/YPJ, the main actor in the SDF coalition, supported by the US) and the PKK, and Türkiye’s demands for the total disarmament of all actors linked to the PKK, including the Kurdish militias in Syria, whilst the SDF and YPG/YPJ held their own talks with the Syrian transitional government. The process in Türkiye had no official third parties, although actors from the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq became involved in supporting it.

Regarding the conceptualisation of the process, the government and its main ally, the ultranationalist MHP party, framed it as an initiative to eradicate terrorism in Türkiye that did not involve concessions. The Kurdish movement presented it as an initiative for peace and for a democratic society. No mutually agreed roadmap with clear phases and timelines came to light. The steps taken were mainly in the military sphere, largely through PKK measures, which Türkiye responded to in the second half of the year through a de facto policy of détente. Analysts pointed to a pattern of reciprocal, coordinated steps, although milestones came through action taken by the PKK.

Among the steps taken this year, in a historic move in February, Öcalan called for an end to the armed struggle and urged the PKK to convene a congress, lay down its arms and voluntarily dissolve, citing changes in the historical context and an atmosphere favourable to the negotiating process.⁷⁰ **The PKK announced a unilateral ceasefire on 1 March.** The SDF said that Öcalan’s call did not apply to their group. The Turkish government warned that all groups linked to the PKK must dissolve, including its “extensions” in Syria. **Despite the unilateral ceasefire, Türkiye maintained military pressure on the group and affiliated militias.** Despite the attacks, **on 12 May the group announced its decision to dissolve its organisational structure and end the armed struggle**,⁷¹ explaining that it had reached a point where the Kurdish issue could be resolved through democratic politics. However, it noted that the implementation of its decision required recognition of Öcalan’s right to participate in democratic politics, solid legal guarantees in the process, a responsible role for the Turkish Parliament in the process and other considerations. The Turkish president described the announcement as a key milestone in advancing towards a “country without terrorism” and said that he expected the dissolution to encompass all extensions of the group, especially in northern Iraq, Syria and Europe. Following its announcement, the PKK temporarily began using the name Kurdistan Freedom Movement.

The PKK began its disarmament in a symbolic act in which 30 fighters destroyed their weapons on 11 July in Sulaymaniyah in Iraqi Kurdistan. In subsequent months, pro-government media reported some further steps in the disarmament, under the supervision of the Turkish intelligence services and the Turkish Army. However, no details emerged about the disarmament roadmap or about the amounts or types of weapons surrendered by the end of the year, nor was any substantial information disclosed about independent supervision or verification. Analysts noted in early 2026 that only symbolic disarmament had taken place and that an uncertain situation prevailed due to the crisis in Syria and Iran. In October, **the PKK announced the withdrawal of its**

70. Full text at “Call for Peace and Democratic Society”.

71. Statement full text.

forces from Türkiye and its retreat to northern Iraq. In November, it moved its forces in northern Iraq areas even further from the border to avoid clashes and protect the peace process, according to the group. During 2025, the PKK demanded that the Turkish government release Öcalan and called for a legal framework to resolve the situation of PKK members and political and constitutional democratisation reforms that address the Kurdish issue. Ankara responded to the steps taken by the PKK in the second half of the year, with few violent incidents in northern Iraq from August onwards.

A parliamentary commission was established in August. Named the National Solidarity, Brotherhood and Democracy Commission, it was given a mandate to provide recommendations on political and legal reforms concerning the process, including in relation to disarmament. All parliamentary parties except İYİ participated in the commission, though with different expectations and priorities. The pro-Kurdish DEM party called for democratisation and made demands related to rights and freedoms for the Kurdish population, including education in the Kurdish language. It also called for the release of Öcalan, the regulation of disarmament and reintegration, the release of political prisoners and other issues. Between August and early October, the commission held hearings with representatives of different groups (officials from the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Defence and the intelligence services, under confidentiality and sealed records for 10 years for these specific cases; victims' relatives, veterans associations, human rights, peace and humanitarian organisations, legal associations, trade unions, business organisations, former speakers of Parliament and academics). These were closed-door sessions. The use of the Kurdish language was prohibited in these sessions, a move heavily criticised by pro-Kurdish and human rights actors, and there were tensions over some testimony deemed re-traumatising. A multi-party delegation from the commission met with Öcalan in November (comprising the ruling AKP, its ultranationalist ally MHP and the DEM party, as the main opposition party, the CHP, refused to participate). The political parties submitted their reports with proposals to the commission. The AKP's report highlighted the need to create a mechanism to verify disarmament and for judicial oversight, and that disarmament must encompass what the AKP considers to be extensions of the PKK in Syria and Iraq. It also recommended a temporary and specific legal framework for the process. In its report, the DEM party recommended the immediate release of Öcalan, the adoption of a peace law and wide-ranging legislative changes and democratisation measures. In December, the commission's mandate was extended for a further two months to agree on a final report.

Gender, peace and security

The negotiating process took place in a political and social context in Türkiye in which UN rapporteurs and human rights organisations warned of the criminalisation of women human rights defenders, women's organisations and LGBTIQ+ people.⁷² Regarding the process and the actors involved, the DEM delegation that held meetings with the PKK leader and with Türkiye's political parties from 2024 and throughout 2025 had a composition that varied according to the type of meeting, but Pervin Buldan was present in all of them. Buldan is a DEM MP, a former co-leader of the HDP (DEM's predecessor) and a women's human rights activist. Buldan also formed part of the HDP delegation that participated in the previous peace process (2013-2015). **Some closed-door meetings took place between Kurdish and Turkish female politicians from different parties.** Media outlets reported on a meeting between a women's delegation from the DEM party and a women's delegation from the AKP party in March. The DEM Women's Assembly said the meeting had gone very well because of a lack of 'grandiloquent politics'. That DEM body stated in March that they had also met with women from the CHP, Saadet, DEVA, Gelecek, TIP and EMEP, and that they planned to meet with the MHP as well, whilst the İYİ party had not responded to them. Furthermore, the DEM Women's Assembly organised meetings during the year in different parts of the country with various groups of women, including female journalists, women from different religious groups, women's organisations and other groups.

In its statement announcing its dissolution and the end of its armed struggle, the PKK referred to the leadership of women and young people, the defence of women's freedom and the involvement of all parts of the population in the peace process, including women. Furthermore, the PKK's symbolic disarmament act in July involved the burning of weapons by 15 male combatants and 15 female combatants. Under the umbrella of the TJA, the Kurdish women's movement issued statements in support of the dialogue and with its own demands. In an August statement, they called for the need for a peace process that involves grassroots parts of the population and demanded an end to the practice of dismissing elected mayors and imposing state-appointed figures, the abolition of the anti-terror law, the release of all political prisoners (especially the sick and elderly), the decriminalisation of politics and a return to the Istanbul Convention.⁷³ They also mentioned the importance of a new constitution and a constitutional debate involving all parts of the population, including women.

72. *Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism and the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls*, AL TUR 8/2025, 7 August 2025. See the response of the government of Türkiye in Permanent Mission of the Republic of Türkiye to the United Nations Office in Geneva, *Information note in reply to the communication from the Special procedures (Reference: AL TUR 8/2025)*, 6 October 2025.

73. See the [statement](#) released in August.

6. Peace negotiations in the Middle East

- The Middle East was the scene of eight negotiations in 2025, accounting for 15% of the total number of cases worldwide.
- The negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme experienced ups and downs and were affected by the 'Twelve-Day War' pitting Iran against Israel and the US.
- The negotiations to address the conflict in Yemen remained deadlocked in 2025, in part due to the impact of regional upheaval on the country.
- Following mediation by Oman, the US and the Yemeni armed group the Houthis agreed to a ceasefire that did not include Israel.
- Despite the ceasefire agreement in late 2024, Israel continued to conduct almost daily attacks in Lebanon.
- The agreements announced in 2025 only relatively lowered the extraordinary levels of violence in Gaza.
- Following the expansion of territories occupied by Israel in Syria, Netanyahu's government and the new Syrian government initiated contacts, but talks remained stalled.
- The regime change in Syria activated internal processes of dialogue and conflict management, in parallel with dynamics of tension and violence.

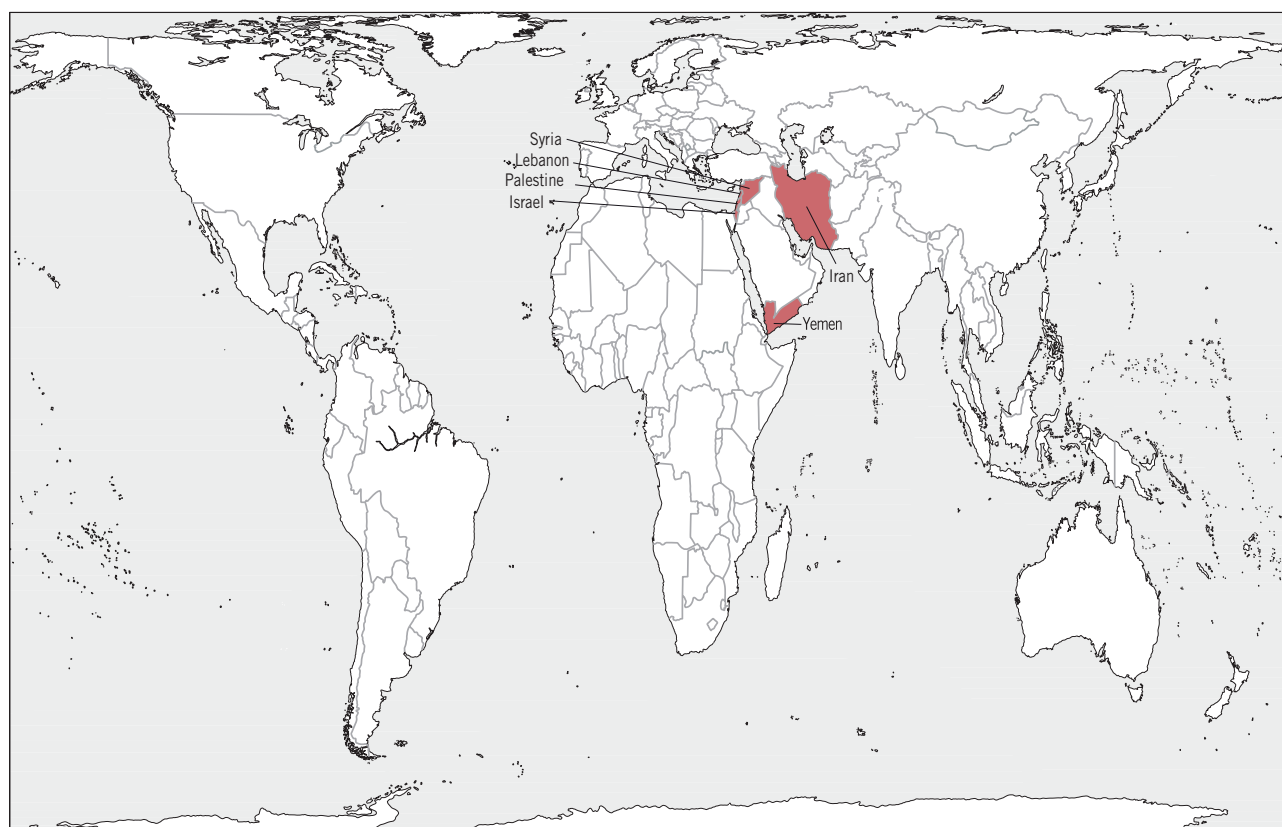
This chapter analyses the main peace processes and negotiations in the Middle East throughout 2025. First, it presents the main characteristics and general trends of the negotiating processes in the region. Second, it studies the evolution of contexts during the year, including references to the gender perspective and implementation of the international agenda on women, peace and security. At the beginning of this chapter, a map is also presented identifying the countries of the Middle East that were the scene of negotiations in 2025.

Table 6.1 **Summary of peace processes and negotiations in the Middle East in 2025**

Peace processes and negotiations*	Negotiating actors	Third parties
Iran (nuclear programme)	Iran, France, United Kingdom, Germany, China, Russia, EU, USA	UN, Oman, Qatar
Israel – Lebanon (Hezbollah)	Government of Israel, government of Lebanon, Hezbollah	USA, France, UN
Israel – Palestine	Government of Israel, Hamas, PA	USA, Qatar, Egypt, France, Saudi Arabia, Arab League, UN
Israel – Syria	Government of Israel, government of Syria	UN, USA, United Arab Emirates (UAE), France, Azerbaijan
Palestine	Hamas, Fatah, other Palestinian political groups	Egypt
Syria	Government, political and armed opposition groups, regional actors	UN, USA, France, Saudi Arabia
Yemen	Internationally recognised Yemeni government (backed by Saudi Arabia), Houthis / Ansar Allah, Saudi Arabia	UN, Oman, ICRC
Yemen (Houthis) – USA	Yemen (Houthis), USA	Oman

* Peace negotiations in bold are described in this chapter.

Map 3.1. Peace negotiations in the Middle East in 2025



■ Countries with peace processes and negotiations in the Middle East in 2025.

6.1 Negotiations in 2025: regional trends

This chapter analyses eight negotiating processes that took place in the Middle East in 2025, that account for 15% of all peace processes worldwide in the last year. There were two more cases than the previous year. Five cases were related to armed conflicts –Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah), Israel-Palestine, Syria, Yemen and Yemen (Houthis)-USA– and the other three were linked to socio-political crises: one associated with the development of Iran’s nuclear programme, another connected to tensions between Syria and Israel and the third related to the dispute between the Palestinian groups Hamas and Fatah. All cases are analysed in this chapter with the exception of the last one (Palestine), due to the fact that its dynamics in 2025 were closely shaped by and linked to the trend of the Israel-Palestine negotiations that focused on Gaza. Most of the negotiations (five) were associated with international disputes, which have increased in recent years: Iran (nuclear programme), Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah), Israel-Palestine, Israel-Syria, Yemen (Houthis)-US. The other two cases involved internationalised internal conflicts (Syria and Yemen) and one an internal dispute, in Palestine. Compared to the previous year, more negotiations were identified in 2025, alongside a

regional scenario characterised by an increase in conflicts and mounting tensions, particularly since late 2023.

Governments were **involved in all the negotiating processes in the region**, whether through direct or indirect contacts, with representatives of other states or of non-state armed actors. The negotiating process surrounding Iran’s nuclear programme stood out for its multilateral dynamic, involving representatives of various states. On the one hand, consultations took place between Iran and diplomats from Germany, France and the United Kingdom (E3) throughout the year. On the other hand, parallel negotiations were held between Tehran and Washington through indirect contacts that derailed following the start of the Israeli attack on Iran in June. In other cases, the process was framed within a bilateral dynamic, involving two governments, such as that of the Israeli government of Benjamin Netanyahu and the new Syrian government led by Ahmed al-Sharaa. In cases such as Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah), official contact took place between representatives of the respective states, although Hezbollah, a non-state political and armed actor in confrontation with Israel played a key role. Armed groups that participated in other negotiations operated as de facto governments in the territories under their control. This was the case of the Houthis, who control the north and much of the centre of Yemen. Through Omani mediation, they

reached an agreement with the US after several months of intense US military strikes and despite the fact that Washington had applied a more stringent “terrorist organisation” designation to the group. The Houthis were also major players in the Yemeni peace process, which involved other political and armed actors, including the internationally recognised government. Following the fall of Bashar Assad’s regime in Syria in late 2024, Ahmed al-Sharaa assumed leadership of the transition and became involved in various kinds of initiatives with armed, political and social actors. One of them, the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), maintained control of 25% of Syrian territory. Along with his former armed group, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), al-Sharaa had also been designated as ‘terrorist’ in the past.

