

Annual Report 2022



INDEPENDENT DIPLOMAT

THE DIPLOMATIC ADVISORY GROUP

Independent Diplomat (ID) conducted its work in 2022 across a range of projects – described below – organized under three pillars: systems change, global threats, and conflict resolution.

SYSTEMS CHANGE PILLAR

Participatory Policymaking - Empowering Refugees in the Diplomatic Process

Objectives

- To ensure refugees have the diplomatic and public space to advocate for their interests.
- To ensure refugees have the skills, expertise and institutional capacity to exert an effective and sustained voice in policymaking.

Along with our refugee partners, ID aims to fundamentally change the international system of refugee policymaking to ensure the systematic and comprehensive inclusion of refugees. The meaningful engagement of legitimate refugee voices in policymaking will enable lasting, systemic change to improve the global refugee response system, in the interest of human dignity and social justice.

Specifically, ID works to secure the following long-term objectives:

- Refugees have an effective and sustained voice in policymaking that is recognized as having a positive impact on policy responses at different levels.
- Refugees have the political and social space to advocate for their interests at national, regional and international levels.

To do this, we work to ensure that refugee-led organizations (RLOs) are (I) institutionally strengthened; (II) have increased capacity in diplomacy, mobilization, advocacy, and media skills; and (III) utilize their insights, skills and networks to shape refugee policy nationally, regionally, and globally.

ID supports RLOs engagement in both regional and global policy processes. At the regional level, in 2022 ID supported its refugee partners as they worked to increase their influence in Africa (at the African Union), and in Latin America in the Quito Process (the meetings and commitments established between Latin American countries to coordinate the response to the Venezuelan migration crisis). At the global level, ID supports our partners to engage with the Global Compact on Refugees process, the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR), and the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme (ExCom).

Women's Political Participation in Peacebuilding

Objectives

- Track I peace processes are more inclusive of women, and female political leaders are well-prepared to participate assertively in political negotiations; peace agreements forged are gender sensitive.

ID has continued its work to advance women's participation in peace processes, providing technical support and capacity building to a wide range of female activists and political leaders. In 2022, ID launched a new line of work with Afghan women, supporting a series of capacity building trainings for Afghan women diplomats and activists, in partnership with UN Women. Also as part of its partnership with UN Women, ID developed a policy report outlining 'lessons learned' from its work with female political party members and negotiators. This report aimed to function as a steppingstone towards a cross-conflict approach to women's political participation in peace processes, in which ID seeks to create synergies between its work with women leaders across conflict zones.

ID also concentrated efforts on examining how to support the next phase of the development of Women for Democracy in Venezuela – an inclusive movement of Venezuelan women from across the democratic spectrum committed to a gender inclusive, democratic future for the people of Venezuela. Following the organization of two international tours for the movement's members – to Europe and North America – ID supported the release of six op-eds by Venezuelan female leaders, developed four policy papers regarding themes including transitional justice, election reform, refugees and migration, and the environment, and expanded the movement's membership to include women from inside Venezuela and civil society leaders. Collectively, these

efforts worked to put women at the forefront of diplomacy, ensuring they have access to the tools, resources, advice and networks needed to effectively engage in peace processes.

Meet the Parties (MTP)

Objectives

- Meet the Parties (MTP) initiative contributes to more inclusive decision-making and sustainable outcomes at the UN Security Council (UNSC), Human Rights Council (HRC), and EU.

As part of its efforts to catalyse greater inclusivity with the standard working methods of the UN Security Council, ID's Meet the Parties (MTP) initiative continues to provide a platform for multilateral institutions – including the UN Security Council (UNSC), EU, and UN Human Rights Council (HRC) – to engage non-state actors on matters critical to international peace and security. In 2022, a core group of States committed to the MTP concept.

Meet the Parties meetings offered the Security Council a rare opportunity to hear from non-state actors critical to conflict resolution but often excluded from multilateral consultations. This included meetings with Haiti's Montana Accord as member states considered the deployment of a rapid action force, the Syrian Democratic Council ahead of the renewal of Syria's cross-border access resolution, Rohingya representatives and other Burmese ethnic and religious minorities following the violent Junta coup, Afro-Colombians on impediments to the implementation of the Colombia peace accord's ethnic chapter, female members of the Libya Political Dialogue Forum ahead of plans to hold Presidential and Parliamentary elections, and Yemeni female political leaders and negotiators amidst a growing crackdown on women's rights.

