3RD INTERNATIONAL MIDDLE EAST CONGRESS
HATAY CALL (DECLARATION)

"Mobilisation for Civil Social Responsibility"

3rd International Middle East Congress took place in **Hatay** on **May 7-8th, 2015** in constructive and candid environment. The Congress, organized in cooperation with Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Research and Institute of Middle East Research at Marmara University, and hosted by Hatay Governorship, Eastern Mediterranean Development Agency and Mustafa Kemal University, focused on the issues "Sects, Ethnicity & Conflict Resolution" The event was attended by academics, researchers, diplomats, statesmen, executives of think tanks and NGO's from all around the world, whose main focus is Middle East. It dealt with the topics "Historical Background and Economic, Cultural, Psychological Dynamics", Sects and Ethnicity; Non-middle Eastern Powers, Governance Dynamics & Governments with Regional References", "Influence of Ideological and Theological Background", Difficulties of Policy Making in the Region in the Multi-polar Era", "Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Other Countries, Proactive Suggestions", "Modern Conflict Resolution Models: Successful Experiences, Systemic & Structural Problems, Opportunities, Cooperation and Conflict Resolution".

The Congress agreed upon the following:

1. Proclamations accepted following the former two events titled International Middle East Congress have been confirmed.

2. It has been suggested that studies on conflict resolution as a mechanism be supported. It is obvious that such theoretical projects over conflicted areas with numerous dynamics in play should be complemented with practical efforts. Scientific knowledge of Turkey, which may be instrumental in resolving of regional sectarian conflicts, should be supported to this end.

3. Ethnic and sectarian variances cause conflicts in Middle East as well as in other parts of the world. However, the actual reason appears as geopolitical and strategic profit seeking. Otherwise, it turns out to be impossible to explain periods of peace and stability experienced by the region. "Multi-cultural peace climate" prevalent in Hatay affirms this view. In this respect, organization of the Congress in Hatay is highly relevant.

4. The multicultural peace environment in Hatay may be embodied by a "Hatay Model" The model, as a theory and brand value, may be instrumental in peacemaking.

5. The most important and divisive of the religious and sectarian problems in the region appears as the Arab-Israel (Israel-Palestine) conflict which revolves around Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa Mosque. It is impossible to imagine peace and stability in the region unless the problem is resolved with the agreement of all religious parties. Therefore, it is crucial that the unrest between the two nations be ended in terms of international agreements. Implementation of the UN resolutions by the parties and recognition of Palestine will facilitate the solution of Jerusalem question and establishment of peace.

6. Another reason behind sectarian and religious conflicts in the Middle East is identity politics employed, neglecting regional socioeconomic and geographical circumstances, during the foundation of nation-state which is shaped by imperial powers. Countries in the region preferred ignoring the differences instead of integrating into the system. Violence used to achieve this aim brought about a security paradox. Therefore, countries with legitimacy problems may be not exist in future.

7. While economic and strategic dynamics are emphasized during regional conflicts, theological factors should also be taken into account. Religion is of the potential to mobilize and set people at odds with each other. Another important factor is that each country establishes its own cleric class and religious institutions during the nation-state foundation. Severe differences among theological approaches of universal Islam encourage violence in the region.

8. In order to analyze the roots of the regional debate, clerics should gather in meetings so that religious conflicts will be eliminated. Particularly, meeting of Shiite and Sunnite clerics will contribute to stability in the region.

9. The reason behind the emergence of terrorist organizations in the Middle East is the ineffectiveness of national and international institutions. Those who join these organizations seek profit, revenge, position and adventure. Individuals who are suspected to join violent organizations should be oriented to the society.

10. Regardless to the reason, killing of innocent people cannot be acceptable. Active forces, particularly UN, should make efforts to protect civilians and stop violence without resorting to violence as much as possible. In this respect, the shelter provided by Turkey along with Lebanon and Jordan for Syrian refugees needs mentioning as an admirable effort.

11. Recently, international micro-nationalism and integration tendencies have had impact on Middle East. Activities of various regional players exposed a group of countries to the risk of balkanization and another group to that of total extinction. Strategic position of and the presence of material resources in the region even increases the risk.

12. In respect to integration tendencies, energy producing countries in the region economically complement Turkey, Pakistan, Egypt. Conflicts between the mentioned countries undermine their economic and strategic interests. In a broader framework, it may be suggested that Organization of Islamic Cooperation and D-8 be strengthened in economic, political and sociological respects.

13. The solidarity language among Middle East countries around such areas as religion, linguistics, history, geography has so far been only at sentimental level. Their preferential need is the human resources, economic and cultural background as well as capacity building in these areas.

14. It is observed that there has been an obvious competition among regional players for the control of the region. Whereas this phenomenon is acceptable in modern politics, synchronization of high level competition and high level cooperation is of crucial importance.

15. During the re-integration of the countries which have been partly or totally outside the international system, it is crucial that mutual dependency be achieved.

16. While developments in communication technologies, transportation, education and finance cause an erosion in nation-state powers, it also brings about new opportunities. The nature of state is in transformation. States need to take measures to adapt to the new order as soon as possible. Otherwise it is expected that many countries will not survive due to institutional incapacity.

17. In the era of empires, possible problems used to be addressed without exaggeration. Rome, Ummayad, Abbasid and Ottoman experiences are appropriate example of the past. In these experiences there was no place for ethnic tensions in one nation and language. After the collapse of Ottoman empire, Turkey and the Arab world could not reorganize. Modern politics tend to exaggerate and complicate problems to the extent that they cannot be resolved. Unless we understand the west we cannot understand our region. We need to become familiar with the world.

18. In order to address the regional problems a qualified elite group and teaching of culture, history and geography are crucial.

19. Entities called "Elsine-i Selase" which speak Farsi, Turkish and Arabic, need Western languages to communicate among themselves. Unless speaking in its own language a civilization cannot survive. Therefore, in the region, use of our own languages should be encouraged.

20. Negative discourse of elites and media turns out to be an affirmative prediction after a while. So, a discourse of peace and solidarity should be espoused.

21. Values of Islam regarding democracy, human rights, women and protection of children as well as environment should be rewritten with a modern language in a way that can mobilize Muslims.

22. In order to end the regional conflict and establish peace, stability and protect welfare and dignity of people initiative should not be expected from other countries. Civil society in the region should take initiative to contribute to the process. In this regard, it is obvious that civil society initiatives in each country will be fruitful and should be supported.

23. The Congress makes a call as "**Mobilisation for Civil Social Responsibility**" for the region whose security, welfare and future are at risk, and confirms that it is crucial that this call turns into a voluntary campaign at each level.

8 May 2015, Hatay