Third parties were involved in all cases in the region, in line with observations made in previous years. Various countries performed mediation and/or facilitation tasks in the negotiations. Several states from the region stood out in this regard. For example, Oman played a mediating role in the ceasefire between the US and the Houthis in Yemen in 2025, continued to host meetings between Yemeni disputing actors to advance the implementation of some agreements and was also involved in the indirect negotiations between the US and Iran over the latter’s nuclear programme, facilitating meetings both in the Omani capital, Muscat, and at the Omani embassy in Rome. Oman’s role as mediator in these cases would have been favoured by its diplomatic relations with both Washington and Tehran, as well as with the Houthis, who maintain a representative office in the sultanate. Qatar was another country in the region involved as a third party. The country was due to host the fifth round of negotiations between the US and Iran, which were ultimately suspended due to Israel’s attack on Iran that led to the so-called ‘Twelve-Day War’. The negotiating process in which Qatar was most involved, however, was Israel-Palestine, where it assumed a mediating role alongside Egypt and the US. As part of that role, Qatar was even the scene of an Israeli attack in which members of the Hamas negotiating delegation were killed. As in previous years, Egypt was involved in intra-Palestinian dialogue initiatives. Saudi Arabia also assumed various roles as a third party in peace processes in the region: alongside France, it continued to promote an initiative to revitalise the two-state solution in the Palestine-Israel context; it became involved in facilitating a ceasefire and a cooperation deal for border demarcation between Syria and Lebanon; and, according to reports, it joined forces with Egypt and Qatar in an attempt to persuade the US to influence Israel to halt its offensive in Lebanon.

Regarding actors from outside the region, **the role of the US was especially important both for the number of negotiating processes in which it was involved and for the forms and impact of the initiatives promoted**

Regional countries such as Oman, Qatar, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia played third-party roles in various negotiation processes

by the Trump administration. Washington was involved in four of the eight processes analysed in the region (Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah), Israel-Palestine, Israel-Syria and Syria), in addition to its role as a negotiating actor regarding the Iranian nuclear issue. Its role as a third party was ambivalent, however, considering that it presented itself as a mediating actor whilst at the same time offering decisive political and military support to one of the parties involved in most of these conflicts: Israel. Washington’s positions demonstrated its partiality and alignment with the interests and positions defended by Israel, and this was even staged in some episodes, such as the announcement of the plan for Gaza alongside the Israeli prime minister in October, which excluded Palestinians and was presented as an ultimatum to Hamas. US actions in this area were channelled largely through special envoys appointed by President Trump, principally US Special Envoy for the Middle East Steve Witkoff and US Special Envoy for Lebanon and Syria Tom Barrack. In addition to its involvement in negotiations, the US participated in monitoring mechanisms such as the one overseeing the Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah) ceasefire, in which the UN and France were also present. The European country most publicly active in promoting mediation and facilitation initiatives in the Middle East was France, which continued to be involved in the Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah) negotiating process, promoted the conference on the two-state solution alongside Saudi Arabia and became involved in mediation efforts between Damascus and the SDF in Syria. In terms of regional organisations, the Arab League presented a plan for the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip as a way to advance the two-state solution. The initiative responded in part to the alarm generated by Trump’s previous statements opening the door to the expulsion of the Palestinian population from Gaza to countries in the region, primarily Egypt and Jordan.

In line with previous years, **the UN was involved in the vast majority of the peace processes in the region, though with a changing role, diminished or affected by contradictions** arising from the way the different contexts developed. One such example concerned the negotiations over Iran’s nuclear programme. Following the reimposition of sanctions on Tehran and the expiration of the framework established by the agreement in force since 2015 (JCPOA), disagreement persisted among members of the UN Security Council at the end of 2025 over the role that the international organisation should continue to play in this area, which had previously and primarily focused on facilitating and monitoring commitments undertaken in the deal. Following the fall of Bashar Assad’s regime and the beginning of a new phase in Syria, questions also arose over the role of the UN, which continued to argue that the roadmap defined in 2015 contained principles applicable to the new phase. After the special envoy

for Syria resigned in September and a technical and strategic assessment was produced, the UN Secretary-General was considering options for the UN's future involvement in the country. In the meantime, two of the UN missions established decades ago to monitor ceasefires in the region saw their operations and prospects compromised. In the case of Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah), the UNIFIL mission continued to participate in the mechanism monitoring the implementation of the ceasefire agreement of November 2024. However, during 2025, UNIFIL's mandate was approved to expire at the end of 2026. The mission had become increasingly uncomfortable for Israel due to its observation and reporting of ceasefire violations, which influenced the US to pressure the UN Security Council to end its mandate. The operations of UNDOF, the mission monitoring the ceasefire and separation of forces between Israel and Syria since 1974, were directly affected by Israel's expansion of its occupation of Syrian territory since late 2024. UN mediation initiatives for Yemen remained blocked, in part as a consequence of the impact of regional upheaval dynamics and the interrelationship of conflicts on the country. In the case of Israel-Palestine, the UN Security Council ultimately validated Trump's plan for Gaza, despite much criticism, including from UN representatives themselves.

The **negotiating agendas** in the region addressed different issues, though efforts aimed at achieving or implementing ceasefires particularly stood out. This observation aligns with what has been seen in previous years. It is also consistent with analyses produced in the last 15 years asserting that ceasefire agreements have become more important as a mechanism for addressing armed conflicts, particularly in the MENA region, alongside a decline in broader and more comprehensive peace processes that tackle the root causes of conflicts amid the proliferation of actors involved both in those conflicts and in mediation initiatives. Various ceasefires were announced in the cases analysed in the region throughout 2025, though the vast majority were characterised by their fragility, recurrent violations or partial scope, and therefore by an often limited and relative reduction in violence. Thus, for example, the ceasefire between the US and the Houthis excluded Israel, so it did not address the hostilities between Netanyahu's government and the Yemeni group, which continued throughout the year. The ceasefire announcements in the cases of Israel-Palestine and Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah) were continuously violated by Israeli forces. In the latter case, for example, the ceasefire was broken daily by Israeli attacks on Lebanese soil since its implementation. In Yemen, the ceasefire that remains de facto in force

The UN was involved in the vast majority of the peace processes in the region, though with a changing role, diminished or affected by contradictions

The negotiating agendas in the region addressed different issues, though efforts aimed at achieving or implementing ceasefires particularly stood out

resisted amid an increasingly fragile atmosphere. In Syria, meanwhile, the main episodes of violence reported in 2025 led to fragile ceasefire agreements that reduced but did not prevent the persistence of violent incidents in various parts of the country.

Withdrawal from territory was another issue present on the negotiating agendas of the Israel-Palestine, Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah) and Israel-Syria cases, given the expansion of land occupied by Israel. Following the October agreement promoted by the Trump administration, Israeli forces in Gaza had withdrawn to the 'yellow line', which became the new limit there and meant that Netanyahu's government maintained control of more than 50% of the territory. The next phase (in 2026) planned for a further withdrawal, conditional on the disarmament of Hamas and the deployment of an 'International Stabilisation Force'. Previously, the ceasefire agreement announced in January had failed in part due to Netanyahu's refusal to withdraw from the Philadelphi Corridor, a strategic area separating Gaza from Egypt. In the Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah) context, Israel withdrew from most of southern Lebanon that it had occupied during the 2023 hostilities in accordance with one of the provisions of the November 2024 ceasefire agreement. By late 2025, however, it maintained five positions and two 'buffer zones' north of the Blue Line (the de facto border). In the case of Israel-Syria, Damascus insisted on demanding Israel's withdrawal and the reinstatement of the agreement in force since 1974, whilst Netanyahu's government persisted in its refusal to withdraw from the areas occupied since 2024 and repeated its intention to occupy these areas indefinitely.

The disarmament of armed actors, particularly non-state armed actors, was another issue concerning negotiations in the region. As mentioned regarding the Israel-Palestine case, phase two of the agreement for Gaza announced by Trump planned for the disarmament of Hamas. The group indicated its willingness to hand over its defensive weapons, but not its offensive ones. In the case of Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah), the disarmament of the Shia group was one of the key issues. The November 2024 ceasefire agreement provided that the Lebanese government must prevent attacks on Israel and confiscate and dismantle Hezbollah's arsenals and those of other armed groups. In this vein, the Lebanese authorities presented a plan to try to ensure the state monopoly on the use of weapons, but the timeline was unclear and Hezbollah insisted that it would not agree to disarmament or to the eventual integration of its militiamen into the Lebanese Armed Forces until Israel's expulsion from Lebanon was guaranteed. However, the

Lebanese government did secure an agreement with the Palestinian Authority in 2025 for the disarmament of Palestinian factions within the PLO orbit in Lebanon. The question of how armed factions linked to Druze and Kurdish groups would be integrated into the new Syrian Armed Forces was one of the prominent points of the talks in Syria, whilst mistrust and dynamics of violence persisted. The exchange of prisoners was another item on the negotiating agendas for Israel-Palestine and Yemen. In the former, the January and October ceasefire agreements included provisions relating to the release of persons held by both Israel and Hamas. Thus, by the end of the year, the Palestinian group had handed over all the Israelis it held, alive and dead, with the exception of one (who was released in January 2026). As part of the implementation of previous agreements in Yemen (Stockholm, 2018), during 2025 the terms of a new prisoner exchange between the parties to the conflict were agreed to be carried out in 2026.

As outlined, the **trend of the negotiations** changed little, with some remaining blocked (Yemen) or showing little progress beyond the initiation of indirect contacts (Israel-Syria) or certain expectations at the beginning of the year (Iran's nuclear programme). Ceasefires that were reached, such as in the cases of Israel-Palestine, Yemen (Houthis)-US and Syria, or implemented, such as in the Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah) conflict, were fragile, partial or continuously violated. The ceasefires therefore only partially or relatively reduced violence against civilians, who were subjected to extremely severe impacts and, in some cases, limited and insufficient access to humanitarian aid to try to alleviate dire needs. Thanks to local mediation efforts and UN support, the reopening of roads that had been closed for seven years due to the armed conflict in Yemen stands out as a positive point due to its practical impact on people, its consideration as a confidence-building step between the parties and its demonstration that it is possible to reach understandings through dialogue.

Finally, the widespread lack of inclusiveness and the nearly exclusive predominance of male leadership in high-level positions once again shaped **gender issues and the participation of women in negotiating processes** in the Middle East. One of the few exceptions was the involvement of UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Jeanine Hennis-Passchaert in the monitoring mechanism for the Israel-Lebanon (Hezbollah) ceasefire. Nevertheless, women in the region, whose roles are analysed in Lebanon, Yemen and Syria in this chapter, continued to be involved in emergency responses to conflicts, in condemning their impacts, in demanding effective ceasefires and in calling for substantive participation in defining the future of their countries, moving beyond tokenistic approaches. Women's

organisations and feminist groups took advantage of the 25th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (October) to amplify their demands.

6.2 Case study analysis

Mashreq

Israel - Lebanon (Hezbollah)	
Negotiating actors	Government of Israel, government of Lebanon, Hezbollah
Third parties	USA, France, UN
Relevant agreements	UN Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006), Cessation of hostilities agreement (2024)

Summary:

Since 1978, the United Nations has been operating in southern Lebanon through an interim force (UNIFIL) to try to secure the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the country and to help the Lebanese government to restore its authority in the area, where Palestinian groups are active. The mission's mandate has changed over the years, in line with developments. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, which encouraged the creation of the Lebanese Shia militia Hezbollah, led to a new period of hostilities. In 2000, Israel withdrew its forces along the Blue Line, the separation line with Lebanon established by the UN that serves as a de facto border between both countries. In 2006, following clashes between Hezbollah and Israel, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1701, which established a cessation of hostilities to be supervised by UNIFIL. In more than two decades, the resolution has not led to a permanent ceasefire or a long-term solution and successive reports on its implementation indicate repeated violations of the agreement's provisions. In 2022, Washington brokered the agreement that fixed the maritime borders between Israel and Lebanon for the first time. Hostilities around the Blue Line intensified again significantly from October 2023, following the Hamas attacks on 7 October 2023, the start of the Israeli offensive against Gaza and Hezbollah's decision to launch attacks against Israel in solidarity with the Palestinian population. In November 2024, Israel and Lebanon reached a new and fragile cessation of hostilities agreement after mediation by the United States and France.

After a ceasefire agreement was reached between Israel and Lebanon in November 2024 following mediation by the US and France,¹ attention in 2025 was devoted to monitoring its implementation in a seriously fragile atmosphere. Although violence decreased following the entry into force of the cessation of hostilities, **repeated violations of the agreement occurred throughout the year**. Israel continued to carry out attacks on Lebanese soil nearly daily (one every four hours on average), according to estimates. Netanyahu's government declared that it wanted to eliminate Hezbollah members or prevent it from rebuilding its military capabilities. Israeli attacks killed more than 400 people, including over 100 civilians.² Hezbollah was not involved in attacks against

1. The text of this agreement is available at the PA-X database: [Announcement of a Cessation of Hostilities and Related Commitments on Enhanced Security Arrangements and Towards the Implementation of UNSCR 1701](#), 27 November 2024.

2. See the summary on Israel-Hezbollah in chapter 1 (Armed conflicts) in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2026! Report on Conflicts, Human Rights and Peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2026.

Israel in 2025, not even during the “TwelveDay War” between Israel and Iran in June,³ though other regional allies of Iran did participate.

Pursuant to the provisions of the cessation of hostilities agreement, in mid-February Israel withdrew from most of southern Lebanon that it had occupied during the hostilities that broke out in 2023. However, it did not withdraw from all territory. At the end of the year, Israel continued to violate the withdrawal conditions and maintained military forces in five positions and two “buffer zones” north of the Blue Line (the de facto border between Israel and Lebanon, though it is not officially recognised). The Israeli government has stressed that it will hold these positions until Israel is certain that Hezbollah will not return to the area south of the Litani River. The ceasefire agreement stipulates that the Lebanese government will prevent Hezbollah and other armed groups from launching attacks against Israel and that the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) will dismantle infrastructure and confiscate unauthorised weapons, among other tasks. During 2025, the LAF expanded its deployment in southern Lebanon and removed weapons and explosives from the area. In August, the Lebanese government approved a plan to guarantee the state monopoly on the use of arms by the end of 2025 and tasked the LAF with carrying it out. The plan involves the disarmament of Hezbollah and other armed groups, although it does not establish a detailed timeline for doing so. The roadmap drawn up by the LAF was questioned and rejected by Hezbollah and its main political ally, Amal. Some Hezbollah leaders said that the group would not accept total disarmament, whilst others suggested that its forces could only be integrated into national institutions after securing Israel’s expulsion from Lebanese territory, among other things. Meanwhile, the Lebanese authorities’ attempts to achieve a state monopoly on force led to an agreement between the Lebanese and Palestinian presidents in May to secure the disarmament of Palestinian factions within the PLO’s orbit in refugee camps in Lebanon. Therefore, the agreement does not involve the Palestinian groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad, also active in the country. By November, weapons had been handed over in eight of the 12 camps.

Throughout the period, **the ceasefire was overseen by the Ceasefire Monitoring Mechanism**, which is military in nature and the only communication channel between the parties. Prior to the November 2024 agreement, a similar mechanism had been established

by UN Security Council Resolution 1701. Originally tripartite, involving Israel, Lebanon and UNIFIL, it was expanded to include the US and France. Washington, which acts as mediator, but is also Israel’s main political and military ally, assumed leadership of the mechanism. UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert also participated in the meetings. In December, the mechanism incorporated civilian representatives from Lebanon and Israel for the first time. These representatives participated in two meetings and reportedly stressed the importance of focusing on conditions for the safe return of displaced populations, moving forward on reconstruction and addressing economic needs. The Lebanese government said that civilian participation in this mechanism, which Hezbollah criticised as a ‘concession’, was not a step towards the normalisation of relations with Israel. The US reportedly urged Beirut repeatedly to engage in direct dialogue with Israel, including through its new ambassador to Lebanon, Michael Issa. A personal friend

At the end of the year, Israel continued to violate the withdrawal conditions and maintained military forces in five positions and two “buffer zones” in the south of Lebanon

of Trump, Issa said that support for Lebanon was conditional on the disarmament of Hezbollah. Following the announcement of the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in October, the Lebanese president stated that his country was willing to negotiate to end Israeli occupation, but that this required a predisposition to dialogue that he did not observe in Netanyahu’s government. Hezbollah warned that negotiations with Israel could lead to domestic upheaval. At the end of the year, in a highly volatile regional context, it emerged that Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Qatar were also urging the US to pressure Israel to de-escalate in Lebanon.

In mid-2025, the UN Security Council decided to renew UNIFIL’s mandate for the last time, as the mission had become an increasingly uncomfortable actor for Israel due to its observation work and its reporting of violations. Among other things, UNIFIL warned of Israel’s constant violations of Lebanese airspace, the construction of walls within Lebanese territory and Israeli fire in areas near UNIFIL personnel. Influenced by Israel, the US took a highly critical stance towards UNIFIL and pushed for the mission to be terminated by mid-2026, but following negotiations with other Security Council members, it was extended until the end of the year in UNSC Resolution 2790.⁴ The text establishes that in June 2026, the UN Secretary-General must present options on how to continue implementing UNSC Resolution 1701 after UNIFIL’s withdrawal, in a scenario that presupposes a greater deployment and control by the LAF in the southern part of the country. Questions remained over the impact of the withdrawal

3. See the summary on Israel, USA - Iran in chapter 1 (Armed conflicts) in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2026! Report on Conflicts, Human Rights and Peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2026.

4. United Nations, *Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2790 (2025), Security Council Extends Mandate of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon*, SC/16159, 28 August 2025; Security Council Report, *UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL): Vote on Final Mandate Renewal and Drawdown, What’s in Blue*, 28 August 2025.

on the prospects for stabilisation in the area and on the monitoring of the ceasefire.⁵

Gender, peace and security

Lebanese women were largely excluded from the negotiations in 2025. The November 2024 ceasefire was limited to military and security issues and did not include any provisions related to civil or humanitarian affairs. Furthermore, the subsequent talks, as well as the monitoring mechanisms, lacked a gender perspective.⁶ Despite their absence from high-level spaces, Lebanese women were active in multiple areas, including in providing emergency responses to the impacts of the conflict, as well as in awareness-raising and advocacy to give visibility to the impacts of the war on women and girls in the country and the region, to condemn the dynamics of militarisation in the Middle East and to demand peace and a real ceasefire. Some initiatives took advantage of the 25th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security to address the UN Security Council. Other initiatives engaged in dialogue with women from other countries in the region, particularly Syria, and insisted on demands for inclusion. Additionally, UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert was involved in the meetings of the ceasefire monitoring committee, where she reportedly advocated for adding others to the conversation.

Israel-Palestine	
Negotiating actors	Government of Israel, Hamas, PA
Third parties	Qatar, Egypt, USA, France, Saudi Arabia, Arab League, UN
Relevant agreements	Israel – PLO Mutual Recognition (1993), Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (Oslo I Accords), Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area (Cairo Agreement) (1994), Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Oslo II) (1995), Wye River Memorandum (1998), Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum (1999), Road Map to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (2003), Annapolis Conference Joint Understanding on Negotiations (2007)

Summary:
The peace process launched in the 1990s has not resulted in an agreement between the parties on the most complex issues borders, Jerusalem, settlements, Palestinian refugees and security or the creation of a Palestinian state. Since the timetable established by the Oslo Accords broke down

a series of rounds of negotiation have been conducted and various proposals have been made, but they have all been unsuccessful. The peace process has developed amidst periodic outbursts of violence and alongside the fait accompli policies of Israel, including about its persisting occupation. These dynamics have created growing doubts about the viability of a two-state solution. Meanwhile, after periods of escalating violence, truce and cessation of hostilities agreements have been reached between the Israeli government and Palestinian armed actors.

Various initiatives were promoted to address the situation in Palestine in 2025. By the end of the year, they had relatively managed to lower the extraordinary levels of violence previously observed, but no other prospects were offered for a just and lasting long-term solution. The second administration of Donald Trump, who returned to the presidency in January, played a particularly prominent role in these initiatives, taking a position clearly aligned with Israel's interests. Therefore, alongside its involvement as a purported mediator, the US continued to provide key political and military support to Netanyahu's government.

Diplomatic efforts intensified in January 2025, in a regional context marked by the Israel-Lebanon agreement (November 2024) and the fall of Bashar Assad in Syria (December 2024). US President Joe Biden was interested in achieving results before the end of his term and Trump had explicitly declared his interest in reaching a rapid agreement on Gaza. The mediation of Qatar, Egypt and the US led to the announcement of a ceasefire agreement on 15 January. The agreement, which came into force four days later, was structured in three phases. The first, lasting 42 days, provided for the exchange of Israelis held by Hamas in Gaza for Palestinians detained by Israel (including an important number of women)⁷, expanded access for humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the most populated areas. Hamas then released 33 Israelis and five Thais, whilst Israel released approximately 2,000 Palestinians. The agreement held despite persistent Israeli attacks in Gaza and accusations that Israel continued to block access to essential goods, in addition to charges that Hamas was staging hostage handover ceremonies. In the second phase, which had no set timeline, the remaining living Israelis held by Hamas were planned to be exchanged for Palestinians imprisoned by Israel and Israel would completely withdraw its forces from Gaza. In a third phase, the bodies of deceased Israeli hostages and soldiers would have been exchanged for deceased Hamas fighters and the reconstruction of Gaza was supposed to be launched.

5. Najia Houssari, *What UNIFIL's looming departure means for Lebanon's volatile southern border*; Arab News, 5 May 2026; Philip Loft, *Lebanon and the end of UNIFIL's mandate in 2026*, House of Commons Library, 24 September 2025.

6. Poppelreuter, Philip, Qabas al-Musawi, Alexander Bramble, *Gendering Ceasefires in the MENA Region: The Cases of Gaza and Lebanon*, Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy and Inclusive Peace, AGDA Insight, November 2025.

7. The first two rounds of prisoner/detainee swaps between Israel and Hamas in January 2025 saw the release of all Israeli women who had been in Hamas captivity since October 2023. Israel also released Palestinian women and teenage prisoners first.

According to the timetable agreed in January, details on this second phase were to begin to be negotiated in February, but as the weeks passed it became evident that Netanyahu's government did not wish to move to the second phase. The first phase expired on 1 March without an agreement. In the meantime, Israel announced that it had no intention to withdraw from the Philadelphi Corridor, a strategic area separating Gaza from Egypt, and demanded that Hamas release all 59 hostages it held in exchange for extending the first phase of the agreement. The Israeli government presented the proposal as conceived by the US Envoy for the Middle East, Steve Witkoff. Washington validated the approach even though it contravened the plan presented in January. Faced with Hamas' rejection, which considered the change of conditions a violation of what had been agreed, Israel suspended humanitarian aid, intensified the blockade on Gaza and broke the ceasefire. The military campaign resumed on 18 March and intensified heavily in the following weeks, with extremely serious impacts on the civilian population. The humanitarian situation worsened, leading to an international famine alert. Various analysts said that Hamas had remained committed to the January agreement and identified various reasons for Netanyahu to resume the Israeli attacks, including internal political calculations to guarantee his government's survival.⁸

In the months that followed, diplomatic efforts were exerted to secure a new ceasefire alongside the development of other initiatives. During a visit by Netanyahu to the White House in February, Trump expressed support for expelling the population of Gaza to Jordan and Egypt and for the US to take control of Gaza to build a 'riviera' in the Middle East. The Arab League countries presented a counterproposal in March based on rejecting the displacement of the Palestinian population. The Arab plan prioritised the reconstruction of Gaza as a way to advance the two-state solution, suggesting that Gaza be temporarily administered by a committee of technocrats and committing a vast amount of resources, which led some analysts to call it a 'Marshall Plan' for Gaza. The Arab League's counterproposal received the support of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, China and several major European countries (Germany, Italy, France and the United Kingdom), whilst the EU considered it a serious basis for future discussions. In July, expectations were raised again about the possibility of a temporary ceasefire, but Witkoff's proposal for a 60-

day ceasefire in exchange for a new prisoner exchange gained no traction.

Amid international alarm over the dire situation in Gaza and the rise in Israeli violence in the West Bank, diplomatic initiatives aimed at giving new impetus to the two-state formula accelerated. **A high-level conference on the two-state solution was held in July. Promoted by France and Saudi Arabia, it resulted in the New York Declaration**, a roadmap that includes a ceasefire in Gaza, the release of hostages held by Hamas, the disarmament of the Palestinian group, the deployment of a stabilisation mission under the mandate of the UN Security Council and the establishment of conditions for a Palestinian state and the normalisation of relations between Israel and Arab countries. The declaration was endorsed by the UN General Assembly in September.

Days later, around a dozen countries announced their formal recognition of the State of Palestine.⁹ Assessments were mixed, as some viewed it as a positive step given the Israeli government's open opposition to a Palestinian state, whilst others thought that it risked remaining merely rhetorical and diverted attention from the urgent need to stop the genocide.¹⁰

Amid growing accusations of genocide, including from the UN Committee of Experts, and regional alarm and international condemnation following the Israeli attack on Hamas' negotiating delegation in Qatar, Trump presented a 20-point plan that he described as 'historic and unprecedented'.¹¹ Though it did share some material with the New York Declaration, it was unequivocally more aligned with Israel's interests, took a murky approach to any prospects for a future Palestinian state, was drawn up without Palestinian contributions and was conceived as an ultimatum.¹² Point 19 of the plan, which was announced at a joint press conference with Netanyahu at the White House, established that, depending on progress made in the reconstruction of Gaza and reforms to the Palestinian Authority, 'it is possible that conditions may finally be created for a credible path towards self-determination and the creation of a Palestinian state'. The plan focused on Gaza, making no mention of the situation in the West Bank and East Jerusalem or the situation of the Palestinian refugee population and offering no prospects for defending Palestinian rights. Trump gave Hamas a deadline of a few days to accept his proposal and warned that he would give Israel the green light to continue its attacks if it did not acquiesce.

In October Trump presented a 20-point plan, including a new ceasefire that led to a limited and relative decrease in violence

8. For more information, see International Crisis Group, *Stopping Israel's War in Gaza*, ICG, 21 March 2026; Escola de Cultura de Pau, 'Israel rompe el acuerdo de alto el fuego en Gaza y escala sus ofensivas en Cisjordania con devastadores impactos', in *Escenarios de riesgo y oportunidades de paz*, April 2026.

9. The states that formally recognised the State of Palestine in September 2025 were Andorra, Australia, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal and the United Kingdom, raising to 157 the total number of countries that have done so.

10. For more information, see Escola de Cultura de Pau, 'Israel enfrenta creciente aislamiento por el genocidio en Gaza, mientras Trump propone nuevo plan para la Franja' in *Escenarios de riesgo y oportunidades de paz*, October 2025.

11. *El País*, *Estos son los 20 puntos del acuerdo presentado por Trump para el fin de la invasión israelí de Gaza*, 29 September 2025.

12. For more information, see Pamela Urrutia, *Palestina: ¿paz mínima o paz c justicia?*, *Nationalia*, 24 October 2025.

Trump's plan was implemented in October and had led to a relative decrease in violence by the end of the year, although persistent Israeli attacks continued to claim Palestinian lives. As part of the implementation of the first phase, Hamas handed over all the Israeli prisoners it held and Israel withdrew to the 'yellow line', which became a new limit within Gaza, meaning that Netanyahu's government controlled over 50% of the territory. Humanitarian aid resumed distribution, but it remained woefully insufficient. The second phase of the plan, which was to begin in 2026, planned for the dismantlement of Hamas' offensive arsenals, though the group has refused to hand over its defensive ones, and a further Israeli withdrawal that would lead to Gaza's occupation by an International Stabilisation Force, whose composition had not yet been determined, but was estimated at between 20,000 and 30,000 personnel. The plan also provided for the establishment of a technocratic government composed of Palestinian and international representatives that would be supervised by the 'Board of Peace' led by Trump himself. At some unspecified point, this Board of Peace would cede control of Gaza to a 'reformed' Palestinian Authority, although the criteria for assessing this have not been established. In this context, various analysts said that Trump's plan established a new model of control and guardianship that replicates a colonial administration for the Gaza Strip. Despite this and the plan's many ambiguities, it was endorsed by the UN Security Council through Resolution 2803, adopted in November with Russia and China abstaining. The resolution was widely criticised, including by UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese, who warned of Trump's plan serious violations of international law.¹³ Palestinian women organisations and activists insisted that any solution to end the genocide not come at the expense of accountability or respect for international law and used international fora and events like the 25 anniversary of the 1325 UNSC resolution to denounce the gendered impacts of violence.¹⁴

Israel – Syria	
Negotiating actors	Israel, Syria
Third parties	UN, USA, United Arab Emirates (UAE), France, Azerbaijan
Relevant agreements	Ceasefire agreement (1973), Agreement on Disengagement Forces (1974)
Summary: In the Arab-Israeli war of 1973, also known as the 'Yom Kippur War', Syria unsuccessfully attempted to use its military to recover the Golan Heights area that Israel had occupied in the 1967 war. The armed conflict then led to an UN-promoted ceasefire (1973) and a disengagement of	

forces agreement (1974) between Israel and Syria, which have technically been at war since 1948. To monitor the implementation of the agreement, a UN observer mission (UNDOF) was established in the Syrian Golan Heights. Since then, the mission has monitored compliance with the ceasefire, the withdrawal of Israeli and Syrian troops, the demilitarised separation area established in the agreement and the restriction of military forces from both countries in the Golan area. Following the fall of Bashar Assad's regime in Syria in December 2024, the situation in the Golan Heights has changed significantly. The Israeli government announced its disengagement from the 1974 agreement, launched a series of aerial and ground military incursions into the area to prevent the deployment of forces from the new Syrian government and sent troops into the demilitarised zone where the agreement only allowed the presence of UNDOF. Israel justified its actions on national security grounds and has announced its intention to occupy the area indefinitely. Meanwhile, the new Syrian government has condemned these incursions, demanded the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Syria and reaffirmed its commitment to the 1974 agreement. In 2025, contacts were initiated to address the crisis between the two countries.

