



## Joint IPSS-University of Deusto Virtual Seminar

### “Tuning Higher - Education for Africa’s Peace & Security Agenda”

29 July 2020

#### Concept Note

### I. Background

The role of higher-education institutions in Africa’s peace and security agenda is defined by the African Union’s Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) 2016-2025 in its stipulated objectives. It is the reason why the Africa Peace and Security Program, under the auspices of the Institute for Peace and Security Studies at Addis Ababa University was specially mandated by the AU to address the intellectual challenge of peace and security affairs on the continent. The contribution of higher education institutions to the AU theme of “Silencing the Guns in Africa” continues to be crucial, considering the impact of their research and graduate outputs on societal dynamics.

In line with this approach, the “Tuning Higher Education for Africa’s Peace & Security Agenda” project will focus on building a community of academic experts who will harmonize and standardize degrees that offer peace or security studies within Africa. This group (technically-oriented) will collaborate in broad consultation exercises on how the designing of degree profiles that cover the generic and subject-specific competences related to Peace or Security should be approached in terms of mutually defined standards and benchmarks.

Therefore, University of Deusto (as the Tuning Academy experts on harmonization) and Institute for Peace and Security Studies (as the AU-mandated higher education institution) plan to organize a virtual Initial Consultative Workshop/Conference. Following the deliberation of the workshop, a technical working group (TWG) will be formed and thus tasked with delivering the necessary follow-up consultation exercises. Under the coordination and hosting of an appropriately selected institution, the TWG on Tuning Higher Education for Peace & Security in Africa (THEPSA) will be concerned with maintaining a database of all relevant HEI’s, their degree programs and profiles. The convening of technical forums and sourcing of funding for related projects will also be the responsibility of this TWG, in collaboration with stipulated partners.

### II. Objective

The main objective of the conference is to give an opportunity to the Higher – Education Institutions to converge in a formal forum to set fundamentals expected in the degree profiles of programs offering peace and security related studies and pave the way for the development of a harmonized approach in delivering these specialized programs, such that the current fragmented efforts at educative contributions to APSA can be consolidated as a concerted effort. It will also create a consultative dialogue where institutions share best practices and standardize their degree programs. The workshop is

expected to provide a forum for consultative dialogue which will prompt the process of launching a Technical Working Group that will actualize this agenda.

### **III. Structure**

The conference will be held virtually for one day with two panel discussions followed by plenary discussions. There will be a moderator (from IPSS) with a selection of specially invited panelists from respected and relevant institutions. Panel presentations by the invited speakers will take 7 minutes maximum in length, to allow for an interactive plenary session which engages invited participants.

### **IV. Participants**

The Webinar (consultative workshop) will gather the representatives of institutions of higher education that offer degree qualifications in the area of peace and security and other notionally related programs. Participants will also include (The number and name of institutions is not decided yet).

### **V. Output**

**The following are expected outputs of the conference**

- A policy brief publication from the proceedings of the conference evaluating the views expressed and positing policy suggestions for the AU-EU partnership;
- The initiation of a mapping process, allowing institutions in attendance to share comprehensive details on their programs which will allow the IPSS to publish a Compendium listing and recording the prominent institutions in the field of Peace and Security across Africa.
- The initiation of a Technical Working Group on the THEPSA project.

### **VI. Outcome**

The conference is expected to lead to consensus on “how” the gathering can embrace the Tuning Methodology and thus set the scene for further progressions towards mutually defined templates for degree profiles. Other expected outcomes are:-

- Pave the way for institutional convergence, at the very least on the core fundamentals to be expected in the degree profiles of programs offering Peace and Security related studies in Africa;
- The organizing of a Training Workshop on Tuning degree profiles on “Peace and Security”, via the University of Deusto and IPSS, featuring higher-education institutions from across the continent.
- Result in the comprehensive mapping of all institutions that offer degree programs in Peace and Security Studies across Africa – to be presented via the publication of a compendium listing all these institutions and their degree programs.
- Trigger the progressive launch of a Partnership Consortium that will assemble under the AU-EU Cooperation framework, via the technical working group which will lay the groundwork by achieving preliminary milestones.

### **VII. Date and Platform**

In view of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the workshop will be conducted virtually (Google meet). The seminar will tentatively be held July 29, 2020.