



## **Brainstorming Session on Developing a Mediators Guideline “Code of Conduct” Focusing on Culturally Sensitive Mediation Approaches**

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SESRIC Headquarters, Ankara, Turkey

Opening Speech by  
**The Director General of SESRIC**  
**H.E. Mr. Nebil DABUR**

**بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ**

**Excellencies,  
Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen**  
السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته  
**Very Good Morning**

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to welcome you all to this Brainstorming Session on Developing a Mediators Guideline “Code of Conduct” Focusing on Culturally Sensitive Mediation Approaches. We at SESRIC are truly delighted to host this Brainstorming Session here at our Headquarters in Ankara. I am really honoured by the presence of such distinguished participants. Thank you all for designating this day from your valuable time to participate in this important meeting.

At the outset, allow me to express my thanks and appreciation to the OIC General Secretariat and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey (the host country of our Centre) for their remarkable cooperation and support, which have been instrumental to put in place this important meeting.

## **Excellences, Esteemed Participants,**

Islam is a religion of peace and tolerance and constantly taking the side of world peace and global justice. Many OIC cities are places for different ethnic groups and religious traditions, where over the course of centuries the people there have developed capacity for coexistence, trust and respect to each other's.

The principle of peace in Islam is supported by the concept of mediation; that is in Arabic “وساطة تسوية صلح”. As outlined in the Holy Quran:

“إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ”

“The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy”.

The principle of peace in Islam is also enforced through practical measures of conflict resolution. As outlined in the Holy verse, which says:

“وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَت إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَى فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّى تَفِيءَ إِلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ”

And if two factions among the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them oppresses the other, then fight against the one that oppresses until it returns to the ordinance of Allah. And if it returns, make a just and even-handed reconciliation between the two of them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.

## **Excellences, Distinguished Participants,**

Unfortunately, over the last few decades the number of conflicts in OIC Countries has shown an upward trend. Currently more than 60% of all conflict in the world occurs in OIC countries. The consequences of the extreme violence in OIC countries have been destructive. It is a human tragedy that has taken its toll on people's lives. More than 80% of global conflict fatalities have taken place in OIC countries. Millions of people have been forced to leave their homes. Two third of the world refugees originate from OIC countries. The economic consequences of conflicts in OIC countries are estimated at hundreds of billions of dollars, money that could have been well spent on economic and social development.

One of the major goals of the OIC is to promote international peace and harmony among various people of the world. Achieving this noble goal requires the OIC to be actively involved in mediation with efforts to identify and implement concrete, workable and suitable solutions to conflicts, disputes and violence.

In this context, an important aspect of mediation is an understanding of the role and power of culture. While the importance of culture is highlighted in a number of international documents prepared, for example, by the UN, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and African Union, there is still a gap in recognising and understanding the role of culture in the practical framework of mediation field.

Given this state of affairs, the latest two sessions of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) adopted a Resolution entitled "Strengthening the Mediation Capacity of the OIC", which mandated the OIC General Secretariat to prepare a

Code of Conduct for mediators “including culturally sensitive mediation approaches”. Subsequently, the OIC Contact Group of Friends of Mediation held a meeting at the level of the Permanent Representatives on 27 June this year and requested the General Secretariat to prepare the code of conduct in collaboration with SESRIC.

### **Excellences, Distinguished Participants,**

The task at hand and the limitation of the available sources on the topic necessitated the holding of this “Brainstorming Session” to fill the gap in the literature by benefiting from the knowledge and expertise of a wide circle of participants. I am confident that the output of this Brainstorming Session will guide the team working on developing the Mediators Guideline and will help us develop further the concept and draw a preliminary outline for the planned Guideline.

The initial draft of the Guideline will be presented in a special session during the 3<sup>rd</sup> OIC Member States Conference on Mediation to be held later this year in Istanbul. The final draft of the Guideline will be prepared by the OIC General Secretariat and SESRIC and will be circulated to the Member States for their consideration and comments before submitting it to the upcoming 47<sup>th</sup> CFM for adoption under the resolution on Strengthening the Mediation Capacity of the OIC.

### **Excellences, Esteemed participants,**

The concept note and the agenda for this Brainstorming Session have been circulated to you in advance and are placed in front of you. Throughout this day, we will have the opportunity to share our experience and views on the subject of

culturally sensitive mediation approaches. In this regard, your views, contribution and guidance will be instrumental for the success of this Brainstorming Session and the preparation of the planned Guideline.

Before I conclude, I would like to say that I am inspired by the task of developing a Mediators Guideline “Code of Conduct” Focusing on Culturally Sensitive Mediation Approaches and I strongly believe that it will have a significant contribution to the literature and the field of mediation. At the end, allow me to thank you all once again for honouring us with your presence at this Brainstorming meeting.

Thank you. والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته