

# LET'S BUILD PEACE, HERE & NOW

EPISODE 2: BASSMA KODMANI AND DAWN SHACKLES

**21 JUNE 2021**  
9:00 AM EDT  
1:00 PM UTC  
2:00 PM BST  
3:00 PM CEST  
6:30 PM IST

**REGISTER HERE**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEsd-6vqzorGdIYK82n5UQKs2hdIDPRAnfN>

## ABOUT THIS EVENT

In the second episode of 'Let's build peace: here and now' conversations, Dawn Shackles, a local activist from Northern Ireland will speak with Bassma Kodmani, a fellow activist and peacebuilder who has worked for over 30 years on what she describes as the cause of her life, Syria. Dawn and Bassma will draw on their shared experiences to talk about what drives them to dedicate their life to the cause of peace in their respective contexts? What motivates them to take the risks? What keeps them going in the face of adversity? And what have they learned over the years about the key elements of building enduring peace?

They will share their stories as individuals who feel a visceral calling to the cause. They will speak of their losses, of the inheritance of the legacy of all those who came before them and about their work of peacebuilding being a permanent state of transition.

We invite you to join us for this 75 minute conversation between two peacebuilders about what it takes to build peace. The conversation will be structured as a dialogue for deep listening, for understanding and learning from each other. It will be moderated by Barry Knight.

## ABOUT BASSMA



Bassma Kodmani is the founder and former Director of the Arab Reform Initiative, a think tank promoting Arab thinking and homegrown options for change. She is Associate Professor of International Relations at Paris University. She served as senior adviser at the French National Research Council, Senior Research Fellow at CERI-Sciences Po, adviser to the Académie Diplomatique Internationale and Senior Visiting Fellow at the Collège de France. From 1998 to 2005, she served as head of the Governance and International Cooperation program at the Ford Foundation office for the

Middle East. From 1981 to 1998, she established and directed the Middle East Program at the Institut Français des Relations Internationales (IFRI) in Paris. She was an active member of several regional track 2 negotiations for the Middle East conflict and in several cases the initiator of such talks.

In 2011, in the wake of the Syrian uprising, she was one of a group of Syrians who founded the Syrian National Council (SNC), the first coalition of the Syrian opposition. She took a leave from her job to serve as head of Foreign Relations and spokesperson of the SNC. She Resigned from the SNC in 2012. In 2015, she joined the High Negotiations Commission (later expanded to become the Syrian Negotiations Commission) and is a member of the negotiating delegation to the Geneva peace talks.

She was appointed member of the Constitutional Committee and one of the 15 smaller groups of the drafting committee. She was a founding member of the Syrian Women's Political Movement in 2017 and is an active member within it. In 2018, she launched GLOBAL SYRIA in partnership with the Asfari Foundation, a new initiative to gather the Syrian diaspora with a view to mobilizing it as a strategic player in rebuilding Syria.

She holds a PhD in Political Science from Sciences-Po in Paris. She has authored and edited books, reports and articles on conflicts, political and security reforms and religious authorities in the Middle East. Kodmani is a member of the Advisory Boards of several international and Arab institutions. She holds the distinction of Chevalière de la Légion d'Honneur of France.

She has published extensively on Arab politics and societies, regional conflicts and more recently on Syria.

## ABOUT DAWN



Dawn Shackles is the Director of Peacebuilding and Communities with the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, an independent philanthropic grant making organisation established over 40 years ago. The Foundation strives to create a society where everyone can prosper and live in peace, encourages and supports those who want to give and empowers the local community to effect change. Renowned for its work in peacebuilding, the Foundation is an organisation that is not afraid to take risks in supporting the most marginalised, to help build peace in Northern Ireland.

Having worked in social justice and peacebuilding roles over the last 20 years, Dawn is not only highly respected but is clearly value driven, compassionate and committed to peacebuilding and a strong advocate for the most vulnerable and marginalised in society. She has significant experience of managing, developing and implementing solutions to complex and sensitive community, peacebuilding, social justice and human rights issues within Northern Ireland and internationally, most recently through her role on the Foundation's for Peace Network.

## ABOUT THE SERIES

2020 has laid bare that crisis and conflict are not just something 'out there'. They are here and now and touch all our lives. And while the deficiencies of our existing models for creating just and

peaceful societies are being revealed, so are the enduring sources of resilience in our world. It is now imperative to do things differently - to listen, share and learn from the extraordinary stories of peacebuilders working in contexts of entrenched injustices, in deeply divided societies and understand what does it take to build just and peaceful societies in an era of escalating inequalities, polarization, conflicts and injustices and of fast eroding human rights and democracies.

Through the 'let's build peace, here & now' series the Foundations for Peace (FFP) network and its partners are creating a space for telling the stories of those who have been closest to the ground. Our approach is to tell our stories through deep and authentic conversations. Stories and narratives are powerful because they stick, narratives can convey complex ideas, help transcend borders and artificial divides speaking to us all as one and inspire to forge new ideas, behaviours and connections. Often in the fields of development and philanthropy stories are watered down by the need for brevity, bullet points and reporting templates. We want to change that and share our narratives freely, authentically, directly and provide an opportunity for people, who are looking for ways to #buildbackbetter, to listen deeply.

#### *PREVIOUS EPISODES*

[Episode 1: Martin Macwan and Stephen Pittam](#)

#### ABOUT FFP



Foundations for Peace (FFP) is an international network of independent local philanthropic organizations working towards peace and social justice. As local activist funders, we play a vital role in delivering and sustaining peacebuilding and social justice programs.

With local knowledge and direct access to affected communities, we are the "bridge" to create relationships and work towards achieving equity and diversity.

We seek to positively influence the global agenda for change and the development aid architecture in conflict/post-conflict regions. We do this by developing and sharing learning, training and other resources to enhance local leadership, skills and potential to deliver sustainable peacebuilding work.

[www.foundationsforpeace.com](http://www.foundationsforpeace.com)

For more information about this event and FFP contact Rasha Sansur at [infoffpn@gmail.com](mailto:infoffpn@gmail.com)