

# Aurora International Peace Conference

## The Role of Higher Education in Peacebuilding

17–21 February 2025, Universität Innsbruck



### Conference Program (version 17/12/2025)

We look forward to welcoming you to Innsbruck soon!



Berghof Foundation



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# General Information

On behalf of the organizing team, we warmly welcome you to a five-day international conference on "The Role of Higher Education in Peacebuilding", organized by the Aurora Karazin University Peace Education Hub and hosted by the University of Innsbruck from 17 to 21 February, 2025. The conference aims to contribute to future research, theory and practice on how higher education institutions can be drivers of conflict transformation, peacebuilding and sustainable development. The conference consists of a 3-day program, preceded by a networking day and followed by a closing day with opportunities for joint work.

The conference is organized by the Aurora Karazin University Peace Education Hub led by Palacký University Olomouc and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, in close cooperation with V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University (School of Sociology), and University of Innsbruck (Unit for Peace and Conflict Studies and UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies), as well as in cooperation with the Berghof Foundation, Germany, and the Sociological Association of Ukraine.

This conference builds on the dedicated and structural support that Aurora Universities has been providing to its Associate Member University, V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University (Karazin University) in Ukraine since March 2022. This effort involves close collaboration with Karazin University's top leadership and ongoing needs assessments focused on immediate (humanitarian), medium-term (recovery), and long-term (development) support. As part of this ongoing effort, a specific objective of this conference is to support the establishment of the Karazin University Peace Education Hub to facilitate conflict transformation and promote peacebuilding in the context of long-term post-war recovery.

## **About the Conference**

The Aurora Universities Conference on "The Role of Higher Education in Peacebuilding" aims to provide a platform for discussing critical questions about how higher education institutions (HEIs) can respond to complex global circumstances by promoting cultures of peace through educational initiatives, activities and policies.

The conference engages with the following key questions:

- How can the HEIs utilize their mission (teaching, research, third role) in the best way to support conflict prevention, transformation, and peacebuilding?

- Which capacity-building programs (teacher training and professional development) for the staff and students could and should be introduced to respond to different stages of the peacebuilding process?
- What can we learn from practitioners in the peace-building sector to enhance the role of HEIs in becoming agents of peace in conflict-affected societies?

The conference invites international experts - both scholars and practitioners in peacebuilding and related fields - higher education policy makers, academics and students from the Aurora Universities, their partners and beyond to discuss the challenges and opportunities of HEI in promoting peace.

### **Conference Topics**

The Conference Program Committee invited academics and practitioners in peacebuilding and related fields to submit abstracts on the following topics:

- Theory and practice of pedagogies of peace and peace education
- Creative and pluriversal avenues of strengthening peace education
- Current challenges to academic freedom and peace education
- Peacebuilding education practices and programs from conflict-affected societies
- Peacebuilding education efforts across HEI and partners in Ukraine
- Experience-based learning from conflict and post-conflict perspectives
- Support and capacity-building frameworks, programming, and crisis management tools for HEI affected by armed conflicts, mass violence, and atrocities
- Ecosystems and collaboration of formal, non-formal, and informal education actors (public/private, state/NGOs) in mediation and dialogue, non-violence, and peaceful relations
- Epistemicide and ways of decolonising HEI
- Gender, diversity and intersectionality in conflict transformation
- Experiences of HEI from war zones and with post-war reconstruction, recovery, and reconciliation

We welcomed contributions from a variety of inter- and transdisciplinary, theoretical and empirical perspectives, as well as case studies from different parts of the world with illustrative examples of impact and practical implications. We particularly welcome contributions that can

offer theory, practice and lessons learned from conflict-affected contexts for future work in Ukraine and the surrounding regions.

### **Conference Proceedings**

All conference abstracts will be published in the Book of Abstracts and on the conference website. Selected papers will be published in a refereed journal and in an edited book. Further information will be announced at a later date. The Aurora Universities are committed to Open Access and promote Open Science practices.

### **Practical Information**

All the programme-related and practical conference information can be found on the official conference website: <https://www.uibk.ac.at/en/international/aurora/aurora-european-universities-alliance/aurora-international-peace-conference-2025/>

The conference will use the *LineUpr* app for event details and attendee engagement, with download instructions sent to all registered attendees prior to the conference.

### **How to Use this Document**

Past this General Information section, which serves as a re-introduction of the conference motivations and goals, you will find:

- Under point 1. “Conference Overview” the broader planning of the conference schedule.
- Under point 2. “Sessions Overview” a more detailed planning of each session (keynote speeches, high-level panels, panels, workshops, and roundtables, including information on who presents, when, and where. Therefore, if you are a conference participant, you should find in this section all relevant information for carrying out the activity you proposed and which was approved!

We hope the many activities listed below inspire you until we meet in person for the conference!

Warmly,

The Conference Program Committee

# 1. Conference Overview

Monday (February 17, 2025)	
Time	Sessions
15.00	Registration
16.00	<b>Welcome and Thematic Introduction</b>
16.30	Keynote Address by <b>Ian S. Manzi</b>
18.00	<b>Opening Reception at the Ágnes-Heller-Building</b>

Tuesday (February 18, 2025)							
Time	Sessions						
09.00	Registration						
09.30	Keynote Address by <b>Chris Coulter</b>						
10.30	Coffee Break						
	<b>Room I</b>	<b>Room II</b>	<b>Room III</b>	<b>Room IV</b>	<b>Room V</b>	<b>Room VI</b>	<b>Room VII</b>
11.00	<b>Panel 1</b>	<b>Panel 2</b>	<b>Panel 3</b>	<b>Rd Tb 1</b>	<b>Rd Tb 2</b>	<b>WoSh 1</b>	<b>WoSh 2</b>
12.30	Lunch						
13.30	Plenary Session on <b>Universities' Peacebuilding Practices and Knowledge Diplomacy</b>						
15.00	Coffee Break						
	<b>Room I</b>	<b>Room II</b>	<b>Room III</b>	<b>Room IV</b>	<b>Room V</b>	<b>Room VI</b>	<b>Room VII</b>
15.30	<b>Panel 4</b>	<b>Panel 5</b>	<b>Panel 6</b>	<b>Rd Tb 3</b>	<b>WoSh 3</b>	<b>WoSh 4</b>	<b>WoSh 5</b>
18.00	<b>Conference Grand Opening</b> in the <i>Landhaus</i> (Main Hall) of the State of Tyrol						
18.30	Keynote Address by <b>Madeleine Reese</b>						
19.30	<b>Welcome Reception</b>						



## Wednesday (February 19, 2025)

Time	Sessions						
09.00	Registration						
09.30	Keynote Address by <b>Frank Geary</b>						
10.30	Coffee Break						
	<b>Room I</b>	<b>Room II</b>	<b>Room III</b>	<b>Room IV</b>	<b>Room V</b>	<b>Room VI</b>	<b>Room VII</b>
11.00	<b>Panel 7</b>	<b>Panel 8</b>	<b>Panel 9</b>	Rd Tb 4	Rd Tb 5	WoSh 6	WoSh 7
12.30	Lunch						
13.30	Plenary Session on <b>Peace Education During and After Atrocities</b>						
15.00	Coffee Break						
	<b>Room I</b>	<b>Room II</b>	<b>Room III</b>	<b>Room IV</b>	<b>Room V</b>	<b>Room VI</b>	<b>Room VII</b>
15.30	<b>Panel 10</b>	<b>Panel 11</b>	<b>Panel 12</b>	Rd Tb 6	WoSh 8	WoSh 9	WoSh 10
17.00	Coffee Break						
17.30	Keynote Address by <b>Oleksandra Matviichuk</b>						
18.30	Art program (tbc)						

## Thursday (February 20, 2025)

Time	Sessions						
09.00	Registration						
09.30	Keynote Address by <b>Marko Lehti</b>						
10.30	Coffee Break						
	Room I	Room II	Room III	Room IV	Room V	Room VI	Room VII
11.00	Panel 13	Panel 14	Panel 15	Rd Tb 7	WoSh 11	WoSh 12	WoSh 13
12.30	Lunch						
13.30	Plenary Session on <b>Peace Practices for Future Eco-Systems</b>						
15.00	Coffee Break						
	Room I	Room II	Room III	Room IV	Room V	Room VI	Room VII
15.30	Panel 16	Panel 17	Panel 18	Panel 19	Rd Tb 8	WoSh 14	WoSh 15
17.00	Coffee Break						
17.30	Keynote Address by <b>Savo Heleta</b>						
18.30	Conference reception						

## Friday (February 21, 2025)

Time	Sessions						
09.00	Registration						
09.30	Keynote Address by <b>Norbert Koppensteiner</b>						
10.30	Coffee Break						
	Room I	Room II	Room III	Room IV	Room V	Room VI	Room VII
11.00	Panel 20	Panel 21	Panel 22	WoSh 16	WoSh 17		
12.30	<b>Final Remarks and Goodbye</b>						