After attacking and dismantling Syrian arsenals following Assad's ouster in late 2024 and disavowing the validity of the 1974 agreement that established a separation area between Syria and Israel, Netanyahu's government expanded its occupation and control of territories in southern Syria adjacent to the Golan Heights. During 2025 Israeli forces launched continuous attacks that were not limited to the southern zone and even reached Damascus. Israel justified its actions on security grounds, explicitly announced its intention to remain in the occupied area indefinitely and demanded the complete demilitarisation of southern Syria, asserting that it would not allow forces from the new Syrian government in the area. The new authorities in Damascus condemned the attacks on their territory, urged the UN and other international actors to react to Israel's expansionist ambitions and reasserted Syria's commitment to the separation agreement that had been in force since 1974. In this context, around the middle of the year, first indirect, then **direct contacts were initiated between the new Syrian government led by Ahmed al-Sharaa and Netanyahu's government.**

According to reports, indirect talks began in May and were mediated by the US and facilitated by the United Arab Emirates (UAE). From then on, discreet direct meetings were initiated under Washington's mediation, some of which would have been held in Azerbaijan. These **initial dialogues may have been aimed at avoiding escalation and direct confrontation between the parties.** The Syrian president acknowledged these contacts and also said that he had called on countries with diplomatic ties to Israel, such as the US and France, to press Israel to halt its actions on Syrian soil. These

13. For more information, see Escola de Cultura de Pau, 'El riesgo de normalizar (aún más) el genocidio, el apartheid y la vulneración del derecho internacional', *Escenarios de riesgo y oportunidades de paz*, January 2026.

14. NGO Working Group on WPS, Statement by Ms. Noura Erakat at the UN Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security, 6 October 2025.

contacts between Israel and Syria were cut short in July following an escalation of violence in Syria that involved and particularly affected the Druze population in the town of Suweida and triggered a fresh rise of Israeli attacks. Netanyahu's government stepped up its military operations in Syria under the argument of protecting the Druze population, though many questioned its sincerity. On 18 July, the US announced that a 'ceasefire' had been reached. The US Special Envoy for Syria and Lebanon, Tom Barrack, assured that the agreement committed Israel and Syria and that it was backed by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, as well as by Türkiye, Jordan and other neighbouring countries.¹⁵ Bilateral contacts resumed and involved US Special Envoy for Lebanon and Syria, Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shaibani and Israeli Minister for Strategic Affairs Ron Dermer. Meetings were held in Paris and Baku, some with the mediation of France. The US reportedly pressed for normalisation of relations between the parties and for progress towards an agreement before the UN General Assembly in October.¹⁶ In the weeks that followed, Netanyahu confirmed that direct negotiations were ongoing with Syria and there were conflicting reports that an agreement might be imminent.¹⁷

By the end of the year, however, the talks remained at an impasse as Israeli attacks continued. The atmosphere was also tense due to Netanyahu's visit to Israeli troops in southern Syria in November, which al-Sharaa's government considered provocative. According to media reports, Israel refused to withdraw from all the territories occupied in southern Syria since December 2024 and was only willing to withdraw from some of them in exchange for a broad agreement with Damascus, not just a security agreement. The Syrian government was reportedly opposed to any normalisation agreement with Israel whilst the occupation of the Golan Heights continued.¹⁸ Publicly, Netanyahu said that an agreement with Syria was possible in December, but he also insisted that it hinged on the establishment of a demilitarised zone between Damascus and the separation area established in the 1974 agreement. This statement came a day after Trump warned against any attempt to destabilise Syria and the new leadership of al-Sharaa, whom he praised after strengthening ties with him in 2025.¹⁹ Throughout the year, the US government lifted sanctions on Syria and the terrorist designation that had weighed on al-Sharaa and other members of his circle. Trump received al-Sharaa at the White House in November, in the first visit by a Syrian president to the US in decades.

Finally, in its statements and periodic reports on

UNDOF, the UN condemned Israeli violations of the agreement, the impact of Israeli forces' operations and activities in Syria, the effects on the mission's work and the violation of Security Council resolutions. The UN Secretary-General urged that full compliance with the 1974 agreement must be restored at a minimum and the UN Special Envoy for Syria warned that Israel's 'fait accompli' in Syria would be difficult to reverse.

Syria	
Negotiating actors	Government, political and armed opposition groups, regional actors
Third parties	UN, USA, France, Saudi Arabia
Relevant agreements	Geneva Communiqué from the Action Group for Syria (2012); UNSC Resolution 2254 in support of the International Syria Support Group Roadmap for a Peace Process (Vienna Statements (2015))

Summary:

Following the start of the uprising against the Bashar al-Assad regime in 2011, given the serious consequences of the armed conflict in Syria and amidst concern about the regional repercussions of the crisis, various regional and international actors tried to facilitate a negotiated solution and commit the parties to a cessation of hostilities. However, regional actors' and international powers' different approaches to the conflict, together with an inability to reach consensus in the UN Security Council, hindered the possibilities of opening the way to a political solution. After a brief and failed attempt by the Arab League, the UN took the lead in the mediation efforts, led by special envoys Kofi Annan (2012), Lakhdar Brahimi (2012-2014), Staffan de Mistura (2014-2018) and Geir Pedersen (2018-2025). Other initiatives have come from the EU, United States, Russia and leaders of the International Syria Support Group (ISSG). In 2015, the ISSG peace talks in Vienna -led by Washington and Moscow and in which twenty countries and international organizations participated- resulted in a peace plan for Syria that was endorsed by Security Council resolution 2254 the ONU. As of 2017, in parallel to the UN-led Geneva process -which included intra-Syrian talks- a new channel began: the Russian-backed Astana process, which also involve Türkiye and Iran. In 2023, the Arab League began a new attempt to get involved in addressing the Syrian crisis. The various rounds of negotiations held since the beginning of the armed conflict showed deep differences between the parties and were not been able to halt the high levels of violence in the country. The fall of Bashar Assad regime in December 2024 opened a new chapter in the country's history, with broad challenges for the transition.

The overthrow of Bashar Assad's regime in December 2024 and the rise to power of new authorities opened a new scenario in Syria, leading various local, regional and international actors to recalibrate their positions,

15. Barak Ravid, *Israel and Syria agree to a ceasefire, U.S. envoy says*, *Axios*, 18 July 2025.
 16. France 24, *Syria, Israel hold US-mediated talks in Paris on regional de-escalation*, 20 August 2025.
 17. Reuters, *Israel says conclusion of talks with Syria contingent on demilitarisation, safeguarding Druze*, 24 September 2025; Mireille Rebeiz, *For warweary Syria, potential benefits of security pact with Israel comes with big risks*, *The Conversation*, 9 October 2025.
 18. The New Arab, *Israel-Syria security deal talks 'reach dead end', Israeli sources say*, *The New Arab*, 18 November 2025; Abby Sewell, *Syria's top diplomat and an Israeli delegation meet in Paris as US pushes for normalizing ties*, 20 August 2025.
 19. Lazar Berman, *After Trump warning, Netanyahu says he is open to deal with Syria, but holds firm on demands*, 2 December 2023.

with some of them involved both in the dynamics of the armed conflict and in initiatives to address it. Throughout the year, the new government led by Ahmed al-Sharaa attempted to tackle some of the country's internal fractures and problems. Initiatives included a national dialogue forum and agreements with political and armed actors, although the implementation of such initiatives raised questions about their scope. The persistence of violence and particularly bloody episodes in some parts of the country exposed the fragility of the new scenario and the enormous challenges of the new phase. The transition period may extend over a period of five years, according to announcements. In a context of a loss of influence in the country suffered by Russia, Iran and Hezbollah, allies of the deposed Assad, the new government sought to configure new alliances, attempted to reposition the country on the international stage, approached the US and other regional actors (Türkiye, Saudi Arabia and others) and secured the lifting of sanctions against al-Sharaa and other members of his government for their links with groups designated as terrorist. In addition, the Syrian government worked for the revocation of part of the sanctions affecting reconstruction activities in the country.

In late February, the new authorities promoted a national dialogue conference that produced a series of recommendations for a new Constitution and the internal reconciliation process, among other issues.

The dialogue was presented as an inclusive process. However, as a two-day event attended by around 900 people, doubts and questions were raised about its ability to maintain detailed discussion, its rigour and its representativeness, given the lack of clarity on the criteria for selecting the participants. Al-Sharaa's government also promoted the establishment of a mechanism for local transitional justice and missing persons. The fact that the mechanism was focused only on crimes committed by Bashar Assad's regime, and not on those perpetrated by all parties to the conflict, also drew criticism. At the same time, various escalations of violence occurred throughout the year. Among other effects, they exposed old and new dynamics of conflict and the difficulties faced by the new government in controlling armed groups theoretically under its orbit of influence. Some of the most serious episodes of violence affected areas where some of Syria's minorities are concentrated, including Alawites on the coast (Latakia and Tartous) and Druze populations in the south (Suweida). The fragile ceasefire agreements that resulted did not prevent violent incidents from recurring in these areas until the end of the year. In

Suweida, the escalation triggered new Israeli incursions into Syria, this time on the grounds of supporting the Druze population.²⁰ The intensification of violence in Suweida gave way to negotiations that led to a US-mediated ceasefire in July. In September, a roadmap was announced to address the crisis in Suweida and stabilise the area following a tripartite meeting between the US, Syria and Jordan. Early in the year, al-Sharaa's government had reached an understanding with Druze leaders to integrate their armed factions into state forces under Damascus' authority.

With regard to the Kurdish question in Syria, the Syrian transitional government and the Kurdish leadership of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) reached an agreement in March according to which the 70,000-strong SDF would transfer control of the 25% of Syrian national territory

they controlled for integration into the new Syrian Armed Forces before the end of the year. Signed by al-Sharaa and SDF leader Mazloum Abdi, the eight-point agreement involved the declaration of a nationwide ceasefire, the dissolution of autonomous Kurdish structures, the recognition of the Kurds as an integral part of Syria, the return of displaced populations and other issues.²¹ The details of the agreement were to be finalised in the following months, but the negotiations stalled and increasingly led to mutual accusations and clashes from August onwards, especially in the Aleppo area (which intensified in early 2026, displacing more than 140,000

people). Kurdish SDF leaders demanded a secular and decentralised state during the year and questioned the new Syrian authorities' ability to guarantee minorities' security. According to some analysts, the experience in Suweida may have decisively convinced Kurdish forces to distrust the agreement with Damascus and to hold on to their weapons to control their areas of influence, as they feared that disarmament would leave them exposed to attacks by Islamist groups aligned with al-Sharaa. Meanwhile, the transitional government believed that the SDF threatened the unity of the Syrian state and, in its interest in taking control of the northeast, had a key ally in Türkiye. Ankara, which described the Syrian Kurdish forces as an extension of the PKK, publicly accused them of becoming the main obstacle to peace and stability in Syria and declared its readiness to support the Damascus government in consolidating its territorial control of the country. Therefore, it was expected that the development of the Kurdish question in Syria and the negotiating process between Türkiye and the PKK would continue to interact with and influence each other.²² The rapprochement between the new Syrian government and Washington, which had until

The Syrian transitional government and the Kurdish leadership of the SDF reached an agreement in March, but negotiations stalled in August and the parties were involved in mutual accusations and clashes

20. See the summary on Israel – Syria in this chapter.

21. Andrés Mourenza, *Las milicias kurdas firman un acuerdo histórico para devolver el territorio bajo su control al Estado sirio*, El País, 11 March 2025.

22. See the summary on Türkiye-PKK in chapter 5 (Europe).

then had the SDF as its main ally in the country due to its role in the fight against ISIS, was also a factor to consider in the internal balance of forces and prospects for negotiation.

The new scenario in Syria also raised questions about the role of the UN, which in recent years had attempted to promote negotiations to address the armed conflict through political channels. In September 2025, Norwegian diplomat Geir Pedersen announced his resignation as UN Special Envoy for Syria after nearly seven years in the post. Until then, Pedersen had insisted on the inclusion of valid principles on the importance of an inclusive government and a new constitution that would pave the way for free and fair elections in UNSC Resolution 2254, which outlined a roadmap for a peaceful transition in Syria in 2015. Throughout 2025, Pedersen emphasised the importance of a disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) process and of addressing the situation of foreign fighters in the country, whilst urging Damascus to seek UN support on these issues. He also warned of the lingering risks linked to foreign interference in the country and the need to take action to regain the trust of minorities most affected by the violence in 2025.²³ Following the commissioning of a technical and strategic assessment, in late 2025 the UN Secretary-General was evaluating the organisation's future involvement in Syria. Finally, **after incidents in the border area in March, the new Syrian government and the Lebanese government announced a ceasefire agreement and signed a cooperation agreement** for border demarcation, in meetings facilitated by Saudi Arabia.²⁴

Gender, peace and security

The transition process gave rise to a series of uncertainties regarding governance and inclusion issues, particularly with respect to women's participation in decision-making spaces concerning the future of the new Syria. Within government positions, women's representation was found to be very limited—only one woman served as a minister in the cabinet—and their marginalization became evident in the indirect parliamentary elections held in October. Only six women were elected to the 119-seat legislature—equivalent to 4%, even lower than during the al-Assad era (10–13%). Feminist organisations also criticised the approach, dynamics and results of the national dialogue.²⁵ In this context, feminist activists warned about the exclusion of Syrian women and cautioned against a tokenistic approach by the new authorities.²⁶

The Gulf

Iran (nuclear programme)	
Negotiating actors	Iran, France, United Kingdom, Germany, China, Russia, EU, USA
Third parties	UN, Oman, Qatar
Relevant agreements	Joint Plan of Action (provisional agreement, 2013), Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (2015) endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231

Summary:

Under scrutiny by the international community since 2002, the Iranian nuclear programme has become one of the main sources of tension between Iran and the West, particularly affecting Iran's relationship with the United States and Israel. After more than a decade of negotiations, and despite the fact that various proposals were made to resolve the conflict, the parties failed to reach an agreement and remained almost unchanged in their positions. The US, Israel and several European countries remained distrustful of Tehran and convinced of the military objectives of its atomic programme, whilst Iran continued to insist that its nuclear activities were strictly for civilian purposes and in conformance with international regulations. In this context, the Iranian atomic programme continued to develop whilst the UN Security Council, US and EU imposed sanctions on Iran and threats of military action were made, mainly by Israel. Iran's change of government in 2013 led to substantive talks on nuclear issues, facilitated new rounds of negotiations and ended in a deal aimed at halting the Iranian atomic programme in exchange for lifting the sanctions. In 2015, Iran and six other countries (China, the USA, France, the United Kingdom and Russia, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, plus Germany) signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). After several years of implementation, the Trump administration withdrew from the agreement in May 2018 and reimposed sanctions on Iran as part of a policy of "maximum pressure" on Tehran. Since 2019, Iran has been gradually moving away from compliance with the provisions of the agreement and has stepped up its nuclear programme.

