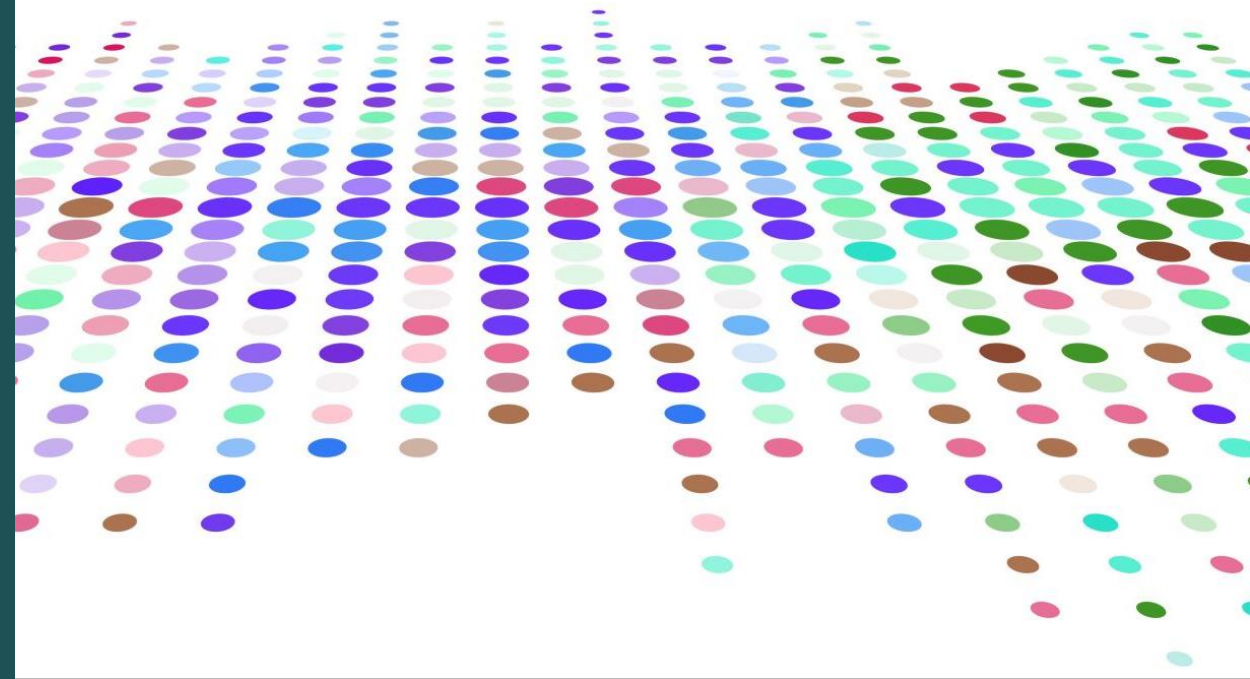


International conference

**The Power of the Local:  
learning from local communities  
pursuing alternatives to inter-ethnic  
violence**

Rijeka / online 22nd September 2025

MEET OUR  
SPEAKERS



# Keynote speaker DINKA ČORKALO

- **Dinka Čorkalo** is a professor of social psychology at the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Croatia. Her research interests include intergroup relations in war and peace, especially the processes of social reconstruction in post-war communities. She teaches courses on intergroup processes, prejudice and discrimination, peace psychology, and ethics in research and professional practice. Dinka was a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at University of Massachusetts at Amherst and a Visiting Scholar at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame. She has published more than 90 peer-reviewed papers and book chapters and has (co-)authored or (co-)edited 13 books and research monographs. She has received several national awards, including the National Scientific Award (2005), the Ramiro Bujas Award from the Croatian Psychological Association (2009), and the Fiat Psychologia Award from the Croatian Psychological Association for her contribution to applied psychology (2012).



