



Draft Project Proposal

**South –East European Cooperation Process  
International Youth Conference**

**BUILDING REGIONAL YOUNG LEADERS NETWORK:  
*“Youth of South East Europe in for stability and cooperation”***

**20-22 June 2010**

**ORGANIZED BY:**

**ISLAMIC CONFERENCE YOUTH FORUM FOR DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION**

**In partnership with:**

**The Turkish Chairmanship-in-Office of The South East European  
Cooperation Process**

**GENERAL PARTNER:**

**İSTANBUL 2010 EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE**

Istanbul, 2010

## **A. Organizers:**

- Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation(ICYF-DC)
- In cooperation with CoE, EYF, possibly AoC regional platform (*at stage of agreement*)
- In partnership – COJEP international
- In partnership -The Turkish Chairmanship- in-office of the South East European Cooperation Process

## **General Partner:**

- Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture

## **B. Background:**

The primary objective of **South –East European Cooperation Process (SEECP)** is to strengthen the good-neighbourly relations among all states across and beyond this region, with the aim of transforming this region into an area of peace, security, stability and cooperation. SEECP Member States enjoy a highly strategic geography connecting Europe to Middle East, advantageous for creating peaceful and good-neighbourly relations in the region through reconciliation, recognition of inviolability of the existing international borders on the basis of cooperation within the framework of international foras, and in improving cross-border cooperation in view of promotion of business cooperation, enterprise development, in facilitation of information and communication flows, including media, across and beyond border regions.

By uniting mature societies in this region, based on educational, social and cultural fields, SEECP is ready for cooperation with international organizations for further development of cooperation in such fields which play a significant role in strengthening stability and security in our world.

One of the main aspects in the scope of the SEECP is to offer support for enhanced cooperation in the fields of education, science and technology, culture and art, increased exchanges and contacts between journalists, academicians, and between youth, organized

independently or through national associations and educational institutions, sports competitions, festivals and other events in order to bring SEECP and other nations closer.

The richness of our societies lies in its cultural diversity expressed also by the number of religious, ethnic and cultural groups and communities present across and beyond the region. Whether national, religious, ethnic, social or cultural, Heritage is an important asset for future intercultural dialogue. Young people, especially those from diverse societies and those living in highly multicultural environments, are by all means the important vectors in promoting social change to this end.

Young participants from SEECP and its partner countries, decision makers, leading scientists, policy-makers, young business leaders, academic or media figures will convene over 2 days to share best practices, to get the most up-to-date experiences from experts crucial for development of young people, to utilise creative methods of teaching young leaders the culture of coexistence, to convey to them the history and practice of inter-civilizational and intercultural respect and coexistence in Turkey.

In this context, the role of youth in intercultural dialogue appears to be part of an essential approach to counter and overcome mutual prejudices, to decrease the existing distance between young people, and to build solid and reliable bridges between them.

If the purpose of intercultural dialogue is “to learn to live together peacefully and constructively in a multicultural world and to develop a sense of community and belonging”, it is clear that it can only work if it involves everyone, young people included, and that it is not reduced to “culture” but encompasses all the social manifestations and expressions of “culture” including religion.

One of the OIC Youth Forum’s major missions is to promote respect for cultural heritage and for regional cultures through intercultural dialogue; the Forum contains within itself youth organizations which are the members of Council of Europe; it has a particularly important role in bringing together and uniting youth representatives from all types of organisations and fields, in the effort to promote and strengthen intercultural dialogue and cooperation. The expertise it developed in the fields of intercultural learning, together with the networks and partnerships within European Youth Forum, European Youth Council it

established across and beyond world, gives it a particular responsibility to pursue and deepen the work in this field and to support young people to do the same. The Youth Forum has organized *“the symposium on interreligious and intercultural dialogue in youth work”* together with the Council of Europe (COE) (İstanbul, 2007). The Youth Forum has also co-organized the international conference titled: *“Beyond Religious Differences: Islamophobia and other forms of discrimination based on religion or belief: consequences on young people and the youth work responses”* in partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe (CoE) and the European Youth Forum (Baku, 2008). The Youth Forum has been a main partner in the international youth forum entitled *“Intercultural Dialogue and its Religious Dimension”* (Kazan,2008), and has been involved as one of the main organizers of Youth Engagement Event *“Building a global movement: Youth for the Alliance of Civilizations”*(Istanbul, 2009).

Holding the conference in Turkey is more than just symbolic. Turkey, a founding member of the SEECP, OIC, COE and other regional and international organizations is a secular republic country with a predominantly Muslim population. It is also a multicultural and multi-religious society with an important historical role in bridging cultures, religions and civilisations. Holding the conference in Turkey will hopefully help to take into account this experience in the conference.