# 2. Sessions Overview


## 2.1. Monday, February 17, 2025

2.1.1. Afternoon Keynote Address: Ian S. Manzi

<b>Ian S. Manzi</b> <b>Redefining Expertise for Sustainable Peacebuilding</b>	
16.30	Aula of the Ágnes-Heller-Building
Abstract	<p>This keynote address will encourage participants to reexamine the role of higher education institutions (HEIs) in peacebuilding by highlighting the benefits of a two-way flow of knowledge that incorporates grassroots wisdom, indigenous practices, and lived experiences. Drawing on Rwanda’s recovery following the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, it will explore how unconventional sources of expertise and knowledge—traditional systems such as Gacaca courts and Abunzi mediation, restorative justice practices like TIG (Travail d’intérêt général), youth-led initiatives, and community-driven family reunification models—provided innovative pathways to reconciliation, resilience, and sustainable peace. The address will underscore the critical role of youth and culturally rooted solutions in transforming post-conflict societies, urging HEIs to become collaborative spaces that seek out, elevate, study, and integrate these contributions. By redefining the flow of expertise and empowering localized solutions, HEIs can bridge academic frameworks with on-the-ground realities, fostering more effective and impactful peacebuilding.</p>
BIO	<p>Ian S. Manzi is the program manager for the Collaborative for Global Children’s Issues at Georgetown University, an initiative that fosters cross-disciplinary research and dialogue on critical and emerging global children's issues, with a particular focus on children in adversity and pathways to resilience. With expertise in international development, education, child protection, and public policy, Manzi has dedicated his career to fostering sustainable development and social impact. He holds a Master of Public Policy with a Global Human Development Certificate from Georgetown University and a bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of Rochester. Manzi’s professional journey began at the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village in Rwanda, where he discovered his passion for child protection and human security while supporting orphaned and vulnerable youth. As co-founder of Critical Thinking for P.E.A.C.E., he spearheaded youth empowerment and peace education initiatives in Rwanda. He also served as a peer mentor and program trainer for the U.S. State Department’s Pan-African Youth Leadership Program, equipping youth with skills for leadership and community building.</p>

## 2.2. Tuesday, February 18, 2025

### 2.2.1. Morning Keynote Address: Chris Coulter

Chris Coulter	
The Power of Higher Education in Shaping Peaceful Futures	
09.30	Aula of the Ágnes-Heller-Building
Abstract	<p>Drawing on extensive global experience in conflict resolution and transformation, this keynote examines how higher education can drive sustainable peacebuilding by fostering critical thinking, dialogue, and innovation and conversely, how higher education needs to adapt to the contextual realities we live in. The address will highlight the transformative potential of universities as spaces for nurturing future leaders and bridging divides in societies fractured by conflict. While focusing on practical insights, it will explore peacebuilding, and post-war recovery, offering a critical perspective on their impact as well as an emphasis on grassroots initiatives and gendered dimensions of peacemaking. Additionally, examples of good practices from other conflict-affected regions will be presented, that might be relevant for post-war recovery and peacebuilding efforts not least in Ukraine. This keynote calls for renewed commitment to equipping students as well as institutions with the skills and strategies necessary to address the complexities of contemporary conflicts and peacebuilding, ensuring that education remains a cornerstone of global peace efforts.</p>
BIO	<div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;">  <div style="flex-grow: 1;"> <p>Chris Coulter is Deputy Executive Director of the Berghof Foundation and heads the department in charge of mediation and negotiation support. She has over 20 years of experience working on conflict resolution in Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Asia, and South America. Before joining Berghof, Chris was the Chief Operating Officer and Director of Programs at the Negotiation Strategies Institute (NSI) in Jerusalem. Prior to this, she was Head of the Peace Process Support Unit at the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) – the Swedish Government Agency for Peace, Security and Development. Chris was also a special advisor on peace and security to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Sweden and has supported several peace talks on track 1 and 2 levels. Chris has a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from Uppsala University (2006) and has worked for many years as a university lecturer and researcher as well as a consultant on gender, peace and security. She is the author of the book <i>Bush Wives and Girl Soldiers</i> (Cornell 2009) and she was the Director of the Sida funded International Training Program on 1325: women, peace and security. Chris is a member of the Swedish Women’s Mediation Network.</p> </div> </div>

## 2.2.2. Morning Parallel Sessions

<b>Panel 1</b>	
<b>Ecosystems and Collaboration of Formal and Informal Education Actors in Mediation and Dialogue, Non-Violence, and Peaceful relations</b>	
11.00	Room I
Paper	<b>Revivifying Reconciliation and Global Peace through Higher Education Curriculums</b> Gaurav Mathur (Jaipuria Institute of Management); Puneet Jangu (Jai Narain Vyas University); Ashutosh Dadhich (Jai Narain Vyas University)
Paper	<b>Achieving Positive Peace through 18 Social Reconciliation Centers across Public Universities in Sri Lanka: The Role of Social Reconciliation Centers (SRCs)</b> Shanti Nandana Wijesinghe (University of Peradeniya)
Paper	<b>Peace Education for Social Cohesion and Non-Violent Conflict Transformation in Great Lake Region (Burundi): Volunteering for Peace Experiences</b> Georges Flora Ngoumou Mveng Epse Mouna (EIRENE International)
Paper	<b>Peace Slams in Colombia: An Alternative Strategy to Peace Education Beyond Academia</b> Claudia Maya Zapata (Instituto CAPAZ / Justus Liebig Universität Giessen)

<b>Panel 2</b>	
<b>Creative and Pluriversal Avenues of Strengthening Peace Education I</b>	
11.00	Room II
Paper	<b>Be the Change</b> Sylvia van de Bunt (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
Paper	<b>Exodus: Crossing Tangible and Intangible Borders</b> Lourdes Rubio Rico (Universitat Rovira i Virgili); Sílvia Monserrate Gómez (Universitat Rovira i Virgili)
Paper	<b>Waging Peace: The Urgent How of Teaching Peace</b> Anne de Graaf (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
Paper	<b>Peace-Building Education as Dialogue: An Approach from Intercultural Philosophy</b> Pius Mosima (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

### Panel 3

## Peacebuilding Education Efforts Across HEI and Partners in Ukraine I

11.00	Room III
Paper	<b>Education for Peace: The Role of Universities and Partnerships in Ukraine's Path to Reconciliation</b> Svitlana Zdorovko (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)
Paper	<b>An Interdisciplinary Approach to University Media Literacy Education: Insights from Ukraine</b> Maryna Subota (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)
Paper	<b>The Education Ecosystem as a Platform for Peaceful Dialogue: Collaboration between Public, Private and Community Initiatives in Wartime</b> Maryna Ivashchenko (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)
Paper	<b>Peacebuilding through Global Academic Partnerships: Ukrainian Experience</b> Oksana Prokhvatilova (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University); Anastasiia Chupis (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)

### Roundtable 1

## Practical Peace Teaching: The Peace by Peace Example

11.00	Room IV
Theme	Explores the educational, thematic, student and global civil society impact of the Peace by Peace ( <a href="http://www.peace-by-peace.com">www.peace-by-peace.com</a> ) example of youth's everyday peacebuilding.
Moderator	Anne de Graaf (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
Participants	Júlia Celma Werthwein (University College Amsterdam); Anne de Graaf (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Sharwari Khare (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Céline Paré (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Ece Sivrikaya (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Erika Vodvárková (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Elena Volbracht (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

## Roundtable 2

### HEIs University Support in Emergency Situations: A Work Plan for War Conflicts

11.00	Room V
Theme	The roundtable compares two different war-emergency settings, the Ukrainian and the Palestinian, and the support policies put in place in the first case by the Federico II University of Naples in collaboration with the University of Al-Najah, in the second by the Palacký University in Olomouc on behalf of the AURORA universities. The comparison will make it possible to illustrate: the different characteristics of the two emergency conditions and the various operational contexts, the background experiences and contexts influencing choices made by the two universities, as well as the unresolved problems and operational limits, offering some ways forward.
Moderator	Alessandro Arienzo (Università di Napoli Federico II)
Participants	Valeria Costantino (Università di Napoli Federico II), Maryam Hmoudah (Al-Najah University); Selma Porobic (Palacký University Olomouc), Olena Muradyan (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)

## Workshop 1

### Integration of Psychosocial Support for Victims and Witnesses into the Investigation of War Crimes, with Special Focus on Children

11.00	Room VI
Theme	Millions of children remain victims of serious human rights violations, including war crimes and genocide. Their involvement in investigations can help them regain control, rehabilitate, and strengthen their identities. However, courts often struggle to balance children's rights to be heard with their protection from re-traumatization by acting in “the best interests of the child”. This workshop will focus on the importance of psychosocial support for child victims during war crime investigations, addressing the unique challenges they face. An interdisciplinary approach will be employed, featuring expert presentations and discussions to assess current barriers and develop strategies for improving support within international criminal justice. Key findings include the need for child-friendly practices, the integration of psychosocial support to enhance well-being and information quality, and recommendations for training staff working with child victims (investigators, prosecutors, interpreters, psychosocial experts, analysts and lawyers). Ultimately, the workshop aims to advance justice and accountability for children affected by conflict, ensuring their voices are prioritized in legal processes and promote a more peaceful future in societies emerging from conflict.