GLOBAL THREATS PILLAR

Climate Change / Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) / High Ambition Coalition

Objective

- To support the Marshall Islands and the High Ambition Coalition (HAC) in its diplomatic efforts to avoid devastating climate impacts.

ID has worked with the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) since 2009, helping the low-lying island nation navigate the complex international negotiations on climate change. In the years leading up to the landmark 2015 COP21 UN climate talks in Paris, RMI became the leading vulnerable country voice on the international stage and, forming the High Ambition Coalition (HAC) with ID's support, secured some of the most ambitious elements of the deal, including the 1.5C temperature limit.

ID's policy support to the HAC and to the RMI Government in 2022 included:

- a) **Mitigation:** Maintaining pressure for major emitters to come forward with 1.5C aligned Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) and Long-term Strategies (LTS) and progressing discussions in the work program on mitigation ambition. Pressing for sectoral ambition, particularly on shipping and aviation.
- b) **Adaptation:** Attention was focused on two areas. First, contributing to the Glasgow-Sharm el Sheikh Work Program (GlaSS) on the Global Goal on Adaptation, ensuring that it reflects the needs and interests of the most vulnerable. Second, sustaining pressure to deliver the doubling of adaptation financing.
- c) **Finance:** Generating momentum in deliberations on a new collective quantified goal on climate finance – in particular with regard to the discussion on access to finance.
- d) **Loss and Damage:** With RMI, feeding into the Glasgow Dialogue (i.e. coming out of the 2021 UN climate negotiations) to discuss the arrangements for the funding of activities to avert, minimize and address Loss and Damage associated with the adverse impacts of climate change, and exploring whether the HAC could be a space in which to progress Loss and Damage discussions.

Key events throughout the year included supporting RMI Climate Envoy Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner to participate in the first and second workshops of the Glasgow Sharm el Sheikh work program on the global goal on adaptation;

supporting RMI's participation in the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly on climate change issues; supporting RMI's participation in a Heads of Delegation Meeting on Loss and Damage convened by the incoming COP27 Presidency in Cairo; participating in the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) preparatory meeting for COP27; extensive support to the RMI and HAC at the COP27 climate talks to a) secure ambitious outcomes on Loss and Damage, b) Keep 1.5C in sight, c) raise pressure for adequate and accessible finance, and d) continue to build support for the maritime shipping levy.

Cyber

Objectives

- To support meaningful engagement of all countries in cyber policymaking and thereby enable better policy outcomes internationally and deliver positive outcomes for participating countries.

Since mid-2021, ID has worked with Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Pacific to achieve robust cyber diplomacy outcomes at the UN Open-Ended Working Group and in negotiations for a new cybercrime convention. In 2022, ID worked to build the capacity of local leaders, officials and negotiators in the Pacific to take part in UN cyber discussions, understand the issues at stake, and increase their countries' engagement in cyber-diplomacy in support of a free and open internet and responsible state behaviour in cyberspace.

Throughout 2022, ID delivered briefings and workshops on UN-level negotiations around responsible state behaviour online, as well as on a new process seeking to establish a convention for combatting cybercrime. ID developed a good working relationship with many Pacific SIDS, including Vanuatu, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Timor Leste, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), which ID also advises on climate change. Independent Diplomat also supported Pacific SIDS at the Open-Ended Working Group on ICTs in New York, where discussions centre on responsible state behaviour online. ID supported a negotiating strategy and talking points for Vanuatu and supported other countries with briefing notes. For the first time, the Pacific Islands Forum submitted a statement to the OEOWG.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PILLAR

Mali

Objective

- The implementation of the Mali Peace Agreement through the provision of professional diplomatic advice and services to the Coordination of Movements of the Azawad (CMA).

The status of the Mali Peace Agreement and broader stability in Mali remained precarious in 2022. More than seven years after its signature, there had been limited progress to implement the agreement's key commitments and to address the fundamental underlying causes of the conflict in northern Mali. Following a second military coup in May 2021, international attention focused on achieving a return to constitutional order that minimized the political bandwidth available to focus on the implementation of the agreement.