# Panel 1 speaker

## FARIS KOČAN

- **Faris Kočan** is Assistant Professor at Chair of International Relations, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences. Currently, he is the principal investigator of the University of Ljubljana team in the Horizon Europe project RECLAIM – Reclaiming Liberal Democracy in Europe in the Postfactual Age, and Slovenian Research Agency project Alternative Ordering(s) – The Hidden Agency of the Demonized: Alternative Socio-Political Ordering(s) in Southeast European Post-Conflict Societies. He has published in several journals, primarily investigating the securitisation of identities in the context of European integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina. He has recently received Dr. Ana Kinsky Award for outstanding doctoral thesis, and The University of Ljubljana Golden plaque Special Commendation for Young Higher Education Teachers.





# Panel 1 speaker DINO ŠAKANOVIĆ

- ▶ **Dino Šakanović** is a historian and researcher from Bosnia-Herzegovina. His research focuses on the society in transition phenomena, such as economic transitions and cultural memory. He is finalizing his doctoral research at the University of Sarajevo.



# Panel 1 speaker

## ANĐELA ĐORĐEVIĆ

- **Anđela Đorđević** is a Ph.D. candidate and researcher at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), affiliated with the Department of Spatial Sociology and the Department for Interethnic Relations. She is currently involved in two projects: „Research on Migration Trends in the Municipality of Ljubljana“ and „The Hidden Action of the Demonized: An Alternative Sociopolitical Order of Post-conflict Societies in Southeast Europe“. Her research primarily focuses on post-conflict societies in the Western Balkans. She has conducted fieldwork in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia.





# Panel 1 speaker ROK ZUPANČIČ

- ▶ **Rok Zupančič** is a Professor of Defence Studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana. His research focuses on peacebuilding processes in Southeast Europe, with a particular interest in how post-conflict environments shape both the psychological and physiological experiences of individuals. He explores the imprint that war and its aftermath leave on people's minds and bodies, aiming to better understand the challenges of reconciliation and coexistence in societies marked by post-conflict anxieties.



# Panel 1 speaker

## VALENTINA OTMAČIĆ

- ▶ **Valentina Otmačić** is a scholar, educator and practitioner in the fields of conflict transformation, peace and human rights. She holds a Ph.D. in Peace Studies from the University of Bradford (UK). Her first book “Resisting Inter-Ethnic Violence: Community Approaches to Conflict Transformation in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina” was published by Routledge in 2025. Valentina serves as Deputy Head of the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies of the University of Rijeka (Croatia)





# Panel 2 speaker

## Isabela dos Santos

- **Isabela Dos Santos** is a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science at the University of Toronto. She studies peace and conflict with a focus on the Middle East. Her doctoral research explores the local, everyday peacebuilding project of Wahat al Salam – Neve Shalom (WASNS), which in English translates to “Oasis of Peace.” WASNS is a binational and bilingual village of Palestinian Arab and Jewish citizens of Israel “dedicated to building justice, peace and equality in the country and the region” (WASNS, n.d.). Isabela's research has been featured in The New York Times, CBC, and La Presse."