Facilitators	Iryna Frankova (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Mwiya Liamunga (International Criminal Court)
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## Workshop 2

### The Puzzle of Peace Pedagogy

11.00	Room VII
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Theme	<p>Peace education is about peace and for peace. Education about peace invites us to understand and critically examine peace (and violence) in its different forms. Education for peace guides the learners towards knowledge, skills and capacities that promote sustainable peace and e.g. nonviolent responses to violence. Pedagogy is a core element in both education for and about peace. All in all, not just WHAT we teach, but WHAT do we actually teach by HOW we teach and promote learning. In the workshop, we will dive together into the tradition of peace education pedagogies continuing to search open-mindedly for the essence of self-reflective peace education (context-based) pedagogies. How could such thinking be implemented in teacher training and peace education studies? Or to the work we do at schools or in youth work? Please, come to the workshop also with ideas about the missing pieces to the peace education puzzle. Workshop is divided into two parts a) Reflections on the tradition of peace education pedagogies, 2) Innovating future peace education pedagogy frameworks.</p>
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Facilitators	Eeva-Liisa Kiiskilä (Peace Education Institute, Rauhankasvatusinstituutti); Markus Heide (University of Hildesheim); Viola Georgi (University of Hildesheim)
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### 2.2.3. Plenary Session: Universities Peacebuilding Practices and Knowledge Diplomacy

Universities' Peacebuilding Practices and Knowledge Diplomacy	
13.30	Aula of the Ágnes-Heller-Building
Abstract	Higher education institutions have much to contribute to in terms of creating more just and peaceful societies but how should they put their resources to use and become drivers of conflict transformation, peacebuilding and sustainable development? This plenary session will look into higher education's role and agency in promoting peaceful relationships and collaborations especially in regions facing conflict and post-conflict recovery. We will discuss how universities can enhance their roles as peacebuilding agents, and which practices are employable in supporting peaceful relationships in the broader context of war and conflicts with implications for long-term societal recovery processes. We will also delve into the potential of knowledge diplomacy in fostering open academic collaboration while at the same time strengthening diplomatic ties, between the countries, regions or even institutions where formal relations may be strained.
Discussants	<a href="#">Tetyana Kaganovska</a> (Rector, V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University) <a href="#">Jeroen J.G. Geurts</a> (Rector Magnificus, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) <a href="#">Chris Coulter</a> (Deputy Executive Director, Berghof Foundation) <a href="#">Brad Blitz</a> (Head of Department Education Practice and Society, University College London)
Moderators	Selma Porobic (Palacký University Olomouc, Aurora) and Sem Barendese (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Aurora)

## 2.2.4. Afternoon Parallel Sessions

<b>Panel 4</b>	
<b>Sustainable Community Practices and Peacebuilding Ecosystems</b>	
15.30	Room I
Paper	<b>Building Sustainable Communities: The Strategic Role of the Welcome Office in Conflict Prevention and Diversity Integration</b> Alena Vyskocilova (Palacký University Olomouc); Pavel Flekac (Palacký University Olomouc)
Paper	<b>Community Urban Gardens: Spaces for Sustainability Education and Peacebuilding</b> Albina Dioba (Copenhagen Business School); Maribel Blasco (Copenhagen Business School); Isabel Fróes (Copenhagen Business School)
Paper	<b>Leisure Activities and the Peacebuilding in the Mountain Societies of Northern Cameroon</b> Jeremie Diye (Université de Maroua)
Paper	<b>Distant Allies: The Contributions of Geographically Distant HEIs to Ukraine's Peace Education</b> Agon Memeti (University of Tetova); Donika Kamberi (University of Tetova)

<b>Panel 5</b>	
<b>Epistemicide and Ways of Decolonising Higher Education Institutions</b>	
15.30	Room II
Paper	<b>Epistemicide and Ways of Decolonizing HEIs</b> Huma Javed (National Defense University)
Paper	<b>Indigenous and Queer Epistemologies as a Pedagogy for Peacebuilding in Latin America</b> Andrei Berezkin (Universitat Jaume I Castellón); Oscar Gómez Tovar (Universitat Jaume I Castellón)
Paper	<b>Decolonizing PACS: Towards an Eclectic Approach to Peace Education and Peacebuilding</b> Fujin Naz Haidery (Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad)
Paper	<b>Knowledge for Peace's Role in Youth Empowerment and Peacebuilding in the MENA Region</b>

Jobran Khanji (Knowledge for Peace, K4P); Ahmad Khanji (Independent Researcher)

### Panel 6

## Peacebuilding Education Efforts Across HEI and Partners in Ukraine II

15.30	Room III
Paper	<p><b>The Role of Higher Education in the Reintegration of Students and Lecturers from Post-Conflict Regions</b></p> <p>Valerii Skrylov (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University); Shvaiko Mariana (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Experience in Projects for the Program “Ways to the Future”</b></p> <p>Olena Ronzhes (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)</p>
Paper	<p><b>HR policy of Ukrainian Universities During the War: Factors of Sustainability</b></p> <p>Iryna Soldatenko (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University); Anna Markovska (Anglia Ruskin University); Alessia Mevoli (Anglia Ruskin University); Oleksii Serdiuk (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Normalizing Extraordinarity in the Perception of Distance Learning: The “Double Blow” of Pandemic and War in Frontline Kharkiv</b></p> <p>Artem Lytovchenko (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)</p>

### Roundtable 3

## The Challenges and Responsibilities of Academia in Times of Conflict

15.30	Room IV
Theme	<p>Higher education plays various important roles related to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Conducting research and teaching about conflict and security are two obvious and important pillars of academia's responsibility to contribute to better knowledge and understanding of the root causes of conflict, its potential solutions, and peacebuilding strategies. But are these the only roles and responsibilities academia has in times of conflict? This roundtable will explore the broader responsibilities and challenges academia faces during times of conflict. In addition to the role of research and teaching, academia often grapples with threats to academic freedom, the safety of faculty and students, and the responsibility to engage with the public and policymakers. These challenges are amplified when mainstream information channels distort or produce biased information, making it difficult for academic insights to reach a wider audience. How can academia</p>

	rise to meet these challenges? Join us in a discussion on how academia can navigate these pressing issues effectively.
Moderator	Anne de Graaf (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
Participants	Júlia Celma Werthwein (University College Amsterdam); Anne de Graaf (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Sharwari Khare (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Céline Paré (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Ece Sivrikaya (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Erika Vodvářková (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Elena Volbracht (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

### Workshop 3

#### HEIs University Support in Emergency Situations: A Work Plan for War Conflicts

15.30	Room V
Theme	Starting from the experiences and problems discussed in the roundtable, the workshop will try to identify possible lines of action of the Aurora network in emergency contexts to support universities and university communities. The workshop is structured in two small group sessions and a session for returning activities. The groups will work on six topics: phases in Emergency Programs, Innovative Teaching/Learning Models, safety and Well-Being of students, (Infra)structural support, Volunteers Program, mobility, Enrollment, and recognition. Each participant will choose two activities to join and work 30 minutes each. A rapporteur for each activity will report in the next session.
Facilitators	Alessandro Arienzo (Università di Napoli Federico II); Valeria Costantino Valeria (Università di Napoli Federico II); Selma Porobic (Palacký University Olomouc)

### Workshop 4

#### The World Peace Game: Teaching the Art of Peace

15.30	Room VI
Theme	The World Peace Game is an experiential political simulation for students aged 10–15, fostering understanding of global interconnectedness and collaboration through role-playing complex economic, social, and environmental crises. Participants form “nation teams,” aiming for peace and prosperity while honing critical skills like negotiation, empathy, and leadership. This workshop explores the game’s philosophy and its impact on nurturing democratic engagement and problem-solving in young learners. Over a decade, the presenter has integrated the game into Stiftsgymnasium Melk’s curriculum, witnessing growth in students’ self-knowledge and political awareness. As a Master Class Facilitator trained by creator John


	Hunter, she also leads training sessions for educators to implement the game effectively. Educators can apply for an intensive four-day training to become certified moderators, gaining tools to enrich their teaching and inspire students to navigate complex global challenges creatively.
Facilitator	Doris Sommer (Stiftsgymnasium Melk)

## Workshop 5

### Exploring Peace Education Methods for School Settings (German)


15.30	Room VII
Theme	Colleagues from the Peace Education Service Centre will share insights into the establishment of the Peace Education Service Centre Baden-Württemberg, a pioneering initiative that remains unique in Germany. Additionally, they will present their diverse toolbox for implementing peace education in schools. These methods include Quararo, role-playing activities, and a peace education workshop format centered around the Peace Counts exhibition, which showcases the inspiring work of peacemakers from around the globe. The exhibition, available in English, can also be displayed throughout the duration of the conference.
Facilitator	Anne Kruck (Berghof Foundation)

