



The Istanbul Mediation Conference is a major forum in the field of conflict resolution and mediation, bringing together officials and civil society experts from the field as well as academics and students, in a bid to make contributions to the practice and study of mediation, influencing the field as well as the evolving normative and conceptual framework.

The seventh edition of the Istanbul Mediation Conference will be organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey on 17 September 2020. This year, the Conference will be held online and will focus on the post-pandemic conflict dynamics and their impact on peace-making. It will explore what new challenges and opportunities have been created by the current pandemic, evolving complications for peacemakers in the field, and the implications of digitalisation on the practice of mediation. As customary, the Conference will take stock and look ahead with the help of renowned practitioners and scholars.

#istanbulmediation #mediationforpeace

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## PROGRAMME

(All times are in GMT+3 – Turkish local time)

13.15 – 13.30 Opening Session

- **H.E. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey
- **H.E. Antonio Guterres**, Secretary General of the United Nations

In collaboration with





## 13:30 – 15:00 Session 1

### An Insider Look at Peace Processes: Reflections from the Field

Today's conflicts are marked by the proliferation of armed-groups and peace actors. The fragmentation of armed groups prompts new complications for peace processes in terms of managing negotiations with multiple groups and the risk of shifting alliances among them. Peacemaking efforts similarly include a plethora of different tracks and stakeholders, as well. The trend of the multiplicity of stakeholders and fragmentation of armed groups may compel mediation efforts to evolve in a certain trajectory, making coordination, complementarity, and coherence more challenging.

As the need for effective peacemaking grows, this panel will resort to the field experiences of notable experts in a bid to identify the future contours of mediation.

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Moderator:

- **Henrik Urdal**, Director, PRIO

Panellists:

- **Álvaro de Soto**, Ambassador, Former Under Secretary General of the United Nations
- **Ghassan Salamé**, Former Special Representative of the Secretary General and Head of the UN Support Mission in Libya
- **Staffan de Mistura**, Former UN Special Envoy for Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq
- **Y. Halit Çevik**, Ambassador, Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine
- **Fred Ngoga Gateretse**, Ambassador, Head of Conflict Prevention and Early Warning Division, African Union

## 15.00 – 15.30 Virtual Break

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## 15.30 – 16.30 Session 2

### Post-Pandemic Conflict and Peace Landscape

The pandemic has affected international and regional peace and security dynamics in multiple aspects. Due to travel restrictions, lockdowns and quarantine measures, conflict prevention including mediation efforts have been hampered. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations have also been impacted by the crisis. Erosion of trust in public authorities and multilateral organizations yield a fertile ground for fuelling conflicts and deepening fragilities. Terrorist organizations and hostile non-state actors have been seeking to capitalize on the conditions of the outbreak for their own destructive agendas. On the other hand, the UN Secretary General's call for a global ceasefire received broad support.

A solid understanding of conflict trends and dynamics is essential for effective peacemaking. Therefore, this session aims to explore the implications of the pandemic for the global conflict landscape.

Moderator:

- **Adam Lupel**, Vice President, International Peace Institute

Panellists:

- **Asako Okai**, Assistant Secretary General and UNDP's Assistant Administrator and Director of the Crisis Bureau, UN
- **Oscar Fernandez-Taranco**, Assistant Secretary General for Peacebuilding Support, UN
- **Aleu Garang**, Director of Mediation Support Unit, IGAD
- **Tuula Yrjölä**, Ambassador, Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre, OSCE
- **Katariina Mustasilta**, Senior Associate Analyst, European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS)
- **Saime Özçürümez**, Associate Professor, Bilkent University

## 16.30 – 17.00 Virtual Break

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### 17.00 – 18.00 Session 3

#### Harnessing Technology for Building and Sustaining Peace

Technology is transforming every aspect of human endeavour and this driver does not spare peace efforts. New technologies are powering the development of early warning, conflict analysis and conflict resolution including mediation. The UN Secretary General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation underlines the potential of global digital cooperation to reveal the transformative power of technology for positive change. Correspondingly, the UN Mediation Toolkit highlights the use of digital tools in peace processes. With the COVID-19 pandemic accelerating digitalization, the need to explore more innovative ways to harness the power of technology is greater. However, it is equally important to be conscious also about the negative uses of digital technologies.

There is much to explore about how technology can shape mediation, a practice largely based on human interaction. This panel seeks to shed light on the ways and means technology does and can support peacemakers.

Moderator:

- **Itonde Kakoma**, Director for Global Strategy, Crisis Management Initiative

Panellists:

- **Fabrizio Hochschild**, Under Secretary General and Special Advisor on Preparations for the 75th anniversary of the UN
- **Teresa Whitfield**, Director of the Policy and Mediation Division, UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
- **Akın Ünver**, Associate Professor, Kadir Has University
- **Andreas Hirblinger**, Researcher, Center on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding, the Graduate Institute Geneva

### 18.00 – 18.15 Virtual Break

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#### 18.15 – 18.45 Session 4

#### Charting a Way Forward for Peacemaking and Mediation

Much will have been said throughout this conference on the drivers and trends in conflict and mediation and how peacemaking and mediation need to evolve. This panel will contribute to the conference by taking stock and looking ahead.

- **William Zartman**, Professor Emeritus, Johns Hopkins University
- **Burak Akçapar**, Ambassador, Director General for Foreign Policy, Analysis and Coordination, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey