Zurich University of Applied Sciences

School of Management and Law

AACSB ACCREDITED Since 2015

Why Has the Middle East Become a Global Mediation Hotspot?



Khaldoun Dia-Eddine
ZHAW School of Management and Law



Dr. Abbas Aroua
Cordoba Peace Institute Geneva



Dounia Rhouma
Co-Founder and Lead Foraus MENA Program



Sebastian Ramspeck
International Correspondent SRF

ZHAW International Business Podium

05 OCT. 2023 | 18:00 CET | Aula (SW), St. Georgen-Platz 2, Winterthur

CORDOBA PEACE INSTITUTE
GENEVA
معهد قرطبة للسلام

For Effective Mediation in the MENA Region

"Why Has the Middle East Become a Global Mediation Hotspot?"

ZHAW International Business Podium

ZHAW School of Management and Law

Winterthur, 5 October 2023

2002 - 2022
in the service of peace
في خدمة السلام

Since 2002, 20+ countries:

- Violence prevention
- Conflict transformation
- Social cohesion

- Modern theory/practice + Internal resources

- CPI / FDFA collaboration



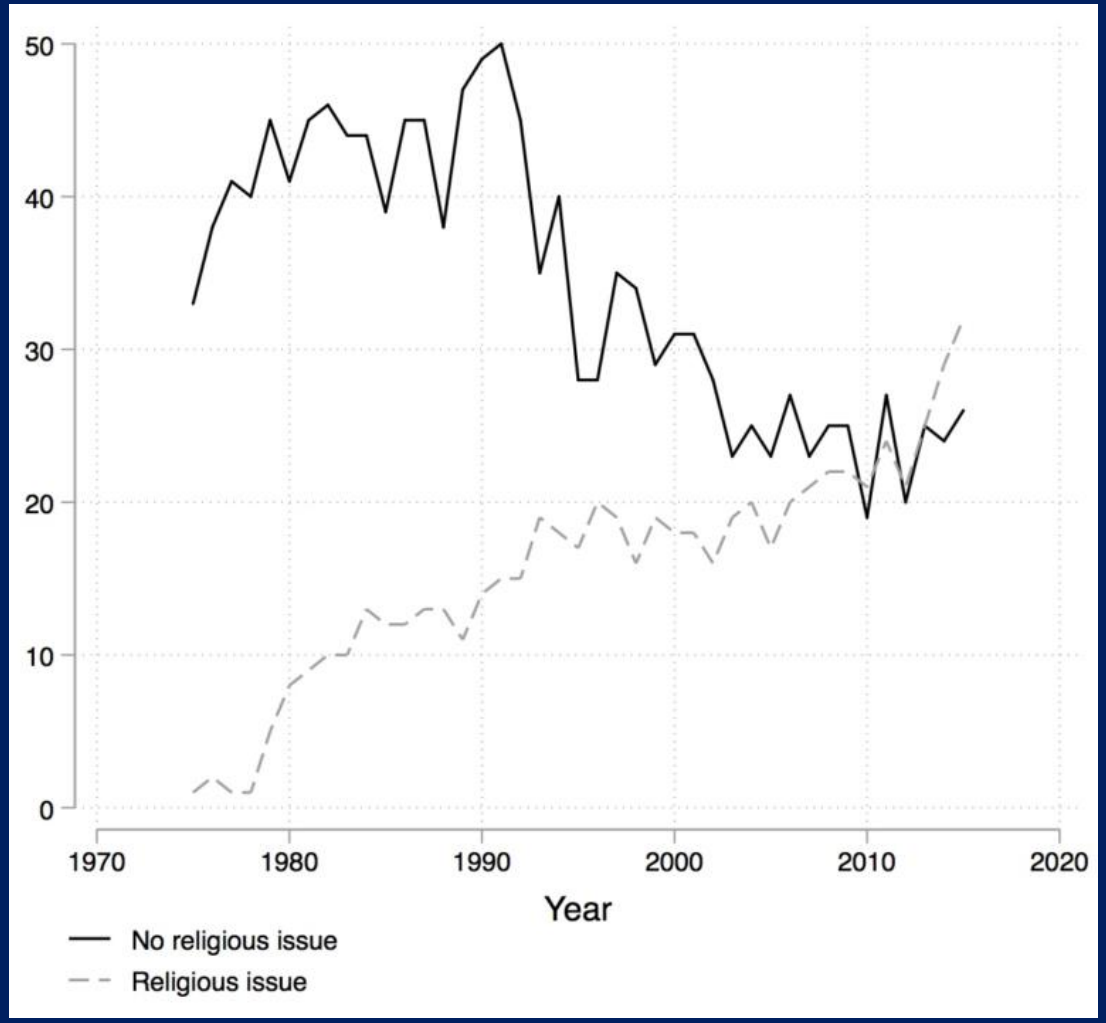
Tensions and polarizations:

- political
- ideological
- religious
- sectarian
- ethnic
- tribal
- linguistic

Evolution of Conflicts

According to Uppsala University Data

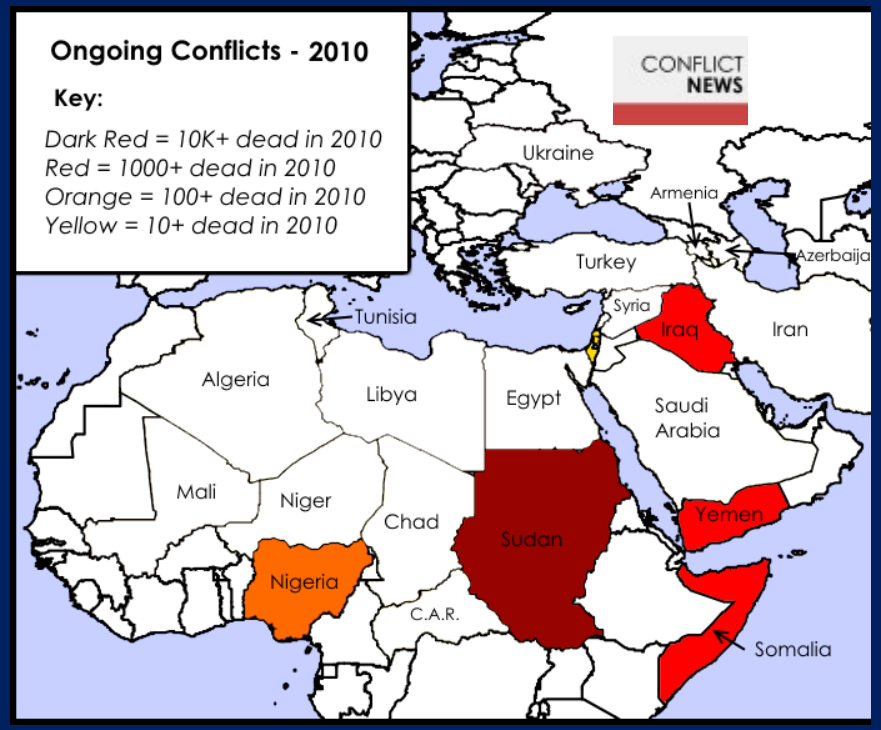
- More than 55% of today's violent conflicts in the world involve a religious issue.
- 75% happen in the Arab and Muslim world.