## 2.2.5. Afternoon Keynote Address: Madeleine Rees

Madeleine Rees Can Peace be Taught?	
18.30	<i>Landhaus</i> (Great Hall) of the State of Tyrol
Abstract	<p>If the physicists are right that our past informs the present, our evolution is predicated on our relationship to structures and histories and there are traces written in the body and the mind from generation to generation. The old adage of history is repeating itself. If this is so, can we educate ourselves towards peace, and will we know it if we do? I will argue that we can, and that is what we are doing. In so doing, I will look at some of the approaches taken in our striving to create peace: achievements in law and in practice, new thinking on our current structures such as economic systems, militarism, and inequalities, gender as of fundamental importance to our understanding of how these structures function. I will attempt to show why these are essential to the planet's protection and peace. Moreover, education is, in part, about curiosity. If we are to have peace, we have to be curious about how we can get there and what it would really look and feel like. We have to ask the right questions. Can we indeed educate ourselves to ensure the constant evolution towards peace?</p>
BIO	 <p>Madeleine Rees, OBE, is a British lawyer and former Secretary-General of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), an organisation dedicated to building peace, a role she held that role from 2010 to July 2024. For most of her adult life, Rees has worked nationally and internationally to advance human rights, eliminate discrimination, and remove obstacles to justice. In addition to her work specialising in discrimination law with a major firm in the United Kingdom, she has also held various roles with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) – including as Head of the OHCHR in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where she helped expose human rights abuses and the involvement of UN peacekeepers in sex trafficking. As Secretary-General of WILPF, Rees lead the organisation's efforts to work through national and international legal frameworks to advance a future of human security and justice by focusing on understanding gender, its relationship to structures, to power, and as causal of violence to understand how to change narratives to create peace.</p>

## 2.3. Wednesday, February 19, 2025

### 2.3.1. Morning Keynote Address: Frank Geary

Frank Geary	
Scholars At Risk, Academic Freedom and Peace Building	
09.30	Aula of the Ágnes-Heller-Building
Abstract	<p>Scholars at Risk is an international network of institutions and individuals whose mission it is to protect scholars and promote academic freedom. By arranging temporary academic positions at member universities and colleges, Scholars at Risk offers safety to scholars facing grave threats, so scholars' ideas are not lost and they can keep working until conditions improve and they are able to return to their home countries. Scholars at Risk provides advisory services for scholars and hosts, campaigns for scholars who are imprisoned or silenced in their home countries, monitoring of attacks on higher education communities worldwide, and leadership in deploying new tools and strategies for promoting academic freedom and improving respect for university values everywhere. Frank Geary, Director of Scholars At Risk Europe will discuss the work of the Scholars at Risk network in Europe and globally with a particular focus on the important role of scholars, academic freedom and higher education in peace building. He will highlight the essential role which academic freedom plays within peacebuilding, as well as actions which higher education institutions can take to support scholars at risk worldwide.</p>
BIO	<div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;">  <div> <p>Frank Geary is the director of SAR Europe, the European office of the global Scholars at Risk network hosted at Maynooth University in Ireland. He is a civil society leader working in human rights, education &amp; culture. Prior to joining SAR, Frank was the Director of the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA), a leading national network of over 120 civil society organisations and activists which has changed the policy landscape, created an award-winning Code of Good Practice, and developed a national strategic vision for global citizenship education. He was a member of Ireland's National Steering Group on Education for Sustainable Development. He has advocated for education and human rights to the United Nations, European Union, and Irish government. Before IDEA, Frank served progressively as the International Programmes Director, Deputy Director, and Interim Co-Executive Director at PEN International. He supported PEN International in over 70 countries to develop regional networks and programmes for human rights, freedom of expression and civil society. He has worked in the Arts &amp; Culture sector, including coordinating national programmes as Education Manager for the Poetry Society in the UK.</p> </div> </div>

SAR Europe, hosted at Maynooth University, is the European office of the global Scholars at Risk network. Launched at an event at the European Parliament in November 2018, the establishment of SAR Europe at Maynooth represents the culmination of nearly two decades of partnership between European higher education institutions and the global SAR network. The SAR Europe office supports and coordinates the activities of SAR national sections and partner networks across Europe to strengthen our collective voice at the European level and contribute to informed policymaking for the greater protection of scholars and increased respect for academic freedom worldwide.



## 2.3.2. Morning Parallel Sessions

### Panel 7

#### Experiences of HEI from War Zones and with Post-War Reconstruction, Recovery, and Reconciliation I

11.00	Room I
Paper	<p><b>Enabling Peace Education through Universities in Conflict-Affected Contexts: Experiences and Reflections from Ethiopia and Sudan</b></p> <p>Michaelina Jakala (Coventry University); Miho Taka (Coventry University); Hala Nur (University of Khartoum)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Leveraging Simulation Models in Higher Education: Enhancing Peace Education and Post-Conflict Recovery Strategies</b></p> <p>Bassel Elkalaf (Youth Leaders Foundation)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Navigating Crisis: Innovative Strategies for Higher Education in Conflict Zones towards Building Sustainable Peace in Nigeria</b></p> <p>Taslim Ayobami Hammed (University of Ibadan); Oluwaseun Emmanuel Omopo (University of Ibadan)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Learning from Engagement of Higher Education Institutions in Peace Promotion: Reflections from Nepal</b></p> <p>Bishnu Raj Upreti (Kathmandu University)</p>

### Panel 8

#### Creative and Pluriversal Avenues of Strengthening Peace Education II

11.00	Room II
Paper	<p><b>Non-Violent Communication for All: A Transformative Approach for Co-Creating Peace</b></p> <p>Asli Telli (Wits University / University of Cologne)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Peace Building through Education: Textual Analysis of Grade Six Social Studies and Human Values Textbooks</b></p> <p>Sandhya Pathak (Tribhuvan University)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Peacebuilding Education Efforts and Challenges in Higher Education in Ethiopia: Drawing Lessons from Jimma University</b></p> <p>Ameyu Godesso, Roro (Jimma University / Yuunivarsiitii Jimmaa)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Fostering Peace through Digital Diplomacy in Universities</b></p> <p>Mariam Bregvadze (Sokhumi State University)</p>

## Panel 9

### Peacebuilding Education Efforts Across HEI and Partners in Ukraine III

11.00	Room III
Paper	<p><b>How Can the HEIs Utilize their Mission in the Best Way to Support Conflict Prevention, Transformation and Peacebuilding: Karazin University Experience</b></p> <p>Iryna Kuzina (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)</p>
Paper	<p><b>The Development of the University Brand During the War</b></p> <p>Hanna Doroshenko (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Representation of Ukrainian Universities as Actors of Peace Culture in the Virtual Communication Space</b></p> <p>Larysa Khyzhniak (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Experiential Learning in Peacebuilding Education within Post-Soviet States: Opportunities and Challenges</b></p> <p>Roman Borysov (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University); Maksym Folomeev (National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance, Ukraine); Oleksandr Khyzhniak (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)</p>

## Roundtable 4

### The Tripartite Mission of the University and Peacebuilding: Are Peace Hubs a Way Forward?

11.00	Room IV
Theme	<p>This roundtable looks at the tripartite mission of a university: teaching, research and engagement, and how all three can be applied to addressing conflict, recovery and reconciliation within the communities in which they are located. It will share examples from peace hubs in the universities of Sarajevo, Kharkiv and Sham (Northwest Syria) operating in pre-, during and post-conflict contexts and in situations of a frozen conflict and early recovery. It will discuss what might constitute a Peace Hub that goes beyond the activities of a peace research center or curriculum initiative to create mutually beneficial partnerships with civil society organizations and the different processes and activities that might be most beneficial for the Kharkiv peace hub at this time.</p>
Moderator	Juliet Millican (Sussex University)
Participants	Selma Porobic (Palacký University Olomouc); Nataliya Rumyantseva (Bath Spa University); Larisa Kafedzic (University of Sarajevo); Olena Muradyan (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)

## Roundtable 5

### 'I Vote for Peace' Project and Twinning Initiative as Peacebuilding Education Practices

11.00	Room V
Theme	Ukrainian universities, with the support of international partners, advance peace through initiatives like the Twinning scheme as well as local projects like 'I Vote for Peace'. This collaboration fosters resilience and development in the Ukrainian higher education sector amid conflict.
Moderator	Ian Gadd (Bath Spa University)
Participants	Iryna Budz (Academician Stepan Demianchuk International University of Economics and Humanities); Ian Gadd (Bath Spa University); Vitalii Demianchuk (Academician Stepan Demianchuk International University of Economics and Humanities); Viktoriia Artiushok (Academician Stepan Demianchuk International University of Economics and Humanities)

