

WORLD PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION

Section on Conflict Management and Conflict Resolution

Candidacy for the 2026–2029 Term

Chair candidate	Ruta Karaliūnienė, MD, PhD — Senior psychiatrist and psychotherapist, Rhein-Mosel Fachklinik / Academic Hospital of Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Andernach, Germany. Current Chair, WPA CMCr Section.
Co-Chair candidate	Enrico Suardi, MD, MSc, MA — Director of Psychiatry, Saint Elizabeths Hospital, and Director of Forensic Services, The Ross Center, Washington, DC, USA. Current Co-Chair, WPA CMCr Section.
Secretary candidate	Margaret Ojeahere, MD, MSc, FWACP — Consultant Psychiatrist and Researcher, Department of Psychiatry, Jos University Teaching Hospital, Nigeria. Leadership Council Member, WPA CMCr Section.

Mission and Vision

Our Mission

The Conflict Management and Conflict Resolution (CMCR) Section exists to apply the knowledge, methods, and clinical experience of psychiatry to the understanding, prevention, and resolution of conflict — between individuals, groups, and nations. Founded in 1990 on Professor Eliot Sorel's premise that psychiatric theory and practice can be brought to bear on ethnic, political, economic, and cultural conflict, the Section has spent more than three decades building an evidence base and a professional community for that idea. Our mission for the 2027–2030 term is to carry that founding premise into practice: to move the Section from documenting why psychiatry belongs in conflict management to demonstrating how psychiatrists can be engaged, trained, and deployed in the actual work of diplomacy and conflict resolution.

Our Vision

We envision a Section that is not only a scholarly forum but a working bridge between psychiatry and the diplomatic, foreign-policy, and conflict-resolution communities — a Section whose members are recognized and called upon as contributors to Track II (unofficial, informal) processes and, potentially, as advisors within Track I (formal, governmental) negotiations. This vision builds directly on our 2026 World Congress e-poster on the role of the psychiatrist in international conflict management, and on recent literature (e.g., Aggarwal & Alderdice, 2025, on Lord Alderdice's role in the Good Friday Agreement) showing that psychiatric contribution to conflict resolution can be expanded beyond the Track II boundaries.

The Way Forward: From Psychiatry to Diplomacy

What we are proposing is a clear throughline that connects with the founding question the Section has asked since 1990 — not merely how conflict affects mental health, but how psychiatric understanding can help prevent and resolve conflict itself. Our joint candidacy is organized around one central thesis, drawn from three decades of Section history and from our own research this year: psychiatrists have the conceptual tools — e.g., understanding of individual behavior, identity formation and trauma, group dynamics, leader–follower relationships, and

communication under stress — to participate in negotiation and diplomacy. If elected, we will pursue this thesis through four concrete priorities:

- Institutional partnerships. Build relationships with bodies that have already done this work in the past — e.g, the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry through its Committee on International Relations, as well as foreign ministries, diplomatic academies, and Track II organizations so that Section members have points of entry into practice.
- A training pathway. Develop the case for structured post-residency training in psychiatry and conflict management — modeled on the forensic expert-witness pathway as an institutional analogy — so psychiatrists entering this field have a recognized route in, rather than an improvised one.
- A living historical record. Maintain and extend the Section's institutional memory (its 60-plus symposia) as the evidentiary foundation for this agenda, including through Congress posters, symposia, and publications.
- Deeper intersectional collaboration within WPA. Continue and expand the cross-section partnerships developed during the current term — e.g., with the Section on Disaster Psychiatry, and initiatives such as Global Women in Psychiatry — so that CMCR's diplomacy agenda is pursued jointly with, rather than alongside, the WPA's other sections and their memberships.
- Commitment to the priorities that have guided the Section in the current and past terms: empowering colleagues in low- and middle-income countries; addressing the mental health dimensions of globalized conflict, gender equity, and climate-driven displacement.



Ruta Karaliūnienė, MD, PhD

Ruta Karaliūnienė is a Senior Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist at the Rhein-Mosel-Fachklinik, Landeskrankenhaus Andernach, an academic teaching hospital of Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany, with a clinical focus on PTSD. She graduated from Vilnius University's Medical Faculty in 2015, completed psychiatric residency in Germany, and has pursued doctoral research on bipolar disorder at the Early Prevention Centre for Psychiatric Disorders, Dresden. Her academic interests include global mental health, the mental health effects of climate change, and early intervention. She has chaired the WPA CMC Section since 2023, building its programming on climate change, workplace mental health, and support for early-career and women psychiatrists worldwide.



Enrico Suardi, MD, MSc, MA

Enrico Suardi is Director of Psychiatry at Saint Elizabeths Hospital, Washington, DC. ABPN Board-certified in general, child and adolescent, and forensic psychiatry, he holds faculty appointments at Saint Elizabeths Hospital, Georgetown University, George Washington University, and USUHS/Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, and co-teaches a graduate course on behavioral sciences in national security and public safety at the Institute of World Politics. He previously served as Chief Child and Family Psychiatrist at the U.S. Department of State. He holds an M.D. from Milan, Italy, an M.Sc. in Public Health and Policy from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and an Executive M.A. in National Security Affairs from the Institute of World Politics. He studied political psychology at the Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University. He is Immediate Past President of the Washington Psychiatric Society and has co-chaired the WPA CMC Section since 2023, with a focus on psychiatry, Track II diplomacy, and international conflict management.



Margaret Ojeahere, MD, FWACP

Margaret Ojeahere is a Consultant Psychiatrist and Researcher at Jos University Teaching Hospital, Nigeria, and a Fellow of the West African College of Physicians. She earned her MBBS from the University of Ilorin and completed psychiatry specialist training at Jos University Teaching Hospital. Her research spans global mental health, old age psychiatry, maternal mental health, the mental health effects of climate change, digital mental health, and bioethics. She has authored more than fifty peer reviewed publications, including work on research and governance in child and adolescent mental health in Africa, dementia care pathways, and trauma related mental health needs of internally displaced older adults. A long-standing contributor to the WPA Early Career Psychiatrists community and recipient of the Young Investigator Award from the International Federation for Psychotherapy. She is a mental health advocate and columnist.