

## **Ninth International Conference of the International Society for Third-Sector Research (ISTR)**

*“Facing Crises: Challenges and Opportunities Confronting the Third Sector and Civil Society”*  
Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey  
July 7-10, 2010

TUSEV was honored to host **Ninth International Conference of the International Society for Third-Sector Research (ISTR)** in Istanbul, which was held on **July 7-11, 2010**.

The Conference continued to be the premier event on the global calendar of academicians, researchers and practitioners of the third sector. Held biannually across the globe, the 2010 Conference attracted **almost 600 representatives** from world-class universities, research centers, foundations and civil society organizations to Istanbul.

The event offered an excellent opportunity for engaging the international community in learning about and collaborating with the Turkish third sector, while promoting the rich past and vibrant present of Turkey’s civic culture to an elite group of intellectuals.

The Conference brought together leading Turkish academicians and practitioners with representatives from the world’s most prestigious universities, along with Europe’s leading academic institutions. Participants also came from diverse regions such as the Middle East, Africa and Asia Pacific, where third sector and related studies have seen an unprecedented growth and recognition in the past two decades.

The Conference opened with a keynote speech from **Ms. Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, United Nations Deputy Secretary General and Director of the UN Population Fund**. Over the course of three days, over 80 panels and workshops, site visits, city tours, cultural evenings and receptions made this global gathering of colleagues a dynamic academic, networking, and social experience. **Rajesh Tandon of Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA)** gave the closing speech, where he offered the participants a glance at the last decade and trends to observe in the global civil society.

TUSEV also tried to expose the participants to Turkish civil society and culture during their stay in Istanbul. A number of strategies were pursued to this end:

- **Kadir Has University’s Cibali Campus**, located in the Ottoman Empire’s first tobacco factory building, was chosen because of its superb location, state-of-the-art facilities and unique place in the city’s historical fabric.
- A special focus was given to Turkish third sector and civic culture with **a main plenary and workshop on the historical heritage and present of the country**.
- Turkish academia and third sector were encouraged to submit their work to be presented in the conference. A **discounted conference registration fee** and a **reserved space to display their work** in the display area were also arranged. As a result 40 participants from universities and civil society organizations from Turkey attended the Conference.

- **Two cultural evenings** were organized at Kadir Has University and Harbiye Military Museum and Culture Centre. Both evenings gave participants a taste of the city's historical and cultural fabric, with fine examples of Turkish cuisine, music and entertainment. Social Inclusion Band – a civil initiative of Dusler Akademisi that brings handicapped children together with professional musicians – enjoyed great interest during the reception at the Museum.
- **City tours** were organized for those participants who were interested in exploring the Old City with professional guides. **City guides** were provided for the more adventurous who wish to discover the city on their own. **Post and Pre-tours** were provided by the Conference's official tour agency.

TUSEV believes that the conference was instrumental as a platform to exchange best practices and ideas between the Turkish third sector and international community. The event also increased knowledge and understanding of Turkey as a country and society. It is our hope that this transfer of knowledge and experience of leaders in the sector will guide the application of new concepts and practices in Turkey.

## **Conference Sponsors**

**TUSEV would like to thank the below organizations  
for their generous support that made this event possible**

Black Sea Trust – A Project of the German Marshall Fund of the United States  
Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation  
Kadir Has University  
TC Başbakanlık Tanıtma Fonu Kurulu Sekreterliği  
Trust Africa  
Turkish Airlines  
U.S. Consulate General Istanbul  
Vodafone Turkey Foundation

## Reflections from Conference Participants

**Mark Sidel, University of Iowa, President, International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR), USA**

*“Let me express our gratitude to you and all of your TUSEV colleagues on the extraordinary work TUSEV did in partnering with ISTR on the ISTR Ninth International Conference. We were delighted to work with you, and the conference was a great success.”*

**Megan MacGarry, CIVICUS, South Africa**

*“Overall, the week was a thrilling and invigorating – if not exhausting – experience. Meeting researchers and practitioners from around the world, active in civil society and the third sector, and hearing about new ideas and current trends, such as increasing threats to civil space and new ways civil society are responding to challenges and difficulties, meant that there was so much to take in. The conference showcased the work of some of the most accomplished and thoughtful researchers and scholars in civil society and philanthropy from around the globe. ISTR is now an established and well-regarded international association promoting research and education in the fields of philanthropy, the non-profit sector, and civil society. The hope is that it will continue to provide as excellent a forum for the development and dissemination of knowledge as it did in Istanbul this July. If it can do so, there may just be success in building a much-needed global community of researchers and scholars to better assess the emerging trends and challenges of the third sector. “*

**Jacqueline Butcher de Rivas, Centro Mexicano para la Filantropía, Meksika**

*“I can say, having been past President of ISTR , organized other conferences for this society, and having attended all except the first, that The Conference in Istanbul has been one of the best ones I have gone to in all aspects: The place which is beautiful, the interest of Turkish society and academics, the receptions and hospitality, the university and its services and TUSEV’s wonderful logistic organization in helping ISTR be a host for over 600 researchers from 69 nations. This was quite a feat and I would like to congratulate TUSEV and the university and all of those who made this possible, smooth, enlightening, and fun! Many thanks for your wonderful hospitality!”*

**William M. Plater, Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), USA**

*“The 9<sup>th</sup> international conference of ISTR was one of the most successful ever, made pleasurable as well as meaningful by its location in Istanbul, by the hospitality of TUSEV, and by the engaging enthusiasm of the emerging philanthropic sector in Turkey. As the bridge between East and West, Istanbul was the ideal setting to reflect on the role that the independent sector is playing in global interrelations as well as the influence of history on the increasingly important role that civil society is playing in shaping the future of the world.”*

**Tom McKenzie, ESRC Centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy, Cass Business School, City University, London, UK**

*“The wide range of presentations meant there was something for everyone and the beautiful surroundings inspired plenty of networking between sessions. I particularly enjoyed the informative workshops and discussions on the sector in Türkiye. The cultural evening was very impressive and completed the meeting in true style. Thank you Kadir Has University and thank you TÜSEV for an unforgettable experience!”*

For photos from the Conference, please [click here](#).

For Paper Abstracts: [www.istr.org](http://www.istr.org)

For blogs from participants:

Paula Johnson : <http://blog.tpi.org/?p=268>

Megan MacGarry : <http://civilsocietyindex.wordpress.com/2010/07/23/istr-in-istanbul-written-by-megan-macgarry/>

## **About TUSEV**

The Third Sector Foundation of Turkey (TUSEV) was established in 1993, with the pioneering leadership of 23 foundations and associations. TUSEV's trustees share a vision of strengthening the legal, fiscal and operational capacity of the third sector in Turkey. With over 100 supporting foundations, TUSEV has been contributing to improving civil society laws, generating research about the sector, and encouraging dialogue and cooperation among private, public and non-profit actors since 1993. Please see [www.tusev.org.tr](http://www.tusev.org.tr) for further information.

## **About ISTR**

Based in Johns Hopkins University, ISTR is the major international membership association and recognized leader promoting research and education in the fields of civil society, philanthropy, voluntarism and the non-profit sector. The Society is known for its commitment to excellence, its collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach, global outreach and values of diversity and inclusion. The International Conference, held biannually around the world, provides a permanent forum for international research, while at the same time building a global scholarly community in this field. Please see [www.istr.org](http://www.istr.org) for further information.