

Religion and Mediation Course 2015

A specialized training course for mediators and peace practitioners

6 - 11 September 2015, Schwarzenberg, Switzerland

Organized by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich with the support of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, and the German Center for International Peace Operations.



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA
Directorate of Political Affairs DP
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Peace, Human Rights, Humanitarian Policy, Migration



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF FINLAND

The Network for
Religious and
Traditional
Peacemakers



Center for
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Peace Operations



What

The goal of the course is for participants to deepen their understanding of the interplay between religion and politics in violent political conflicts. Participants will acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes to contribute to efforts to mediate or transform conflicts where religion plays a role. The course applies a broad understanding of mediation which encompasses a variety of approaches where third parties create a supportive space for actors to come together to address their differences.

By the end of the course, participants will

- Understand how religion matters when working on conflict
- Have the tools for analyzing religion's role in conflict
- Be familiar with a variety of approaches to mediating and transforming conflicts with religious dimensions
- Have applied their learning to case studies of current conflicts with religious dimensions.

Why

In a world where over 80% of the world's population identifies with a religious community, there is increasing recognition of the need to understand and address religion's role (both positive and negative) in violent conflict. From Israel-Palestine to Somalia to Sri Lanka, religious narratives, religious identities and religiously-inspired actors play an important role. This course provides the knowledge and tools for thinking about the role of religion in conflict, and for translating that thinking into action to transform violent conflict.

Who

The course is aimed at mediators, peace practitioners, policy makers and others working to address violent political conflicts in contexts where religion has strong relevance. Participants should have solid experience of working on conflict transformation or peace mediation. The course will be held in English. A balance of women and men will be sought. The final selection of 25 participants will be made by the CSS and the Swiss FDFA in consultation with their supporting partners.

How

Experience oriented: The course draws heavily on practical experiences of working on religion and conflict while also making reference to a number of theoretical and conceptual frameworks and tools.

Interactive learning: All the training sessions are highly interactive. Participants are invited to share their experiences and learn from the experiences of others.

Expert inputs: In addition to staff from the Swiss FDFA and CSS, academics and experienced practitioners from around the world will lead and contribute to a number of sessions.

The course will begin on **Sunday 6 September 2015 at 17.00 and end on Friday 11 September 2015 at 18.00**. It will take place at **Hotel und Bildungszentrum Matt**, in Schwarzenberg in the heart of Switzerland.

Applications (a CV and a letter of motivation) should be sent to mediation@sipo.gess.ethz.ch by Sunday, 19 April 2015.

The course is offered free of charge. However, participants are expected to cover their own transport and accommodation costs. Six nights (Sun-Sat) accommodation with full board will cost approximately CHF 1'050.

A number of scholarships are available to cover the travel and accommodation costs of participants from non-OECD countries who could not otherwise afford to participate. These scholarships will be awarded at the discretion of the organizers. **If you wish to be considered for a scholarship, please indicate this in your application.**

Additional information such as the draft program can be found online at **www.rmc.ethz.ch**

When and Where