Comparing responses to the Issue of Diversity

Although there is growing interest in diversity management as a response to demands for greater ethnic integration, the approach is not limited to societies characterized by a great mix of racial, religious or ethnic groups. Rather, the issues brought forward by human diversity are universal and actively managing existing differences in beliefs, values, solutions and goals is important for preventing the dominance of one mindset or worldview and opening opportunities for alternative values and solutions to be recognized.

This panel will examine the way different national civil service systems have responded to the issue of human diversity within their ranks. We will consider national cases that have historically had racially and ethnically diverse populations from four different geographic regions: Central Asia; Africa; Europe; and North America in order to determine how national government employment policies have reflected and responded to the common condition of heterogeneous populations. The examination will primarily focus on what lessons can be gained from these national examples about how diversity can be actively managed to enhance perceived legitimacy of public institutions and public trust, citizen satisfaction with government outputs, and, as a consequence of conflict prevention, to bring forward greater domestic peace and national security.

Participants will include university-based researchers and staff members from government and international agencies.

The panel will be co-chaired by Yolande Jemiai, United Nations and Lois R. Wise, Indiana University.