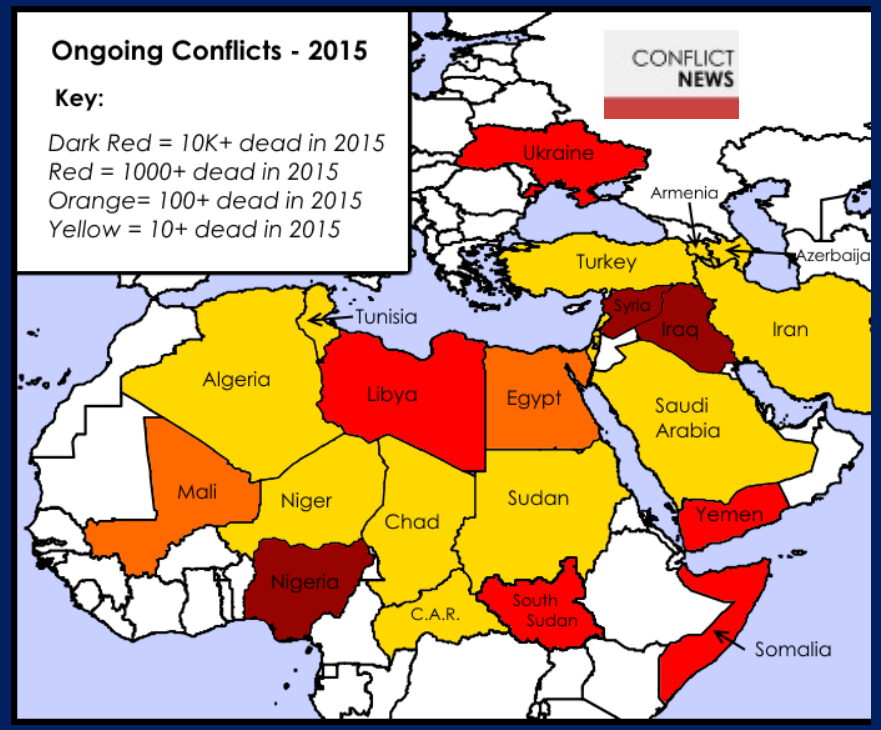


Isak Svensson and Desirée Nilsson. Disputes over the Divine: Introducing the Religion and Armed Conflict (RELAC) Data, 1975 to 2015. Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vo. 62(5), pp.1136-1137 (2018).

Evolution of Conflicts

The proliferation of conflicts in the MENA region in the aftermath of the “Arab Spring”

