

**The Role of Higher Education in  
Fostering the Culture of Dialogue and Understanding**  
**International Association of Universities 2009 International Conference**

**4 – 6 November, 2009**

Notre Dame University - Louaize  
Main Campus - 72, Zouk Mikael  
Zouk Mosbeh, Lebanon

**Conference Programme**

<b>Wednesday, 4 November, 2009</b>	
	Arrival of participants
16:00	Registration, <i>Hotel Le Royal Beirut, Dbayeh</i>
18:00	Welcome reception, <i>Hotel Le Royal Beirut, Dbayeh</i>
<b>Thursday, 5 November, 2009</b>	
08:30	Registration, at NDU – <i>Main Campus, Zouk Mosbeh</i>
10:00	<b>Inaugural Ceremony</b>
	<b>Welcome and Opening</b>
	<b>Walid Moussa</b> , <i>President, Notre Dame University – Louaize, Lebanon</i>
	<b>Juan Ramón de la Fuente</b> , <i>President, International Association of Universities (IAU)</i>
	<b>Introduction to Higher Education in Lebanon</b>
	<b>Ahmed Jammal</b> , <i>Director General, Higher Education, Lebanon</i>
	<b>Address of His Excellency President of the Lebanese Republic</b>
11:30	Coffee break
12:00	<b>Opening Keynote Address</b>
	<b>Chair</b>
	<b>Juan Ramón de la Fuente</b> , <i>President, International Association of Universities (IAU)</i>
	<b>Keynote Speaker</b>
	<b>Federico Mayor Zaragoza</b> , <i>President, Culture of Peace Foundation, Former Director-General of UNESCO, Co-Chair of the High Level Group United Nations Alliance of</i>

*Civilizations*

13:00 Lunch

14:30 **Plenary Session I**

**Why and How to Develop the Culture of Dialogue? Challenges from Institutional, Local and Global Perspectives.**

The central idea of this session emanates from a belief that dialogue, a culture in its own right, is a means to enhance communication, understanding and appreciation among people from different cultures. As such, this Plenary will serve to frame the conference theme, exploring both the rationale and the ways forward when choosing to use dialogue as a strategy leading to the fulfillment of goals such as tolerance, acceptance and appreciation of the other, transparency, openness and straightforwardness, egalitarianism and democratic/participative approaches to living in society.

Both higher education and non higher education speakers will share their views on this broad question and challenge the audience to focus on some key related questions.

**Chair**

**Janyne Hodder**, *President, The College of the Bahamas, The Bahamas*

**Speakers**

**Is-Haq Oloyede**, *Vice-Chancellor, University of Ilorin, Nigeria, President, Association of African Universities (AAU)*

**Antoine Messarra**, *Professor, Membre du Comité Constitutionnel, Lebanon*

**Georges Nahas**, *Vice – President, University of Balamand, Lebanon*

**Demianos Kattar**, *Former Minister of Finances & Former Minister of Economy and Trade, Lebanon*

*Discussion*

16:00 Coffee break

16:30 **Parallel Session 1. a.**

**Shaping the Future Citizen: What competencies should graduates have to be prepared for effective intercultural dialogue?**

The future citizen is expected to be an individual capable of understanding and immersing in the dynamics of global cooperation and collaboration.

This will require an appreciation for and knowledge of other cultures and a capacity to learn more over time. In this session we will explore the skills and competencies required to do so, and the curricular or pedagogical means that might best serve this purpose.

**Chair**

**Norbert Kis**, *Vice-Rector, Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary*

**Speakers**

**Darla Deardorff**, *Executive Director, Association of International Education Administrators, Duke University, USA (10 min. Video Conference)*

**Simon Ho**, *Vice Rector, Academic Affairs, University of Macau, Macao SAR, China*

**Leila Fayad**, *President, Centre national de Recherche et de Développement Pédagogiques, Lebanon*

**Yazmín Cruz López**, *Project Officer, Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI), Spain*

*Discussion*

16:30

**Parallel Session 1. b.**

**Dialogue as a means to conflict prevention, management and resolution: a Lebanese case study**

Has dialogue contributed to conflict management, conflict avoidance or conflict resolution in addressing the Lebanese crisis?

The Lebanese crises have been approached from different perspectives. This session will offer insights into the situation of Lebanon and explore the various dynamics involved in addressing the Lebanese debacle. It focuses on what role higher education institutions have played in seeking resolution and offers some 'universal' comments about conflict avoidance, management and resolution in a context of cultural diversity and inter-cultural strife.

**Chair**

**Agneta Bladh**, *Rector, University of Kalmar, Sweden*

**Speaker**

**Antoine Rajeh**, *President, Antonine University, Lebanon*

**Amr Galal El-Adawi**, *President, Beirut Arab University, Lebanon*

**Michel Nehme**, *Professor of Political Science and International affairs, Director of University International Affairs Office, Notre-Dame University, Louaizé, Lebanon*

*Discussion*

20:30

**Conference Dinner**

*Hotel Le Royal Beirut, Dbayeh*

**Friday, 6 November, 2009**

08:30

Registration

09:30

**Plenary Session II**

**Instilling the Culture of Dialogue in Higher Education**

This Plenary session tackles the ways and means that HEIs can use to integrate the culture of dialogue into all of their missions of teaching and learning, research and service.

As institutions that house the most well-informed segments of the population and where cultural and political values are articulated, contrasted and compared, the HEIs have a major responsibility to find ways to ensure that they serve as models of institutions putting dialogue into practice and to improve knowledge and understanding about other cultures and study the potential and actual impacts cultural differences may have on the way societies tackle a variety of problems inside and outside the university, including everyday life, or major issues such as democratic governance, economic development, scientific research, etc.

