



Ushirika wa Maendeleo ya Elimu Barani Afrika  
الرابطة لأجل تطوير التربية في إفريقيا  
Association for the Development of Education in Africa  
Association pour le Développement de l'Éducation en Afrique  
Associação para o Desenvolvimento da Educação em África



## WORKING GROUP ON HIGHER EDUCATION (WGHE) WEBINAR SERIES

### CONCEPT PAPER FOR THE 6<sup>TH</sup> WEBINAR ON THE 30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2016

#### PROMOTING PEACE EDUCATION AND CONFLICT PREVENTION/RESOLUTION IN AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

##### The Issue

Peace is antithetical to conflict and is priceless in any developmental equation. This understanding is driving a strong expectation that all sectors of society, particularly universities, must play a role in peacebuilding (Sarajevo Declaration, 2014). A continent steeped in conflictual situations and struggling to achieve authentic development for its people should pay all legitimate prices necessary, including a sustainable support for its universities, to get peace.

Contemporary wisdom argues that a culture of peace and conflict resolution, necessary for development, can only result from an authentic process of socialization which produces a peace-oriented transformation of both the individual and the collective. That is to say, peace is a learned human state at personal and societal levels (Galtung, 1996). Learning is a function of education. Thus, there should be no contesting the point that peace education, particularly at the university level where most opinion leaders are raised, must occupy the pride of place especially in Africa – a continent still challenged with conflicts and sorely in need of development.

The significance of peace education in fostering conflict prevention and resolution has continued to be emphasized since the end of World War II. The Preamble to the UNESCO Constitution which came into force on 4 November 1946 states, in part, that:

“since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed; that the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfil; that peace must, therefore, be founded, if it is not to fail upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind (abridged)”.

Since then, several works have underlined the promise that peace education holds for a world more at peace with itself. Talking about the learning that makes such “intellectual and moral solidarity” possible, Julius et al. (2012) argues that “such learning cannot be achieved without intentional, sustained and systematic education for peace”.



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This webinar invites all those who care deeply about development in Africa to join us to explore **the state of peace education in African universities** and to discuss **what needs to be done to enhance its strategic value for development and conflict prevention/resolution**.

### **Essence and Typology of Peace Education**

As the Charter of the United Nations-mandated University for Peace in Costa Rica states clearly, the persistence of war in the history of mankind and the growing threats against peace in recent decades jeopardize the very existence of the human race and make it imperative that peace should no longer be viewed as a negative concept, as the end of conflict or as a simple diplomatic compromise, but rather that *it should be achieved and ensured through the most valuable and most effective resource that man possesses: education* (emphasis, added).

Education (teaching and learning) encounters can take many forms. The ones that constitute Peace Education are equally varied. At core, we shall focus on those that:

- a. Provide people with the **knowledge** of structural arrangements which produce and legitimize injustice, inequality, and disharmony;
- b. Empower people with **skills** in nonviolent alternatives for managing the ensuing conflict; and
- c. Draw from people the **attitude** for living in harmony with oneself, with others, and with the natural environment (see Harris and Synott, 2002).

This is the ASK (attitudes, skills and knowledge) at the heart of peace education. Elaborating on this heart (essence) of peace education, Page (2008) posited that peace education, properly deployed, should inform about conflict-generating social systems; define appropriate (non-conflictual) responses; and encourage imagination of and commitment to a peaceful future - all of which must be strong enough to make the students appreciate the world and care for others (see also Kumar, 2010; Julius et.al. 2012).

It would appear then that to achieve a **predetermined end**, peace education must have its own **peculiar curricula and pedagogies**. We will also explore this point in the webinar, using as contexts the widely acknowledged **typology** which classifies peace education as:

- a. Conflict resolution training - focusing on the social-behavioural symptoms of conflict, training individuals to resolve inter-personal disputes through techniques of negotiation and (peer) mediation.



- b. Democracy education - focusing on the political processes associated with conflict, and postulating that with an increase in democratic participation the likelihood of societies resolving conflict through violence and war decreases.
- c. Human rights education - focusing humanity moving closer to a peaceful global community where all individual members of the human race can exercise their personal freedoms and be legally protected from violence, oppression, and indignity.
- d. Worldview transformation education - focusing on the healthy development and maturation of human consciousness through assisting people to examine and transform their worldviews which are defined as the subconscious lens (acquired through cultural, family, historical, religious and societal influences) through which people perceive and respond to 'reality' (see Wikipedia on Peace Education).

