Conference Report

Colloquium Peacemaking and Statecraft in the Muslim World: Towards a More Convergent Normative Conflict Resolution Framework

Hilton Hotel, Istanbul, Turkey
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FBA

Center for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies

1.0 Synopsis

From the 10th of February until the 12th of February 2022, the Center for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies (CHS) and the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) hosted a joint colloquium in Istanbul, Turkey on the topic of statecraft and the development of post-conflict transitional governance arrangements, particularly in Muslim-majority countries. The conference sought to identify and examine certain procedural and substantive principles deployed by the Prophet Mohammed[1] that could aid other peacemakers in transforming and resolving conflict through an Islamic-oriented mode of peacemaking.

A central pillar of the CHS is to contribute towards the enablement of sustainable recovery in conflict-affected societies. Additionally, CHS' guiding principles of contextualization, participation, and collaboration lead its efforts to provide context-specific and culturally-sensitive frameworks for durable peace. To this end, the conference is an extension of CHS' goals in promoting sustainable peace by gathering the minds of venerated Ulema, activists, political leaders, and academics to formulate lasting comprehensive governance arrangements that fit the Islamic mold for peace and conflict resolution.

2.0 Welcoming Remarks and Introductions

The first day commenced with opening remarks from Markus Derblom, Director of the Department for Conflict Prevention at FBA; Dr. Sultan Barakat, Founding Director of CHS; Eldridge Adolfo, Senior Mediation Adviser at FBA and Conference Director; Mark Muller, London School of Economics Strategic Director; Ambassador Ebrahim Rasool of South Africa; and Dr. Houda Abadi, Founder and Executive Director of Transformative Peace. Markus Derblom initiated the dialogue by introducing the conference as an attempt to bridge different nations under the shared aim for peace. Dr. Barakat continued this sentiment by expressing how peacemaking must be triggered by justice in order to uphold human dignity. This requires a contextualization of peace principles within the global architecture so that Islamic principles and Western approaches can be integrated and consolidated into a sustainable peace process. Eldridge Adolfo then laid out the two-pronged approach that was implemented with regards to the International Norms Project (INP), under the auspices of FBA since 2020: 1). A research Pillar which was run by the London School of Economics (LSE); and 2). A Transitions Leaders Pillar that brought together senior leaders from across the Muslim world who had themselves gone through and managed transition processes within their own countries. The objective of this two-pronged approach was to have a convergence of the academic research and the real-life practical experience of senior leaders, in order to forge a more comprehensive understanding of what could actually be feasible, in relation to peacemaking and

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[1] "The Prophet Mohammed, Peace be upon him": In every instance that this text refers to the Prophet Mohammed, it refers to this verse and the document has full respect for the Prophet Mohamed. However, the complete verse is not repeated each time, for the purposes of brevity.

statecraft in Transitioning Muslim societies. Furthermore, Mark Muller introduced the INP research programme which began in June 2020 in order to map synergies and points of convergence between Islamic Jurisprudence and International Norms, within the Afghanistan peace process. The INP initiative was to help bolster the Afghan dialogue to reach consensus on the promotion and protection of fundamental freedoms. Muller expressed his hopes for gaining further strategies and insights from the delegates attending the conference in order to implement culturally sensitive transitional governance mechanisms and overcome certain false binaries that hinder peace. Ambassador Rasool and Dr. Abadi explained their research for INP, which they described as an attempt to bridge the divide between the global north and global south. They offered a need to reimagine peacebuilding on three fronts; 1) good intent, 2) humility, and 3) empathy, in order to work across political and ideological divides.

3.0 The State of the Muslim Ummah and a Call to Peacemaking: A World of Conflict, Division and False Binaries

Paving the path of reconciliation towards sustainable peace in Muslim societies requires warring parties to overcome false binaries and find points of connection and convergence. The session began with Ambassador Rasool contextualizing the current state of the Ummah as it stands today. He urged the delegates to reimagine the Ummah despite its traumatic history of colonialism. He attributed the suffering of Muslim-majority nations enduring endemic conflict and their social stagnation to "political nihilism". To this end, Ambassador Rasool implores the Ummah to regain the agency of past civilizations and detract from feeding into the narrative of victimization. He emphasizes the need to analyze the state of the Ummah in the present day before creating solutions. This requires an in-depth referral to the Quran and a process for diagnosis that is respectful of the varying degrees of nuance and subsects so that societies can foster a middle ground of *wasatiya*, or moderation.

