

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 10 January 2022 from the Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the pleasure to inform you that Norway, in its capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of January 2022, will hold a President's retreat on preventive diplomacy and mediation, which will take place on 13 January.

In order to guide the discussions, Norway has prepared a concept note (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mona Juul
Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations



Annex to the letter dated 10 January 2022 from the Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note for the retreat on preventive diplomacy and mediation, to be held by the President of the Security Council on 13 January 2022 at the Greentree Foundation, Manhasset, New York

Overview, draft agenda and session plans

Overview

As the United Nations organ with the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council today faces a set of challenging conflict contexts and does so at a time when the multilateral system is under pressure. While a number of protracted conflicts dominate the Council's agenda, new situations are emerging and others have the potential to escalate rapidly. This underlines the importance of preventive diplomacy and the use of dialogue to build trust and avoid a descent into conflict, or to seek a negotiated solution where violence has already taken hold.

The retreat held by the President of the Security Council will provide the Council with the time and space to reflect on the opportunities and challenges for peacemakers in addressing specific emerging crises and conflict cases. It will serve as a platform to discuss the interaction of the work of the Council with that of other peace diplomacy actors to ensure that the Council's conflict resolution efforts are as effective as possible. By showcasing the first-hand experiences of peacemaking actors on the ground and paying attention to the interconnection of different peacemaking tracks, including local and regional efforts, the retreat will provide an opportunity for the Council to draw out insights for current preventive diplomacy and mediation efforts.

At the start of the retreat, the Secretary-General will present and discuss his vision for the future of preventive diplomacy with the 15 Permanent Representatives, as he begins his second term in office. The Permanent Representatives will also hold a closed-door session ("sofa talks") on the topic of "talking with all conflict actors".

Two further sessions will take place with a small number of high-level external contributors. In the "negotiator's studio", participants will hear from representatives of both sides of the conflict between the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo.

Alongside the Norwegian facilitator of the peace process, they will reflect in a frank and informal discussion on their respective roles during the negotiations that led to a landmark agreement in 2016.

Finally, a working dinner on Afghanistan will provide an opportunity for participants to discuss the country's humanitarian crisis, the potential role of dialogue in addressing challenges to security and the stabilization of public services, and the possibilities for longer-term political engagement with the Taliban.

Oslo Forum

Since 2003, the Oslo Forum has grown to become the pre-eminent, agenda-setting retreat in the field of international peacemaking. Co-hosted annually by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, the Oslo Forum provides a discreet and informal space for mediators, high-level

decision makers and parties in conflict to reflect on current conflicts, peace processes and mediation practice; collaborate across institutional and conceptual divides; and advance negotiations.

Mediation and dialogue are most effective when built on in-depth knowledge, access to broad networks and an openness to engage with all parties. Channelling the spirit of the Oslo Forum, the retreat held by the President of the Security Council will create a collaborative atmosphere for the discussion of those guiding principles and of the steps that can be taken by a range of actors to ensure effective and inclusive peace diplomacy.

Draft agenda

Thursday 13 January 2022

(Final timing to be confirmed)

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| 1–2.45 p.m. | Closed-door lunch

“Preventive diplomacy and vision of the Secretary-General for his second term” |
| 2.45–3.15 p.m. | Coffee |
| 3.15–4.30 p.m. | Sofa talks

“Talking with all conflict actors” |
| 4.30–5 p.m. | Drinks |
| 5–6.15 p.m. | The negotiator’s studio

“Colombia – Lessons from the field” |
| 6.15–6.45 p.m. | Break |
| 6.45 p.m. | Working dinner

“Afghanistan” |
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