

Bologna Peacebuilding Forum 2023

Peace Mediation at a Crossroads

15-17 May 2024

Agency for Peacebuilding

The Agency for Peacebuilding (AP) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote conditions to enable conflict resolution, reduce violence, and contribute to a durable peace across Europe and the world.

AP occupies a unique role in Europe, as it interprets and synthesizes relevant peace and security issues for the benefit of Italian agencies and in support of international partners working in local conflict areas.

For more information, visit the [Agency for Peacebuilding website](#).

The Bologna Peacebuilding Forum

AP organizes annually the *Bologna Peacebuilding Forum* with two main goals. Firstly, strengthening the network of peacebuilding scholars and practitioners to improve policy-oriented research and fieldwork. Secondly, opening up the peacebuilding domain to a wider international audience.

The **sixth edition** of the *Forum* will take place on **15-17 May 2023** at the *Johns Hopkins University-School for Advanced International Studies (SAIS Europe)* and in other prominent venues in Bologna. Since 2019, the *Forum* has become a prime venue for peacebuilding discussions in Italy and internationally. The sixth edition of the *Forum* will continue to offer a platform for debating relevant and timely topics concerning various aspects of peacebuilding.

The topic of the sixth edition of the Forum:

Peace mediation has profoundly changed over the last two decades in terms of actors, approaches and legitimacy. While the role and leverage of the United Nations have diminished, some regional entities, such as the Arab League and the European Union, have acquired more space. Besides, a plurality of state actors have aspired to be recognised as credible and effective peace brokers, such as Turkey or China, enriching a grouping that in the past was largely composed of European states such as Norway and Switzerland.

At the same time, peace mediation has increasingly become a proper professional field, with its own diverse community of researchers, experts, and practitioners. Different forms of mediation support guide and underpin the work of mediators, while different states and regional organisations increasingly rely on specialised mediation support staff and services, conduct mediation-oriented training and nurture mediation rosters.

Against this backdrop, the *Forum* will provide a space to analyse these transformative dynamics with particular attention to the opportunities offered by multi-track and inclusive mediation. As mediation is a discrete job that is often conducted out of the public eye, the *Forum* will provide a rare opportunity for a frank and open debate involving different stakeholders. Inclusivity certainly involves the role of civil society organisations, of women and youth. Still, some marginalised groups receive even less attention and the engagement of critical groups such as violent extremist actors is easily left out of the debate. Practical approaches which prioritise and include all members of society, from local grassroots actors to higher officials, are therefore central to creating sustainable peace processes. The *Forum* will also discuss how digital technological innovation in mediation and peace processes can facilitate reaching marginal groups but it also represents a critical issue.

PROGRAMME

Wednesday 15 May

📍 Palazzo d'Accursio 15:30 - 17:00 (free entry)

Italy's role in Peace Mediation

Launch of the Peacebuilding Agency study on Peace Mediation in Italy with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

Thursday 16 May

📍 Johns Hopkins University SAIS Europe 9:30 - 17:30 (free entry)

International Conference

Conference on the theme of peace mediation with experts in the field, practitioners and academics from Italy and abroad. The sessions will provide an opportunity for discussion and reflection on the concept of inclusive mediation and the use of technology in peace processes.

Friday 17 May

10:00 – 13:00 (subscription-only events for students)

Next Generation Forum

Two parallel events for university students, in collaboration with the University of Bologna and the American University of Rome.

- 📍 Palazzo Ercolani **Workshop on Peace Tech**
- 📍 Laboratorio 41 **Experiencing the future through Live Action Role Play**