**Chair**

**Deepak Pental**, *Vice-Chancellor, University of Delhi, India*

**Speakers**

**Sjur Bergan**, *Head of the Department of Higher Education and History Teaching, Directorate General IV - Education, Culture and Cultural Heritage, Youth and Sport Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France*

**Saleh Hashem**, *Secretary general, Association of Arab Universities, Jordan*

**Abdo El Kahi**, *Coordinator, Lebanese Center for Societal Research, Notre-Dame University, Louaizé, Lebanon*

**Andrea Blaettler**, *Executive Committee Member, European Students' Union (ESU)*

*Discussion*

11:00 Coffee/tea break

11:30 **Parallel Session 2. a.**

**Comparative Research and Cultural Studies as Means to Enhance Dialogue through Curricular Innovation.**

How does comparative research involving two or more countries enhance the course of mutual understanding where differences are admitted, syntheses are derived and similarities explored?

Cross-fields of education (inter-disciplinary) and cross-cultural exchange of perspectives enrich and widen the spectrum of understandings and innovations.

**Chair**

**Justin Thorens**, *Former Rector, University of Geneva, Switzerland, Honorary President, International Association of Universities (IAU)*

**Speakers**

**Saouma BouJaoude**, *Professor, American University of Beirut, Lebanon*

**Tore Saetersdal**, *Director - Nile Basin Research Programme, University of Bergen, Norway*

**Edward Alam**, *Secretary-General, Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, Lebanon*

*Discussion*

11:30 **Parallel Session 2. b.**

**The role of leaders, administrators, faculty and students in nurturing a culture of dialogue and understanding on campus.**

In small groups, participants will be invited to discuss what leaders, faculty members and students can do in concrete ways to create or nurture a culture of dialogue in the classroom, in various extracurricular activities and in initiatives connecting the HEI to the local or even global community.

Participants will be particularly encouraged to share practices or cases where they have succeeded in bringing together diverse groups to either resolve issues or to simply learn about each others' culture and perspective.

## Co-chairs

**Patricia Pol**, *Vice-President, University Paris 12 – Val de Marne, France*

**Assaad Eid**, *Vice-President, Sponsored Research and Development, Notre-Dame University, Louaizé, Lebanon*

This session will be organized in small discussion groups.

13:00 Lunch

14:30 **Parallel Session 3. a.**

### **Internationalization of higher education – cross-border and at home - promoting the culture of dialogue and appreciation for diversity.**

Internationalization is taking on numerous forms in HEIs moving from collaboration in research, faculty and student exchanges and other kinds of mobility through cross-border partnerships. There are also initiatives that are designed to internationalize programs, courses and even extracurricular activities for those who do not get an opportunity to go abroad (internationalization at home).

These processes offer opportunities to improve quality education and allow for cross-cultural research ultimately promoting innovation by introducing diverse academic and cultural perspectives.

How do we maximize the benefits of such initiatives and ensure that dialogue leads to an appreciation of diversity, assuming that diversity might also at times lead to disagreement and controversies?

How to ensure that when mixing students of different races, genders, language, ethnic and religious groups, their interaction in a common intellectual space is fruitful and offers good learning opportunities?

To what extent do exchange programs bridge social, political and cultural gaps in higher educational institutions and to what extent may they actually widen them?

How can we benefit from such cultural diversity and prevent what Huntington would call the inevitable clash of civilizations?

## Chair

**Duma Malaza**, *Chief Executive Officer, Higher Education South Africa (HESA)*

## Speakers

**Alf Rasmussen**, *Senior Advisor, Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, Department of Higher Education, Oslo, Norway*

**B.A. Digolo**, *Dean, School of visual and performing arts, Kenyatta University, Kenya*

**Zixin Hou**, *professor and former President, Nankai University* and **QingHua Liu**, *associate professor, Institute of Higher Education, Nankai University, China*

*Discussion*

14:30 **Parallel session III. b.**

### **ICTs as Facilitators or Obstacles of Inter-Cultural Dialogue in Higher Education**

Online Universities have proven to be enablers of strong relations between the academic and student community they work with. Virtual learning environments mediate traditional cultural barriers, such as physical frontiers and time zones. Once

technology is available, in any of its modes, people from different countries and from different social and economic conditions can study and work together as equals.

Ubiquity and accessibility have never been so close to being fully realized by the international higher education community; if anything, ICTs have played a major role in enabling people anywhere to access quality education.

However, now that we have people from different places and with different ideas and religions working and studying together, we need to address a new challenge. How can the ICTs help build up a truly global community, based on the understanding, respect, and appreciation of cultural differences.

Such issues are already being addressed by the international higher education community, with varying degrees of success, and new programs and collaborations are already providing the first answers. Many others are possible.

A panel will discuss ongoing experiences and best practices, as well as what must still be done to face the challenges ahead.

*This session is organized jointly with the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC).*

**Chair**

**Imma Tubella**, *President, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC), Spain*

**Speakers**

**Bakary Diallo**, *Rector, African Virtual University, Kenya*

**Ana Perona-Fjeldstad**, *Executive Director, The European Wergeland Centre, Norway*

*Discussion*

16:00 Coffee/tea break

16:30 **Closing Plenary**

**Chair**

**Eva Egron-Polak**, *Secretary-General, International Association of Universities (IAU)*

**Closing remarks**

**Juan Ramón de la Fuente**, *President, International Association of Universities (IAU)*

**Walid Moussa**, *President, Notre Dame University – Louaize, Lebanon*

Evening **Cultural Evening**

Visit of the Jeita Grotto and Concert