### **Peace Education Practices in Universities: Africa and other Regions**

Peace education is pushing universities beyond their traditional concern with “imparting specialized knowledge and skills in various fields of study capable of helping beneficiaries to make useful contributions to the societal development and also earn meaningful livelihood from a legitimate occupation. There is increasing interest in the role of [universities] in promoting peace and security at all levels of society, particularly in volatile conflict-prone and war-affected societies” (Omeje, 2015). In this webinar, we shall further explore how the universities in Africa are responding to peace education, compared to those of the other regions of the world.

In particular, we shall examine whether the responses or practices confine such a role to selected faculties (e.g. social sciences and humanities) where courses such as peace, conflict, and security studies are offered or they mainstream the role through embedding peace education in all the programmes offered across the entire universities beside the specialised peace-related programmes (see Omeje, op.cit). We shall tease out the consequences of either approach; and draw lessons regarding critical factors that can **accelerate** peace education and conflict prevention and resolution in African universities.



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## Objectives:

This webinar aims to interrogate peace education as an emergent programme of study in African universities - a programme with a great promise for conflict prevention and resolution in the continent.

The interrogation is designed to:

1. Clarify the historical context of the programme's emergence in African universities;
2. Analyse the current status of its practice, compared to other regions, in terms of prevalence, purpose, typology, curricula and pedagogy; and
3. Determine some critical factors that can foster a greater uptake for the programme and enhance its strategic value for socio-economic and political development in Africa.

## Deliverables

The deliverables of the webinar are:

1. Presentation on Promoting Peace Education and Conflict Prevention/Resolution in African Universities
2. Interaction with the various participants and stakeholders on the presentation
3. Documented lessons from the presentation as well as the Q & A session of the webinar.

## Expected outcomes

It is expected that the webinar will produce the following outcomes:

1. Critical review and understanding of the practice of peace education and conflict prevention/resolution in African universities.
2. Encouragement of broader support from core University stakeholders, including African Governments, for peace education and conflict prevention/resolution as a key response to Africa's developmental challenges.

## INFORMATION ON THE WEBINAR PRESENTATION

**Date:** Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016

**Time:** 12:00 GMT

**Venue:** Online (Adobe Connect Platform)



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**Organizers:** This Webinar is organized by the Association for Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) through its Working Group on Higher Education (WGHE), hosted by the Association of African Universities (AAU).

**Target Audience:** The Webinars are open to all - most especially, Vice- Chancellors, Academic Staff, Board Members of AAU, Development Cooperation Partners, the African Union Commission staff, Educational Divisions of the various Regional Economic Communities (RECs), International Education-based NGOs, Ministries of Education, Scholars, Students, Researchers, Diaspora, Peace Organizations, Government officials and others.

## HOW TO PARTICIPATE

1. Register at [www.aau.org/webinars](http://www.aau.org/webinars)
2. Webinar will be streamed live at <https://meet53484183.adobeconnect.com/wghetalks/>
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4. Live Tweeting and Event Hashtag
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## WEBINAR PRESENTER

### Professor Paul Omojo Omaji

Paul Omojo Omaji is a Professor of Criminology and Vice Chancellor Emeritus-Salem University, Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria. He trained in Sociology, Criminology, and Law in Nigeria and Australia. He has researched, published and lectured in these fields for about 35 years across Australia, Canada, India, Nigeria, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, United Kingdom, and United States.

Professor Omaji has over 40 years of community and professional leadership experiences including senior executive positions in the Australian Government public service. In the Australian positions, he provided policy advice at ministerial levels and led his teams to successfully implement government programmes in several countries, including Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Italy, Sweden, United Kingdom, and United States.

Professor Omaji has also served at various levels in the university system, culminating in his appointment as a pioneer Vice Chancellor of a private University in Nigeria. In the last few years, he has been a resource person in AAU's Leadership and Management Development programmes.

He is currently the Chief Executive Officer of Omaji Leadership Solutions and Virtuous Leaders Development Network; and has recently authored *Audacity of Leading Right: An Odyssey Towards Virtuous Leadership* and *Lead For Life: 7 Essentials for High-Impact Leadership*. These and other works of his are available on Amazon bookstore.