

A watercolor-style map of the African continent is the background of the entire page. The map is rendered in various colors: red, purple, blue, yellow, orange, and green, with a soft, painterly texture. The map is centered and occupies most of the frame.

CALL FOR PAPERS

FAITHS AND (IN)SECURITY  
IN AFRICA

JULY 4 – 8, 2016

ST PAUL'S UNIVERSITY, KENYA  
CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS IN EASTLEIGH

## FAITHS AND (IN)SECURITY IN AFRICA: AN INTRODUCTION

The last decade has seen growing prominence of religious groups in local and translocal conflicts that pit them against states or members of rival ethno-religious traditions (Gort, Jansen and Vroom, 2002). In an increasingly secularizing world, the resurgence of religion at the centre of local and international conflict is both interesting and worrying. From the clashes between rival religious groups in Central Africa Republic, to protracted skirmishes and kidnapping by Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria, to sieges and bombings by Al-Shabaab in East Africa to large scale civil wars by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), to numerous other similar examples in almost all continents, the need to interrogate the place of religion in global conflicts as both causes and potential part of solutions is more than urgent.

In a mediatized world, peoples and ideas flow between regions providing religious groups with capacities to reach out to co-religionists across national borders, hence challenging a traditional understanding of security where the state deter external threats (Haynes,2012)). Groups across the world in zones of conflicts master convincing

narratives, appealing ideological discourses and enticing benefits in the world 'Here and Now' and 'the Hereafter'. Many governments across the world have enacted legislations that are geared towards curbing acts of terrorism often associated with breach of peace and security by religiously-motivated political groups. The use/abuse of powers by state machineries targeting members of specific traditions under the rubric of fighting terror has also been cited in a number of countries as infringing on human rights and freedoms (Wilson, 2005). There also has been heightened strained interfaith and intrafaith relations within individual countries and regions especially in Europe, the Middle East, East Africa and Nigeria.

On the other hand, there has been an increasing move towards interfaith alliances, for example, Doha International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue, United Religions Initiative, the Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations in Eastleigh (CCMRE), Coast Interfaith Council of Clerics among others and several intra-religious organizations e.g. National Council of Churches and Muslim organizations e.g. the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims(SUPKEM), that have played an increasing critical role in mediation and peace building process at national and transnational levels. In the world in which religious fundamentalism, conservatism, militancy, terrorism and radicalization have come to define the present day image of faith traditions, religion has also been viewed as an ally in reigning in insecurity, enhancing good governance, promoting inter-ethnic/faith cohesion and growing cordial citizen-state religions.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

As the issues of faith and securitization of every day in the world today is a multifaceted phenomena with implication on government policies, peace building, interfaith relation, human rights, war on terrorism, development among others, this call invites abstracts that address (though not limited to) the following key questions:

- What are the causes and manifestations of religiously-motivated violence?
- How have State agencies responded to protracted religious conflicts?
- How has media depicted issues of religion and security?
- How has the war on terror infringed/enhanced human rights of citizens within nation-states?
- Have religious actors been co-opted adequately in addressing the problems of security?
- How can theological education contribute towards understanding of relation between faith and security?
- What are the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that can help explain the intractable place of religious traditions and (in) security today?
- How have different humanities and social sciences framed and approached debates on faith and security?

This conference plans to bring together senior and junior academic scholars, religious specialists and practitioners, youth and women leaders, human rights advocates, security experts, persons with disability as well as St. Paul's University community and its environs to reflect on the above themes. As a model of multidisciplinary engaged interactions, the forum would be a delicate balance of academic discussions and grass-root based conversations on the place of faith traditions in relation to emergent issues of security and cordial co-existence.

## CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Conference registration fees of \$40 (local participants) and \$80 for international participants will be charged. Accommodation and meals will be available at affordable rates at Jumuia Resorts and St Paul's University Guest House, Limuru, Kenya. International participants who need a letter of invitation for visa processing should write to the Conference organizers to facilitate this. Also bookings for accommodation can be made in advance through the conference organizers.

Partial or full financial support would be availed to limited deserving presenters and participants. Should you require it, indicate it in the submitted documents.

The conference is organized by St. Paul's University, Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations in Eastleigh (CCMRE) in collaboration and with support of Candler School of Theology of

Emory University, the Danmission of Denmark, Egerton University, Kenya, the Volkswagen Foundation, Germany, Columbia Theological Seminary, USA and Radboud University, Netherlands.

Select academic papers from the conference would be published in a peer reviewed edited volume. In addition, conference output would be publicized in special edited reports and booklets for wider public. The conference will also be a platform for mutual engagement between and among faith-based actors and state/security forces. The conference is an initial part of wider process of engaged exchanges of ideas between academia, religious practitioners and related state and non-state agencies on the question of faith and (in) security in Africa.

## SUBMISSION DETAILS

We welcome papers that are both theoretical and empirical from disciplines such as theology, religious studies, political science, law, anthropology, social geography, sociology, media studies and related areas.

Kindly submit a 250-300 words abstract and a short bio-data by email to Dr Joseph Wandera [wandera@spu.ac.ke](mailto:wandera@spu.ac.ke), Coordinator Centre for Christian Muslim Relations in Eastleigh, Dr HalkanoWario, Postdoc Fellow Volkswagen Foundation [hwario@spu.ac.ke](mailto:hwario@spu.ac.ke) or Prof. Esther Mombo, Director International Partnerships and Alumni [mombo@spu.ac.ke](mailto:mombo@spu.ac.ke) by 30 November 2015.



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