Ambassador Rasool then outlined the strategic challenges that need to be faced in order to develop a more culturally sensitive approach towards conflict resolution. He discussed the rising problem of a "triangular conundrum", which places the Restless at the apex, representing the ordinary Muslims who are excluded or marginalized from socio-political and economic participation. The base of the triangle contains the responsibility to manage the Unsustainable, the various forms of powerful, undemocratic governments who cultivate systems of authoritarianism and dictatorships but are unable to maintain themselves when their funds, oil, and economic power exhaust. These regimes require measures ranging from reform to revolution, otherwise, they become hotspots for discontent and extremism. At the other end of the base lie the Undesirables, the forces of extremism and literalism who thrive in transitioning societies, when conflagration rages and governance is weak. Ambassador Rasool warns against the creation of vacuums that allow the Undesirables to fill the space and create breeding grounds for wanton violence. To undertake this conundrum, Ambassador Rasool recommends the Muslim Ummah to manage the role of Islam in the public sphere as a source of identity and values that are compatible with various models of Western peacebuilding.

3.1 Respondents

The first respondent was Professor Talha Kose, the chair of the Political Science Department at Ibn Haldun University, who reflected on the challenges Muslims face in their inability to accept the nation-state order. He states the need to refrain from associating unjust principles and patriarchal practices with Islamic identities. The tendency to portray local, traditional practices as inherently Islamic fuels an image of Islamic resistance to global change and modernity. Thus, Professor Kose advocates the need to find flexible and adaptive areas that manage inclusivity and implement practical solutions to the local vs universal discourse surrounding Islam. Following this contextualization, Dr. Mustafa Osman Elamin, a Professor at the College of Islamic Studies, discussed the relevant peacemaking practices found within Islam that do not contradict Western approaches. He cited Prophetic stories, Quranic verses, and hadiths that provide examples of negotiation, reconciliation, mediation, and collaboration that can be used to close the gap between religious and secular peacebuilding. The next respondent, Bassima El-Hakkaoui, who was a Former Member of Parliament and the Minister of Morocco, reiterated that peacebuilding efforts cannot succeed in Muslim-majority countries unless they are addressed within the Muslim community. She asserted how Islamic conceptions of peace are not contradictory with UN standards, but distinguished the need for a different approach to peacemaking that includes local religious leaders in the reconstruction and conflict mediation process. Additionally, she stated that the specific values of equality and justice are shared and accepted tenets, however, the implementation is lacking to ensure sustainability. Imported solutions tend to conflate existing peacemaking strategies and neglect local initiatives already in place, thus El-Hakkaoui recommends standardizing peacebuilding approaches to a systemized process that combines both methods to reach consensus. Continuing the discussion, Former Member of the Egyptian Government and Muslim Brotherhood, Amr Darrag reminded the delegates that the Ummah is currently trying to escape its "miserable state" of authoritarian regimes and history of colonization and imperialism. He used Egypt's revolution to demonstrate the need for a grace period for nations to adjust to the learning curve after engaging in conflict and strife. Darrag proclaims that the issue of inclusivity is a "two-sided coin", which requires the international community to include the Muslim Ummah in its discussions.

Lastly, Dr. Nayef Nahar Al-Shammari, Director of the Ibn Khaldon Center for Humanities and Social Sciences at Qatar University, discussed two main issues; the failure of an Islamic approach to peacemaking, and the UN's ineffective approach towards Islamic countries. The first issue stems from inequality between State and Ummah, where the State governs and the Ummah is ruled. Dr. Nayef stated the different requirements for both the State and the Ummah and warns against conflating the two due to the current discrepancy of values. He further cited the issues in developing a unified methodology for converging the Ummah and the State, one of which is the lack of a unified perspective on Fitnah. Thus, lies the need to resort to the Quran, which can provide an authentic perspective for peacemaking. Moreover, Dr. Nayef discussed the double standard of the UN that hinders a convergence of humanity. He specifically noted the UN's financial and economic support of various dictators, which he highlights as a disregard of justice.

3.2 Open Discussion

After the delegates' responding remarks, an open discussion was facilitated to delve deeper into the issues and problems that the Ummah and peacemakers need to overcome. Dr. Hayatullah Atid, a member of the consultative body in Afghanistan, referred to the three enemies of the Ummah; ignorance, poverty and unemployment, and internal conflict. To which, Dr. Naziha Maarij, Assistant Secretary-General of the International Union of Muslim Scholars, added that the language and symbolism employed by the Ummah affect the way Islam is perceived and is applied to peacemaking frameworks. She posited that conflict can sometimes be God's mercy, as the divergence and differences can ignite a need for collaboration and information-sharing that allows for the discovery of common ground. To elaborate on the role of the Ummah, Dr. Naima Benyaich, a Moroccan Faith-Based Leader and Social Activist, stressed the point of uniting the Ummah as one entity, necessitating a focus on the internal identity rooted in the devotion to God and His peaceful precepts. Moreover, Dr. Heba Raouf Ezzat, a scholar from the Alliance of Civilizations Institute at Ibn Haldun University, considered the importance of the urban space in relation to structural violence and conflict. She explains that the cleavages within urban segregation and class divisions breed violence and lend to the radicalization of Muslims. She recommends the elimination of segregated and organized divisions within society and assigns the nation-state as responsible for such structures. The morning session concluded with a fruitful introduction into the Ummah's role, responsibilities, and realities for engaging in conflict resolution.

4.0 Current and Contemporary Approaches Towards Peacebuilding

The afternoon session discussed the best practices related to peacebuilding as defined by the UN Guide to Effective Mediation and understood from recent peacebuilding efforts. Eldridge Adolfo and Mark Muller deconstructed recent UN and EU-supported peace processes which are based on the international norms of justice and peace, human rights, inclusivity, reconciliation, and national dialogue. Adolfo elaborated on the Western multi-track processes that involve Track 1, the president's administrative and leadership actors, Track 2, civil society and mid-level influential actors, and Track 3, grassroots actors and community leaders. Adolfo also highlighted the fact that in today's changing global order, the parties to a conflict are no longer allowed to come to an agreement on their own. The re-emergence of geo-politics means that global and regional powers play a significant role in the conflict resolution of any country, and as such, they need to be much more integrated into the peace process. Muller contextualized the Muslim narrative, citing that 70% of the world's conflicts involve Muslims, thus it is of international imperative to develop conflict resolution mechanisms that are sustainable and culturally sensitive. He criticizes the highly processed peace process designed by foreign UN envoys due to their failure to build trust amongst locals who feel the lack of input in the process. Hence, Muller proposes the contextualization of Western-imposed processes that are synergetic with Islamic principles and local culture and can foster transformative solutions.

To add on, Isak Svensson, who attended via Zoom, provided an Islamic dimension for conflict and peace processes. He spoke on the increase of Islamist armed conflicts and the need for peace practitioners to utilize them as bases for dialogue, particularly by examining the state formation processes of intra-state conflicts such as Syria and Tajikstan in relation to the different ways parties have managed incompatible claims to the Sharia. Svensson recommends the course of legal pluralism by incorporating solutions of autonomy within sovereign states in order to create group-based rights and territorial decentralization.

4.1 Respondents

The first respondent of this session was Tim Philips, Co-Founder, and CEO of Beyond Conflict. He compared the issues of identity status and family status as a constant, unconscious GPS system that navigates every social environment. His revolutionary perspective into behavioral science conflated human experience into conflict, especially within a context of polarization. As an example, Philips examined the polarization of the US, which is becoming more sectarian as a result of identity-based behaviors. This phenomenon led Philips to advance the need to overcome these binaries in order to allow negotiation and integration. Pontus Ohrestedt, the Head of Peace Process Support at FBA furthered the reflection of behavior in conflict on four fronts; the issues of participation and inclusion, the role of women, the peace and justice trade-off, and the negotiation implementation. These conditions for successful peace processes contributed to the argument that conflicts are complex and adaptive systems that work in multi-track processes, must be creative to fill the vacuum of stagnation, and must work with agencies from within the system to deeper understand socio-political dynamics.

Moreover, Dr. Sultan Barakat, Founding Director of CHS, provided insight into the complex realities of conflict resolution. He pointed to the monopolization of peacemaking in the West, which has given purpose to the actors mediating international politics instead of being a genuine desire to end wars. He also noted that peacemaking efforts begin their processes too late when structural barriers hinder the prospects for reconciliation. Dr. Barakat continued to state that efforts created in the name of inclusivity without contextualization and localization are actually unproductive and contribute to the unwillingness to trigger effective peace processes. The last respondent of the session was Oliver McTernan, Co-Founder and Director of Forward Thinking. He proclaimed that ignorance is the biggest enemy of the Ummah, which he attributes to misinformation in the media and superficial studies. McTernan also cited two fundamental challenges to sustainable peacemaking; the technical challenge of lacking sufficient resources and the attitudinal challenge that requires the mindsets of people who have real constituencies to change. McTernan accepted the principle of inclusivity, however, discerned that engagement is not the same as endorsement and the prejudice against Islam prevents peace processes.

4.3 A South African Perspective

Following the open dialogue, an interview was conducted with Roelf Meyer, South Africa's chief negotiator from the National Party during the transition from apartheid, and Mohammed Bhabha, former Member of Parliament and part of the African National Congress (ANC), both of whom are currently Directors at the In Transformation Initiative. This session analyzed the South African peace process through a first-hand account of how South Africa navigated numerous issues. They described the internal division within South African society that necessitated the inclusivity of all actors in the negotiation process. Meyer stressed that the inclusive process enabled the negotiators to pacify the extreme viewpoints and build trust between each other as opponents. Due to the constant interaction without the aid of foreign mediators, both parties were able to build a relationship and find commonalities that facilitated a bottom-up process for peacebuilding. Bhabha further articulated the need to spend time on capacity-building of government bodies, which enabled a realistic starting ground for constitutional reform. This perspective was relevant as a case study due to its relation to the issues that Muslim-majority societies often face when attempting to resolve conflict and build new state structures, in addition to the relationship to transitional governance arrangements.

5.0 An Islamic Approach Towards Peacebuilding

The second day began by exploring the missed opportunity for peacemakers to incorporate certain Islamic principles of peacebuilding relating to its concept of justice, community, and equality. Dr. Abadi and Ambassador Rasool led a joint presentation on the various foundational and theological principles of peace and justice found within Islam. The session sought to identify practical ways to apply these principles to modern peacebuilding efforts. One of these ways was to attach moral identification with peacebuilding principles through the inclusion of local initiatives that are not primarily Eurocentric. This reclaims indigenous narratives and restores trust between conflict-ridden communities and peace practitioners. Dr. Abadi and Ambassador Rasool highlighted the Islamic emphasis on relational networks through concepts of sulh, wasatiya, hiwar, shura, and ceasefire — all of which prioritize the restoration of social unity and justice. Dr. Abadi asserted that inclusion and participatory processes are obligations under Islam that place particular emphasis on positive peace and not just the cessation of violence. Islam articulates *niya*, or good intentions and relationships that reflect private consultations between mediators to reframe issues and reach agreements. This values-based approach differs from Western peacemaking, which attempts to completely eradicate conflict in order for peace to be fully restored and often implements secular frameworks. Thus, both delegates promote the development of genuine relationships with legitimate Islamic scholars who have influential roles to play in the peace process, as opposed to instrumentalizing them for foreign goals.

Specifically, the session analyzed wider Islamic concepts of mercy and forgiveness, including the potential role that the Maqasid Al-Sharia might play in contemporary peacebuilding. Ambassador

Rasool asserted that in Islam, peace is not an option, it is an obligation that relies on soft power principles that embrace diversity and promote the integration of the fragmented. The Islamic concept of mercy integrates communities and promotes justice as the manifestation of the Muslim's *shahada*. He summarizes his perspective by stating that mercy integrates communities and ushers in human coexistence.

5.1 Respondents

Sheikh Nurudeen Lemu, Director of Research and Training at the Da'wah Institute of Nigeria, was the first respondent of the session. He articulated how we should not deem Western approaches to peace as un-Islamic merely because they did not come directly from the Quran or the Sunnah. This is attributed to *ta'ruf*, or the concept of getting to know one another and learning from what is around you, which teaches Muslims that useful wisdom can be found in every community. Ta'urf is mutual and reciprocal, a way for Muslims to humble themselves and accept diversity. Sheikh Lemu reiterates that from the Islamic standpoint, a practice is halal or permissible as long as there is no harm and not prescribed to be forbidden. He further clarifies the role of the Maqasid Al-Sharia in their five pillars; the protection of faith, life, intellect, human dignity, wealth and property, and of family and family values. Contrastingly, he outlined the role of the mediator as threefold; loyalty to Allah above all, justice is a religious obligation even if it is against the individual and the need for openness and capacity for bridge-building. Dr. Mustafa Elamin added on to Sheikh Lemu's description of Islamic principles of peace by alluding to the Prophet's primary approach of reconciliation. Elamin referred to the non-violent responses to conflict in Meccah, which provide essential teachings to Islam and can be applied in peacebuilding approaches today.

Manziha Wafeq, President and co-founder of the Afghanistan Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (AWCCI), discussed the lack of justice in Afghanistan. She described the ignorance of Islamic teachings and the Quran amongst Afghans due to the focus of ritualistic practices of Islam such as praying and fasting, as opposed to the values and principles of a peaceful Islam. Wafeq endorses a unified teaching material of Islam that can be integrated into Afghanistan to educate its people on true Islamic principles that will help citizens practice acceptance, respect and humanity towards each other. Additionally, Wafeq advocates for educational investment and the inclusion of the private sector from the beginning of the peace process to allow for an integrated and Islamic peace process.

6.0 Women, Islam, and Building Inclusive Societies

Women's voices are crucial to reducing conflict, advancing stability, and building lasting peace. After the lunch break, Dr. Houda Abadi examined how peace practitioners can disentangle the universal tenants of Islamic law from socially inherited customs and practices that have become conflated with Islamic principles. She identified the common discrepancies between women's rights

as outlined in religious texts, national constitutions, and international law and rights often enacted or restricted through customary law, patriarchal norms, and restrictions of personal status. Dr. Abadi specified how gender sensitive language and rebranding are influential in creating inclusivity and closing the gaps of ambiguity. Dr. Abadi advised that women's rights should not be viewed in isolation but as part of the democratization and peacebuilding efforts.

Dr. Naima Benyaich described how the Prophet Mohammed transformed the role of women in Islam and asserted their integral role in protecting and upholding justice in their societies. Dr. Benyaich implored the distinction between historical customs and Islam, which empowers women in the Quran and Sunnah and must be adhered to over cultural rituals. At the time of the Prophet, women were entrusted with great responsibilities and were capable of leading peace processes, as exemplified by the story of Balquees, the Queen of Sheba. She raised the need to connect and create a network of women that unites Muslim women and empowers them to uphold their rights not just based on women's social expectations. Bassima El-Hakkaoui added to this point by stating that the Muslim community needs to link women directly to peacebuilding, rather than just empowering them in Islamic prophetic teachings. Dr. Naziha extended the issue of adaptation and applicability, particularly on how the old fatwa is unable to address the current issues that women face due to the alteration of society and need for updated interpretations of women's roles.

Another case study, offered by Camilla Riesenfeld, the Project Manager for the Swedish Women's Mediation Network at the FBA, analyzed the commendable peace process within Colombia, known for its focus on inclusion and its attention to the role of women. She noted the large group of women, mainly conservative Catholic women, who opposed the referendum due to the targeting of gender ideology. The peace process was influential because it framed all the issues to benefit both men and women. In another context, specifically in Afghanistan, Riesenfeld described the difficulty of settling all gender concerns at once, which places even more importance on local peacebuilding practitioners, especially religious leaders who can provide a platform of dialogue between the West and Afghanistan. In response, Dr. Barakat advised on the separation of women's rights from liberal agendas so that humanitarian assistance is not conditional and can be distributed to where women need the aid the most.

7.0 Points of Convergence Between Western and Islamic Modes of Conflict Resolution

The third and final day progressed towards the revival of the Maqasid Al-Sharia, the practice driven by the pursuits of the intents and values of the Sharia. Delegates collaborated to help establish a new inclusive paradigm in peacemaking for international and local peacebuilders dealing with Muslim related conflicts. Ambassador Rasool presented the points of convergence between the Maqasid Al-Sharia and international norms as they apply to the process design of peace processes, the principle of inclusion, and the negotiation of certain substantive issues,

particularly in relation to transitional governance arrangements. He considered how current approaches towards mediation might incorporate some of these convergent principles and norms.

