

[Logo St. Paul]



[Logo Pax Christi]

University of Peace in Africa Campus 2024 Nairobi

Concept Note

Out of the box: Rethinking African Security
A Social University Forum for to boost Peace and Security
in Africa beyond violence based (military) reactions

(1) RATIONAL

(11) UPA: University of Peace in Africa is a social teaching project on concepts and active methods of (re-)building Peace, of preventing violence, of mediation and non-violent conflict management, of social cohesion of consensual transformation towards resilient communities. By invitation of a local partner, the UPA Campus opens each year in a different country of Africa, in French and English language, hosting a three-week program of 3 comprehensive teaching sectors and 6 modules including an exposure visit to successful local Peace initiatives. UPA is addressing responsible executive staff with a sound experience in Civil Society, (inter-) religious organisations, in governmental programs or in public military/police forces searching for a methodical quality time for achieving enhanced Peace competence, further personal development and effective pan-African networking. UPA celebrates its 20 years of existence, its 350 Laureates active and impacting their organisations and societies in 30 countries in Africa. The NAIROBI Campus in 2024 is co-organized with PEACE TREE NET, a national Peace platform in Kenya and in synergy with Pax Christi International.

(12) ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY is a Chartered Christian University with a longstanding reputation, known and respected both locally and internationally for providing high quality training and producing graduates in relevant fields for serving society and humanity. It proposes a joint event with UPA for offering an innovative element of the exposure visits of its participants: a one-day interactive university forum within its academic research and teaching priority on Peace and Security. Its students and professors, its partners in the international university networks, in politics and diplomacy, in socio-economic development agencies will work with the UPA participants on the innovative concept and campaigning of Rethinking African Security.

(13) RAS: Rethinking African Security is a campaign launched since 2022 by international Peace activists, African politicians, professors and agents in international (UN/AU) organisations establishing spaces of innovative thinking, systemic acting and courageous lobbying for a "new Africa" that is targeted by African Union promise of "Africa without arms in 2063". As it is

obvious, that current political and societal systems as well as international mechanisms and behaviour remain stuck worldwide in militarised and violent (re-)actions: regardless of continents, they are producing only counter-violence and in more and more cases particular terrorist counter-violence. Even at UN Peace keeping levels the violent paradigm prevails, resulting in a lull and Negative Peace only. Most decision-makers and (political) actors, for lack of knowledge and in-depth reflection, are caught in the trap of the *myth of redemptive violence*, that is benefitting only weapon industries and arm traders and masking particular egoistic geopolitical primacy, control and domination interests.

RAS induces scenarios that scare war away based on community resilience, active non-violence, equitable justice and human rights. RAS campaigning and programs support and offer to Africa community and to committed institutions and networks its approaches and tools to overcome a “perpetuated victim situation of violent globalisation” and to achieve an autonomous and authentic response to current international challenges. ‘*Copying evil and sticking to it blindly*’ gets Africa nowhere: Africa seems to be ready - once again after decolonisation – to free itself and change the paradigm. To start linking academic sector with its knowledge, questioning and competences to RAS campaigning is a highly appreciated and necessary strategy for benefitting both.

(2) LOGISTICS

(21) DATE and LOCATION: The one-day Forum will be convened and hosted by St. Paul’s University, Nairobi on **Tuesday, 15 October 2024, 08h30 to 18h00**. UPA participants will join the Forum at the beginning of their Campus as a part of their exposure visits to Kenyan Peace work reality.

(22) DIDACTIC CONCEPT: The Forum will be **structured in two distinct periods:**

- (a) morning sessions as podium discussion with academic inputs provided by selected panellists from senior academic sector and civil society directors; interactively facilitated with periods of question and comments from the (public) audience,
- (b) afternoon session with a series of thematic focus groups for interactive considerations about the morning inputs and working on impacts to RAS campaigning based on active experience of participants.

(23) AUDIENCE: Up to 100 participants will be invited from academic staff and partners of St. Paul, from Nairobi politics and embassies in relation with St. Paul, Civil Society and particular Peace initiatives in Kenya (especially from UPA co-organizer network Peace Tree Net). In particular, participants will be selected and invited from:

- Scientists and researchers of relevant sectors (politics, sociology, theology, psychology, security, international diplomacy)
- Students of St. Paul's University and relevant departments of partnering universities
- Political decision makers on communal and national level (representatives of ministries and counties)
- Representatives of international entities involved in security issues: United Nations' Organisations, embassies (partnering with St. Paul's University)
- Representatives of African Union and related bodies concerning Peace and security (ECOSOCC, Commission-7, SPC)

- Religious actors involved in Peace building, representatives of Interfaith Dialog
- Grassroot Peace initiatives (especially women) and their cooperative entities (networks, platforms, associations)

(3) OBJECTIVES

(31) Create a space for academic and (social, political) research interest on the emerging all African RAS campaign as well as a RAS interest in academic questioning and strengthening

(32) Link (social and political) research evidence of the failure and the limits of violence-based security interventions with civil society Peace building competences and good practice

(33) Promote a synchronisation of non-violent peace building competence (widespread in Africa's cultural heritage and Civil Society) with political and international security decision makers and politics (constructive systemic impact)

(34) Design milestones and impact scenarios from RAS towards promoters of community resilience, social healing, active non-violence, human security: to bring back the issue, the responsibility and the power of action on social security to the first concerned, which are the population and communities themselves (Instead of alienation and appropriation of security by external -self-appointed- governmental and violent security forces).

(35) Inspire participants and delegates from invited organisations and entities by learning about RAS and comprehensive, inclusive development on pro-active, systemic non-violent intervention scenario in Peace building, de-escalation and social coherence.

(36) Use the presence of UPA Campus Peace Builders to spread out RAS to the countries of participants and their Peace building programs and strategies.

(37) Let shine the already existing Peace reality in Civil Society competence and action, but poorly supported by current political and state systems and mechanisms. A multitude of good practices carried out successfully by Peace Builders from all over Africa are constantly materialising Positive Peace scenarios that attempt to control and overcome violence and that are based on active and transformative non-violence following the logic of human, community-based security self-managed by its beneficiaries, the population itself with its responsibility, resilience and cultural and traditional capacity.

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Hubert HEINDL, UPA / RAS



Photos: University of Peace in Africa, Campus 2005, www.universityofpeacein africa.org
 African Program of Non-violent Intervention INOVAR, Bangui 2016
 Pictograms: GRAAP, Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso, www.graap-afrique.net