

The Third Conference on National Dialogues, 5-6 April 2017

The House of the Estates, Helsinki

Local Dialogue in the absence of National Dialogue

In many conflicts in the Middle East, there is a discernible need for national dialogue but the intensity of warfare or insufficient political space proves an obstacle. Building a national consensus will need to engage a very wide range of actors and to solidify common narratives to offset the narratives of belligerence and war. In this situation, Track 2 and Track 3 local dialogue processes become essential. This session will focus on dynamics in Syria, and Libya, among other possible regional examples.

The session will look at the local dialogues and discuss what potential and challenge exists for these types of dialogues as an instrument for conflict resolution, peacebuilding and supporting national dialogue. Track 2 and track 3 processes are often seen as detractors from track 1 processes. Linking track 1 to track 2 and 3 remains an unfulfilled promise. Because of that, the session will also discuss how best to devise such links and synergies between the three tracks.

On questions regarding inclusion and the role of women in local dialogue processes, the panel will discuss lessons learned and look especially at the question of process design of local dialogues. It will discuss how best to support inclusion so that women would become legitimate and effective participants and actors of processes.

Panel:

Mr. Mahmoud Ramadan, Strategic Development Coordinator, Common Space Initiative (Moderator)

Mr. Maruan El-Krekshi, Head of MENA, Crisis Management Initiative

Ms. Raeifa Samie, Member of the Women Advisory Board of UN special envoy for Syria

Ms. Eva Zidan, Coordinator, Coordinamento delle organizzazioni per il servizio volontario of Italy

Mr. Martin Griffiths, Executive Director, European Institute for Peace (First Commentary)