7.1 *Respondents*

Sheikh Nurudeen Lemu began the discussion by indicating how Islam is a multi-cultural religion that requires using a nuanced vocabulary when discussing rights and issues. Dr. Heba Raouf Ezzat provided a realistic perception of how humans react and govern themselves. She argued that due to the human history of violence and brutality, the international community and delegates of the conference must disillusion themselves from the idea of innate peaceful intentions. Referencing Ibn Khaldoun, Dr. Ezzat reasons that humanity is in a constant pendulum between savagery and civility. Therefore, she asserted that the aspects of time and space are important for modes of reconciliation because of the fragility of peace. Time is an essential precondition to peace, especially after periods of conflict due to the need for periods of reconciliation, reflection, and acceptance. In reference to space, Dr. Ezzat raised the issues related to spatiality, planning, and reconstruction after war, all of which require the maintenance of architectural integrity and creating a space based on respectful and functional structures. Overall, Dr. Ezzat contended that Muslims have to reclaim their concepts of Islam and peace in order to fight against injustice and deal with unpredictable trajectories of discontent.

To further this point, Hamid Awaluddin, Indonesia's chief negotiator during the Helsinki process, discussed points of convergence. He reasoned that the purpose of human rights is the protection of human dignity – a shared Islamic precept that should not clash with Western thought. The problem, Awaluddin raised, remains within the rigidity of freedom. Instead, state actors and Muslim states must root their governance structures in equality as expressed practically and comprehensively in Islam.

Discussing the perceived binaries between Islam and the West, Pinar Akpinar, a research fellow at the Conflict Resolution and Mediation Stream at the Istanbul Policy Center, looked deeper into the division between secular and conservative binaries. She discussed the debate between reason and emotion, which perceives the West as a more rational and logical actor and the rest of the world as emotional and reactive. However, based on cognitive behavioral science humans rarely conform to the notion of rational models, and instead resort to emotion. This finding contributed to Akpinar's argument that Islam and the West agree on the fundamental level of human nature, which allows for synergies and points of convergence.

Ending the discussion, Julian Weinberg, Political Dialogues Director at Forward Thinking, reiterated the possibility and opportunities for convergence between Islam and the West, but charged the lack of implementable models to the religious illiteracy of global politics. He maintained that the context of war and strife in the Middle East creates barriers to the implementation of international norms. Thus, he affirmed the incorporation of inclusive approaches that are embedded in norms and

guidance to empower parties to pursue their processes in their own ways, without hindering the peace process by negligent imported models. In agreement with the previous speakers, Weiberg reaffirmed the need to reclaim Islamic principles and reshape a future based on converging and integrated models for justice.

8.0 Prophetic Foundations for Statecraft in Muslim-Majority Societies

An important source of statecraft in Muslim-majority societies is the prophetic teachings as laid out within the Charter of Medina and the Qur'an. This afternoon session discussed the specific lessons that can be learned from the Arab Spring when it comes to negotiating successful transitional governance and final status arrangements. The presentation outlined three important lessons from the Arab Spring; there is a yearning for economic, social, and political inclusion, elections are necessary in order to moderate sensitivities and ensure inclusion, and the anti-colonial experience of the countries impacted the post-colonial model. These three concepts raised influential questions on how to construct a state that is both inclusive in its preservation of human rights and respectful of the innate Islamic identity of the region. Ambassador Rasool posited that the Maqasid Al-Sharia are essential tools that will unite Muslims and maintain nuances of secularism, similar to the Turkish Republic. Ultimately, Ambassador Rasool provided participants with a strong foundational understanding of the historical and present context for statecraft and state-building in Muslim-majority societies affected by conflict.

8.1 Respondents

The session was augmented by former politicians and heads of states who provided their insights into creating sustainable and balanced Islamic governance structures as well as representative and inclusive frameworks. Former Vice-President of Indonesia, Dr. Jusuf Kalla highlighted that the elements of equality within economy and socio-politics is integral in resolving conflicts and maintianing stability. Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, former Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, contrasted the difference between an Islamic State and a Fragmented State. He believes that a truly democratic state is accountable for all its constituents and does not cause fragmentation or social strife amongst sects. He also alluded to the growing secularism in global politics, which he claims lacks essential moral ethical dimensions in government, especially in extremely laicite or secularist states. Thus, Ibrahim recommends the merging of extreme political polarity through the concepts of *madani*, where a modern democratic system is accountable.

