



**Statement by Ms. Ondina Blokar Drobič, Deputy Permanent Representative,  
Chargé d'affaires of the Republic of Slovenia to the UN at the Open Debate of the  
UN Security Council on Maintenance of International Peace and Security:  
Mediation and Peaceful Resolution of Conflicts**

**New York, August 29, 2018**

Madame President,

Slovenia welcomes the UK Presidency initiative to organize this open debate. I wish to align myself with the statement delivered by the European Union and Group of Friends of Mediation of which Slovenia is a member. In addition I would like to make some remarks in my national capacity.

Let me first reiterate our support to the Secretary-General for his determination to bring mediation at the forefront of the UN peace related activities. We trust that the creation of High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation will further strengthened UN mediation capacities and hope that countries will avail themselves of using these capacities.

As we have stated in another debate before this Council, when it comes to the peaceful settlement of disputes Chapter VI of the Charter offers a good guidance and should be used more often. We also wish to encourage the Council to explore the ways of identifying the crisis and risks to international peace and security as early as possible and address them.

This is where preventive diplomacy, including mediation pays off many times over. Preventing any dispute from escalating to the armed conflict will save enormous resources, financial and others that could be used elsewhere, but most of all will save human lives. Mediation is a powerful tool and can encourage parties to prioritize negotiation, provide alternatives to violence and end mass atrocity crimes.

Advocating culture of peace and dialogue, together with respect for human rights and international law is at the core of Slovenian foreign policy activities. In the last years we were focused on promoting mediation in the Mediterranean region through MedMed Initiative and the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network by highlighting indispensable role that women and young people play in the peace and reconciliation processes.

As agents of change on the ground women are well aware of what is needed in their community. Therefore, they must be integral part of processes that will lead to the viable long-term solutions. The awareness campaigns on the advantages of women' participation in peace-related activities should be raised.

Promotion of dialogue, in particular among young people, is an important way of building lasting and sustaining peace through education, including about practices of peaceful conflict resolution and mediation.

One good example we wish to share is a project of school and peer mediation that Slovenia launched in August 2017 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With the aim of raising awareness of positive effects of peaceful and constructive resolution of conflicts in the schools, teachers and students in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and Brčko District are trained in different mediation techniques. By establishing mediation capacities among teachers and students, schools become promoters of tolerance, human rights, diversity and reconciliation.

The project, which currently runs in nine primary schools, has been very well received in local communities and is already showing positive results. With its big potential we plan to expand it also to some other countries in the region.

Mediation is a valuable tool for conflict prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes, it nurtures reconciliation and can help build and develop democratic and resilient societies. Even though every mediation situation is unique, its basic principles can be the foundation of solving crisis before they escalate anywhere in the world. This is why we have to invest in education about it, not only of future mediators, but of entire society.