The negotiations surrounding Iran's nuclear programme followed a bumpy path in 2025 and were directly affected by the 'Twelve-Day War' that pitted Israel and the US against Iran in June,²⁷ whilst developments observed in the second half of the year raised questions about the continuity of the negotiating framework in force since 2015. Amid the gradual deterioration in the implementation of the agreement on Iran's nuclear programme, the JCPOA, the year had begun with cautious expectations following the resumption of direct diplomatic contacts between Tehran and the three European countries involved in the agreement: France, the United Kingdom and Germany (E3). Resumed in

23. Amberin Zaman, UN special envoy for Syria Geir Pedersen steps down after six years, 18 September 2025.

24. Associated Press, Lebanon and Syria agree to ceasefire after 2 days of border clashes, Syrian defense ministry says, AP, 17 March 2025; Enab Baladi, Syria and Lebanon sign agreement for cooperation in border demarcation, 28 March 2025.

25. Syrian Women's Political Movement, Statement of the Syrian Women's Political Movement on the National Conference Dialogue, February 2025.

26. Alaa Al-Muhammad, New Faces, Old Barriers: Women Locked Out of Syria's Transition, 14 November 2025.

27. See the summary on Israel, USA-Iran in chapter 1 (Armed conflicts) in Escola de Cultura de Pau, Alert 2026! Report on Conflicts, Human Rights and Peacebuilding, Icaria: Barcelona, 2026.

November 2024, these were the first contacts since the Vienna process negotiations had been suspended in August 2022. A new round was held in early 2025, which the parties described as ‘consultations’, not ‘negotiations’, and as serious and constructive. These meetings took place a week before Donald Trump’s return to the White House, who had decided to withdraw from the JCPOA agreement during his first term, in 2018. In this context, some members of the Iranian regime called on the new US administration to enter into negotiations.

Trump’s second term resumed the policy of ‘maximum pressure’ on Iran through threats and sanctions, but at the same time he declared that he was open to negotiating a new nuclear agreement. In early March, the US President communicated that he had sent a letter to Iran’s Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, to express his desire to initiate new negotiations and to warn that Iran’s rejection would expose it to military consequences. Members of the Iranian government ruled out direct negotiations with Washington as long as it maintained its threats and its policy of ‘maximum pressure’, but dismissed the possibility of dialogue through third parties. Thus, on 12 April, the first indirect meeting took place between official US and Iranian delegations in Muscat, the capital of Oman. Both sides described the meeting as ‘constructive’ and ‘promising’ and the decision was made to continue the dialogue.²⁸ In the months that followed, new meetings were held in Muscat and at the Omani embassy in Rome. According to reports, the meetings addressed issues such as Tehran’s uranium enrichment (the US wanted to eliminate it, but Iran was willing to limit it), the International Atomic Energy Agency’s (IAEA) supervision system and the lifting of sanctions. The indirect contacts were led by Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and US Special Envoy Steve Witkoff, and the third meeting also included a technical meeting of experts to develop the framework for a possible agreement. Some analysts interpreted this meeting as a sign that the parties were considering realistic and pragmatic options and wished to explore their details.²⁹

In the weeks that followed, the US and Iran made contradictory statements about the imminence and content of a possible agreement. On 31 May, an IAEA report found that Tehran had accumulated significant reserves of uranium enriched to high levels (up to 60%), well above the limit established in the JCPOA. On **12 June, for the first time in 20 years, the IAEA Board of**

The Israeli attack against Iran dynamited the prospects for negotiations on the nuclear program and halted direct contacts between Tehran and Washington

Governors censured Iran, considering that its atomic activities violated its obligations as a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Despite this, no actions by Iran to militarise its nuclear capabilities had been verified, and both the IAEA and CIA reports had concluded that there was no evidence that Tehran had activated a plan to develop nuclear weapons. On 13 June, a day after the IAEA Board’s decision, Israel, which possesses atomic weapons and is not a signatory to the NPT, launched a massive attack against Iran, claiming to destroy its nuclear and ballistic missile programme and asserting that Tehran was on the verge of obtaining an atomic weapon, though it presented no evidence. The Israeli attack dynamited the prospects of the ongoing negotiations two days before a new round of meetings scheduled for 15 June in Qatar. Internationally condemned as a violation of the

UN Charter, the Israeli attack was followed by large-scale strikes against Iran’s nuclear facilities at Isfahan, Natanz and Fordow on 22 June. Two days later, Trump announced a ‘complete and total’ ceasefire between Israel and Iran. Hostilities ceased hours later amid claims of victory by all parties involved.

Following the attacks and despite Trump’s claims that he had ‘completely obliterated’ Iran’s nuclear facilities, questions persisted regarding the extent of the damage, Tehran’s capacity to resume its activities

and the fate of approximately 400 kilograms of uranium enriched to 60%. Likewise, various analysts underscored the impact of the ‘Twelve-Day War’ on the prospects for nuclear negotiations, as it marked a point of no return by altering the basis on which the non-proliferation architecture with respect to Iran had been built, and by the possibility that it could decisively change Tehran’s willingness to accept inspections, among other effects.³⁰ The E3 countries, which barely had information or room to influence the meetings held between the US and Iran in 2025, took different positions on the military strikes on Iran, with France describing them as illegal, the United Kingdom responding ambiguously and Germany supporting them. Some attempts were made to resume contact in the following months and information emerged about parallel rounds of talks between Iran and both the US and the E3 countries, including a meeting between deputy foreign ministers with France, Germany and the United Kingdom in Istanbul. These meetings were held amid warnings from the E3 that they would activate the ‘snapback’ mechanism if progress were not achieved before the end of August, which would reinstate UN sanctions against Iran.³¹ **At the end of**

28. Iker Seisdedos, *EEUU e Irán inician la negociación de un nuevo acuerdo nuclear tras un primer encuentro ‘prometedor’*, *El País*, 12 April 2025.

29. Jon Gambrell, *What do ‘expert level’ talks signal for the progress of the Iran-US nuclear negotiations?*, Associated Press, 26 April 2025.

30. For more information, see Enrique Mora, *El día que nació un Irán nuclear*, *Política Exterior*, 24 June 2025; and *Ataque de Israel y EEUU a Irán culmina en una tregua frágil y en un escenario incierto*, in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Escenarios de riesgo y oportunidades de paz*, July 2025.

31. *Deutsche Welle*, *Irán confirma nueva negociación nuclear con países europeos*, DW, 21 July 2025.

August, the E3 fulfilled its ultimatum and initiated the procedure for the automatic reversal of the sanctions relief that had been approved as part of the JCPOA. In September, IAEA Director Rafael Grossi said that the agency’s inspectors had only had access to the Bushehr nuclear facilities. Following a meeting in Cairo, Grossi and Araghchi agreed on ‘practical modalities’ to resume inspection tasks.³²

Nevertheless, in the absence of a new UN Security Council resolution halting the ‘snapback’ procedure, the UN sanctions regime against Iran was reinstated in September. The EU, which coordinates the JCPOA joint commission responsible for overseeing implementation of the agreement and resolving related disputes, reimposed the sanctions that had been suspended in 2015 following its entry into force.³³ However, other actors closer to Iran, such as Russia and China, questioned the legality and timeliness of the reimposition of sanctions. On 18 October, the day the JCPOA formally expired (‘Termination Day’), Iran, Russia and China announced that they considered the provisions and restrictions of the agreement to have ended, and therefore also the validity of UN Security Council Resolution 2231 that had supported it and included the ‘snapback’ mechanism. In November, the IAEA Board of Governors approved a resolution promoted by the E3 and the US demanding full access to inspections for Iran, and especially to the facilities that had been targeted in the ‘Twelve-Day War’. China, Russia and Niger opposed the resolution and the Iranian government considered it hostile, claiming that it undermined the agreement reached with Grossi in September to allow a limited return of inspections. By the end of the year, disagreement persisted among Security Council members over the legitimacy of the UN’s role to continue facilitating meetings and producing reports to examine the Iranian nuclear programme following the expiration of the framework established by the JCPOA.³⁴

Yemen	
Negotiating actors	Internationally recognised Yemeni government (backed by Saudi Arabia), Houthis / Ansar Allah, Saudi Arabia
Third parties	UN, Oman, ICRC
Relevant agreements	Stockholm Agreement (2018), Riyadh Agreement (2019), truce agreement (2022)
Summary: Affected by several conflicts in recent decades, Yemen began	

a difficult transition in 2011 after the revolts that forced Ali Abdullah Saleh to step down as president after more than 30 years in office. The eventful aftermath led to a rebellion by Houthis forces and former President Saleh against the transitional government presided over by Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi, who was forced to flee in early 2015. In March 2015, an international coalition led by Saudi Arabia decided to intervene militarily in the country in support of the deposed government. Since then, levels of violence in the conflict escalated. The United Nations, which has been involved in the country since the beginning of the transition, has tried to promote a political solution to the conflict, joined by some regional and international actors. Despite these initiatives, the meetings were unsuccessful, and the talks have been at an impasse since mid-2016. It was not until late 2018 that meetings between the parties resumed and led to the signature of the Stockholm Agreement at the end of that year, arousing cautious expectations about the possibilities of a political solution to the conflict. The hostilities have significantly worsened the security and humanitarian situation in the country. In 2019, under the mediation of Saudi Arabia, various actors signed the Riyadh Agreement to try to resolve the struggles and differences within the anti-Houthis faction. In 2022, the internationally recognized government backed by Riyadh and the Houthis reached a five-point truce agreement at the request of the UN. Though it ceased to be formally in force months later, in practice the de facto drop in hostilities and violence has held up, as well as some parts of the agreement. Meanwhile, in 2022 direct negotiations began between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis, mediated by Oman.

Negotiations to address the armed and political conflict in Yemen remained largely deadlocked in 2025, partially due to the consequences of the upheaval in the Middle East. Although the de facto truce in place in the country since 2022 has contributed to an overall decline in violence levels compared with the worst period of the armed conflict, the fragility of the situation became evident over the past year and the risks that the rifts between the different actors involved in the conflict would widen due to the lack of any substantive political process to address the country’s challenges.³⁵ The involvement of the Yemeni group known as the Houthis (formally Ansar Allah) in an open confrontation with Israel, the US and the United Kingdom since 2023 has influenced the dynamics of the Yemeni peace process and the calculations of its main actors. In this context, UN Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg insisted on various occasions during 2025 that regional de-escalation, including with in Gaza, was necessary to make headway in the Yemeni peace process, as both conflicts have become increasingly interconnected. Nevertheless, he warned that the situation in Yemen should not be addressed solely through a regional lens and that it is essential to focus on internal challenges

32. *NPR*, Iran and nuclear watchdog sign agreement seeking path to restart cooperation, 9 September 2025.

33. Council of the European Union, *Reversión automática de las sanciones contra Irán: el Consejo restablece las medidas restrictivas*, 29 September 2025.

34. *UN News*, Security Council remains divided over Iran nuclear programme, sanctions stay in place, 23 December 2025; UN Security Council, Implementation of Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015), Twentieth report of the Secretary-General, S/2025/814, 15 December 2025.

35. For more information, see the summary on Yemen in chapter 1 (Armed conflicts) in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2026! Report on Conflicts, Human Rights and Peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2026.

and the Yemeni population, which has suffered for years from the violence and humanitarian crisis resulting from the armed conflict.

During the first quarter, the intense US airstrike campaign against the Houthis encouraged expectations among their internal adversaries of Washington's possible support for a ground offensive against them, but no such scenario took place.³⁶ The ceasefire reached between the Trump administration and the Houthis in May, which did not entail an end to hostilities between them and Israel, was assessed by Grundberg as an opportunity to revitalise the Yemeni peace process. Unlike the Biden administration, which appointed a special envoy for Yemen, the Trump administration, which took office in January, did not appoint a specific delegate to engage in the Yemeni process and did not become involved beyond the understanding with the Houthis. Despite the degradation of their military capabilities and many casualties among their ranks, some analysts underscored that the US campaign ultimately strengthened the Yemeni group domestically, which claimed victory after it ended.³⁷

In Yemen progress was made in some specific areas, resulting in the reopening of roads and agreements on prisoner exchanges

In the following months, successive armed clashes broke out between various Yemeni actors and reinforcements were deployed along the front lines. Despite these dynamics, progress was also made in some specific areas. In late May, largely thanks to local mediation efforts and with UN support, an agreement was reached to reopen the vital Dhale road, which connects the capital, Sana'a (under Houthi control) with the southern port of Aden (in the hands of the internationally recognised government) and which had been closed since 2018 due to the armed conflict. Traffic was also restored on roads connecting Ma'arib, Al Bayda and Abyan. The reopening was praised for its practical effects, such as reducing travel times, facilitating the movement of people and goods and improving access to healthcare for various communities, as well as for being a confidence-building step between the parties that demonstrates that it is possible to reach understandings through dialogue.³⁸ Along similar lines, and following 12 days of meetings in Oman, in December the parties to the conflict agreed on a new phase of prisoner exchange to be implemented in 2026 within the framework of the committee established for this issue under the Stockholm Agreement (2018).³⁹

The UN special envoy acknowledged that the negotiating environment had changed since late 2023, when the parties appeared to be moving towards a common roadmap,⁴⁰ but insisted that moving towards a lasting and comprehensive solution to the conflict in Yemen required work on three priorities: 1) de-escalating on the front lines and addressing the principles of a ceasefire with the parties to the conflict; 2) convincing the parties to return to talks in line with the commitments made in December 2023 to draw up a roadmap; and 3) securing regional and international cooperation to support and stabilise Yemen, for example, through security guarantees regarding the Red Sea.⁴¹ The internal situation in Yemen became tense at the end of the year due to a dispute between different actors on the anti-Houthi side, who were involved in clashes supported by various regional actors. For months, disagreements and power struggles had been affecting the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), the eight-member executive body leading

the internationally recognised government. However, the situation escalated significantly in December when southern secessionist forces (STC) attempted to expand their control in governorates in the southern region (Hadramawt and Al-Mahra) with UAE support. This prompted Saudi Arabia to become militarily involved again, including through an attack on a UAE vessel that was allegedly transporting weapons to the secessionist forces. Riyadh has mediated in conflicts on the anti-Houthi side in the past. With Saudi help, the internationally recognised government regained control of territories in the early days of 2026 and political adjustments were made, including the expulsion of STC members from the PLC. The crisis encouraged diplomatic discussions between various actors and once again exposed the fragility of the situation in Yemen.

