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27.10.07

SATURDAY

Fethullah Gülen and His Global Contribution to Peace Building

by *Zeki Saritoprak*

Panel:
Gülen Movement in Peace
Building and
Conflict Resolution

Venue:
D202,
Clement House, LSE

26.10.07 Panels	Parallel Session 1	Parallel Session 2
9:30-11:30		
13:00-15:00		Presentation: 08
15:10-17:00		

Fethullah Gülen is one of the most influential scholars and thinkers in the contemporary Islamic world, particularly in Turkey. Although recent studies have put forward Gülen's ideas on various topics, Gülen's approach to peace building is one of the less studied. Given the contemporary reality of wars and ethnic/religious strife, this is a neglect that needs to be corrected. Fethullah Gülen stands up for peace and for the prevention of any clash of civilisations, not only through his speeches and writing, but through his actions as well. This paper examines the concept of peace building through Gülen's writings and activities with reference to the main sources of Islam and Gülen's commentary on them. In focusing on Gülen's activities, the paper emphasises certain American institutions, notably the Washington D.C. based Rumi Forum for Interfaith Dialogue (of which Gülen is the honorary president), and its contribution to peace-building through interfaith activities.

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Zeki Saritoprak (PhD in Islamic theology, University of Marmara, Turkey; and several year studying the Arabic language in Cairo while researching his dissertation on 'The Antichrist (al-Dajjal)'): the Bediuzzaman Said Nursi Chair in Islamic Studies at John Carroll University in Cleveland, Ohio. He has researched and taught a range of subjects – at Harran University (Turkey), Georgetown University, the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. and Berry College in Rome, Georgia – Islamic theology, Introduction to Islam, World Religions, Biblical Elements in the Qur'an, Islamic Spirituality, classical and contemporary Islamic movements, and interfaith dialogue, notably courses on Islamic personalities such as al-Ghazzali and Bediuzzaman Said Nursi.