

# Peace Mediation Course 2025



**29 June – 11 July 2025**

A specialized training by the Swiss Federal  
Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)

[www.peacemediation.ch](http://www.peacemediation.ch)



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
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Confederazione Svizzera  
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Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA  
**State Secretariat STS-FDFA**  
Peace and Human Rights

Created in 2008, the Peace Mediation Course (PMC) is a flagship course of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). Organized by the Peace and Human Rights Division (PHRD) in collaboration with the Mediation Support Project (MSP), the two-week course focuses on peace mediation and negotiation processes in today's complex conflict settings. While concentrating on mediation and negotiations undertaken between the leadership of the primary actors in armed conflicts, the course recognizes the multitrack nature of contemporary peace processes and the need for complementary support by different third-party actors.

## GOAL

The PMC enables participants to deepen their understanding of peace mediation and negotiation, as well as to acquire specific skillsets, knowledge and attitudes to engage with and support such processes effectively. It also aims to enhance the exchange and networking among participants.

## APPROACH

The PMC applies a comprehensive approach, which takes into account the different phases, relevant actors and topics of peace mediation and negotiation.

Key elements of the PMC include:

- Overview of the landscape of peace processes and mediation today
- Insights from leading experts and mediators on how to design and manage processes
- Practice of essential mediation skills through interactive exercises and roleplays
- Analysis of thematic areas shaping peace mediation processes

## PARTICIPATION

### TARGET PARTICIPANTS

Each year, 25 mid- to senior-level professionals participate in the course. Participants include people directly involved in peace processes such as conflict parties, negotiators or insider mediators, as well as Swiss diplomats and experts, representatives of international and regional organizations, foreign ministries, and international non-governmental organizations.

### CRITERIA

Participants must have sound skills, knowledge and experience in mediation and negotiation, or several years of field experience related to peace processes. Priority will be given to participants who are, or will be, working in support of peace processes. Good command of English is required. Participants are expected to have a high degree of motivation and commitment, to stay for the entire duration of the course, and to read the background material carefully.

### SELECTION

Participants are selected by the Swiss FDFA taking into account diversity in terms of gender, geographic, professional and institutional background.



## TRAINING METHODOLOGY

### EXPERIENCE ORIENTED

The PMC is practical and experience driven – the basic learning tools will be past and ongoing mediation and negotiation case studies. Conceptual frameworks are used to help analyze these experiences and extract learnings. Exclusive exchanges (e.g. “fireside chats”) with high-level mediators provide candid insider experiences of mediation and negotiation processes.

### INTERACTIVE LEARNING

The sessions are designed to enable highly interactive training methodologies.

### HEAD, HEART, AND HANDS

Attitudes and values are as important in mediation as knowledge and ‘technical’ skills. The course aims at a comprehensive and self-reflective approach to mediation.

## TRAINERS

This will be the 16th Peace Mediation Course held by the Swiss FDFA. Pascal Holliger, Senior Mediation Adviser in the Peace and Human Rights Division at the Swiss FDFA, is the course director. The trainers and resource persons are all highly experienced mediators and renowned experts in the relevant thematic areas. Trainers in the 2025 edition of the PMC will include (others to be announced):

- **Julian Arevalo:** Senior Fellow in swisspeace’s Mediation team. Teaches Political Science at the University of Basel’s Department of Social Sciences.
- **Joane Holliger:** Senior Program Officer, Mediation Support Team, CSS, ETH Zurich.
- **Pascal Holliger:** Senior Mediation Adviser, Swiss FDFA.
- **Philipp Lustenberger:** Special Envoy for the Peace Process in Colombia at the FDFA (on special leave of absence from his post as co-head of the swisspeace Mediation program).
- **Simon Mason:** Head of the Mediation Support Team, Center for Security Studies (CSS), ETH Zurich.
- **Belinda Ncube:** Peacebuilder and Mediator, Zimbabwe Institute.
- **Meredith Preston McGhie:** Secretary General of the Global Centre for Pluralism.
- **Georg Stein:** Senior Mediation Adviser, Swiss FDFA.
- **Marie-Joëlle Zahar:** Professor of Political Science, Director of the Research Network on Peace Operations at the Université de Montréal.

The training will be held in English. For more details on this year’s trainers and program, please see the website: [www.peacemediation.ch](http://www.peacemediation.ch)

## PRACTICAL DETAILS

### DATES AND VENUE

The 2025 PMC begins on **29 June 2025 at 16:00** and ends on **11 July 2025 at 16:00**, with a day off on the middle Sunday. The course will take place at the HUUS Gstaad Hotel in Saanen, Switzerland: [www.huusgstaad.com/en](http://www.huusgstaad.com/en)

### FEES

The PMC is offered free of charge to non-FDFA participants. In general, participants have to arrange and pay for their own transport.

### INFORMATION AND APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications are open from 16 December 2024 to 31 January 2025. All applications must be made through the PMC website ([www.peacemediation.ch](http://www.peacemediation.ch)). Late applications will not be considered. For further questions or information, please send an e-mail to [sts.afm.mediation@eda.admin.ch](mailto:sts.afm.mediation@eda.admin.ch).

"The course experience was immensely helpful and enriching: I must say it was one of the highlights of my work in this field, and it was hands-down the best training course I have ever attended".

— **Dawn Peebles**, United Nations

"Swiss PMC is one of the longest-running and most comprehensive trainings available to mid-senior experts and practitioners to develop their negotiation, mediation and process design skills. With its updated curriculum that reflects current changes in the conflict landscape and their repercussions in the field of peace mediation, it was the best learning journey I have ever taken in my professional life".

— **Özkan Duman**, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

"The Peace Mediation Course was an outstanding opportunity to learn and deepen my knowledge in a field that is more than ever needed. The balance between theory and practice including the final role play truly provided a glimpse into mediation and negotiation. Putting us in the shoes and making us feel the difficulties, emotions, tensions and sensitivity of such fragile but critical processes".

— **Paul Picard**, OSCE Conflict Prevention Center

"The Peace Mediation Course is the best training available in our field of work".

— **Olai Voionmaa**, EEAS, Mediation Support Team.

"In just two weeks I had the opportunity to get a deep and very useful insight in the theory and practice of peace processes. All that in the company of a very passionate, competent and amazing group of people from over the world".

— **Rita Duca**, Swiss FDFA



**The Peace Mediation Course is organized by the Swiss FDFA in collaboration with the Mediation Support Project (MSP) – a joint venture between swisspeace and the Center for Security Studies (CSS) at ETH Zurich, funded by the Swiss FDFA.**

Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich  
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