Gender, peace and security

Yemeni women's exclusion from formal negotiating spaces persisted in 2025. Their marginalisation continues despite their prominent role in local peacebuilding initiatives, community-level conflict resolution and critical initiatives for the daily survival of the population, such as to secure civilian access to water, for example. The Director of the NGO Centre for Civilians in Conflict, Dina El Mamoun, appeared before the UN

36. See the summary on Yemen (Houthis) – USA in this chapter and on Yemen (Houthis) – Israel, USA, United Kingdom in chapter 1 (Armed conflicts) in Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2026! Report on Conflicts, Human Rights and Peacebuilding*, Barcelona: Icaria, 2026.

37. Maysaa Shujaa Aldeen, *The paradox of intervention: How US strikes in Yemen empowered the Houthis*, European Council on Foreign Relations, 13 May 2025.

38. Escola de Cultura de Pau, 'Reapertura de carreteras clave tras años de bloqueo en las negociaciones', in *Escenarios de riesgo y oportunidades de paz*, July 2025.

39. OSESGY, Statement by the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen at the conclusion of the tenth meeting of the Supervisory Committee on the implementation of the Detainees' Release Agreement, 23 December 2025.

40. OSESGY, Update on efforts to secure a UN roadmap to end the war in Yemen, 23 December 2023.

41. OSESGY, UN Special Envoy Hans Grundberg's Briefing to the Security Council, 12 August 2025;

Security Council in May to condemn this exclusion and to warn of some of the invisible consequences of the conflict that disproportionately affect women, such as the increase in forced child marriages. The Yemeni Women's Union also produced an assessment stating that no political progress had been made for women in 2025 and highlighting the growing role of civil society in protecting women's rights and economic empowerment.⁴² The office of the UN Special Envoy for Yemen continued to try to open spaces to amplify women's voices and to ensure that their perspectives on peace, justice and inclusion are taken into account in efforts to move towards a political agreement. To mark the 25th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, several days of debates were held in Taiz and Aden, in which warnings were issued about the growing risks for women assuming public leadership roles and the need for peace efforts to address the fragmentation of military and security institutions and to end impunity, among other issues.⁴³ In 2024, following a forum in Madrid co-organised by the UN and Spain, Yemeni women released a statement setting out some of their ideas for moving the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda forward in the country.⁴⁴

Yemen (Houthis) – USA	
Negotiating actors	Yemen (Houthis), USA
Third parties	Oman
Relevant agreements	Ceasefire Agreement/Understanding (2025)

Summary:
One consequence of the escalation of violence in the Middle East against the backdrop of the Gaza crisis is an armed conflict that has pitted the Yemeni armed group the Houthis (or Ansar Allah) against Israel, the US and the United Kingdom since late 2023 and that has featured the Red Sea as one of its main theatres. The Houthis, who have historically taken an antagonistic position towards the US and Israel and are a key ally of Iran in the region, have asserted that they would only stop their attacks after the end of the blockade and the Israeli military campaign in Gaza. After the Houthis began their attacks in the Red Sea, the Biden administration acted against them with a combination of force and international pressure, but no evidence emerged of negotiations or direct contacts between the parties. Donald Trump's return to power in the US increased pressure on the Houthis. Following an intense US military offensive against the group, a ceasefire was reached in May 2025 through the mediation of Oman. The agreement committed only Washington and the Houthis and did not end hostilities between the Yemeni group and Israel. Subsequently, the ceasefire agreement announced by the US for Gaza, which

did not lead to a cessation of hostilities, but rather to a relative reduction in violence, favoured de-escalation in this conflict as well, albeit in a fragile and uncertain scenario. The dynamics of this dispute could also have repercussions on the armed conflict between different Yemeni armed actors, in which regional actors have also become involved, as well as on its prospects for a negotiated solution.

The high levels of violence observed during the year partially subsided from May onwards following a ceasefire agreement involving the Houthis and the US. This limited agreement between two of the actors involved in the armed conflict affected only some of its dynamics, which continued to be characterised by ongoing clashes between the Houthis and Israel. Developments continued to be influenced by the crisis in the Middle East.⁴⁵ The ceasefire agreement between the Houthis and the US came after a severe US military offensive against the Yemeni group. Following Donald Trump's return to power in January, Washington had demonstrated its intention to take a hard-line towards the Houthis. As such, one of its first actions was to designate them as a terrorist group using a more severe category than that used by the Biden administration. In line with their policy of linking their attacks to the situation in Gaza, the Houthis had halted them in January following the announcement of a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas.⁴⁶ However, after Israel broke the truce and reimposed a total blockade on Gaza in March, the Houthis announced that they were resuming their attacks in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. In this context, the US launched an intense bombing campaign against the group, which also had significant impacts on the civilian population.

Unexpectedly, on 6 May, a week before visiting several Middle Eastern countries, Trump announced the suspension of his air campaign in Yemen during a meeting in the Oval Office with the Canadian Prime Minister. **Oman then reported that it had mediated a ceasefire agreement committing the Houthis and the US not to attack each other.**⁴⁷ Oman's mediating role may have been facilitated by its relations with Iran and with the Houthis, who maintain a representative office in the sultanate. According to reports, Oman contacted US Special Envoy for the Middle East Steve Witkoff in early May, who immediately relayed the message to the White House. On 5 May, the day before the announcement, Trump had ordered US Central Command (CENTCOM) to halt attacks in Yemen. Washington thus suspended its attacks against the Houthis, who ceased their attacks in the Red Sea and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and pledged to ensure freedom of navigation and

42. Rahma Shanathour, Yemeni Women's Union: 2025, a Year Without Political Gains for Women, Jinha Agency, 3 January 2026.
 43. OSESGY, 25 years of women, peace, and security agenda: Yemen's path to inclusive peace process, 16 October 2025.
 44. OSESGY, From the Status Quo to a Transformation: Advancing Women, Peace and Security in Yemen, April 2024.
 45. For more information, see the summary on Yemen (Houthis) – Israel, USA, United Kingdom in chapter 1 (Armed conflicts) in *Alert 2026! Report on Conflicts, Human Rights and Peacebuilding*, Icaria: Barcelona, 2026.
 46. See the summary on Israel-Palestine in this chapter.
 47. Foreign Ministry of Oman, Oman announces ceasefire agreement between Washington and Sanaa, 6 May 2025.

maritime commercial traffic in the area. The agreement ensured that US military vessels and those linked to US maritime commercial traffic would not be attacked. Both sides described the agreement as a victory.⁴⁸

The ceasefire agreement prompted many analyses of its possible impact and the motivations behind it. Some of them argued that Washington's acceptance of the truce highlighted the limitations of its air campaign, which had degraded the Yemeni group's capabilities but had not entirely eliminated them or its ability to attack or to significantly affect maritime traffic in a key area. They also underscored that the decision reflected the United States' reluctance to become embroiled in a wider armed conflict.⁴⁹ The armed conflict was not only highly costly for the US economically, but it also provoked growing international criticism of Washington over the high number of civilian casualties and the repercussions for the humanitarian crisis in the country, in addition to the diversion of military resources from other strategic areas. The Houthis' acceptance of the ceasefire may not have been motivated solely by the impact of the US military campaign, but also because, according to their calculations, an agreement would make Washington's support for a ground campaign launched by adversarial Yemeni groups less likely. Following the announcement, the UN Special Envoy for Yemen underscored that he hoped the understanding between the Houthis and the US would help to revitalise the deadlocked Yemeni peace process.⁵⁰

The ceasefire agreement between the Houthis and the US came after a severe US military offensive against the Yemeni group

One of the details that prompted the most speculation was that the ceasefire agreement was reached without including Israel, despite its strategic relationship with the US and its leading role in the conflict. Various sources confirmed that the announcement took Netanyahu's government by surprise, which was attributed to a tense atmosphere in bilateral relations over Israel's decision to resume the blockade on Gaza and the United States' involvement in negotiations with Iran over its nuclear programme at the time.⁵¹ Some analysts said that the understanding reached with the Houthis suggested an intention to secure US interests beyond Netanyahu's opinion. Following the ceasefire announcement, the Houthis publicly emphasised that it did not include an end to attacks on Israel. In the months that followed, clashes between Israel and the Houthis continued and were especially intense during the 'Twelve-Day War' between Israel and Iran, which ultimately involved the US.

Months later, in October, Trump's announcement of a 'peace plan' and a 'ceasefire' for Gaza, which in practice only entailed a relative drop in violence conducted by Netanyahu's government, prompted the Houthis to suspend their attacks against Israel once again. By the end of the year, the de-escalation was holding, albeit in a volatile climate given persistent Israeli attacks in the Gaza Strip, instability in Iran and the dynamics of the conflict between the Houthis and other Yemeni actors.

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48. Maysaa Shujaa Aldeen, *The paradox of intervention: How US strikes in Yemen empowered the Houthis*, European Council on Foreign Relations, 13 May 2025.
49. Maysaa Shujaa Aldeen (op. cit) and Soufan Center, *US-Houthi ceasefire leaves questions unanswered*, Intelbrief, 12 May 2026.
50. See the summary on Yemen in this chapter.
51. See the summary on Iran (nuclear programme).

Annex 1. Summary of armed conflicts in 2025¹

Conflict ² -beginning-	Typology ³	Main parties ⁴	Intensity ⁵
			Trend ⁶
AFRICA			
Burundi -2015-	Internationalised internal	Government, Imbonerakure Youth branch, political party CNDD-FDD, political party CNL, armed groups RED-Tabara, FPB (previously FOREBU), FNL	1
	Government		↑
Cameroon (Ambazonia/ North West and South West) -2018-	Internationalised internal	Government of Cameroon, government of Nigeria, political-military secessionist movement including the opposition Ambazonia Coalition Team (ACT, including IG Sako, to which the armed groups Lebialem Red Dragons and SOCADEF belong) and the Ambazonia Governing Council (AGovC, including IG Sisiku, whose armed wing is the Ambazonia Defence Forces, ADF), different militias and smaller armed groups	3
	Self-government, Identity		=
CAR -2006-	Internationalised internal	Government, armed groups that are members of the Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC, made up of anti-balaka factions led by Mokom and Ngaïssona, 3R, FPRC, MPC and UPC), Siriri ethnic armed opposition coalition AAKG, Sudanese Rapid Support Forces (RSF) militias, other local and foreign armed groups, France, MINUSCA, Rwanda, Russia, Wagner Group	2
	Government, Resources		=
DRC (east) -1998- ⁷	International	DRC, Angola, Burundi, SAMIDRC (SADC Regional Force composed by South Africa, Malawi and Tanzania), MONUSCO, pro-government militias Volunteers for the Defence of the Homeland (VDP, composed of dozens of former Mai Mai militias and other armed groups from North Kivu and South Kivu, like APCLS, PARECO-FF, Nyatura, Raia Mutomboki, and other pro-government militias known as Wazalendo), FDLR, FDLR splinter groups (CNRD-Ubwiyunge, RUD-Urunana), private security companies (Agemira RDC and Congo Protection), March 23 Movement (M23), Twirwaneho, Rwanda, other armed groups that are not part of Wazalendo, Burundian armed groups, Ugandan armed group LRA, Ituri groups and community militias (including CODECO/URDPC, FPIC, FRPI, MAPI, Zaire-FPAC), AFC Coalition and allies	3
	Government, Identity, Resources		↑

1. Table from Escola de Cultura de Pau, *Alert 2026! Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding*. Barcelona: Icaria 2026.
2. This column includes the states in which armed conflicts are taking place, specifying in brackets the region within each state to which the crisis is confined or the name of the armed group involved in the conflict.
3. This report classifies and analyses armed conflicts using two criteria: on the one hand, the causes or clashes of interests and, on the other hand, the convergence between the scenario of conflict and the actors involved. The following main causes can be distinguished: demands for self-determination and self-government (Self-government) or identity aspirations (Identity); opposition to the political, economic, social or ideological system of a state (System) or the internal or international policies of a government (Government), which in both cases produces a struggle to take or erode power; or the struggle for the control of resources (Resources) or territory (Territory). In respect of the second type, the armed conflicts may be of an internal, Internationalised internal or international nature. An internal armed conflict is defined as a conflict involving armed actors from the same state who operate exclusively within the territory of this state. Secondly, an internationalised internal armed conflict is defined as that in which at least one of the parties involved is foreign and/or in which the tension spills over into the territory of neighbouring countries. Another factor taken into account in order to consider an armed conflict as internationalised internal is the existence of military bases of armed groups in neighbouring countries (in connivance with these countries) from which attacks are launched. Finally, an international conflict is one in which state and non-state parties from two or more countries confront each other. It should also be taken into account that most current armed conflicts have a significant regional or international dimension and influence due, among other factors, to flows of refugees, the arms trade, economic or political interests (such as legal or illegal exploitation of resources) that the neighbouring countries have in the conflict, the participation of foreign combatants or the logistical and military support provided by other states.
4. This column shows the actors that intervene directly in the hostilities. The main actors who participate directly in the conflicts are made up of a mixture of regular or irregular armed parties. The conflicts usually involve the government, or its armed forces, fighting against one or several armed opposition groups, but can also involve other irregular groups such as clans, guerrillas, warlords, armed groups in opposition to each other or militias from ethnic or religious communities. Although they most frequently use conventional weapons, and more specifically small arms (which cause most deaths in conflicts), in many cases other methods are employed, such as suicide attacks, bombings and sexual violence and even hunger as a weapon of war. There are also other actors who do not directly participate in the armed activities but who nevertheless have a significant influence on the conflict.
5. The intensity of an armed conflict (high, medium or low) and its trend (escalation of violence, reduction of violence, unchanged) are evaluated mainly on the basis of how deadly it is (number of fatalities) and according to its impact on the population and the territory. Moreover, there are other aspects worthy of consideration, such as the systematisation and frequency of the violence or the complexity of the military struggle (complexity is normally related to the number and fragmentation of the actors involved, to the level of institutionalisation and capacity of the state, and to the degree of internationalisation of the conflict, as well as to the flexibility of objectives and to the political will of the parties to reach agreements). As such, high-intensity armed conflicts are usually defined as those that cause over 1,000 fatalities per year, as well as affecting a significant proportion of the territory and population, and involving several actors (who forge alliances, confront each other or establish a tactical coexistence). Medium and low intensity conflicts, with over 100 fatalities per year, have the aforementioned characteristics but with a more limited presence and scope. An armed conflict is considered ended when a significant and sustained reduction in armed hostilities occurs, whether due to a military victory, an agreement between the actors in conflict, demobilisation by one of the parties, or because one of the parties abandons or significantly scales down the armed struggle as a strategy to achieve certain objectives. None of these options necessarily mean that the underlying causes of the armed conflict have been overcome. Nor do they exclude the possibility of new outbreaks of violence. The temporary cessation of hostilities, whether formal or tacit, does not necessarily imply the end of the armed conflict.
6. This column compares the trend of the events of 2025 with those that of 2024. The escalation of violence symbol (↑) indicates that the general situation in 2025 has been more serious than in the previous year; the reduction of violence symbol (↓) indicates an improvement in the situation; and the unchanged (=) symbol indicates that no significant changes have taken place.
7. The evolution of the situation between the DRC and Rwanda, analysed in previous editions of the *Alert!* report in chapter 2 (Socio-political crises) and as part of the DRC (east) summary in chapter 1 (Armed conflicts), is no longer considered a socio-political crisis and will now be analysed exclusively in the DRC (east) summary in chapter 1. However, the armed conflict in the DRC (east) exceptionally remains unchanged in its designation, as it is an international-type conflict involving other state actors, in addition to Rwanda.

