

## DEFINITIVE CEASEFIRES

### OVERVIEW: DEFINITIVE CEASEFIRES

#### DEFINITION

A definitive ceasefire is the **permanent agreement** that sets out the security arrangements that aim to *end* rather than *suspend* the fighting.

Definitive ceasefires are a key outcome of peace talks and complement the peace agreement covering the political resolution of the underlying issues.

- The definitive ceasefire is intended to be the *final step* in the formal negotiation process.

Common Elements: Many definitive ceasefires include some agreement on the size and composition of the army, nature of revised command structures, method of integrating the non-state force, and agreement on the rank and compensation for former insurgents joining the new forces.

#### DIFFERENTIATION FROM PRELIMINARY CEASEFIRE

- The central component of a definitive ceasefire is the **final status of forces agreement**.
- A definitive ceasefire is often one of the last elements to be negotiated and is only signed once all the rest of the political terms have been agreed.
- Technical support is often required to ensure that provisions are developed and sequenced according to a coherent strategic logic.
- Security provisions often closely relate to political issues, meaning that the negotiation and security negotiations should in principle occur in tandem.
- The negotiation of a definitive ceasefire usually takes place towards the end of the negotiation process.

- The terms of a definitive ceasefire may be highly technical.

#### **ROAD TO A PRELIMINARY CEASEFIRE**

- Consolidate the prior cessation of hostilities or preliminary ceasefire agreements.
- The parties must develop sufficient trust, and build working relations with the other side.
  - Confidence building is intended to encourage cooperation.
- A system of interim security management is developed following the preliminary ceasefire
- Reminder that parties must maintain ownership of the agreement in order to sustain it.

Note that the terms of a definitive ceasefire may be highly technical, and training, workshops and technical advice is often needed to help the parties sustain the existing ceasefire whilst negotiating the final definitive agreement. Ideally, the final status of forces then formalizes the structures and processes initiated in the period of interim security management. Without this phase, there is a risk that parties have the final status of forces thrust upon them before they are ready, leading to the collapse of security and potentially the agreement.