## Workshop 6

### Questioning Techniques as a Tool of Creation Capacity-Building Programmes in HEI

11.00	Room VI
Theme	This engaging workshop is designed for educators, administrators, and stakeholders in higher education who are committed to advancing peacebuilding efforts. It focuses on leveraging structured questioning techniques as a strategic tool to uncover insights into the needs and objectives of students, faculty, and institutions. Participants will explore how effective questioning can support the design and implementation of capacity-building programs tailored to the unique challenges faced by higher education institutions (HEIs) in conflict and post-conflict contexts. Through a blend of guided discussions and group activities, attendees will delve into the role of HEIs in supporting peacebuilding across various stages, including conflict prevention, stabilization, and post-conflict recovery. By the end of the session, participants will have gained practical skills to incorporate questioning into program design and a preliminary roadmap for creating initiatives that empower students and faculty with the tools for conflict resolution and peacebuilding.
Facilitator	Olena Parkhomenko (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)

## Workshop 7

### Constructing Peace in the Minds of Tomorrow: Mediation and Conflict Resilience in Higher Education

11.00

Room VII

Theme

"Since wars begin in the minds of people, it is in the minds of people that the defences of peace must be constructed" (UNESCO). The workshop begins with the basics of mediation, contrasting two approaches: the legal paradigm, centered on facts and rules, and the subjective paradigm, focused on personal perspectives. Participants practice key mediator interventions to experience their de-escalating and connective effects. The second part of the workshop introduces some of the initiatives employed by VU: 1. Education: The Conflict Management and Mediation programme teaches students to address conflicts through both paradigms. 2. International Collaboration: Partnerships with institutions expand knowledge of mediation, restorative justice, and community-based sociotherapy, embedding these methods in sustainable peace efforts. 3. Restorative University: VU's mediation pool addresses conflicts early, fostering mutual understanding and a reconciliation-driven culture. By embedding mediation into education and policy, universities can model effective conflict resolution and contribute to lasting peace.

Facilitators

Lenka Hora Adema (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Marise Van Amersfoort (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

### 2.3.3. Plenary Session: Peace Education During and After Atrocities

Peace Education During and After Atrocities	
13.30	Aula of the Ágnes-Heller-Building
Abstract	Peace education has the potential to contribute meaningfully at every stage of the conflict cycle. This panel will delve into its central themes during and after violent conflict, addressing critical questions: What key topics should peace education focus on in these contexts? Which approaches and methods have demonstrated effectiveness? How can peace education facilitate processes of reckoning with a violent past, including transitional and restorative justice? The discussion will also explore future directions for the peace education community, identifying areas ripe for further research and innovation. How can diverse actors—state and non-state, academic and practical—collaborate to harness peace education's potential and navigate its challenges? Bringing together international experts from peace education practice, higher education, and state institutions, this panel will provide a rich and multifaceted exploration of these pressing issues.
Discussants	<p><a href="#">Liliia Hrynevych</a> (Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs, V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, former Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine; tbc)</p> <p><a href="#">Ian Manzi</a> (Programme Manager, Collaborative for Global Children's Issues, Georgetown University)</p> <p><a href="#">Tony Jenkins</a> (Coordinator of the Global Campaign for Peace Education, Managing Director of the International Institut on Peace Education)</p> <p><a href="#">Gloria Ramírez Hernández</a> (President of the International Association of Educators for Peace in Latin America, Professor at the National Autonomous University of Mexico; tbc)</p>
Moderator	Dagmar Nolden (Berghof Foundation)

## 2.3.4. Afternoon Parallel Sessions

<b>Panel 10</b>	
<b>Current Challenges to Academic Freedom and Peace Education</b>	
15.30	Room I
Paper	<p><b>Reclaiming Peace Pedagogies; Contextualizing Peace Research and Practice in (Post-)Conflict Peacebuilding</b></p> <p>Waseem Iftikhar Janjua (National University of Sciences and Technology); Muhammad Makki (National University of Sciences and Technology)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Addressing Collective Trauma and Group Identity in University Students</b></p> <p>Juliet Millican (University of Sussex)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Refugee Research in India: Scoping Scholarship, Advocacy, and Peace Efforts in Higher Education Spaces</b></p> <p>Geetha Gopinath (University of Hyderabad); Sabeena Khatoon (University of Hyderabad)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Reimagining Academic Freedom: The Role of Spirituality and Non-Violence in Peace Education</b></p> <p>Sharda Nandram (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Gaëtan Mourmant (N/A); Gunjan Joshi (N/A); Raysa Geaquinto Rocha (N/A); Puneet Bindlish (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)</p>

<b>Panel 11</b>	
<b>Peacekeeping Activities during Pro-Palestine Protests at Amsterdam Universities by Executive Boards, Staff &amp; Students, Activists, and Police</b>	
15.30	Room II
Abstract	<p>This panel examines the multifaceted peacekeeping efforts undertaken during the pro-Palestine protests at Amsterdam based Universities (VU &amp; UvA), reflecting on the actions of executive boards, staff and students, activists, and police. In line with the recent UNESCO report <i>*Peace Education in the 21st Century: An Essential Strategy for Building Lasting Peace*</i> (2024), this analysis is framed within the context of universities as vital agents of peace, particularly as they face pressures to navigate tensions while safeguarding academic freedom and ensuring campus safety. As institutions increasingly assume roles in societal peacebuilding, examining how they respond to socio-political conflicts internally offers critical insights into their broader role in fostering a culture of peace. Each of the four presentations within this panel will focus on one of the key actors involved in managing or responding to the protests: executive boards, university staff and students, activists, and police forces. We focus on the interaction, and employ video</p>

	footage analyses (often of little moments of intense interaction floating around on social media). These perspectives offer a comprehensive view of the peacekeeping challenges and opportunities presented by such situations within higher education institutions (HEIs), alongside the practical and ethical considerations inherent to these encounters.
Moderator	Laura Keesman (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
Paper	Jacqueline van Stekelenburg (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
Paper	Marie Rosenkrantz Lindegaard (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
Paper	Laura Keesman (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
Paper	Virginia Pallante (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

## Panel 12

### Peacebuilding Education Efforts Across HEI and Partners in Ukraine IV

15.30	Room III
Paper	<p><b>Social Cohesion and Institutional Resilience of V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University in the Context of War and Post-War Reconstruction: Challenges, Strategies and New Opportunities</b></p> <p>Anastasiia Soshenko (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University); Ihor Lameko (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Individualization of Qualification Improvement and Education: A Guarantee for Forming High Competencies of Teachers and Students in Wartime</b></p> <p>Lyudmyla Kalinichenko (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University);</p>
Paper	<p><b>War and Writing: War Narratives in the Creative Writing Course for Students of Karazin Kharkiv National University</b></p> <p>Roman Tryfonov (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Educational Exchanges in the Context of Peacebuilding in Ukraine</b></p> <p>Tetiana Stetsenko (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)</p>

## Roundtable 6

### 'Strategic Narratives of Peacebuilding

15.30	Room IV
Theme	<p>Discussion on the role of higher education in key strategic narratives that guide efforts to create and sustain peace. These narratives often include the promotion of cultural diversity, economic freedom, innovation, transparency, and stability to build peaceful and prosperous societies. They serve as a basis for understanding and implementing peacebuilding initiatives and aligning the interests of key stakeholders. In the economic context, it is about identifying the underlying economic interests that may shape conflict preconditions. This includes promoting economic freedom, deregulation and innovation to create a stable and prosperous environment. By promoting economic growth, transparency and equal opportunity, these narratives aim to reduce poverty, inequality and conflict, thereby contributing to long-term peace and stability.</p>
Moderator	Volodymyr Rodchenko (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)
Participants	N/A

## Workshop 8

### Peacebuilding Film Club: Education through Documentary Screenings with Engagement of Survivors

15.30	Room V
Theme	<p>As a pedagogical method, we propose a Peace Building Film Club, where students discuss documentaries on conflict prevention and peace building under the guidance of either a facilitator or a survivor (someone with lived experience of the conflict). This method harnesses the power of documentary and film media and incorporates recent insights into social and psychological processes in peace building, as well as fostering mutual understanding of those from opposing perspectives in post-conflict settings. The aim is to enhance students' understanding of conflict resolution, peace building, and the importance of empathy and bridging differing perspectives. Advantages of using this method in peace education: - Development of critical thinking, - Enhancement of emotional engagement, - Stimulation of discussions, - Expansion of cultural understanding. This method can help foster a generation of conflict resolution specialists and proactive individuals who are inclined to prevent conflicts using reflection, empathy, and perspective-taking rather than allow them to escalate the conflict situations. They are ready to address global challenges through informed and thoughtful interventions.</p>



Facilitators	Charlotte Elisabeth Vaassen (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Bogdana Cherniavska (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
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## Workshop 9