Conflict -beginning-	Typology	Main parties	Intensity
			Trend
AFRICA			
DRC (east – ADF) -2014-	Internationalised internal	DRC, Uganda, Mai-Mai militias, armed opposition group ISCAP-ADF, CODECO, M23, MONUSCO	3
	System, Resources		↑
DRC (west) -2023-	Internal	DRC, Teke community militias, Yaka and Suku community militias (including the armed group Mobondo) and other allied community militias	1
	Identity, Resources, Territory		=
Ethiopia (Amhara) -2023-	Internationalised internal	Government of Ethiopia, government of Amhara Region, Amharic Fano militia, Oromo armed group OLA	3
	Government, Self-government, Identity		=
Ethiopia (Oromia) -2022-	Internal	Government of Ethiopia, government of Oromia Region, armed group Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), Amharic Fano militia	3
	Self-government, Identity, Resources		=
Lake Chad Region (Boko Haram) -2011-	Internationalised internal	Government of Nigeria, pro-government militia Civilian Joint Task Force, Boko Haram factions (ISWAP, JAS-Abubakar Shekau, Ansaru, Bakura), civilian militias, Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF – Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, Niger)	3
	System		↑
Libya -2011-	Internationalised internal	Government of National Unity (GNU) based in Tripoli, Government of National Stability (GNS) based in Tobruk, various armed groups including the Libyan National Army (LNA, also called the Arab Libyan Armed Forces, ALAF), Stability Support Apparatus (SSA), 444 Combat Brigade, Special Deterrence Force (Al-Rada), ISIS, mercenaries, Africa Corps (former Wagner Group), among others; Russia, Türkiye	1
	Government, Resources, System		=
Mali -2012-	Internationalised internal	Government, Permanent Strategic Framework for the Defense of the People of Azawad (CSP-DPA), Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM or GSIM), Islamic State in Greater Sahara (ISGS), Katiba Macina, Africa Corps (former Wagner Group), Russia, Alliance of Sahel States (AES)	3
	System, Self-government, Identity		=
Mozambique (north) -2017-	Internationalised internal	Government; Islamic State's Central Africa Province (ISCAP) or Islamic State's Mozambique Province (ISMP), previously known as Ahlu Sunnah Waljama'a (ASWJ); al-Qaeda; Tanzania; Rwanda; South Africa; "Naparama" local militias	2
	System, Identity		↑
Somalia -1988-	Internationalised internal	Federal government, pro-government regional forces, Somaliland, Puntland, clan and warlord militias, Ahlu Sunna Waljama'a, USA, France, Ethiopia, Türkiye, UAE, AUSSOM, EU NAVFOR Somalia (Operation Atalanta), Combined Task Force 151, al-Shabaab, Islamic State in Somalia (ISS or ISIS-Somalia)	3
	Government, System		↑
Somalia (Somaliland – SSC Khatumo) -2023-	Internal	Republic of Somaliland, SSC Khatumo administration (Khatumo State)	1
	Self-government, Identity, Territory		↓
South Sudan -2009-	Internationalised internal	Government (SPLM/A); armed group SPLA-in Opposition (Riek Machar faction); SPLA-IO dissident Kitgwang factions led by Peter Gatdet, Simon Gatwech Dual and Johnson Olony ("Agwalek"); SPLM-FD; SSLA; SSDM/A; SSDM-CF; SSNLM; REMNASA; NAS (Cirillo); NAS (Loburon); SSUF (Paul Malong); SSOA; community militias (SSPPF, TFN, White Army, Shilluk Agwalek); armed coalition Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF, composed of JEM, SLA-AW, SLA-MM and SPLM-N); Non-Signatory South Sudan Opposition Groups (NSSSOG, previously known as the South Sudan Opposition Movements Alliance, SSOMA), which includes the rebel organisations NAS, SSUF/A, Real-SPLM, NDM-PF, UDRM/A, NDM-PF and SSNMC; Sudan; Uganda; UNMISS	3
	Government, Resources, Identity		↑
Sudan -2023- ⁸	Internationalised internal	National: Government (Sudan Armed Forces), Rapid Support Forces (RSF), mercenaries (Russia, Colombia) Darfur: Government, janjaweed, RSF, armed coalition Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF, composed of JEM, SLA-AW, SLA-MM and SPLM-N), various SLA factions and other armed groups, community-based militias South Kordofan and Blue Nile: Government, SPLM-N, armed coalition Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), pro-government militias PDF, RSF, South Sudan East: Government, RSF, Eastern Sudan Liberation Forces, United Popular Front for Liberation and Justice, Beja National Congress, Beja Armed Congress	3
	Government, Self-government, Resources, Identity		↑

8. Before 2023, two distinct armed conflicts were identified in Sudan: Sudan (Darfur), which broke out in 2003, and Sudan (South Kordofan and Blue Nile), which began in 2012. Both conflicts were characterised as internal-internationalised and motivated by self-governance, resources and identity. Following the outbreak of armed conflict in the country in April 2023 between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary group Rapid Support Forces (RSF), which affects a large part of the country and particularly the regions of Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile, all are now analysed under a single armed conflict labelled Sudan (2023). Irregular armed actors from these regions are also actively participating in the hostilities.

Conflict -beginning-	Typology	Main parties	Intensity
			Trend
AFRICA			
Western Sahel Region -2018-	International	Burkina Faso; Mali; Niger; Côte d'Ivoire; Togo; Benin; Alliance of Sahel States (AES); Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM or GSIM); Islamic State in Greater Sahara (ISGS), also known as Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP); Katiba Macina; Ansaroul Islam; other jihadist groups and community militias; Russia; Africa Corps (former Wagner Group)	3
	System, Identity, Resources		=
AMERICA			
Colombia -1964-	Internationalised internal	Government, ELN, Estado Mayor Central (EMC), Segunda Marquetalia, Estado Mayor de Bloques y Frente (EMBF), Coordinadora Nacional Ejército Bolivariano, narco-paramilitary groups	3
	System		↑
Haiti -2024-	Internationalised internal	Government, Multinational Security Support Mission in Haiti (MSS), Gang Suppression Force (GSF), armed gangs (including Viv Ansanm, an alliance between two coalitions of armed groups -GPèp and Revolutionary Forces of the G9 Family and Allies), vigilante and self-defense groups (Bwa Kale movement), private military company Vectus Global	3
	Government, Resources, Territory		↑
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC			
Afghanistan -2001-	Internationalised internal	Government, National Resistance Front (NRF), ISIS-KP, Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF)	2
	System		↓
India (CPI-M) -1967-	Internal	Government, CPI-M (Naxalites)	2
	System		↑
India (Jammu and Kashmir) -1989-	Internationalised internal	Governments, Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Jaish-e-Mohammed, United Jihad Council, Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), The Resistance Front (TRF)	1
	Self-government, Identity		↓
India – Pakistan -2025-	International	India, Pakistan	1
	Territory		End
Indonesia (West Papua) -2024-	Internal	Government, OPM	1
	Self-government, Identity, Resources		↑
Myanmar -1948-	Internationalised internal	Government, armed groups ABSDF, ALP, CNF, DKBA, KNU, KNU/KNLA-PC, PNLO, RCSS, NMSP, LDU, KIA, NDAA, MNDAA, SSPP/SSA, TNLA, AA, UWSA, ARSA, KNPP, PDF	3
	Self-government, Identity, System		↓
Pakistan -2001-	Internationalised internal	Government, Armed Forces, intelligence services, Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), ISIS-KP	3
	System		↑
Pakistan (Balochistan) -2005-	Internationalised internal	Government, BLA, BNA, BLF, BLT, LeJ, TTP, ISIS-KP	2
	Self-government, Identity, Resources		↑
Philippines (NPA) -1969-	Internal	Government, NPA	1
	System		↓
Philippines (Mindanao) -1991-	Internationalised internal	Government, Abu Sayyaf, BIFF, Islamic State of Lanao/Dawlah Islamiyah/Maute Group, MILF and MNLF factions	1
	Self-government, Identity, System		↓
Thailand (south) -2004-	Internal	Government, BRN and other pro-independence opposition armed groups	1
	Self-government, Identity		=
Thailand – Cambodia -2025-	International	Thailand, Cambodia	1
	Territory		↑
EUROPA			
Türkiye (PKK) -1984-	Internationalised internal	Government, PKK, TAK, ISIS	1
	Self-government, Identity		↓
Russia – Ukraine -2022- ⁹	International	Russia, Donbas militias, Ukraine	3
	Government, Territory		↑
MIDDLE EAST			
Iraq -2003-	Internationalised internal	Government, Iraqi military and security forces, Kurdish forces (peshmergas), Shia militias (including Harakat al-Nujaba, the Hashd al-Shaabi coalition, Kataib Hezbollah and the coalition/network Islamic Resistance of Ira), ISIS, US-led international anti-ISIS coalition, USA, Iran, Türkiye, Israel	2
	System, Government, Identity, Resources		↓

9. Between 2014 and 2021 the war in eastern Ukraine was analysed as an internationalised internal conflict. See the summary on “Ukraine (east)” in pre-2022 editions of this report.

Conflict -beginning-	Typology	Main parties	Intensity
			Trend
MIDDLE EAST			
Israel – Hezbollah -2023-	International	Israel, Hezbollah, other Lebanese armed organisations (Al-Fajer Forces, Amal Movement) and Palestinian armed organisations active in Lebanon (Hamas’ al-Qassam Brigades and Islamic Jihad’s al-Quds Brigades)	2
	Government, Territory		↓
Israel – Palestine -2000-	International	Israeli government, settler militias, PA, Fatah (Al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades), Hamas (Ezzedin al Qassam Brigades), Islamic Jihad, FPLP, FDLP, Popular Resistance Committees, Salafist groups, Jenin, Brigades, Nablus Brigades, Tubas Brigades, Lion’s Den	3
	Self-government, Identity, Territory		=
Israel, USA – Iran -2025- ¹⁰	International	Israel, USA, Iran	3
	System, Government		↑
Syria -2011-	Internationalised internal	Government, pro-government militias, Free Syrian Army, Ahrar al-Sham, Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF, coalition led by the Kurdish militias YPG/YPJ of the PYD), Jabhat Fateh al-Sham (formerly al-Nusra Front), Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), ISIS, US-led international anti-ISIS coalition, Türkiye, Israel	3
	Government, System, Selfgovernment, Identity		=
Yemen -2004-	Internationalised internal	Armed forces loyal to the internationally recognised government, followers of the cleric al-Houthi (al-Shabaab al-Mumen/Ansar Allah), tribal militias linked to the al-Ahmar clan, Salafist militias (including Happy Yemen Brigades), armed groups linked to the Islamist Islah party, separatist groups under the umbrella of the Southern Transitional Council (STC), Joint Forces (including the Giant Brigades), Security Belt Forces, AQAP, ISIS, international Saudi Arabian-led coalition, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE)	3
	System, Government, Identity		=
Yemen (Houthis) – Israel, USA, United Kingdom -2025-	International	Houthis /Ansar Allah, Israel, USA, United Kingdom, Iran	2
	System, Government		↑

10. In the previous edition of *Alert!*, this case was analysed as a socio-political crisis under the heading “Israel–Iran”. The new designation of the case as an armed conflict includes the United States due to its prominent role in the events of 2025.

Glossary

AA: Arakan Army	CNR: National Council of the Republicans
AANES: Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria	COSPAC: Coordinator for Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Casamance
ABSDF: All Burma Students' Democratic Front	CPA: Comprehensive Peace Agreement
ABM: Ansar Beit al-Maqdis	CPC: Coalition of Patriots for Change
ACCORD: African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes	CPSR: Permanent Framework for Consultation and Reflection
ADF: Allied Democratic Forces	CPE: Center for Peace Education
AKP: Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)	CPI-M: Communist Party of India-Maoist
ALP: Arakan Liberation Party	CST: High Transition Council
AMISOM: African Union Mission in Somalia	CSP-PSD: Permanent Strategic Framework for Peace, Security and Development
APCLS: Alliance of Patriots for a Free and Sovereign Congo	DDR: Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
APSA: African Peace and Security Architecture	DFLP: Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
AQIM: Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb	DKBA: Democratic Karen Buddhist Army
AQAP: Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula	DMLEK: Democratic Movement for the Liberation of the Eritrean Kunama
ARB: Autonomous Region of Bougainville	DMZ: Demilitarised Zone
ARSA: Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army	DNIS: Inclusive and Sovereign National Dialogue
ASEAN: Association of Southeast Asian Nations	DPA: Darfur Peace Agreement
ASWJ: Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a	DRC: Democratic Republic of the Congo
AU: African Union	EAC: East African Community
AUBP: African Union Border Program	ECCAS: Economic Community of Central African States
AU-MVCM: AU Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mission	ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States
BDB: Benghazi Defense Brigades	EDA: Eritrean Democratic Alliance
BIFF: Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters	EEZ: Exclusive Economic Zone
BINUH: United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti	EFDM: Eritrean Federal Democratic Movement
BLA: Baluch Liberation Army	EH Bildu: Euskal Herria Bildu
BLF: Baluch Liberation Front	EIC: Eritrean Islamic Congress
BLT: Baluch Liberation Tigers	EIPJD - Eritrean Islamic Party for Justice and Development
BOL: Bangsamoro Organic Law	ELF: Eritrean Liberation Front
BRA: Balochistan Republican Army	ELN: National Liberation Army
BRN: Barisan Revolusi Nasional	EMC: Estado Mayor Central
BRP: Baluch Republican Party	ENSF: Eritrean National Salvation Front
CAR: Central African Republic	EPC: Eritrean People's Congress
CARICOM: Caribbean Community	EPDF: Eritrean People's Democratic Front
CCSMR: Military Command Council for the Salvation of the Republic	EPL: Popular Liberation Army
CDN: Coalition for Dialogue and Negotiation	EPG: Eminent Persons Group
CELAC: Community of Latin American and Caribbean States	EPPK: Collective of Basque Political Prisoners
CENCO: Congolese Episcopal Conference	EPRDF: Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
CENTCOM: United States Central Command	ERC: Republican Left of Catalonia
CIA: Central Intelligence Agency	ETA: Basque Country and Freedom
CMA: Coordination of Movements of Azawad	ETIM: East Turkestan Islamic Movement
CMFPR: Coordination of Movements and Patriotic Front of Resistance	ETLO: East Turkestan Liberation Organization
CNARED: National Council for the Respect of the Peace Agreement and the Reconciliation of Burundi and the Restoration of the Rule of Law	EU: European Union
CNDD-FDD: National Congress for the Defense of Democracy - Forces for the Defense of Democracy	EUBAM: EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine, in Moldova (Transdnistria)
CNDP: National Congress for the Defense of the People	EUFOR: European Union Force
CNF: Chin National Front	EULEX: European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo
CNL: National Congress for Freedom	EUMA: EU Mission in Armenia
	EUMM: EU Observation Mission in Georgia
	EUNAVFOR Somalia: European Union Naval Force - Somalia, Operation Atalanta