### **C. Objectives:**

- a. To create a youth network for strengthening the ties and cooperation among themselves and with other states;
- b. To exchange practices, methodologies and approaches of youth work on intercultural dialogue;
- c. To identify follow-up projects and priorities in intercultural dialogue with young people;
- d. To identify concrete steps to be taken within the conference to improve youth work in the regional cooperation;
- e. To address and identify the main issues and challenges faced by young people across and beyond region marked by cultural diversity;
- f. To support all intercultural campaigns across and beyond SEECP countries;

- g. To value, acknowledge and learn from the experiences of intercultural dialogue in Turkey;

#### **D. Participants:**

**Early stage participants:** 65 youth representatives from member states of SEECP and 20 youth representatives respectively from EU, COE, OIC and AOC Youth Network (Alliance of Civilization) and 10 local participants. Age range – 18-30 years old. 1/3 from each group represents families of prominent political figures, youth national assemblies, young business leaders, academics or media figures. The rest of the group represents leading youth activists, students of international relations in particular those focusing in issues related to interdependence of societies in security and development areas, cross-cultural studies as well as concept and practice of dialogue.

**Contributors (Lecturers and entertainers):** The pool of high profile names in academia, artists and social activists will contribute to the introduction of the historical, political and social aspects of interaction between different cultures, as well as contributing to recognition of the diversity and richness of cultures in the West and East. ( Number of RP – 15)

**Total number of participants:** youth – 85; pool of contributors – 15.

**E. The program will be prepared by the experts committee (all themes of plenary and workshops will be approved also by co-organizers and partners).**

<p><b>20 June 2010, Sunday</b></p> <p>09.00- whole day</p>	<p><b>Arrive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Registration at hotel</i></li> <li>• <i>Social Activities</i></li> <li>• <i>Networking welcome Reception</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>21 June 2010, Monday</b></p> <p>08.00-09.00</p> <p>09.00 – 09.45</p> <p>10.00-11.00 – <b>Opening Remarks</b></p> <p>11.00-11.15</p> <p>11.15-13.15</p> <p>13.30-15.00</p> <p>15.00-16.15</p> <p>16.15-16.30</p>	<p>Late registration</p> <p>Inaugural Ceremony</p> <p><b>Address of Welcome:</b></p> <p><i>“Youth of South East Europe for stability and cooperation “</i></p> <p><b>Coffee break</b></p> <p><b>I .Plenary discussion &amp; Working group:</b></p> <p><i>Balkans in concept of Mediterranean and Black Sea Cooperation</i></p> <p><b>II. Plenary discussion &amp; Working group:</b></p> <p><b>Bringing Gap: Education and intercultural dialogue</b></p> <p>Lunch</p> <p><b>III. Plenary discussion &amp; Working group:</b></p>

<p>16.30-18.00</p> <p>18.15-19.30</p> <p>20.00 -</p>	<p><i>The dynamic role of youth in conflict resolution</i></p> <p><b>IV. Plenary discussion &amp; Working group:</b></p> <p><b>Prejudices and Stereotypes: <i>Media and Civil Society</i></b></p> <p>Coffee Break</p> <p><b>IV. Plenary Discussion &amp; Working group:</b></p> <p><i>Young entrepreneurs – contributions to the basis of economy, reducing unemployment and immigration?</i></p> <p><b>V. Plenary Discussion &amp; Working group:</b></p> <p><b>Coexisting Living Together: Democracy, Ethnicity, Identity, and Culture</b></p> <p><b>Coffee break with I,II,III,IV,V Working group Reports Finalizing Session</b></p> <p><b>Dinner and cultural program</b></p>
<p><b>22 June 2010, Tuesday</b></p> <p>09.00-10.30</p> <p>10.30- 10.45</p> <p>10.45-13.00</p> <p>13.00- 14.30</p>	<p>Presentations of working groups</p> <p><b>Coffee Break</b></p> <p><b>Adoption of final outcome documents</b></p> <p><b>Lunch</b></p> <p>Istanbul 2010 European capital of culture activities</p>

14.30-18.00	(tour,etc)
18.00-19.30	<b><i>Presentations - each groups' intercultural dialogue maps</i></b>
20.30-	Gala
	<b>Opening Ceremony of SEECF Summit</b>
	<b>Departure</b>

## **F. Expected outcomes and results:**

One of the main functions of the conference is to address issues related to the intercultural dialogue. In addition, the conference aims to:

- Produce a statement affirming the key values, principles and purpose of intercultural dialogue (according to the participants), provisionally named “Istanbul Youth Dialogue Declaration”;
- Sign an agreement in the establishment of youth leaders network in South East Europe;
- Produce a set of guidelines for the (good) practice of intercultural dialogue in youth work;
- Provide an opportunity to develop contacts and partnerships between participants and represented organisations.