



## **There is a language tying us to each other!**

(Message from the President of the Board of Directors of the Iranian Peace Studies Scientific Association (ISPAN) to the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Silk Road Universities Network)

**Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Distinguished Professors from the Silk Road Universities Network**

On Monday, 6 February 2023, a huge earthquake occurred, shook many parts of Turkey and areas in northern Syria, and took many lives in these areas. A few hours after this unfortunate event, the students in the ECO Regional Studies Association in Allameh Tabataba'i University, in cooperation with the United Students of the Silk Road Universities Network (USSUN) and Iranian Peace Studies Scientific Association (ISPAN), produced a short video clip to express their sympathy and solidarity with the students and professors in the earthquake-affected areas. Within two days, numerous messages arrived from students in seven countries, the video clip was prepared, and they were sent to various universities in these countries.

Meanwhile, as another beautiful effort in this period, Persian-speaking students in Iran and Afghanistan tried to send the messages in Turkish language to their friends in Turkey. It showed that, despite the political approaches to transform language as a tool for identity-making and separating nations, our students tried to show that, if we want to be friends, language barriers can be removed easily. According to Mowlana (Rumi), the famous poet from Balkh, Tabriz, Konya, and other cities of the region: "Empathy is better than speaking the same language".

I would like to seize the opportunity, on behalf of the Iranian Peace Studies Scientific Association, and suggest that the linguistic links between the peoples of the great Silk Road region be included among the topics for cooperation on the Silk Road Universities Network. In this way, our students would be trained to learn the language of peace and friendship through acquiring the various languages of the region.

Yours sincerely,

**Mandana Tishehyar (PhD),  
President of the Board, IPSAN**