FACT: Front for Change and Concord in Chad
FARC-EP: Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia - People's Army
FARDC: Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo
FDLR: Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda
FGN: Federal Government of Nagaland
FLEC-FAC: Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda
FLM: Macina Liberation Front
FNL: National Liberation Forces
FPB: Popular Forces of Burundi
FPR: Popular Front for Recovery
FPRC: Patriotic Front for the Renaissance of the Central African Republic
GATIA: Imghad Tuareg Self-Defense Group and Allies
GCC: Gulf Cooperation Council
GERD: Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam
GID: Geneva International Discussions
GNA: Government of National Accord
GNS: Government of National Stability
GNU: Government of National Unity
GNWP: Global Network of Women Peacebuilders
GPRN/NSCN: Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland / National Socialist Council of Nagaland
GSIM: Support Group for Islam and Muslims
GSPC: Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat
G7: The Group of Seven
HCUA: High Council for the Unity of Azawad
HRW: Human Rights Watch
HTS: Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham
IAEA: International Atomic Energy Agency
ICC: International Criminal Court
ICG: International Crisis Group
ICGLR: International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
ICRC: International Committee for the Red Cross
IFLO: Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia
IGAD: Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IHL: International Humanitarian Law
INTEX: Instrument for Supporting Trade Exchanges
IOM: International Organization for Migration
IPRM: Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism
IRGC: Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps
ISGS: Islamic State in the Greater Sahara
ISIS: Islamic State
ISSG: International Syria Support Group
ISWAP: Islamic State in the Province of West Africa
IU: United Left
IWF: Iduwini Volunteers Force
JCPOA: Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
JEM: Justice and Equality Movement
JKLF: Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front
JMB: Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen (Mujahideen Assembly)
JNIM: Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (Support Group for Islam and Muslims)
KANU: Kenya African National Union
KCP: Kangleipak Communist Party
KDP: Kurdistan Democratic Party
KDPI: Kurdistan Democratic Party - Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan

KFOR: Kosovo Force
KIA: Kachin Independence Army
KLA: Kosovo Liberation Army
KNA: Kuki Liberation Army
KNF: Kuki National Front
KNLAPC: Karen National Liberation Army Peace Council
KNPP: Karenni National Progressive Party
KNU: Kayin National Union
KNU/KNLA: Karen National Union/Karen National Liberation Army
KPLT: Karbi People's Liberation Tigers
KRG: Kurdistan Regional Government
KWN: Kosovo Women's Network
KYKL: Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (Organization for the Salvation of the Revolutionary Movement in Manipur)
LDU: Lahu Democratic Union
LeJ: Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (Jhangvi Army)
LeT: Lashkar-e-Toiba (Jhangvi Army)
LGBTIQ+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Asexual and Plus
LNA: Libyan National Army
LRA: Lord's Resistance Army
M23: March 23 Movement
MAA: Arab Movement of Azawad
MASSOB: Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra
MEND: Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta
MFDC: Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance
MILF: Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MINUSCA: United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MINUSMA: United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MINUSTAH: United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MLCJ: Movement of Central African Liberators for Justice
MNDAA: Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army
MNJTF: Multinational Joint Task Force
MNLA: National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad
MNLF: Moro National Liberation Front
MONUSCO: United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MOSOP: Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People
MPC: Patriotic Movement for Central Africa
MRC: Mombasa Republican Council
MSA: Movement for the Salvation of Azawad
MUD: Democratic Unity Roundtable
MUYAO: United Movement for Jihad in West Africa
MVMV: Mechanism of Oversight, Monitoring and Verification
MWMN: Mediterranean Women Mediators' Network
NAM: Non-Aligned Movement
NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NBI: Nile Basin Initiative
NCA: Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement
NCC: National Consultative Council
NCP: National Congress Party
NDA: Niger Delta Avengers
NDAA: National Democratic Alliance Army
NDF: National Democratic Front
NDFB: National Democratic Front of Boroland
NDFB-P: National Democratic Front of Boroland - Progressive
NDFB-RD: Ranjan Daimary faction of The National Democratic Front of Boroland
NDGJM: Niger Delta Greenland Justice Mandate
NDPVF: Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force
NDV: Niger Delta Vigilante
NGO: Non-Governmental Organization
NIDCA: Niger Delta Consultative Assembly
NMSP: New Mon State Party
NNC: Naga National Council
NNC/GDRN/NA: Naga National Council/ Government Democratic Republic of Nagaland/ Non-Accord
NNPG: National Naga Political Groups
NOREF: Norwegian Centre for Conflict Resolution
NPA: New People's Army
NPGN: National People's Government of Nagaland
NPT: Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NSCN (K-K): National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Kole-Kitovi)
NSCN-IM: National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isaac Muivah
NSCN-K: National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang
NSCN-R: National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Reformation
NSLA: National Santhal Liberation Army
NSSOG: Non-Signatory South Sudan Opposition Groups
NTC-ELCAC: National Task Force to end the Local Communist Armed Conflict, National Security Commission
NTJ: National Towheed Jamaat
OAS: Organization of American States
OCHA: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OFDM: Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement
OIC: Organization for Islamic Cooperation
OIF: International Organization of La Francophonie
OLA: Oromo Liberation Army
OLF: Oromo Liberation Front
ONLF: Ogaden National Liberation Front
OPC: Oromo People's Congress
OPM: Organisasi Papua Merdeka (Organization of Free Papua)
OPRARU: Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity
OSCE: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PA: Palestinian Authority
PANDEF: Pan-Niger Delta Forum
PCPSR: Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research
PDKI: Kurdish Democratic Party
PFLP: Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PJAK: Party for the Free Life in Kurdistan
PKK: Kurdistan Workers' Party
PNA: Palestinian National Authority
PNDPC: Pan Niger Delta Peoples' Congress
PNLO: Pa-Oh National Liberation Organization
PNV: Basque Nationalist Party
POLISARIO: Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro
PP: Spain's Popular Party
PPS: Peace Process Secretariat
PREPAK: People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak
PREPAK (Pro): People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak / Progressive
PS: Province of Sinai
PSC AU: Peace and Security Council AU
PSE-EE: Socialist Party of the Basque Country-Euskadiko Ezkerra
PSOE: Spanish Socialist Worker's Party
PYD: Democratic Union Party of Kurds in Syria
R-ARCSS: Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan
RABMM: Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
RAMM: Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao
RCSS/SSA- South: Restoration Council of Shan State / Shan State Army – South
RDNP: Rally of Progressive National Democrats
RECOM: Regional Commission Tasked with Establishing the Facts about All Victims of War Crimes and Other Serious Human Rights Violations Committed on the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia
RED-Tabara: Resistance for the Rule of Law in Burundi
RENAMO: Mozambican National Resistance
REWL: Red Egbesu Water Lions
RPF: Rwandan Patriotic Front
RPF: Revolutionary People's Front
RPMP-RPA-ABB: Rebolusyonaryong Partido Manggagawa ng Pilipinas/Revolutionary Proletarian Army/Alex Boncayao Brigade
RSADO: Red Sea Afar Democratic Organization
RSF: Rapid Support Forces
SADC: Southern Africa Development Community
SADR: Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic
SAF: Sudan Armed Forces
SCACUF: Southern Cameroons Ambazonia Consortium United Front
SDC: Syrian Democratic Council
SCDF: Southern Cameroons Restoration Forces
SCPS: Southern Cameroons People's Secretariat
SDF: Social Democratic Front of Cameroon
SDF: Syrian Democratic Forces
SIGI: Social Institutions and Gender Index
SLA: Sudan Liberation Army
SLA-AW: Sudan Liberation Army - Abdul Wahid
SLA-MM: Sudan Liberation Army - Minni Minnawi
SLDF: Sabao Land Defence Forces
SLM-MM: Sudan Liberation Movement - Minni Minnawi
SOCADef: Southern Cameroons Defence Forces
SPLA: Sudan People's Liberation Army

SPLA-IO: SPLA in Opposition
SPLM: Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SPLM-IO: Sudan People's Liberation Movement – in Opposition
SPLM-N: Sudan People's Liberation Army - North
SRF: Sudan Revolutionary Forces
SSA: Shan State Army
SSA-N: Shan State Army – North
SSDM/A: South Sudan Democratic Movement/Army
SSLA: South Sudan Liberation Army
SSOMA: South Sudan Opposition Movement Alliance
SSPP: Shan State Progress Party
SSPP/SSA-N: Shan State Progress Party / Shan State Army – North
SSUF: South Sudan United Front
START: Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
STC: Southern Transitional Council
SWIFT: Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication
TAK: The Kurdistan Freedom Falcons
TCG: Trilateral Contact Group
TFG: Transitional Federal Government
TJ-WGE: Working Group of Experts on Transitional Justice
TMC: Transitional Military Council
TNLA: Ta-ang National Liberation Army
TPLF: Tigrayan People's Liberation Front
TTP: Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan
UAE: United Arab Emirates
UCDP: Uppsala Conflict Data Program
UDPS: Union for Democracy and Social Progress
UFDD: Union of the Forces for Democracy and Development
UFR: Union of Resistance Forces
UK: United Kingdom
ULFA: United Liberation Front of Assam
ULFA-I: United Liberation Front of Assam - Independent
ULFA-PTF: Pro-Talks faction of United Liberation Front of Asom
UN: United Nations
UNAMA: United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

UNAMI: United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNAMID: United Nations and African Union Mission in Darfur
UNCTAD: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
UNFICYP: United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
UNFPA: United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNISFA: United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei
UNLF: United National Liberation Front
UNMIK: United Nations Mission in Kosovo
UNMHA: United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement
UNITAMS: United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan
UNMISS: United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UNOCA: United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa
UNOCI: United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire
UNRWA: United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNSMIL: United Nations Support Mission in Libya
UPC: Union for Peace in Central Africa
UPLA: United People's Liberation Army
UPR: Universal Periodic Review
USA: United States of America
USAN: Union of South American Nations
USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UWSA: United Wa State Army
UWSP: United Wa State Party
WAP: Women's Advisory Board for the Sustainable Peacebuilding
WB: World Bank
WFP: World Food Program
WILPF: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
YPG: People's Protection Unit
YPJ: Women's Protection Units
YWPL: Young Women for Peace and Leadership
ZUF: Zeliangrong United Front

About the School for a Culture of Peace

The Escola de Cultura de Pau (School for a Culture of Peace, hereinafter ECP) is an academic peace research institution located at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. The School for a Culture of Peace was created in 1999 with the aim of promoting the culture of peace through research, Track II diplomacy, training and awareness generating activities.

The main fields of action of the Escola de Cultura de Pau are:

- Research. Its main areas of research include armed conflicts and socio-political crises, peace processes, the gender dimension in conflict and peacebuilding, and peace education.
- Teaching and training. ECP staff gives lectures in postgraduate and graduate courses in several universities, including its own Graduate Diploma on Culture of Peace at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. It also provides training sessions on specific issues, including conflict sensitivity and peace education.
- Track II diplomacy. The ECP promotes dialogue and conflict-transformation through Track II initiatives, including facilitation tasks with different actors and on various themes.
- Consultancy services. The ECP carries out a variety of consultancy services for national and international institutions.
- Advocacy and awareness-raising. Initiatives include activities addressed to the Spanish and Catalan society, including contributions to the media.

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Peace Talks in Focus 2025. Report on Trends and Scenarios is a yearbook that analyses peace processes and negotiations that took place in the world during 2025. The examination of the development and dynamics of negotiations worldwide allows to provide a comprehensive overview of peace processes, identify trends and comparatively analyse the various scenarios. *Peace Talks in Focus 2025. Report on Trends and Scenarios* also analyses the evolution of peace processes from a gender perspective. One of the main objectives of this report is to provide information and analysis to those who participate in peaceful conflict resolution at different levels, including parties to disputes, mediators, civil society activists and others. The yearbook also aims to grant visibility to different formulas of dialogue and negotiation aimed at reversing dynamics of violence and channelling conflicts through political means in many contexts. Thus, it seeks to highlight, enhance and promote political, diplomatic and social efforts aimed at transforming conflicts and their root causes through peaceful methods.

The voices and knowledge of women and girls are often omitted and neglected in conflict contexts. They are considered victims, incapable, fragile, and irrelevant to peacebuilding. It is essential to give voice to the perspectives, views, and feelings of women in conflict settings in order to build and keep peace; this is precisely what the report *Peace Talks in Focus. Report on Trends and Scenarios* does. Women have always been at the forefront of the pursuit of peace and social cohesion. They weave the social fabric of communities and know how to achieve peace. Their absence at political negotiation tables and in National Dialogues often results in incomplete and fragile peace agreements. It is time to recognize the important role of this group in guaranteeing a sustainable and lasting peace.

Nzira de Deus

Executive Director of Fórum Mulher, Mozambique

Yearbook *Peace Talks in Focus 2025. Report on Trends and Scenarios*, compiled by the School for a Culture of Peace (ECP), is an outstanding strategic resource that re-centres peace negotiations as a political, rather than military, pathway to addressing conflict, while grounding its analysis in rigorous global evidence and comparative trends. Its integration of gender across case studies and regional analysis moves beyond tokenistic inclusion, providing a valuable foundation for advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda in practice. By examining 53 peace processes across all regions, it equips policymakers, mediators and feminist movements alike with a rare combination of analytical depth and operational relevance. For WILPF, it reinforces the case that inclusive, rights-based and locally led dialogue remains one of the most effective alternatives to escalating militarisation. At a time when multilateralism is under

strain, this yearbook stands as an indispensable guide for those committed to transformative peace grounded in justice, participation and the resolution of root causes. The publication is one of the strongest global references on peace processes because of its breadth, empirical rigour and comparative analysis.

Amrita Kapur

Secretary general of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

One of the great challenges of the 21st century should be to move "from the age of force and war to the age of dialogue and negotiation", to borrow an expression from Andrea Riccardi. Humanity can heal conflicts through dialogue, diplomacy, and encounter, but today these are humiliated. Despite the pessimistic and resigned rhetoric that surrounds us, the School for a Culture of Peace (ECP) has been working tirelessly for over 25 years to build a culture of peace, alerting us and analysing open conflicts around the world. It reminds us that the suffering of victims and the violation of human rights continue, but it also illustrates the paths to resolution set in motion by peacebuilding efforts. *Peace Talks in Focus. Report on Trends and Scenarios* reveals the stark reality of our world so that each of us, starting from our own perspective, can react. It is a very useful and rigorous tool, not only for specialists, but for all of us who feel the responsibility to build a new humanism of peace. As Giorgio La Pira said, we believe that "the method of war must be replaced by the method of peace: the method of negotiation, of encounter, of convergence; that is, the authentically human method!"

Jaume Castro Forns

Head of Sant'Egidio community, Catalonia



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