

CSSProject for Integrative Mediation

Integrative Mediation: Bringing Local Leaders Together

The CSSProject for Integrative Mediation (CSSP) evolved out of ten years of experience of the International Mediator in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dr. Christian Schwarz-Schilling and has been operational since 1 January 2005. The work of the Mediator started informally in 1992 and was formally mandated by the international community and the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1995 to 2004. Upon request, the format and structure of mediations were conducted at the local level based on practical needs and local conflicts. The Mediator sought to increase dialogue and reduce tensions by finding step-by-step solutions to daily problems. The format of the process included information visits, mediations, follow ups and round table dialogues. In 10 years the Mediator conducted over 185 local mediations in 55 municipalities. The mandate of the Mediator was completed in December 2004.

Integrative Mediation seeks to apply lessons learned and to adapt the unique Bosnia model for possible use in other parts of South Eastern Europe. The mediation team developed a comprehensive approach to mediation by including various levels of responsibility, multiple actors and a variety of techniques. It combines six different conflict resolution activities, drawing on classical mediation and developing a holistic and decentralized instrument for implementation of agreements. The elements of Integrative Mediation are Grassroots Mediation, Self-Mediation, Negotiation Training, Problem-Solving Workshops, Reconciliation-building, and Research/Analysis. Throughout the process, it assists local actors to develop initiatives and to implement confidence-building measures. In addition, it helps to clarify to civil society why certain measures are needed, and enables communities to participate actively in the local peace process. Furthermore, it brings the general and hierarchical process of conflict resolution down to the local level.

Integrative Mediation does not seek to replace or remove ownership of the peace process. Instead, by complementing the peace process Integrative Mediation provides local parties with a conflict resolution framework that enables them to identify for themselves the obstacles to conflict resolution and reconciliation efforts. The main aim of Integrative Mediation is to leave decisions and solutions in the hands of local actors and to strengthen the work of local peace initiatives, thereby facilitating return, co-existence and re-integration at the local level.

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