


Baku International Summer Academy: 7 - 15 July, 2026

Venue: Baku, Azerbaijan - Ganjali Plaza Hotel - Trip to Sheki

Trainers & Topics

IPD Academic Programs: Theory - Practice - Research - Exchange - Networking - Contribute

I LECTURER: Peter Aeberhard Class Days: 8 & 9 July, 2026

 **Peter Aeberhard** brings over three decades of experience in **conflict transformation, mediation, and strategic leadership** across government, international NGOs, and foundations. With expertise in both high-level policy advising and field-based implementation, Peter has served as a political advisor to the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs, country director for SWISSAID in Tanzania and Niger, and consultant in fragile and post-conflict contexts such as Somalia, Kenya, and the Sahel. His work bridges the gap between **systemic leadership** and **on-the-ground mediation**, always with a focus on **sustainable conflict resolution**.



Core Expertise

Mediation and Conflict Resolution: Mediator with experience in trauma-informed conflict management. Skilled in fostering sustainable, inclusive solutions through culturally sensitive approaches in fragile and multicultural contexts.

Strategic Conflict Prevention: Expertise in systems thinking and anticipatory strategies for preventing escalation of violence. Focus on linking individual leadership to collective security and resilience.

Leadership in Fragile Contexts: Coaching leaders from civil society, governments, and security institutions to adopt conflict-sensitive and trauma-informed approaches.

Training & Facilitation: Over 20 years of experience in designing and leading workshops on conflict resolution, negotiation, mediation, and intercultural dialogue in Europe, Africa, and beyond.

Peter's recent publications include *Addressing Trauma: The Missing Element in Security Sector Governance and Reform* (DCAF, 2024), where he highlights the integration of trauma-awareness into peacebuilding and leadership frameworks.

Essence of Training

This two-day program, “**Empowering Leaders for Conflict Prevention and Mediation**”, supports participants in developing conflict-sensitive leadership skills and trauma-informed mediation capacities.

Day 1 introduces participants to the fundamentals of **leadership vision, systems thinking, and conflict prevention**, giving them practical frameworks to understand conflict dynamics and anticipate escalation.

Day 2 emphasizes **mediation, negotiation, and trauma-informed leadership**, enabling participants to apply culturally sensitive tools in practice-oriented simulations.

The unit balances **theoretical input, applied exercises, and reflective learning**, ensuring that participants not only gain conceptual clarity but also practical skills for their professional environments.

Training specifics

Day 1 Topic: Foundations of Empowered Leadership and Conflict Prevention

Objective: Build a strong foundation for conflict resolution by integrating leadership awareness with systems thinking and conflict analysis.

Topics Covered

1. **Personal Vision and Leadership in Conflict Settings**
 - Clarifying leadership goals and values in high-stakes contexts.
 - Understanding personal triggers and resilience factors.
2. **Systems Thinking for Conflict Prevention**
 - Using causal loop diagrams to analyze conflict drivers.
 - Identifying feedback loops between trauma, mistrust, and dialogue.
3. **Interactive Case Study & Reflective Strategy Session**
 - Group exercise on a multi-layered conflict scenario.
 - Application of systems thinking and reflective leadership strategies.

Methodology

- Vision-mapping and self-reflection exercises
- Systems analysis with CLDs (Causal Loop Diagrams)
- Group case study and guided peer reflections

Day 2 Topic: Mediation, Negotiation, and Trauma-Informed Leadership

Objective: Equip participants with **practical skills in mediation and negotiation**, integrating trauma awareness and cultural sensitivity into leadership and decision-making.

Topics Covered

1. **Trauma-Informed Mediation and Cultural Sensitivity**
 - Mediation tools that address trauma impacts.
 - Reading the spoken and unspoken in cross-cultural contexts.
2. **Strategic Negotiation and Empowered Decision-Making**
 - Negotiation styles and managing power asymmetries.
 - Practical tools: Interests vs. positions and cultural filters.
3. **Simulation & Action Planning Workshop**
 - Role-play exercises simulating high-stakes mediation settings.
 - Peer feedback and facilitator coaching.
 - Individual action planning: integrating new skills into professional practice.