Although Sheikh Rashid Ghannoushi, the Co-Founder and President of the Ennahda party in Tunisia, could not attend, his spokesperson shared his perspectives on integrating Islam into political frameworks. He portrays an Islamic State of Affairs as opposed to an Islamic State, this arrangement should prioritize the avoidance of corruption and the profusion of good. He argues that democracy is part of Islam because it is based on freedom and the acceptance of diversity, thus the representative strived towards making freedom as the main balance of power. Furthermore,

based on his insights, changing the regime requires building up a stronger democracy that will encourage parties to uphold a constitution as a contract that expresses the widest level of majority as well as the ummah's consensus.

9.0 Towards an Islamic and International Normative Compliant Conflict Resolution & Transformation Framework

The final session drew from all the discussions of the previous days in order to formulate a more Islamic-sensitive framework towards the resolution of conflict. It identified key concepts and how they might enhance western frameworks of conflict resolution. Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim raised the challenge of navigating and explaining the judicial attitude towards Islam, to which he recommended going back to the Islamic root of good governance and justice. Jusuf Kalla furthered this point by stressing the importance of democracy, but only when implemented in a religiously sensitive manner that is inclusive to all ethnicities, religions, and peoples.

The session attempted to map out a more culturally and religiously sensitive conflict resolution framework consistent with international peacebuilding and governance norms and common to all nations. The intention was to create such a framework for the benefit of international and domestic mediators and stakeholders involved in negotiations featuring Muslim-majority societies affected by or emerging from conflict. The delegates warned against conflating Islam as synonymous with the State, but rather agreed that formulating a governance structure consistent with Islam and using the practices that are compatible and in consensus with the Ummah can aid in the development of synergies between overarching international values. Ultimately, the delegates looked to the Prophet who assembled a free and tolerant society, not necessarily a purely Islamic one.

10.0 Key Messages

Overall, the conference was motivated by the delegates' desire to spare the people of the Muslim world further violent conflict. The key shared messages and points of common understanding that emerged from the discussions in the Conference on Peacemaking and Statecraft can be summarized as follows:

1. Conflicts affecting the Muslim world cannot be resolved by violence or military means, and sustainable peace can only be achieved through the development of inclusive political solutions negotiated by those who are involved and affected by such conflicts;
2. Securing a permanent cessation of hostilities and laying down agreed political transitional arrangements are two fundamental prerequisites to the transformation and lasting settlement of such conflicts;

3. In the view of the Conference, such arrangements need to be culturally and religiously sensitive and situated within the local context of the conflicts they are seeking to help resolve;

4. Recent experience demonstrates that existing best practice peace-making and building approaches towards such conflicts need to be enhanced if they are to be properly situated and better understood and supported by stakeholders affected by these conflicts, including a focus on Women's Peace and Security;

5. The enhancement of such best practices can be achieved through the development and deployment of a more culturally and Islamic-inspired conflict resolution framework, consistent with international norms, which draws upon the soft power of Islam. These include the Maqasid Al-Shariah and certain first principles relating to modes of peacemaking as identified by the Prophet Mohamed – peace be upon Him – and articulated in the Charter of Medina and the Quran;

6. Simultaneously, the tenets of the Maqasid Al-Shariah, the Charter of Medina, and the Quran were found, in large part, to converge with best practices in international norms;

7. The international Ulema, together with Muslim political transitional leaders, scholars, and conflict resolution practitioners are critical to the development of such a framework in consultation with Muslim-majority societies either affected by conflict or who are emerging, or have emerged, from it.

8. Within an Islamic peacemaking approach, it is important to consider the critical components of justice, equality, inclusion, and pluralism -- in which Muslims place an emphasis on the restoration of social unity and justice. The justice consideration is an application of positive peace that transcends the cessation of violence and places a collective responsibility for conflict resolution.

9. There is the need to continuously help develop, stress-test, and deploy such a framework, where requested, as well as to deepen the research into Islamic state formation and new thinking emerging from the Muslim world regarding more Islamic sensitive forms of statecraft consistent with international norms. This includes the development of a set of essential governing principles that might be said to govern such statecraft and state formation.

The culmination of the three days sought to establish a new community of practice in support of a more Islamic-sensitive framework towards the resolution of conflict. In the concluding sentiments, the delegates shared their keenness to reform inept peace processes and incorporate the lessons learned from this conference into peacebuilding in Muslim-majority nations such as Afghanistan.