### Dignifying Human Movements for Peacebuilding


15.30	Room VI
Theme	The purpose of the workshop on Human Movements is to create a safe space where participants can collectively engage in experiential learning, enabling them to recognize and dignify their own roots for recognizing and dignifying the roots of others. Through such reflection, they will be better able to engage in a true dialogue based on mutual respect. This process of reflection will also help them to enhance intercultural acceptance, both of self and others. The workshop also offers participants the opportunity to see each other as they wish to be seen, to acknowledge the right of every individual to a sense of belonging, and to become aware of their connection to their deepest selves, as well as to others, both past and future generations, the cosmos, the Earth, and all living beings that inhabit it. If we, as universities, can establish spaces where future generations begin to build from humility and a sense of brotherhood—recognizing that we are all links in the chain of humanity—then perhaps, just perhaps, the construction of peace will no longer be a distant utopia.
Facilitators	Lourdes Rubio Rico (Universitat Rovira i Virgili); Sílvia Monserrate Gómez (Universitat Rovira i Virgili)

## Workshop 10

### What's Involved in Setting up a Peace Hub?

15.30	Room VII
Theme	This workshop has been planned to build on discussions held during the round table on Peace Hubs, and share tools, skills and strategies that might help in planning and setting one up in different social and political environments. It will be organised around five key questions: Who should instigate, plan and finance a peace hub and how to negotiate the tricky relationships between locals, diaspora and internationals? Why/Are relationships with civil society organisations important and what are the issues involved in establishing healthy partnerships? What are the challenges in developing interdisciplinary fields and multidisciplinary teams in universities with strong traditions and strict hierarchies? What are the different activities a peace hub might undertake and some tools to help map and prioritise these? How might such a hub be financed and sustained in the long term?
Facilitators	Juliet Millican (University of Sussex); Larisa Kasumagić Kafedžić (University of Sarajevo)

2.3.5. Afternoon Keynote Address: Oleksandra Matviichuk

<b>Oleksandra Matviichuk</b> <b>The Role of Higher Education in Peacebuilding</b>	
17.30	Aula of the Ágnes-Heller-Building
Abstract	<p>Peace, progress and human rights are inextricably linked. States that grossly violate human rights pose a threat not only to their own citizens but to security and peace in general. We are losing freedom in the world. More than 80% of people around the world live in not-free or partially free societies. The problem is not only that the space of freedom in authoritarian countries has narrowed to the size of a prison cell. The problem is that even in democracies, people starting to call into question the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Human rights require a certain mindset, a specific perception of the world that determines our thinking and behavior. So, it is not enough to sign international agreements or create formal institutions. Values of society will always prevail. It's time to think about the role of higher education in upholding the humanist idea and peacebuilding.</p>
BIO	<div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;">  <div style="flex-grow: 1;"> <p>Oleksandra Matviichuk is a human rights defender who works on issues in Ukraine and the OSCE region. At present she heads the human rights organization Center for Civil Liberties, and also coordinates the work of the initiative group Euromaidan SOS. The activities of the Center for Civil Liberties are aimed at protecting human rights and establishing democracy in Ukraine and the OSCE region. The organization is developing legislative changes, exercises public oversight over law enforcement agencies and judiciary, conducts educational activities for young people and implements international solidarity programs.</p> <p>The Euromaidan SOS initiative group was created in response to the brutal dispersal of a peaceful student rally in Kyiv on November 30, 2013. During three months of mass protests that were called the Revolution of Dignity, several thousand volunteers provided round-the-clock legal and other aid to persecuted people throughout the country. Since the end of the protests and beginning of Russian aggression in Ukraine, the initiative has been monitoring political persecution in occupied Crimea, documenting war crimes and crimes against humanity during the hybrid war in the Donbas and conducting the #LetMyPeopleGo and #SaveOlegSentsov international campaigns to release political prisoners detained by the Russian authorities. Oleksandra Matviichuk has experience in creating horizontal structures for massive involvement of people in human rights activities against attacks on rights and freedoms, as well as a multi-year practice of documenting violations during armed conflict. She is the author of a number of alternative reports to various UN bodies, the Council of Europe, the European Union,</p> </div> </div>

the OSCE and the International Criminal Court.

After the beginning of new armed aggression in February 2022, Oleksandra Matviichuk together with other partners created the "Tribunal for Putin" initiative in order to document international crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in all regions of Ukraine which became the targets of attacks of the Russian Federation.

In 2016 she received the Democracy Defender Award for "Exclusive Contribution to Promoting Democracy and Human Rights" from missions to the OSCE. In 2017 she became the first woman to participate in the Ukrainian Emerging Leaders Program of Stanford University. In 2022 Oleksandra Matviichuk was awarded with the Right Livelihood Award, the Sakharov Prize from the European Parliament and recognized as one of the 25th influential women in the world by Financial Times. In 2022 she received the Nobel Peace Prize for the work of her organization the Center for Civil Liberties.

## 2.4. Thursday, February 20, 2025

### 2.4.1. Morning Keynote Address: Marko Lehti

<b>Marko Lehti</b> <b>Respect Beyond Harmony and Amity: Embracing an Agonistic Approach to Peace(building) and Dialogue</b>	
09.30	Aula of the Ágnes-Heller-Building
Abstract	N/A
BIO	 <p>Marko Lehti is a Research Director of Tampere Peace Research Institute (TAPRI) and an Academic Director of master's programme in Peace, Mediation and Conflict Research (PEACE) both at Tampere University, Finland. Lehti's current research focus on peace mediation, agonistic peace(building), multilateralism and changing global order. Furthermore, his research has dealt question of peace, transnational encounters and identifications in the Baltic countries, the South Caucasus, Ukraine, and the Balkans. His latest books are "Nordic Peace in Question. A Region of and for Peace" (with Christopher Browning &amp; Johan Strang) (Routledge 2024), "The Era of Private Peacemakers. A New Dialogic Approach to Mediation" (Palgrave 2019) and "Contestations of Liberal Order. The West in Crisis?" (with Henna-Riikka Pennanen and Jukka Jouhki) (Palgrave 2020). He is also PI of Erasmus funded project "Curriculum Reform to Promote Education for Peace in Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova" (PeaceEdu).</p>

## 2.4.2. Morning Parallel Sessions

<b>Panel 13</b>	
<b>Experience-Based Learning from Conflict and Post-Conflict Perspectives</b>	
11.00	Room I
Paper	<p><b>The Role of Higher Education in Peacebuilding: Actions of Solidarity and Peace Education from the University of Padua</b></p> <p>Elisa Gamba (University of Padova)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Teaching Peace in a “Border” Country: Lessons Learned from Introducing Peace and Conflict Studies Courses and Master’s Program in Poland</b></p> <p>Katarzyna Anna Przybyla (Collegium Civitas / University of Manitoba)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Role of Higher Education Institutions in Building Resilient Community Through Well-Organised Collaboration of Stakeholders: A Case Study of Refugee Crisis Management in Olomouc Region (Czechia) Amid the War in Ukraine</b></p> <p>Gabriella Capec (Palacký University Olomouc); Vladimíra Sedláčková (Palacký University Olomouc); David Dohnal (Palacký University Olomouc); Simona Dohnalová (Palacký University Olomouc); Szergej Cápec (Palacký University Olomouc)</p>
Paper	<p><b>Student Exchange Programs in Times of War: Outcomes of an Ukrainian Student Visit Program at an Austrian School and its Implications for Peace Education</b></p> <p>Christian Kraler (University of Innsbruck); Sabrina Bacher (University of Innsbruck); Marina Bacher (University of Innsbruck)</p>

<b>Panel 14</b>	
<b>Experiences of HEI from War Zones and with Post-War Reconstruction, Recovery, and Reconciliation II</b>	
11.00	Room II
Paper	<p><b>The Mediatization of Education as a Catalyst for Peacebuilding in the Middle East: The Palestinian Split as a Case Study</b></p> <p>Hussein AlAhmad (Arab American University of Palestine)</p>
Paper	<p><b>The Gaza Crisis and the Limitations of Predictive Systems in Protracted Conflicts</b></p> <p>Ruth Hanau Santini (Università di Napoli L'Orientale); Andrea Novellis (Università di Napoli L'Orientale)</p>

Paper	<b>A Victory Without Peace: The Nineveh Plain and Sinjar, Five Years After ISIS's Defeat</b> Bayar Mustafa (University of Kurdistan Hewler)
Paper	<b>Impact of the Ethnopolitical Management on Peacebuilding: The Case of the System of Educational Resilience</b> Anastasiia Dehterenko (National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine)

### Panel 15

#### Peacebuilding Education Efforts Across HEI and Partners in Ukraine V

11.00	Room III
Paper	<b>Legal Education to Prevent Conflicts: The Role of Universities in Developing a Peacebuilding Culture</b> Viktor Savchenko (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)
Paper	<b>The Application of the Oral History Method in Higher Education Programs as an Important Factor in Preventing Armed Conflicts</b> Liudmyla Profatilova (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)
Paper	<b>The Role of Physical Geography in Higher Education in Peacebuilding in the Context of Geo-Ecological Change</b> Kateryna Borysenko (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)
Paper	<b>Discourses of Peace in Social Media and Prospects for Peacebuilding Communication in Ukraine During the War</b> Olena Zinenko (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)

### Roundtable 7

#### Student-Driven Solidarity and Mental Health Initiatives: Austrian-Ukrainian Response to the Russian War in Ukraine

11.00	Room IV
Theme	This roundtable explores four student-led initiatives in Austria addressing peacebuilding, mental health, and post-conflict recovery after Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
Moderator	Oleksandra Terentyeva (University of Innsbruck)
Participants	N/A

## Workshop 11

### Awareness through Discomfort: On the Facilitation of Courage to Imagine Peaceful Change

11.00	Room V
Theme	This workshop explores consent, boundaries, and embodied practices to foster transformative dialogue in peace education, helping participants turn discomfort into meaningful change and conflict positivity.
Facilitator	Julian Philipp Marek Zink (Independent Researcher)

## Workshop 12

### Ecosystems of Peacebuilding with Young Muslims in Sicily: Good Practices to Prevent Ethnic and Religious Extremism

11.00	Room VI
Theme	The “Human Rights and Democratic Coexistence Lab” at the University of Palermo (Sicily) intends to dedicate resources to educational and cultural initiatives that promote integration and foster respect for ethnic and religious diversity. Additionally, the Lab seeks to strengthen community support networks focused on enhancing both individual and collective well-being as a means to mitigate social conflicts. Innovative educational practices at the University of Palermo contribute to peacebuilding and the prevention of ethnic and religious extremism through the flipped classroom model, designed to equip participants with essential tools and insights for fostering inclusive, culturally responsive environments in higher education. This session will involve educators, students, and community stakeholders in exploring the distinctive peacebuilding ecosystems that have developed in Sicily – a region with a rich multicultural history and a key role as a crossroads for diverse ethnic and religious groups. The workshop highlights best practices, lessons learned, and potential models for integrating flipped education into peacebuilding efforts within academic settings.
Facilitators	Elisabetta Di Giovanni (Università degli Studi di Palermo); Massimiliano Schirinzi (Università degli Studi di Palermo); Maria Garro (Università degli Studi di Palermo); Mario Veca (Università degli Studi di Palermo); Gaetano Di Napoli (Università degli Studi di Palermo)

## Workshop 13

### Peace Education from the Deconstruction of Educational Violence

11.00

Room VII

Theme

The objective of the workshop will be to reflect on and make visible the violence that the educational system reproduces as a social subsystem. These forms of violence (or micro-violence) are multiple (Galtung, 1985): direct, structural and cultural. It is a matter of becoming aware of them in order to deconstruct them. The proposal is the deconstruction of violence and the reconstruction of a peace education approach from an inclusive, diverse and equitable perspective. We need to promote, through education, values, attitudes, competences and core skills to make peace and to contribute to the cultures of peace from our personal and daily experiences. With this regard, we will make a change from the narrative-contemplative paradigm (Martin Gordillo, 2010) in which the professor is the one who has power, voice and knowledge to the dialogic-participative paradigm in which everybody (professors and students) have power, voice and knowledge to share, to interpellate, to disagree, to make agreements and to construct collectively the knowledge. The Peace Education REM Approach focus on the human capabilities to make peace and on our empowerment to make peace come true. In this endeavor, the 5 C (Curiosity, Criticism, Care, Collaboration and Creativity) will be required. This will allow us to be trained on a capacity-building tools to be able to transform our daily conflicts peacefully and to respond to different stages of the peacebuilding process. Different resources (videos, music, pictures, group dynamics, games, tales) will be used along the workshop to work the peace education in action.

Facilitator

Sofia Herrero Rico (Universitat Jaume I)



### 2.4.3. Plenary Session: Peace Practices for Future Eco-Systems

Peace Practices for Future Eco-Systems	
13.30	Aula of the Ágnes-Heller-Building
Abstract	The interconnection between peace research and peace practice is at the center of this panel. It offers reflections on how to create and implement 'islands of peace' in the midst of armed conflict, war, and cycles of violence. By exploring perspectives of the humanization, empowerment and inclusion of different actors in conflict affected contexts, this panel reflects on future spaces and eco-systems of peacebuilding, reconciliation and dialogue. It will discuss the ways in which education can play a role in building sustainable and just peace.
Discussants	<a href="#">Iryna Drobovych</a> (Co-Founder, Foundation 'The Day After') <a href="#">Julia Palmiano Federer</a> (Senior Researcher, Center for Security Studies at ETH Zürich) <a href="#">Nizam F. Salahat</a> (Professor, Al-Istiqlal University)
Moderator	Rina Malagayo Alluri (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies, University of Innsbruck)

## 2.4.4. Afternoon Parallel Sessions

<b>Panel 16</b>	
<b>Theory and Practice of Pedagogies of Peace and Peace Education I</b>	
15.30	Room I
Paper	<b>Teachers as Agents of Peace: The Role of Teacher Education in Fostering Human Rights</b> Sabrina Bacher (University of Innsbruck)
Paper	<b>The Role of History in the Education for Sustainable Peace: A case of The Republic of Moldova</b> Sergiu Musteata (State University of Chisinau)
Paper	<b>Universities and Everyday Practices of Dealing with a Violent Past and Present</b> Miriam Tekath (Marburg University / EUPeace University Alliance for Peace, Justice and Inclusive Societies); Eva Froneberg (Marburg University)
Paper	<b>Challenging Structures of Coloniality Within Academic Settings: A Framework for Praxis</b> Rina Alluri (University of Innsbruck); Zeus Hans Mendez (University of Innsbruck)

<b>Panel 17</b>	
<b>Peacebuilding Education Efforts Across HEI and Partners in Ukraine VI</b>	
15.30	Room II
Paper	<b>Bringing a Trauma Informed Lens to Higher Education Collaborations with Ukraine</b> Nataliya Rumyantseva (Bath Spa University)
Paper	<b>Universities Chipping in: Building Local Capacities for the Post-Conflict Reconstruction of Ukraine</b> Lenka Duskova (Palacký University Olomouc); Eva Sera Komlossyova (Palacký University Olomouc)
Paper	<b>The Effectiveness of MOOCs as a Tool of Non-Formal Peace Education</b> Anastasiia Kushnir (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)
Paper	<b>Decolonization in Ukraine: A Pathway to Just Peace?</b> Oleksandra Terentyeva (University of Innsbruck)

## Panel 18

### Experiences of HEI from War Zones and with Post-War Reconstruction, Recovery, and Reconciliation III [online]

15.30	Room III
Paper	<b>Social Dialogue and Trade Union Involvement in Conflict Prevention: Educational Dimensions in Peacebuilding Programs</b> Natalia Shchukina (Tiraspol Shevchenko University)
Paper	<b>Sowing Water Activism for Convivial Climate Resilience</b> Marisol C. Bock (Universitat Jaume I / Karlshochschule International University)
Paper	<b>The Role of Science and Education as the Pillars of the Post-Conflict Recovery: The Lessons from Karabakh Region of Azerbaijan</b> Nargiz Hajiyeva (University of Michigan); John Branch (University of Michigan); Fariz Ahmadov (Karabakh University)
Paper	<b>Creating Safe Spaces for Peacebuilding in the Gaza Strip: Challenges and Opportunities</b> Abdrabou Alanzi (Al-Azhar University in Gaza)

## Panel 19

### Creative and Pluriversal Avenues of Strengthening Peace Education III

15.30	Room IV
Paper	<b>Safe Spaces and Bridge Builders: Universities as Sites of Protection and Solidarity I</b> Licia Proserpio (University of Bologna)
Paper	<b>Safe Spaces and Bridge Builders: Universities as Sites of Protection and Solidarity II</b> Brad Blitz (University College London); Marie Lall (University College London)
Paper	<b>Gender, Diversity, and Intersectionality in Conflict Transformation: Insights from the Women Peace Ambassadors Program</b> Erica Zucec (Womens Democracy Network & MIT-Center)
Paper	<b>Peter Manniche &amp; Higher Education as a Means of Peace</b> Julie L. Shackelford (Den Internationale Højskole)

## Roundtable 8

### Peace and Conflict Research as an Indispensable Tool for Overcoming Interdisciplinary Communicative Obstacles in Everyday Academic Life

15.30	Room V
Theme	Discover the transformative power of Peace and Conflict Studies (PCS) in higher education in our roundtable! We will explore how PCS acts as a catalyst to challenge and overcome existing power structures and inequalities in academic practice. Inspired by Paulo Freire's 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed', we will take a critical look at the challenges of interdisciplinary communication in a world full of complex problems. In this interactive exchange, six participants of the MA program in Peace and Conflict Studies will share their unique perspectives and experiences. Join us as we discuss the need for a pluralistic and critical engagement with issues such as structural inequality and epistemic violence - a step towards a more just and inclusive academic landscape using the enzymatic power of PCS!
Moderator	Emilie Coller (University of Innsbruck)
Participants	Dominik Gallenberger (University of Innsbruck); Christian Gessl (University of Innsbruck); Cedric Isbrandt (University of Innsbruck); Mina Bankova (University of Innsbruck); Dashielle Vawter (University of Innsbruck)

## Workshop 14

### Skills for the Peacebuilder: Communication and Conflict Handling

15.30	Room VI
Theme	This workshop provides the introduction to communication and conflict handling. The questions of the workshop address perception, communication skills, and conflict handling skills. The section on conflict-handling skills provides a tool assessing individual ways of dealing with conflict, an introduction to third party roles in conflict and peacebuilding, and an introduction to problem solving and negotiation skills and to the process of mediation. This workshop starts with perceptions. It is followed by a focus on communication, a basic building block for peacebuilding, both as a component of peacebuilding programming and as a skill every peace agent should have. Two assessment tools that are useful in looking at how each of us deals with conflict are then included. Lastly, three basic methods of dealing with conflict on a larger scale – problem solving, negotiation, and mediation – are presented.
Facilitator	Yuliia Prus (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)

## Workshop 15

### Academic Positionality-Based Contributions to Peacebuilding

15.30

Room VII


Theme

The workshop is supposed to bring its participants in joint engagement and thinking about possibilities of contributing to peacebuilding that are linked to their academic positionalities. We will begin with a brief impulse talk on the question and its elements, to then build groups of approximately five participants that will collect ideas and discuss them. At the end, ideas will be collected and discussed in the plenum.