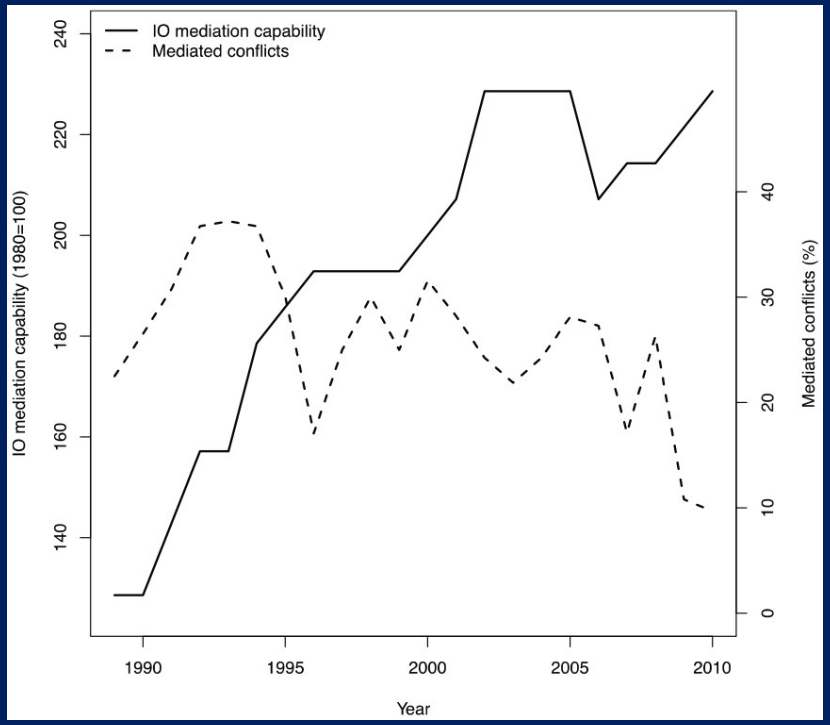






Evolution of International Mediation

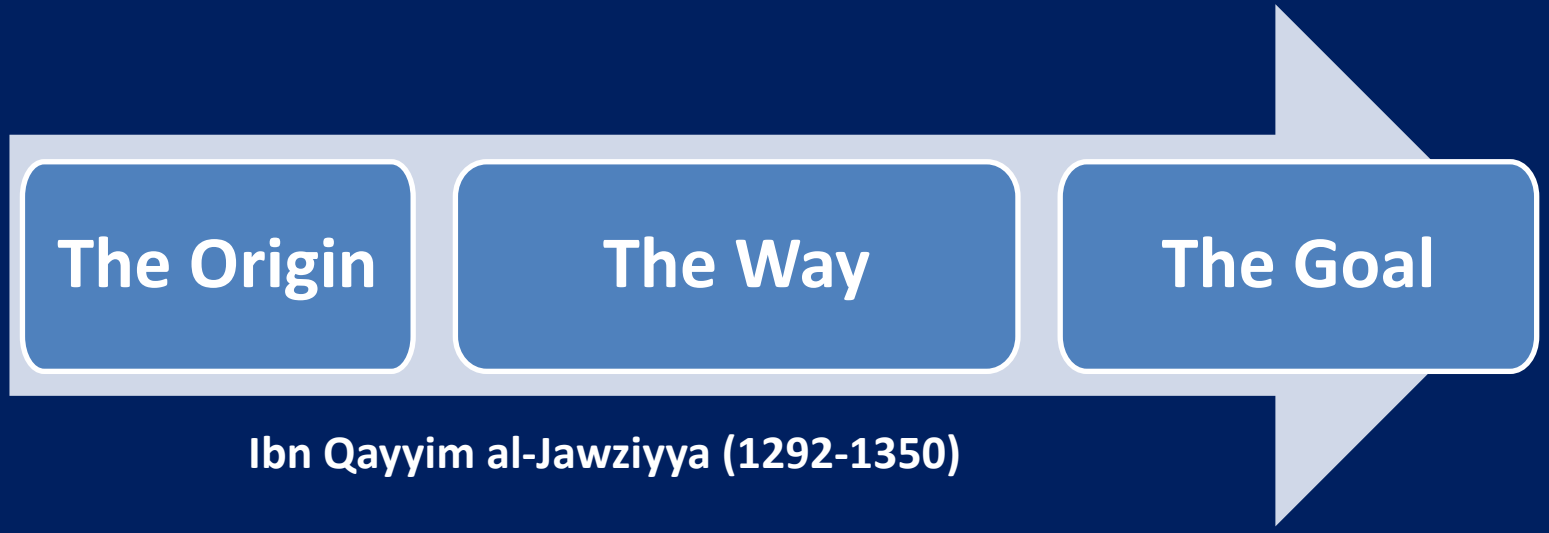
- Increased specialization
- More mediation capacity
- Puzzle of mediation decline



(Magnus Lundgren & Isak Svensson, 2020)

Mediation Challenges

- Access to conflict parties (proscription)
- Appropriate approach to the type of conflict



Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1292-1350)

Conflict: incompatible origins, divergent ways or contradictory goals.

Evolution of International Mediation

- Proliferation of mediators
- Competition for mediation
  → Fragmentation
  → Destructive interference



Evolution of Mediation in the MENA Region

Growing interest of OIC

- Since 2017, four annual conferences on mediation.
- Third conference (2019):
"The Role of Culturally Sensitive Mediation"
- OIC Resolution No. 56/46-POL (2019)
“Strengthening the Mediation Capacity of the OIC”
“Code of Conduct for Mediators, focusing on culturally sensitive mediation approaches” to be prepared.

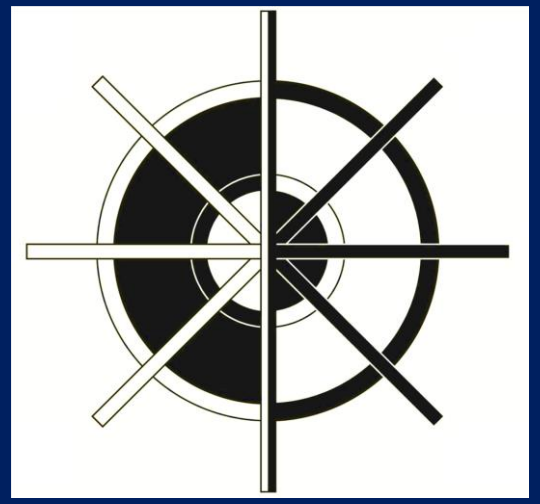
Evolution of Mediation in the MENA Region

Awareness of the duty of mediation in society.

