AFRICA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

International Conference: October 24th – 26th, 2023 – Nairobi, Kenya

Announcement and Call for Abstracts and Papers

Theme: *Contextualising Peacebuilding: Seizing Opportunities for African Realities*

The Institute for the Study of African Realities (ISAR), a constituent school of Africa International University (AIU), is pleased to announce the International Conference for 2023 to be held in Nairobi, Kenya. This conference aims at interrogating a predicated local turn as a way of bridging the lacuna in knowledge production systems, most of which follow from the colonial texts and decrees, along the geographical boundaries. Contributions should focus on reimaging contentions from the colonial narratives which continue to dominate the African geopolitics, like those presenting Africa as a 'dark continent riddled with conflicts, devastation and poverty', to the nominal quests for 'African solutions to African problems. The conference consequently targets peace researchers (including post graduate students and distinguished scholars), and peace practitioners (including media experts, politicians, NGOs, state agencies, and development partners) to join and share their research findings and experience in practice in the debate about contextual knowledge as a breakthrough to the impending [re]conceptualisation of peacebuilding in Africa, and to problematise some general assumptions made in contemporary interventions and scholarship.

Contributions from diverse knowledge backgrounds, geopolitical regions, and diverse cultures are highly welcome based on the following proposed conference sub-themes and topics:

a. *Decolonizing Methodologies and Knowledges in Peacebuilding*
  - Epistemic Justice in Knowledge production and recognition in peace research
  - African approaches for decolonising peacebuilding research and practice
  - Opportunities for African Indigenous methodologies for researching peace and conflict
  - Research ownership, data protection, positionality, and knowledge sovereignty
  - Space for African vs Western researchers in peacebuilding

b. *Peacebuilding through the Lens of Power and Interests*
  - Who determines how to do peace?
  - Shifting the power by rethinking financing for peacebuilding
  - The geopolitics of power and peacebuilding in Africa
  - Local Institutional strengthening for peacebuilding
  - The role of international organizations in sustainable peace building

c. *Technology for Peace and Conflict Resolution*
  - Technology, AI, and democracy: How is technology shaping African politics and elections, and post-election framings?
  - Social media space, disinformation, and misinformation
  - New threats by emerging technologies to peace building (hacking, algorithmic control to peace and political narratives in digital sites, facial/digital surveillance, and ethnic polarization)

- Technology and indigenous methods for peace
d. *Governance, Religion, and Contemporary Issues:*
  - Justice and political power – navigating the thin line between strong institutions and strong men for posterity and implications for peace
  - Space for religion in local peacebuilding – the role of the church or Islam in troubled spaces
  - Inclusivity and special interest groups in building peace: gender considerations including LGBTQ, voice of children, space for people living with special needs and dynamics for the elderly
  - Climate change – indigenous practices for resolving resource conflicts, link between global campaigns and the local initiatives
e. *Peacebuilding and Conflict Management*
  - The role of mediation and diplomacy in peace building
  - The role of Art in peace building
  - Conflict transformation and the role of Non-Governmental Organizations
  - Conflict prevention and early warning systems
  - Culture and Ethnicity: cultural practices or positive aspects of ethnicity worth exploring in peacebuilding

Criteria for abstract acceptance will be:
  - Relevance to the conference general topic and focus on selected thematic areas
  - Research rigour and quality in terms of critical thought, methodology and theoretical aptness

IMPORTANT DATES:
1. *Abstract Submission date: June 23rd, 2023*

   Submit your abstracts of not more than **350 words**. The abstracts should include title, author(s), institution of affiliation and email contact(s) of all contributors, and key words. The abstracts should clearly articulate the problem statement, purpose or main argument/contribution, methodological and theoretical approach, and (expected) results and recommendations.

2. *Abstract Acceptance Notification date: July 7th 2023*

   Authors will be notified **to submit full papers** after abstracts' acceptance.

Details of the conference can be downloaded from www.aiu.ac.ke. You can also request for more information through the email contacts:

rosemary.mbogo@aiu.ac.ke and copy to enoch.opuka@aiu.ac.ke and sam.oando@gmail.com

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