Facilitators


Cedric Isbrandt (University of Innsbruck); Lukas Engelberger (University of Innsbruck)

## 2.4.5. Afternoon Keynote Address: Savo Heleta

<b>Savo Heleta</b>	
<b>Rebuilding Higher Education: Unpacking the Trends, reversing the Neglect in Conflict Settings</b>	
<b>17.30</b>	<b>Aula of the Ágnes-Heller-Building</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>Higher education is a frequent casualty of violent conflict. Fighting and instability negatively affect students and staff and force many to flee, while university infrastructure is damaged. Having well-functioning higher education institutions is a prerequisite for socio-economic recovery and development in the aftermath of violent conflict. Higher education is a key sector for knowledge production, research, education and skills development. The sector can also play an important role in developing intercultural competencies for peacebuilding. For all this to happen, systems and institutions require support to recover, rebuild and/or strengthen. However, higher education has been a neglected sector in conflict- and post-conflict settings, both in terms of local support and foreign aid. This talk will critically unpack foreign aid flows to higher education in 23 conflict-affected settings during 2013-2022. Despite the calls for support of higher education which emerged over the past decade, the sector continues to be grossly neglected, negatively impacting its ability to function, deliver on its mission, and contribute to broader peacebuilding and socio-economic recovery efforts. The talk will also focus on the ways scholars and practitioners can contribute to challenging and reversing the neglect of higher education and supporting rebuilding and strengthening of the sector in conflict settings.</p>
<b>Bio</b>	 <p>Dr Savo Heleta is a Bosnian researcher with more than ten years' experience in South African higher education. His research focuses on decolonisation of knowledge, higher education internationalisation, international research collaboration, analysis of foreign aid flows to higher education, and rebuilding higher education after violent conflict. Survivor of the Bosnian war, he is the author of 'Not My Turn to Die: Memoirs of a Broken Childhood in Bosnia' (2008).</p> <p>More info at <a href="http://SavoWrites.com">SavoWrites.com</a></p>

## 2.5. Friday, February 21, 2025

### 2.5.1. Morning Keynote Address: Norbert Koppensteiner

<b>Norbert Koppensteiner</b> <b>Relational Pedagogies in Peace Studies: Opportunities and Challenges</b>	
09.30	Aula of the Ágnes-Heller-Building
Abstract	N/A
Bio	 <p>Norbert Koppensteiner is Associate Teaching Professor of Peace Studies and the director of the International Peace Studies Concentration at the Keough School's Master of Global Affairs. Previously, Koppensteiner spent two years as a visiting research fellow at the Kroc Institute. Before coming to the Kroc Institute, Koppensteiner was the program coordinator at the MA Program for Peace Studies at the University of Innsbruck and Senior Lecturer at the same university. He has taught extensively as a guest lecturer in Peace Studies across the globe and as a freelance facilitator for embodied practices of conflict transformation with a special emphasis on dance, theater and breath. Norbert Koppensteiner earned his Ph.D. at the European Graduate School in Saas Fee, (Switzerland) in 2009, an MA in Peace Studies from the University of Innsbruck (Austria), and a Mag.Phil. in Political Science from the University of Innsbruck (Austria). He is the author of two monographies, <i>Transrational Peace Research and Elicitive Facilitation</i> (2020) and <i>The Art of the Transpersonal Self</i> (2009), as well as the co-editor of the <i>Palgrave International Handbook of Peace Studies: A Cultural Perspective</i> (2011, 2014).</p>

## 2.5.2. Morning Parallel Sessions

<b>Panel 20</b>	
<b>Beyond Books: On the Ground Conflict Transformation Education</b>	
11.00	Room I
Paper	<b>Sustainable Education and Peacebuilding Through Decolonized Research, Teaching, and Intervention in Mozambique</b> Luka Mukhavele [Lucas Johane Mucavel] (Mukhambira)
Paper	<b>A Historical Analysis of Traditional Strategies of Conflict Resolution among the Turkana and Samburu Communities of Northern Kenya</b> Precious Joan Wapukha (Kibabii University); Allan Chore (Garissa University)
Paper	<b>Extension Agents as Peace Ambassadors in Rural Farming Communities in Nigeria: The Role of Tertiary Institutions of Learning in Peacemaking</b> Muhammad R. Ja'afar-Furo (Adamawa State University); Aishatu Abdullahi (Adamawa State University); Aliyu Abubakar (Adamawa State University)
Paper	<b>Rethinking gender dimension of HEI in the frontline city: Case of V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University</b> Daria Yashkina (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University)

<b>Panel 21</b>	
<b>Theory and Practice of Pedagogies of Peace and Peace Education II</b>	
11.00	Room II
Paper	<b>The Emotional Dimension of Teaching War: A Multi-Level and Multidisciplinary Approach</b> Marije Luitjens (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Andres Pacheco Lozano (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); John Hogan (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Maartje Weerdesteijn (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
Paper	<b>Peace Education in the Educational Space of Georgia: Current Situation and Perspectives</b> Lia Tvildiani (Ilia State University); Sofiko Lobzhanidze (Ilia State University)
Paper	<b>Extension Agents as Peace Ambassadors in Rural Farming Communities in Nigeria: The Role of Tertiary Institutions of Learning in Peacemaking</b> Muhammad R. Ja'afar-Furo (Adamawa State University); Aishatu Abdullahi (Adamawa State University); Aliyu Abubakar (Adamawa State University)



Paper	<b>Redefining the Role of Higher Education Institutions as Partners for Civil Society Organizations in Capacity Building and as Agents of Peace</b> Christian Gessl (University of Innsbruck)
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## Panel 22

### Education Practices and Programmes from Conflict-Affected Societies

11.00	Room III
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Paper	<b>Evaluating the Impact of Conflict in Higher Education: The case of Kosovo</b> Leon Gojani (University Institute of Lisbon)
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Paper	<b>Evaluating the Impact of the Higher-Education on Peacebuilding in Somalia</b> Mustafe Mohamed Salad (Somali National University / Gazi University)
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Paper	<b>External Intervention and the Role of Higher Education in Peacebuilding: Navigating Conflict Resolution and Political Stability in the Ethiopia-Tigray Crisis</b> Olileanya Amuche Ezugwu (Covenant University)
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Paper	<b>Empowering Peace Dialogue through Academia: A Case Study of the Peace Women Research Project in Yemen's Conflict Transformation</b> Ewa Strzelecka (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
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## Workshop 16

### History Dialogue

11.00	Room IV
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Theme	In this workshop, colleagues from the Berghof Foundation will offer experiential learning insights from their work with historical dialogue in the South Caucasus, sharing a range of their methodologies. In these dialogue processes, participants share stories about their own histories in a strictly biographical manner, listening to different voices and experiences. Articulating grievances and recognising each side's losses can be a first step towards reconciliation. For more information, see: Berghof Foundation – History Dialogue in Georgia and Abkhazia.
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Facilitator	Oliver Wolleh (Berghof Foundation)
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## Workshop 17

### Peace within Touch

11.00

Room V

Theme

Solidarity ought not be an abstraction, but practiced through humanizing relationships. How can this be taught? Far from having an answer we'll be guiding participants through a series of brief grounding, embodiment, sensory and connection practices with the goal of exploring whether such practices will support conference attendees in their relational experience of the conference. We will offer some short practices that attendees can use in their own HEI contexts to build connection and emotional capacity. This workshop emerges out of our understanding that the dehumanizing processes of war and colonialism are culturally and institutionally linked to educational processes that ask students to study violence without meaningfully acknowledging the emotional impacts. Can peace studies programs support students in developing a solidarity praxis through relational practices that help them stay connected to themselves and the complex arenas of study?

Facilitators

Dashielle Vawter (University of Innsbruck); Vladimir Gasior (University of Innsbruck)