Methodology


- Trauma-sensitive role plays and scenario-based negotiations
- Reflective coaching and structured peer feedback
- Individual action planning with measurable steps and indicators

Expected Outcome

- By the end of the training, participants will:
- Clarify their **personal leadership vision** in conflict settings.
- Apply **systems thinking tools** to prevent conflict escalation.
- Develop **trauma-informed mediation and negotiation skills**.
- Strengthen their ability to manage **power dynamics and cultural differences** in practice.
- Leave with a concrete **action plan** for integrating insights into their organizational and regional work.

II LECTURER: Ms. Sibylle Rupprecht Class Days: 10 & 11 July, 2026



 For 30 years, **Sibylle Rupprecht** headed profit centers, SMEs or international NGOs. Her rich and varied experience makes her a consultant with an excellent understanding of the challenges faced by companies and organisations. She has also created her own consulting companies, accompanying her clients in their growth, reorganization and political representation.

An experienced advocate at the UN and the European Union, she appreciates the importance of governance, negotiations, mediation and communication.

Building on her experience as a member and chair of various boards and expert groups, Sibylle Rupprecht also brings her expertise to companies, foundations and associations by helping them to embrace diversity, upskill their human capital and enhance performance of the board of directors.

Sibylle Rupprecht is a speaker, trainer and certified coach. A former mentor at the Cherie Blair Foundation, she teaches at various training institutes and is a consultant and mentor to establishing NGO's and companies.

She holds a postgraduate diploma in Management of International Organizations of Fribourg University, an Executive Certificate in International Advocacy from the Graduate Institute in Geneva, and is certified in Human Behavior Analysis as well as Relationship and Intimacy Coaching.

Day 1 Topic: Ethical Leadership - Key to Social Peace and Justice

Introduction of Topic

From accounting scandals, political unethical behaviour to pollution to executive compensation, **Business Ethics** has always been a hot topic. It is related to the broader field of **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**, plays a role in **ethical investing** and may or may not influence **sustainable ("green") business** as well.

Ethics calls for ethical leadership. Ethical leadership is essentially characterised by respect for values, for the rights of others and for our environment. It reflects trust, honesty, consideration, charisma and fairness. These qualities are manifested by ethical leaders both within and beyond their companies and communities. And yet, we have witnessed over recent years an alarming increase in leaders who are failing to strike a sustainable balance between the financial imperatives of their mission and the vital social and environmental dimensions that should rationally complement them.

As we rebuild our economy after this crisis, let us create it as sustainable, inclusive and resilient as possible. Building ethical leadership into the organisation culture, make it more likely to attract top employees, clients and supporters.

Methodology

- A) Lectures & Theory B) Group Works & Presentations C) PowerPoint Presentations
- D) Interactive Discussions and Experience Sharing

Day 2 Topic: Ethics and Advocacy - How to Defend, Negotiate, Mediate

Introduction of Topic

This training is focused on the understanding that communication processes are needed for effective advocacy at a national and international setting. Emphasis is placed on the application of key principles that will enhance communication, effectiveness and the development of skills and attitudes appropriate to communication, especially in matters of public persuasion.

In a national environment, politicians constantly strive to attract and sustain attention from their target audience with focused planning. A strategic approach to advocacy is crucial to allocate resources where they deliver the highest impact.

Effective advocacy calls often for negotiation and mediation. This area requires real learning to understand the causes of conflicts and how they are created. A professional attitude is useful to discover the human needs and mechanisms of functioning in society, as is the mastery of the tools and techniques that allow to defuse conflicts by mediation and by a creative process leading to win-win solutions.

