

SUMMARY REPORT ON THE LAUNCHING OF THE NETWORK FOR PEACE AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE (NetPID)

The youth of The Gambia will have their voices heard at national, sub-regional, regional and international platforms on peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue through the Network for Peace and Intercultural Dialogue (NetPID) which was launched on 12 July 2014.

The event was held at Conscience International (CI) Offices in Bakau. The Director of Conscience International (CI), Shaka Ceesay officially opened the Network, which will see a number of projects unfold in the near future. According to Shaka, the launch is based on an analysis of the current situation of intercultural violence involving the youth in most African countries such as the Central Africa Republic (CAR).



Many countries in Africa are witnessing growing divisions among the youth on lines of ethnicity/tribe/culture, race, religion and class. This situation is a threat to social-economic development and especially peace building in any country. In most African countries, there is the challenge of no major opportunities for youth to engage in dialogues for peace building, intercultural understanding of issues as well as understanding implications of such situations. Understanding what roles they could play in relation to the promotion of a culture of tolerance and peace building in response is important and educational for the youth.

The participating organizations underscore the importance of youth as key partners in identifying common issues, advocating them and helping to be part of the solution. As world leaders continue to come together to discuss problems and solutions, we want to make sure the voices of youth from different walks of life participate in peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue programs both in The Gambia and internationally. Most of all it's a golden opportunity and space for The Gambia to be the birth place of a prestigious initiative, a once in a lifetime experience.

At the end of the meeting, the participants presented their action plan based on fortnightly meetings to discuss topics such as interfaith interaction, educational initiatives, youth empowerment and social activities. It is planned to have activities on international event days and entertainment programs for youth and children. Plans were in place to use the communication media to reach out to the religious youth across The Gambia.

To this end, an adhoc committee was instituted by the participants to lead the activities of the Network and the following people were elected:

1. Mr. Shaka Ceesay (Conscience International - CI): Coordinator
2. Mr. Babucarr Fall (Association of Young Peace Advocates - AYPA): Secretary General
3. MS. Fatoumata Krubally (Triple D Foundation): Assistant Secretary General
4. Mr. Abdou Rahman Sallah (Biodiversity Association Journalists - BAJ): Outreach Officer
5. Mr. Kebba Jeffang (Sensitive Youth Association - SYA): Assistant Outreach Officer