

THE AFRICAN PEACE ACADEMY

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Summary

The **African Peace Academy** will be a program of the **Gorée Institute**. Its purpose is through networking regionally and continentally to gather the necessary expertise to work towards identifying and researching the causes of African conflicts and to facilitate their resolution.

It will provide a *space* for antagonists to meet and build peace together; an *environment* of research, reflection and training; a *platform* for facilitating more effective coordination of organizations and agencies working in the areas of *democratization, development, conflict prevention and human rights*.

It will be presided over by a *Committee of Patrons*, consist of a *Scientific Council* and *Departments* implementing the projects, and be run by a *Secretary of the Academy*.

Proposal

We, the **Gorée Institute (GORIN)**, are launching the creation and the establishment of an **African Peace Academy (APA)**, to be seated within the Institute.

For an initial and transitional period of three years **APA** will be developed and administered as a **GORIN** program. It will thus express and enhance the values and commitments expressed in **GORIN's** traditional areas of activity: promoting processes of *democracy, development* and *culture* in Africa - and benefit from **GORIN's** infra-structure, programs, experience and networks.

The concerns and the areas of activity of **APA** will be resolutely rooted in African civil society. This will be its defining characteristic. It is thus not intended to compete with any similar project created by any African state or number of states. As with **GORIN**, its 'first circle' will be its close integration with the Gorée Island community. Working under the auspices of an established Public Interest Organization (PIO) it will interact with other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Africa and beyond, active in the fields of conflict prevention and resolution, human and citizen rights, and development for peace. **APA** will strive to build a regional constituency by helping to promote the active coordination of NGOs working for peace and human rights in the sub-region; it will particularly reach out to those associations representing traditional and confessional interests that do not appear on the NGO network screen. **APA** will engage with African state, sub-regional and continental institutions in order to research and understand the causes and origins of conflict and insecurity - and to advance, implant and implement viable and sustainable processes of building peace and security and promoting citizen and human rights in Africa. **APA** will seek to work in support of African Union structures such as the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). **APA** will continue pursuing the goals and tasks identified during the June 2002 Maputo Workshop convened by Ford Foundation's Special Initiative for Africa (SIA); it will, furthermore, seek to develop its activities with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and it will collaborate with the United Nations Peace University.

Mission

To be a platform for peace.

To research and understand the causes of conflict and insecurity in Africa, and to transmit this knowledge for purposes of implementation and pedagogy.

To create a platform for facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experiences on peace-building and security, and how these relate to development processes and cultures.

To facilitate a more practical and effective coordination among NGOs and state or regional institutions working in these areas.

To shape and promote programs and projects which build peace, advance the processes of democratization and the sustainable development of an autonomous Africa, enhance intellectual and cultural creativity, and advocate the respect for human and citizen rights in open African societies.

Articulation

APA will provide, through its position within **GORIN** on Gorée Island, a privileged [space](#) for protagonists and antagonists to meet, away from any outside interference but under expert guidance if so required, together to start talking through the problems and perceptions that may lead to, or have led to conflicts.

APA will provide an [environment](#) - by means of sabbatical and residential facilities, through its organizational infrastructure, through its communication means and access to networks - for [research and reflection](#). This 'think tank' and 'intellectual laboratory' environment will make it possible: to gather, treat and share relevant information, notably through effective communication systems; to promote the collection of narrative histories, so that we may understand Africa also through the stories of its actors; to test the applicability of presently-used paradigms of development and conflict resolution to African conditions, and help fashion new concepts where necessary; to develop the capacities for geo-political thinking so as to foresee the problems and situations which may lead to conflict, and to forewarn decision-makers and concerned agencies of looming crises; to build scenarios that will allow us to understand and help prevent the catastrophes Africa is exposed to.

APA will provide a [platform](#) where organizations and institutions working in the areas of conflict prevention, of building for security and democracy and the rule of law, may meet to better coordinate and structure their activities so as to enhance their impact.