Methodology

- A) Lectures & Theory B) Group Works & Presentations C) PowerPoint Presentations
D) Interactive Discussions and Experience Sharing

III LECTURER: Urs Stirnimann Class Days: 13 & 14 July, 2026

 **Urs Stirnimann** is the **chairman** of **Swiss Academy DMCC** in Dubai.

Urs worked more than **30 years** in various countries of the **Middle East** and **Latin America** with different responsibilities in the financial and legal field. Before coming to the UAE, he was leading on behalf of the **Swiss Foreign Ministry** a special mission in the Middle East working as legal advisor and head of staff and giving lectures in international law to members of different foreign ministries. For several years, Urs was the **CEO of VP Bank in Switzerland** and before that CEO of VP Bank in the **Caribbean**, where he also was the founder and **president** of the **BVI Bank Association** and **advisor** to the **BVI government**. In the 90s he was for **Credit Suisse** in **Bahrain** and covered **Saudi Arabia** and **Qatar** as private banker. In the 80s he worked several years for the International Committee of the Red Cross (**ICRC**) and was legal delegate in **Lebanon** and dissemination delegate in **El Salvador**.



2004, Since Urs gives regularly courses about International Humanitarian Law to diplomats, journalists, NGO members in the UAE.

Urs had plenty of **honorary positions** like for 18 years **Vice President** of the **Swiss Business Council Dubai** and Chairman of the **Swiss Financial Group**, where 20 Swiss banks and insurance companies are represented. In addition, he was the **Executive Director** of the **Emirati Swiss Friendship Forum** under the leadership of HH Sheikh Sultan Bin Khalifa Al Nahyan and HE Pascal Couchepin former president of Switzerland. For many years he represents the Swiss in the UAE at the **Council for Swiss Living Abroad**.

Urs studied **economics** and **law** at the University of Zurich, where he graduated as lic. iur. Urs is fluent in **German, English, Spanish** and **French** and has a basic knowledge of Italian and Arabic.

Day 1 Topic: Introduction to International Humanitarian Law

Day 1 Topic Introduction

- What is International Humanitarian Law (IHL)
- How must Prisoners of War be treated
- What is the difference between IHL and Human Rights Law

On the first day of the program, students will embark on a journey through the origins and evolution of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). They will learn about the early developments of IHL and how it was implemented in armed conflicts to protect those affected by the horrors of war. The session will offer an in-depth exploration of the First World War, which marked a critical moment in history with millions of prisoners of war (POWs) held by various parties. The suffering and poor treatment of these individuals highlighted the need for more robust protections, ultimately leading to the establishment of the 1929 Geneva Convention.

This landmark convention provided a framework for the humane treatment of POWs, outlining their rights and the responsibilities of the powers detaining them. Students will analyse the key provisions of the Geneva Convention and its significance in shaping modern IHL.

In addition, the course will cover the relationship between International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law, two distinct yet sometimes overlapping bodies of law. Students will assess the scope and purpose of each, exploring how they work in different contexts to protect individuals in times of peace and conflict. This foundational session will provide a strong understanding of the legal frameworks that govern wartime conduct and the protection of those involved in or affected by armed conflicts.

Methodologies

- PowerPoint presentation
- With short exercises

Day 2 Topic: Protection of Civilians and War Crime Matters

Day 2 Topic Introduction

- Treatment of Civilian Persons in time of war
- How are war criminals prosecuted under IHL
- What measures are available for implementing IHL?
- What is the ICRC's role in ensuring respect for IHL?

On the second day, students will explore the profound impact of the Second World War on the revision of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). This session will focus on the introduction of special protections for civilians, a key development following the widespread devastation of the war. Participants will also examine how internal armed conflicts contributed to the expansion of IHL, addressing the complexities of warfare within states.

Key topics include an in-depth understanding of war crimes, the legal frameworks for prosecuting war criminals, and the various mechanisms available for enforcing IHL. The critical role of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in promoting and ensuring respect for IHL will also be discussed. This comprehensive session will provide students with a deeper understanding of the evolution of legal protections in armed conflicts and the importance of accountability in modern warfare.

The day will conclude with a comprehensive test, designed to assess students' understanding of the content covered over the two days. This evaluation will ensure students have a solid grasp of the key legal frameworks, historical contexts, and principles of accountability that shape modern IHL.

Methodologies

- PowerPoint presentation
- With short exercises

We are looking forward to seeing you in our Baku Summer Programs 2026