



# ULUSLARARASI BALKAN FORUMU

“Sağlık Diplomasisi  
ve Turizm”

# INTERNATIONAL BALKAN FORUM

“Health Diplomacy  
and Tourism”

STRATEJİK VİZYON BELGESİ | STRATEGIC VISION DOCUMENT





## STRATEGIC VISION DOCUMENT (DRAFT)

# 7<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL BALKAN FORUM

## “Health Diplomacy and Tourism”

( 6-7 November 2014, Margi Hotel - Edirne )

As of many regions in the World; **Balkans** have been effected by global economic recess although the region had been stable after years of conflicts. Partial political stability with certain initiatives in Balkan countries has provided economic stability in the region. One of these initiatives is **sectoral transformation**. Dynamism and potential of **health and tourism sectors** in Balkan countries is remarkable. Health Sector should be considered as a global ‘soft power’ tool.

In order to formalize and orient global health applications; **Health Diplomacy** gathers various disciplines together such as; public health, international relations, management, law and economy. **Health, Foreign Policy and Trade** form the junction point for health diplomacy. With the development of means of communication; investment to health sector has grown and due to globalization, health services have gained international qualification.

Today; **Health Diplomacy** has become a **foreign policy tool** in terms of development of national security, free trade and economic relations. For instance countries such as; Brazil, United Kingdom and Switzerland have been trying to accord their policies with issues like “human rights” and “A central global health strategy based upon global public welfare”. Considering the effect of globalization on health, it is obvious that foreign policy, international development, trade and investment should be in accordance with each other. The countries which are aware of this necessity have begun their institutionalization processes about global health. For instance; countries like Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, USA and UK created a common intergovernmental platform called **Global Health Security Initiative (GHSI)** in order to combat biological, chemical and nuclear threats. The close relation between Health and Foreign Policy has become one of the main agendas of organizations such as World Trade Organization (WTO) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

In this regard, the relation between **trade and global health** has to be understood by those concerned. On the other hand, within the context of carrying out national interests; it is obvious that global health problems should be considered as a main issue by **foreign policy makers**. Therefore; besides coordinated orientation of public health professionals and diplomats; there is need for **capacity building** and inclusion of all NGOs and parties to this process.

Participation of **Non-Governmental Organizations** to this process has importance for our country which has a rich legacy and historical experience in “**Waqf**” (endowments) management. Cooperation and contribution of the activities of public and private sectors and coordination and orientation of potential countries in diplomacy and international relations; are crucial for **overcoming resource problems**.





Turkey; with reference to this idea, has been providing humanitarian aid to the regions and its people that are in need regardless of race, ethnicity, language, religion and has supported and contributed to the international initiatives with regards to this purpose. Turkey's close historical and cultural ties with Balkans have accelerated this process. Foreign aid strategy which can be described within "Health Diplomacy" includes building hospitals, sending medical instruments and medication and providing education for doctors from different countries. Besides these; structural projects that can **transform health sectors systematically**, should be supported in order to **deepen mutual dependence positively**.

**Foreign investment and trade** in health sector has great importance with regards to foreign investment from Turkey and Turkish businessmen's investments in Balkans. In order to integrate the accumulation of Turkey in health sector with macro level strategies, to direct foreign aids coming in and out of Turkey to be beneficial economically and to reach the goals with regards to health diplomacy; strategies about health services and foreign aids should be reviewed and become integrated.

**Health Tourism** which can be described as travel of people to other countries for medical and holiday purposes; has become an important source of revenue. The increase of tourists for health purposes has contributed the economy of the countries significantly. Turkey is a prominent country in terms of providing affordable and qualified health services to citizens of various countries with its geographical features, climate and natural resources. In order for all these factors and Turkey's success and experience to be shared based upon mutual dependence; individual and collective efforts should be supported, policies of the governments should be in accordance with each other, certain cities should become brands in certain health sections, thermal health services should be developed, bilateral agreements between region countries should be increased, acceleration of insurance services should be provided, the activities of local authorities, universities and NGOs should be coordinated, the infrastructure of transportation should be coordinated and PR and promotion activities in other countries should be popularized

Culture has great importance in Balkans and this has begun to be taken into consideration by many Balkan countries. Cultural diversity can be perceived as richness but also it can be perceived as threat towards common life values and norms. When common values, freedoms and human rights are accepted by everyone; a peaceful coexistence can be achieved. Cultural diversity enriches the Balkans and with emphasis on common culture based upon common legacy can be supportive for coexistence of peoples.

In order to decrease the negative effects of cultural diversity; it is necessary for nations to know each other. Tourism is an important political tool which can be used by Balkan peoples to know their similarities and differences.

Development of Tourism between Balkan Countries in which the health diplomacy is influential; will be beneficial for multiculturalism. Besides economic gains from tourism; there is need for some kind of cultural diplomacy which considers common culture of Balkan peoples as a unifying element and the gains from different experiences as cultural richness. Based upon this need; in order to contribute to cooperation process





among Balkan countries, TASAM has decided that the **main theme** of **7<sup>th</sup> International Balkan Forum** would be **“Health Diplomacy and Tourism”**.

We hope that this Forum will strengthen cooperation among **Balkan** states in health and tourism sectors with proactive approaches and will contribute to the transformation of cultural differences into richness.

## MAIN THEME

### Health Diplomacy and Tourism

## SUBTHEMES

### International Health Perspective

- Moral and Ethical Values
- Health Law

### Major Factors of Health Diplomacy

- International State Investments
- Private Sector
- Red Crescent and Red Cross
- NGOs

### Successes in Health Sector and Health Tourism

- New Inventions and Accepted Treatment Centers.
- Health Education
- Alternative Treatment Centers

### Multilateral and Bilateral Cooperations in Tourism

- State Aid and Actions
- Mutual Agreements
- Common Activity Field in International Organizations

### Non-state Actors in Tourism: Proactive Suggestions

- Local Authorities
- Civil Society
- Private Sector
- Media