In all of the above, **APA** will strive to remain a light, flexible, mobile and inventive process. Our ongoing concern is to recognize those gaps that may lead to breakdown and chaos, to identify the essential links that could start processes of prevention and resolution, to strive for adding value to existing organizations and programs. In other words: [To think and intervene strategically](#).

Organizational Structure and Responsibilities

1. [The Board of Trustees](#) of **GORIN** constitutes the legal authority of the **African Peace Academy**. It will oversee the cohesion among **GORIN** and **APA** programs and organs.

2. [The Committee of Patrons](#). The *Committee* will consist of a number of eminent Africans, to be known as *Patrons*. They will guarantee the moral and political integrity of **APA** and assure its relevance, ethical probity, independence and creativity.

3. [The Scientific Council](#). The *Council* will consist of 12 persons reputed for their competence, their commitment to peace, their integrity and their moral authority, to be known as *Councilors*. The *Council* will constitute the on-going 'think tank' of **APA** and will democratically define the orientation of its structures and projects. It will oversee and lead the **APA** programs of activity and guarantee their scientific quality. The Chairperson of Gorée Institute's Board of Trustees and the Executive Director of the Institute will be *de facto Councilors*. The *Council* can be enlarged to include

representatives of donor agencies as non-voting consultants. *Council* will democratically define its statutes and working rules.

4. *The Secretary of the Academy*, as *de facto* member and Executive Secretary of *The Scientific Council* will lead and coordinate **APA** structures and activities. The *Secretary* will work under the authority of **GORIN**'s Executive Director.

5. **APA** activities will be developed through existing **GORIN** structures and programs. As soon as possible it will develop a number of *Departments* - Research and Reflection, Publications, Advocacy... The *Secretary*, in conjunction with the **GORIN** Executive Director and Programs Coordinator and in consultation with the ad-hoc *Advisory Committee* constituted during the

Conceptual Workshop which took place at the Institute (23-25 January, 2003) will pilot the structuring of **APA** and the putting in place of its programs and projects during this initial phase.

6. **APA** structures will be light, flexible, and in some instances implanted elsewhere on the continent. They will be defined by projects and continuously express interaction with other NGOs and agencies. When feasible **APA** will work with experts and project leaders or coordinators from related instances (universities, development agencies, national or international institutions...)

Monitoring

1. The Conceptual Workshop established an *Advisory Committee*, representative of the community of organizations and individuals with whom we intend to collaborate. Its task is to monitor and assess the progress or difficulties of this first phase of implanting **APA**. It will receive regular progress reports. This *Advisory Committee* has the right and the responsibility of monitoring the financial status of **APA**.

2. As with all the other activities of **Gorée Institute**, the financial and administrative concerns of the program will regularly be monitored, evaluated and controlled by the appropriate authorities of the Institute (the *Executive Director*, the *General Manager*, the *Board of Trustees*.)

3. **APA** will regularly submit progress reports, and more specifically financial reports, to its sponsors and donors whom we consider as strategic partners, such as the Special Initiative for Africa of the Ford Foundation. **APA** will be submitting progress and financial reports to *all* its donors, as defined by contract.

4. After the first two years (starting from January 2003) **APA** will be submitted to a thorough financial and administrative audit, made by outside experts, to verify its viability, applicability, relevance and effectiveness. This audit - over and above the annual financial audit of **Gorin** - is to be repeated at regular two-year intervals.

5. It is to be hoped that a Parliament of African NGOs, an African Council for Peace, may emerge, to pool and reflect the activities of peace-building institutions. In that case, **APA** will report its activities to this body for consultation and monitoring.

Indicators of Success

The indicators of success for **APA** will be the extent to which we can contribute to the better and more effective functioning of a collective of non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, and public interest organizations in defusing conflicts and building the conditions for sustainable peace. If we can articulate an ethical and non-partisan voice underwritten with the earned authority of sympathetic comprehension and professional practices, and if this voice can be heard and listened to, we will have made a difference.

