



COMMUNIQUE

CONFERENCE ON PEACEMAKING AND STATECRAFT IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

12 FEBRUARY 2022

ISTANBUL

TURKEY

The **Folke Bernadotte Academy** and the **Centre for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies** (Doha), have successfully concluded a landmark “Research Conference on Peacemaking and Statecraft in the Muslim World”, between 10-12 February 2022 in Istanbul, Turkey.

The conference brought together over fifty (50)¹ Islamic scholars, senior transitional leaders, peace practitioners, activists and academics from a wide range of Muslim majority countries including from Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Syria, Turkey and Qatar as well as others. The express purpose of the Conference was to enhance existing peace-making and peacebuilding approaches and practices towards the Muslim world including through the adoption of a more culturally sensitive and Islamic-based and inspired conflict resolution framework consistent with international normative standards. This framework was developed by Muslim conflict resolution scholars and experts, working within the International Norms Project at the London School of Economics.

The Conference participants were united around two urgent priorities:

1. The concern at the ongoing and persistent episodes of violent conflict that has engulfed the Muslim World over the last few decades; and
2. The need for a new paradigm of conflict resolution, peacemaking and statecraft that is based on and inspired by Islam, and compliant with International Norms, in order to help resolve these conflicts.

The conference was not oblivious to events in Afghanistan, and saw it as emblematic of the elusive peace, and in immediate need of statecraft strategies that could transition it from 40 years of conflict, to a society embracing transformation on the basis of sustainable values and

¹ Of the fifty (50) participants, forty-five (45) were physically present in Istanbul, while five (5) participated virtually.



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the development needs of its people.

The conference was motivated, therefore, by the sole desire of all delegates - from ulema and activists, political leaders and academics - to spare the people of the Muslim world further violent conflict. Moreover, the conference was convinced that the path was one based on a progression from developing short-term transitional frameworks that bridge over to lasting comprehensive governance arrangements.

A unique contribution the conference grappled with over the three days, was how to base any intervention - from conflict resolution to peacemaking measures to models of statecraft - in the rich and longstanding scripts and traditions of Islam itself. A critical point of departure was that the Maqasid al Shariah (the Intents of Islamic Law) provided a foundation for Islamically-inspired normative standards and principles in relation to the relief of humanitarian suffering, the promotion of human development, respect for good governance, the advance of fundamental freedoms, establishing the rule of law, and the establishment of inclusive governance based on popular consultation.

In order to realise these objectives, the Conference on Peacemaking and Statecraft in the Muslim World emerged convinced that:

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 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



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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 effected 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.

To this end:

- A **Voluntary Community of Practice** entitled “*CONFERENCE ON PEACEMAKING AND STATECRAFT IN THE MUSLIM WORLD*” supported by a website containing the founding materials leading to the colloquium, as well as possible tangible actions to advance the work **is being established by INP partners**; and
- The **International Norms Project** will endeavor, **within 3 months to publish and share** the first iteration of **its research** and deploy it for further stress-testing. This is to help further open the debate, elicit contributions, and shape further the discourse around peacemaking and statecraft in the Muslim world.

FBA, CHS.