Track 8
Funding

Track 1
Government

Track 2
Professional
Conflict Resolution



Track 7
Religion

Track 3
Business

Track 9
Media and Public
Opinion (internal circle)

Track 6
Peace Activism

Track 5
Research, Training
and Education

Track 4
Private Citizen

Multi-Track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace, by Dr. Louise Diamond and Ambassador John McDonald, Kumarian Press, 1996.

Evolution of Mediation in the MENA Region

Mediation: a religious duty

- Importance of bond mending in Qur'ān.
(Qur'ān: 2:224, 4:114, 8:1, 49:9)

- "More valuable than fasting, praying, and almsgiving is to mend the relations."
(Ahmad, Tirmidhi and Ibn Hibban)

- "Making peace justly between two parties is an act of charity". (Bukhāri and Muslim)

- Peace mediators are eligible for *zakat.*





How Effective is Mediation in the MENA Region?

- **Motivation for mediation**
  (altruism, interest: national security, soft power)
- **Commitment of mediator**
  (by conviction, proxy mediation like proxy war)
- **Coherence of the mediator**
  (mediate outside / repress inside)
- **Type of mediation**
  (pure, with muscles, with bank checks)
- **Cultural sensitivity**
  (“copy-paste” recipes / internal resources)

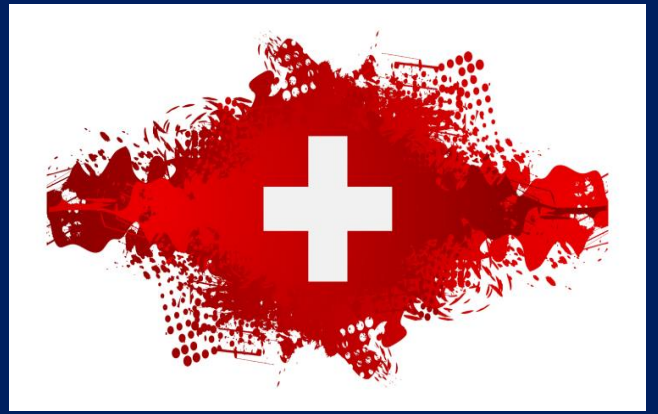


Future of Swiss Mediation

Peacebuilding is enshrined in Swiss law and is one of the priorities of foreign policy.

- **The Confederation shall promote the peaceful co-existence of peoples.** (Constitution, Art. 54 Foreign relations)

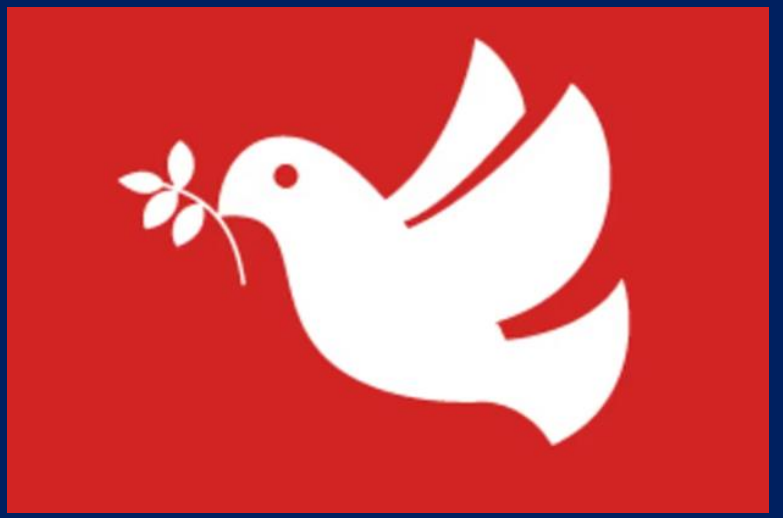
- **The Confederation pursues the objective of "preventing, calming or resolving armed conflicts, in particular through confidence-building, mediation and peace-building measures."** (Federal law on measures to promote civil peace and strengthen human rights, Art. 2)



© Perspectives de médiation

Future of Swiss Mediation

- International collaboration
- Perception of neutrality
- Non classical mediation
- State/non-state partnership



© swissinfo.ch



www.cpi-geneva.org
facebook.com/cpi.geneva
twitter.com/cpi_geneva
linkedin.com/in/cpi-geneva