# Panel 2 speaker AHMADULLAH ARCHIWAL

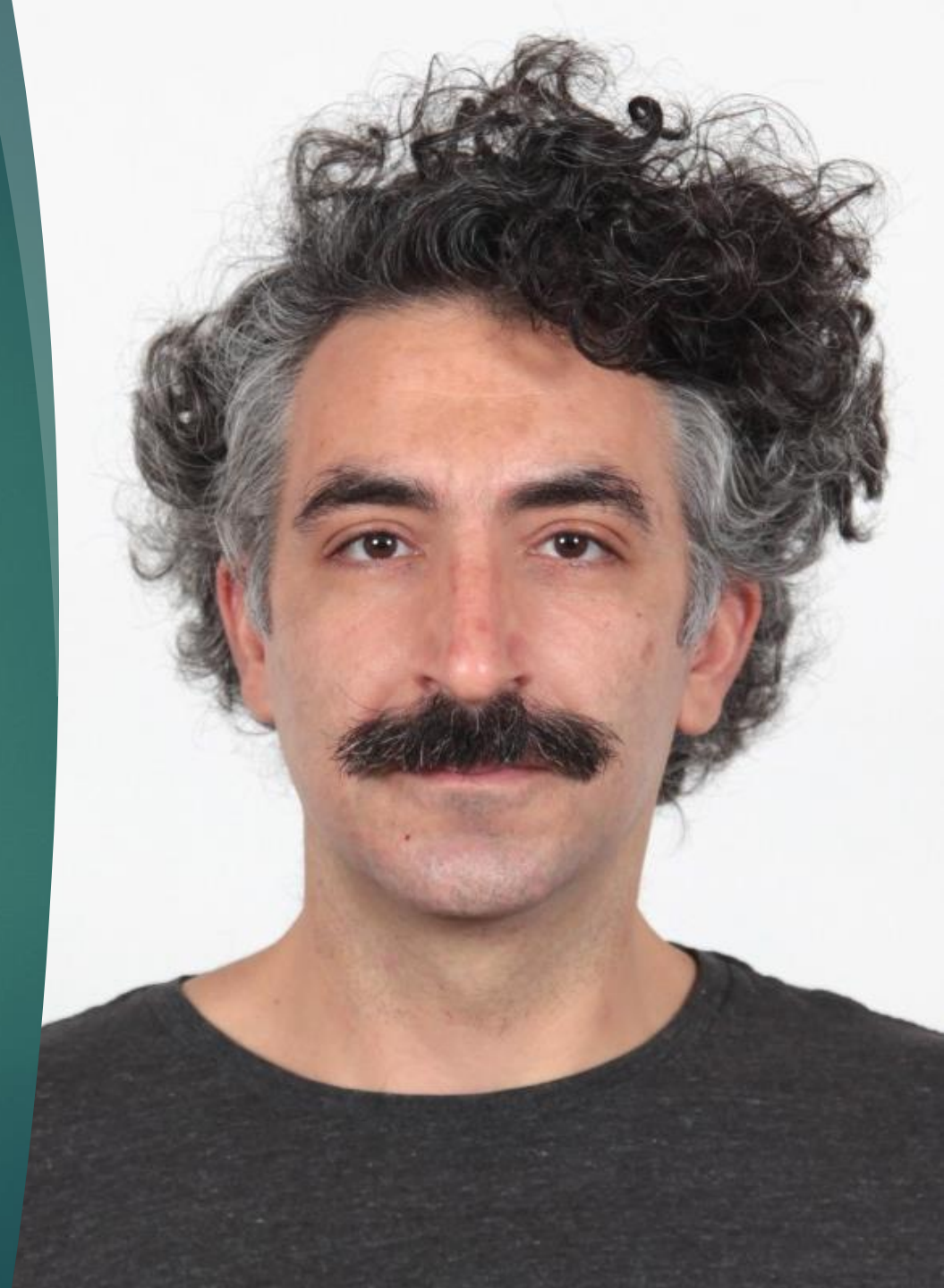
- ▶ **Ahmadullah Archiwal** holds two MAs - MA in journalism from Peshawar University and an MA in international affairs at the New School University in New York. He has done pioneering work on nonviolence in Afghanistan and has written three books on nonviolence and Khudai Khidmatgar Movement (an anti-British Indian movement in today's Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan). He has been writing on contemporary nonviolent movements in Pakistan, Afghanistan and beyond.



# Panel 2 speaker

## LOIZOS KAPSALIS

- ▶ **Loizos Kapsalis** is a History Education Officer at the Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (AHDR) in Nicosia. Before joining the AHDR he completed his PhD at the Centre for Hellenic Studies, King's College London and held research and teaching positions at King's College London, the European University of Cyprus and the University of Cyprus. He is a founding member of the public history group *bahçêş histories of Cyprus*.





# Panel 2 speaker

## SEAN BYERS

- ▶ **Seán Byers** works for Trademark Belfast, a trade union linked cooperative involved in political education, post-conflict transformation and the new economy. For fifteen years he has worked on and written extensively about the challenges facing deeply divided societies, with a particular focus on the material conditions shaping patterns of conflict and division.

