

Youth Consultations on Peacebuilding and Intercultural Dialogue



**CI Office - Bakau
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**Report prepared by Shaka Ceesay
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Conscience International (CI), through donations from Mr. & Mrs. Yameen Muhammed and Family in the US, organized the Youth Consultations on Peacebuilding and Intercultural Dialogue under the theme “End War, Bring World Peace”. The meeting was held in close collaboration with the International Youth Peace Group in Seoul, South Korea on 30 June, 2014.
- 1.2 The meeting was a lead-up to the formation of a Peace Ambassadors Network which will take place on 12 July 2014. The overall goal of the consultations meeting was to ensure that youth leaders provide a clear assessment of what progress has been made in their respective organizations in regards to the promotion of peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue. In addition, the forum enabled the participants to give clear guidance to the development partners, civil society, private sector development and the broader international development community, on a new framework that will ensure that Peacebuilding and Intercultural Dialogue goals become an integral part of the national development policies and that this framework becomes an efficient tool to transition communities out of instability and crises.
- 1.3 The specific objectives of the consultations were to (i) look at the trends and specific challenges posed by conflict and instability on the sub-region of West Africa and the African continent as a whole; (ii) discuss the state of youth in Peacebuilding and Intercultural Dialogue priorities; (iii) explore what changes are required to make youth more effective in peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue, based on existing evidence and policy discussions.
- 1.4 The meeting brought together 23 participants, representing youth based and youth led organizations, participated in the meeting. Two media practitioners participated actively in the discussions throughout the consultations. (see the list of participants)

2. PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONSULTATIONS

- 2.1 The meeting was opened by CI Program Assistant, Samuel Mendy. In his opening remarks, Mr. Mendy explained the importance of having frank and meaningful consultations amongst youth leaders and their organizations. Such a meeting would be critical to achieving the Peacebuilding objectives and also to support Intercultural Dialogue at all levels in The Gambia and the sub-region of West Africa.

- 2.2 The Director, Mr. Shaka Ceesay focused on the themes of leadership, accountability, and commitment to promote peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue effectiveness and broader collaboration among youth and their communities. He invited participants to embody those principles and join together in carrying priorities for peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue. Mr. Ceesay stressed the importance of commitment and emphasized the need to focus on long-term Peacebuilding goals. He noted that the experiences and grassroots insight into the lives of conflict affected youth and young peacebuilders around the world have informed CI the importance of engaging youth in peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue.
- 2.3 Participants reiterated that youth based and youth led organizations serve the need of an otherwise underserved demographic. Youth peacebuilding organizations, in particular, actively work to promote a culture of peace, intercultural dialogue and non-violent conflict transformation. Alongside young peacebuilders, youth organizations have an important role to play in implementing the forthcoming development agenda and shaping the course of the world. Youth have been applauded for their ability to positively transform small communities and societies at large, and, it is for this exact reason, that peacebuilders must be consulted on the way forward for world peace.
- 2.4. The International Peace Youth Group (IPYG)'s "Declaration of World Peace" was read by Glo Touch Foundation (GTF)'s volunteer, Ms. Joyce Colley before the close of the consultations.

3. CONCLUSION

The consultations ended with a focus on outlining the various resources available to support work with youth organizations for peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue and identifying key areas where we can work together strategically at both national and regional levels.

The next steps for collaboration in peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue emerged during the discussions to address the gaps identified during the consultations. Enhanced coordination among the participants was identified as a key element to maximizing impact in communication, networking, capacity building and research.

Consequently, the participants unanimously agreed to meet again in order to formalize the creation of a network of youth based and youth led organizations taking the lead in peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue in the Gambia and the entire sub-region. Thus, the participants will convene on 12 July 2014 for the purpose of establishing a functional network of ambassadors of peace in The Gambia.

List of Participants

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Ms. Joyce Colley reading the "Declaration of World Peace" to participants.