

The Quest for Peace in the Middle East: Interrogating expertise, anthropologizing moral imperatives and normative empires

Workshop hosted by the

**Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs (IFI)
at the American University of Beirut (AUB)**

**June 22, 2010
Auditorium B1, College Hall, AUB**

The Quest for Peace in the Middle East workshop will discuss findings of a research project on the anthropology of peacebuilding expertise, which was supported by the *Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries* (KFPE). Research findings will be presented to stimulate public debate on the meaning and role of peacemaking and conflict resolution in Lebanon and the Arab world, as well as to receive valuable feedback from experts and professionals in the field. The broader aim of the workshop is to develop a book proposal for a new series *Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding* by London publishers Routledge.

AGENDA

09:00-09:15

WELCOME NOTE/OPENING SESSION

Welcome note: Rami Khouri (AUB-IFI)

Introduction: Nikola Kosmatopoulos (University of Zurich)

09:15-10:15

PANEL I: The Conceptual Foundations of Peacebuilding

- *Contemporary Peace Expertise: b/orders and limits of morality and epistemology*

By Nikola Kosmatopoulos (University of Zurich)

- *Constructing Peace Operations in the Middle East: What do they mean?*

By Karim Makdisi (AUB)

10:15-10:30

COFFEE BREAK

10:30-12:30

PANEL II: Findings from the peacebuilding field in Lebanon

- *Construction of expertise and (re)production of knowledge: the case of a Swiss Association's Inter-Lebanese Dialogue Initiative*
By Lyna Comaty (The Graduate Institute, Geneva)
- *An International Peacebuilding NGO in Lebanon: Building Peace or Re-building Local Needs?*
By Zina Sawaf (AUB-IFI)
- *The UN Peacekeeping Agenda in a Southern Lebanese Village: "The International Community" and Local Autonomy*
By Susann Kassem (AUB)

Discussants: Riccardo Bocco (The Graduate Institute, Geneva) and Karam Karam (Common Space Initiative)

12:30-13:30

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

- Wrap-up led by Nikola Kosmatopoulos and Riccardo Bocco, with comments by Asad Abukhalil (California State University), followed by an open discussion