Against this backdrop, ID continued to support the leadership of the Coordination of the Movements of the Azawad (CMA) with strategic, political advice on how to respond to these emerging developments. This included the withdrawal of French and other Western allies from Mali and the arrival of Russian/Wagner Group mercenaries at the end of 2021. In part due to ID's support, the CMA is recognized as a credible and effective actor by the international community, which increasingly acknowledges the importance and relevance of the CMA's concerns and arguments in relation to the peace agreement's implementation. ID has continued to help facilitate and inform engagement between the CMA and international actors at vital moments.

Late in 2022, ID organized a visit to Brussels in October for the MNLA Secretary General and key CMA leadership member for meetings with interlocutors from EU Member States. This proved a timely opportunity to pass several key messages relating to the risk of the agreement collapsing if the Government pressed ahead with a new Constitution that ignores commitments made and the need for urgent international engagement to help prevent this, the Signatory Movement's efforts to counter the terrorist threat, and the need for the EU to reconsider delivery models for development and humanitarian aid.

In parallel, ID also continued to support the inclusion of female Malian representatives in the peace process and formal CSA structures, including providing specific mentoring and advice to the CMA's female CSA members. ID has also led on delivering three in-person capacity building workshops for female CSA representatives from all the signatory parties (and in some cases wider female leaders from northern Mali) in Bamako, and two virtual workshops, across needs identified by the women. These include effective diplomacy, negotiation tactics, and strategic communications. In addition, ID organized a diplomatic visit to Brussels in February 2022 for female CSA representatives from all the signatory movements, providing a platform for them to influence European policymaking and to shine a light on development and humanitarian needs that have often been neglected in favour of focusing on security issues.

Yemen

Objectives

- Southern Transitional Council (STC): Advise the STC and enhance its diplomatic engagement within the UN-led political process towards a solution for the South Yemen issue;
- Yemeni women: Support South Yemeni women to shape international policymaking on the South issue and broader Yemeni crisis.

In early 2022 a new coalition government was formed in Yemen: The Presidential Leadership Council (PLC). ID's partners, the Southern Transitional Council (STC) for the first time secured a position within the coalition and became a legitimate part of the Yemeni Government. In parallel, the truce negotiations in Yemen collapsed after the Houthis sought the payment of salaries of their troops as part of the package of concessions. Against this backdrop tensions and divisions within the PLC became increasingly acute.

The primary goals of ID's work in 2022 was: i) to advise the STC on its strategy at both the national and international level, ii) to assist the STC in its efforts to secure an end to the Yemen conflict, and iii) to establish a process to address the status of the South of Yemen. There has been a particular focus on ensuring the STC's inclusion in the UN process, and for the Southern issue to be factored into UN plans, and in parallel advising the STC on regional negotiations and tactics.

This new context has required ID to adapt the goals of the project, three broad priorities in 2022 included:

- i. The STC's positioning and messaging internationally, how to structure that effort and deliver a strategy as part of the PLC;
- ii. Supporting the decision-making processes within the PLC that benefit the South, in particular on improving the humanitarian and economic situation.
- iii. Preparing for UN-led negotiations and ensuring the inclusion of the Southern framework within the UN plan.

ID continued to provide advice on the above to the STC throughout 2022. Additional areas of focus included:

- Strategic advice. The principal focus has been on political advice on how the STC navigates truce negotiations and the consequences of growing divisions within the PLC.
- International visits. The STC seeks to use their new position and legitimacy for high level visits.
- Enhancing the women's political participation element of the project. We have expanded our relationship with women STC representatives in Aden.
- Capacity building/formal training.
- Lessons learned from other conflicts. There are comparable examples and contexts similar to Yemen and the formation of the PLC (e.g. in Sudan and Mali).

Western Sahara (Frente POLISARIO)

Objectives

- To achieve progress towards a negotiated political solution that provides for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, in accordance with international law.

ID advises the Frente POLISARIO / government of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) – the legitimate political representatives of the people of Western Sahara. There continued to be low-level conflict on the ground stemming from the collapse of the ceasefire in November 2020. In this context, the annual MINURSO (UN peacekeeping mission in Western Sahara) mandate renewal in October 2021 was viewed by many as a missed opportunity to make political progress. Steffan de Mistura was appointed the new Personal Envoy to the Secretary-General (PESG) in late 2021 and spent much of 2022 building his knowledge and relationships with the parties, as well as seeking the support of key international partners for his efforts going forward. Without significant investment from the UNSC to help create the conditions for the PESG to succeed (i.e. a clear framework and incentives for progress), expectations of a breakthrough remained low. The UNSC voted on 27 October 2022 (13 for, with 2 abstentions) to renew MINURSO's mandate for a further year and called on all parties to renew negotiations in good faith.

Against this backdrop, in 2022 ID provided targeted support to the Frente POLISARIO in considering how to approach a potential relaunched political process. ID also provided specific advice on potential confidence-building measures that could help support the resumption of the political track, although Moroccan intransigence over the format of talks remains a challenge that the PESG was unable to overcome. ID also provided informal advice to NGOs on their advocacy efforts on Western Sahara as well as ensuring that the cause is reflected in our wider work with the African Refugee Network.

Rohingya / Myanmar

Objective

- To assist an emerging group of Rohingya representatives to play a greater role in influencing the diplomatic response to the crisis, with a particular focus on accountability.

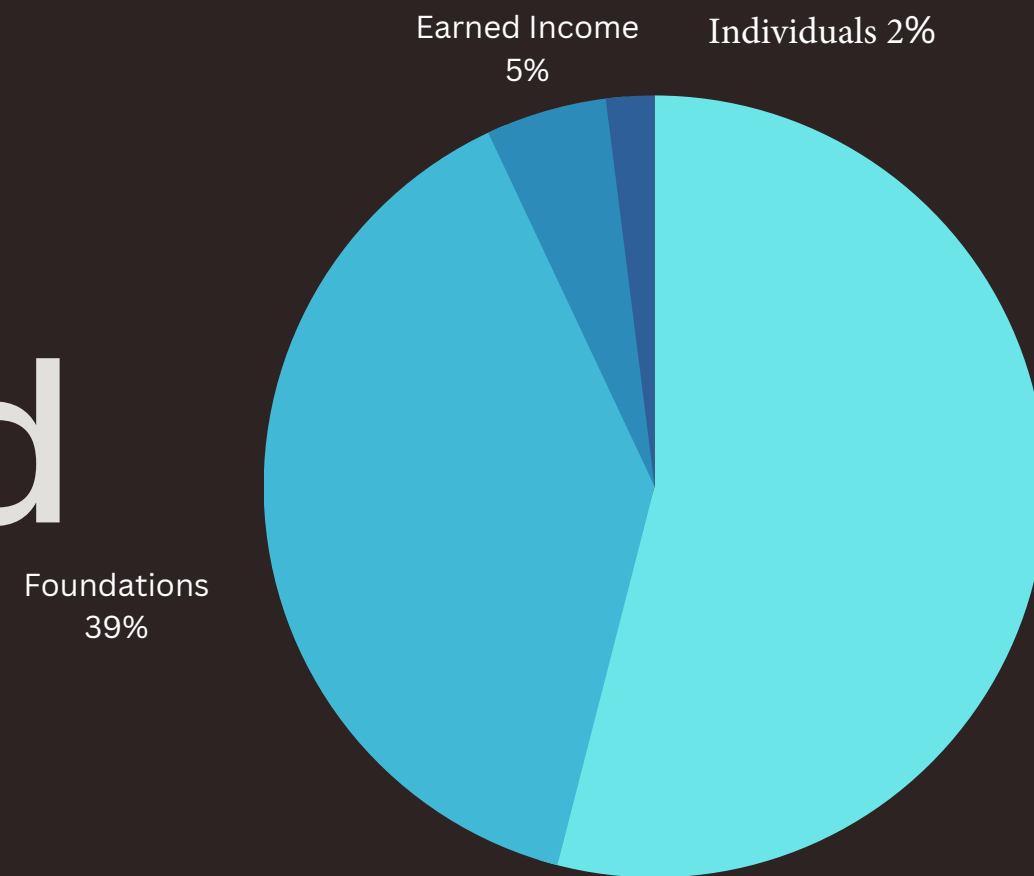
Since 2017, ID has provided political and strategic advice to a coalition of Rohingya partners to pursue justice and accountability in response to the genocide and progress towards the conditions for a repatriation to Myanmar. The political context for this project changed significantly following the February 2021 military coup in Myanmar; the creation of new opposition structures to the military rule (see below) saw greater alignment amongst Myanmar's ethnic and religious minorities. In parallel there was a realization by the international community that the Rohingya issue could no longer be addressed as a separate issue but was a key component to secure a genuine democratic transition.

Against this backdrop, in 2022 ID supported its partners in engagement with the broader opposition – the National Unity Government (NUG) – which provided an opportunity for ID to act as a bridge between our Rohingya partners and the NUG. In 2022, ID focused on supporting and strengthening the composition of the Rohingya coalition which we have partnered with. ID successfully supported the expansion of the coalition to include additional representatives in the Cox's Bazar (CXB) refugee camps and increased representatives from the main Rohingya political parties in Myanmar. However, several of these partners have fled the country for safety since the coup.

Throughout 2022, ID provided advice on policy positions to address the inclusion element of the Rohingya demands with the broader opposition movements. Successes included contributing to judicial progress, including by laying the groundwork for the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar (IIMM) and launching cases of universal jurisdiction. In parallel, ID focused on supporting development of the strategy and objectives of the group. The aim of this was to assist the group to prioritize its efforts and potential for maximum impact.

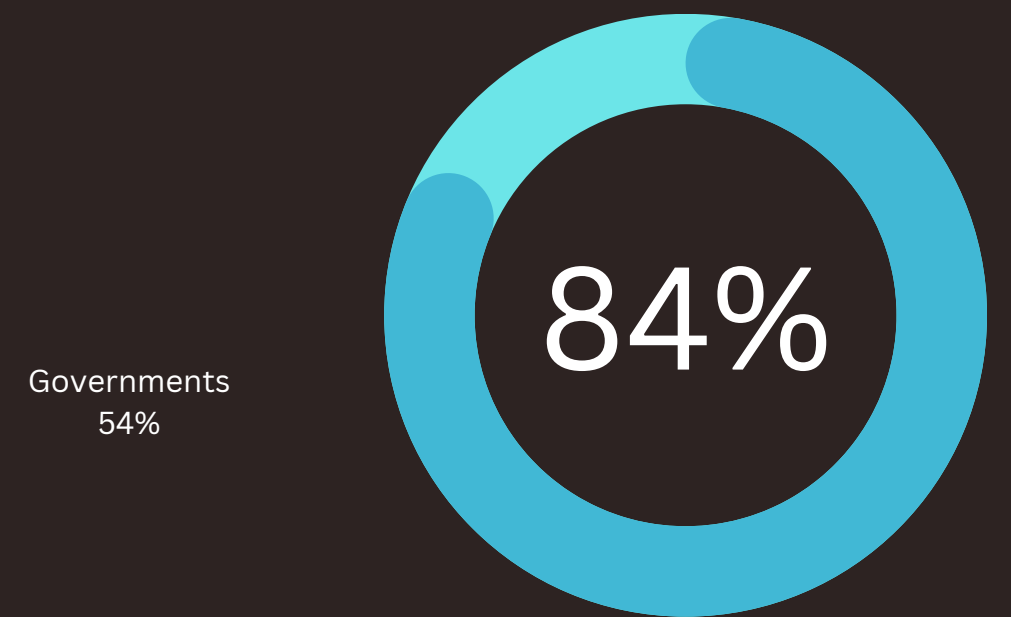
Overall, ID provided support to our Rohingya partners in engagement that ensures the Rohingya issue remained on the diplomatic agenda. This was achieved by continuously facilitating access to prominent platforms such as relevant sessions of the UN Human Rights Council, briefings and other direct advocacy with the UN Security Council and direct engagement with key stakeholders. This ongoing support includes providing our Rohingya partners with analysis, strategic advice, facilitating meetings, drafting talking points, and arranging media opportunities.

2022 Consolidated Financials



Total Revenue
\$3.043m

Total Expenditure
\$3.074m



Governments
54%

Expenditure
to Program
Services

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