If we can show that our modes of reflection, of trying to think ahead, of advocating the respect for human rights and the strengthening of civil society in processes of democratization, are strategically justified, and if we can provide a platform to conflict-defusing and peace-building organizations conducive to the improvement of their impact, to bringing about better linkage and eliminating duplication and waste, we will have proved our worth.

More modestly, if we can have at the end of two years a professionally functioning and intellectually creative **African Peace Academy** to serve as example for other similar efforts on the continent, if we can participate in and federate significant research, thinking, advocacy and training in this arena, we will have been successful.

Themes and Goals

APA will work towards rapidly giving substance to its means of articulation: the *space*, the *environment* and the *platform*. This implies that it will actively promote the availability of its location and its infrastructure for bringing together adversaries in pre-conflict or conflict situations; establish data banks and research facilities, and have scholars, activists and creators present on the island in order to initiate reflection processes; facilitate through meetings and workshops the coming together of various institutions working in the same field.

Keeping in mind the criteria of identifying the causes of conflict and the commitment to build for peace, **APA** will embark upon promoting modules (enquiries, studies, workshops, scenario building, publications, advocacy, training and formation) for understanding and coming to terms with:

- * The phenomenon of a deteriorating African environment due to the contagion of regional conflagrations (Ivory Coast, Liberia, Zimbabwe)...
- * The likely impact of the War on Terror on actual and incipient African conflicts.
- * The ways in which identity politics, cultures and religions, have been abused, resulting in mass violence.
- * The modalities of training for peace and stability.
- * The modalities of harmonizing and better articulating the preparation, monitoring and interpretation of African elections.
- * The need to strengthen African legal and juridical systems.
- * The impact of the HIV-Aids pandemic on African systems and societies - governance, education, public security, agriculture, family life...
- * The problems of post-genocide and post-conflict reconciliation and development.
- * The need to identify and combat systemic corruption, also by identifying the cynical and manipulative sources and initiators of corruption.
- * Understanding the extent to which Africa has become a conduit for dealing in drugs, and helping to coordinate means to combat this phenomenon.
- * Helping to promote the control of the proliferation of small arms.
- * Understanding the decisive and often destructive role played by multi-nationals.
- * Helping to coordinate efforts to bring an end to the horror of child soldiers.
- * Understanding and enhancing the central role played by the African woman in building for peace.
- * Initiating the formation of a future leadership by exposing young Africans to the best minds of our time in an environment of active training.

Next Steps

The 'Pilot Group' consisting of **GORIN**'s Executive Director and Programs Coordinator, and the *Project Director*, working in consultation with the *Advisory Committee*, will:

- draw up the proposed statutes and organogram of **APA**;
- work on a definitive conceptual version of the project;
- start putting together the various organs of **APA** (the *Committee of Patrons*, the *Scientific Council*);
- identify potential strategic partners, find sponsors to strengthen its administrative, financial and intellectual capacity, build a network;
- proceed rapidly toward the implementation of a first project to test the viability of **APA**'s orientations (enquiry into a conflict zone, workshop and networking with a specific advocacy goal);
- proceed with the preparations for a Strategic Planning Workshop that will modify if necessary, adopt and validate the proposed statutes and organizational structure, and together identify and elaborate a strategic plan for the next three years.

GORIN is committed to organize and host two major workshops at **Gorée Institute** in the course of 2003, and two more during 2004. These workshops will be shaped around ways to realize the above goals; they will also initiate original ways of trying to think ahead; they will, furthermore, continue to shape the structures and the projects of **APA**.

GORIN will host the 2003 follow-up meeting to the Maputo Workshop organized by the Special Initiative for Africa of the Ford Foundation. This should be the opportunity for confirming coordination through networking, and identifying even more the specificity and the tasks of **APA**.

GORIN hopes to rapidly find support for implementing its permanent sabbatical program, in terms of which there will be the continuous presence on the island of a number of scholars, activists and creators who will take part in **APA** activities.

GORIN/APA will launch an electronic newsletter as discussion and reflection forum, and as means to building networks and promoting advocacy.

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