



**Under the High patronage of the President of Ivory Coast**

## **« Peace in the mind of men and women »**

**CELEBRATION OF 25 YEARS OF THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE OF PEACE**

**LAUNCHING OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE NETWORK FOUNDATIONS AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS FOR THE PROMOTION OF A CULTURE OF PEACE IN AFRICA**

**YAMOOUSSOUKRO, 21-22-23 SEPTEMBER 2014**

Peace is reverence for life.

Peace is the most precious possession of humanity.

Peace is more than the end of armed conflict.

Peace is a mode of behaviour.

Peace is a deep-rooted commitment to the principles of liberty, justice, equality and solidarity among all human beings.

Peace is also a harmonious partnership of humankind with the environment.

Today, on the eve of the twenty-first century, peace is within our reach.

**Preamble of Yamoussoukro declaration on peace in the mind of men, 1989**

## **Introduction: the increased relevance of the concept of culture of peace in Africa**

Twenty-five years after the International Congress of UNESCO held in Yamoussoukro (Ivory Coast) on the theme "Peace in the minds of men", that gave birth in 1989 to the concept of culture of peace, the UNESCO and the Félix Houphouët-Boigny Foundation for peace research will jointly celebrate this anniversary in Yamoussoukro from 21 to 23 September 2014. This event, under the High patronage of the President of Ivory Coast, has two objectives, the first being to measure the progress made since 1989 geared towards the implementation of this concept and the second, to explore future avenues, in particular, by launching the activities of the Network of foundations and research institutions for the promotion of a culture of peace in Africa, established in September 2013 in Addis Ababa.

Over twenty-five years since the birth of the concept of culture of peace, UNESCO and its partners in Africa and around the world have spearheaded this renewed peace concept. In the framework of this movement, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the principle that the culture of peace consists "*of values, attitudes and behaviors that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, all human rights, tolerance and solidarity, that reject violence and strive to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation and that guarantee the full exercises of all rights and the means to participate fully in the development process of their society*"(United Nation General Assembly Resolution 52/13 1998).

Its promotion culminated with the proclamation by the United Nation General Assembly in 1999, the "Declaration and Program of Action for a Culture of Peace" (A/53/243) and the celebration of " the International year for the Culture of Peace " in 2000. This International Year was followed by the " International Decade for a culture of Non-violence and peace for the children of the World (2001 - 2010). " "The completion of this major Decade has given rise to a new dynamic concept of culture of peace, embodied particularly in the "intersectoral and interdisciplinary work program for a culture of peace and non-violence" adopted by the UNESCO for the period of 2011-2013.

Africa is actively contributing to the reinvigoration of efforts aimed at promoting a culture of peace. The adoption of an "Action for the Culture of Peace Plan" at the Pan-African Forum "Sources and resources for the culture of peace in Africa", organized jointly by the UNESCO and the African Union in March 2013 in Luanda, Angola, is emblematic in nature, just as the launch of networks and activities within the framework of the campaign of the African Union "Make Peace Happen / Make Peace" to "mobilize all partners - political, civil, military, citizens – in order for each to take their share of responsibility so that peace is realized or really consolidated". The first of its networks, created in September 2013 in Addis Ababa, is the "network of foundations and research institutions for the promotion of a culture of peace in Africa ", which will be followed by others, bringing together youth and women's organizations.

Subsequently, the UNESCO adopted in November 2013 an Operational strategy for Priority Africa with its six flagships programs that meet a requirement of peace building and pursuit of sustainable development, to be implemented in 2014-2017. Among these six programs is the flagship program entitled "Promoting a culture of peace and non-violence."

In light of these recent developments, reflecting on the aftermath of Yamoussoukro Congress is relevant, as it has marked a major turning point in the research for peace. While Inviting "States, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental, scientific, educational and cultural communities in the world, and all individuals to contribute to the construction of a new vision of peace by developing a culture of peace, on the basis of universal values of respect for life, freedom, justice, solidarity, tolerance, human rights and equality between women and men", the Yamoussoukro Declaration was adopted at the end of the Congress and has sketched new horizon for peace which is in line with developments in the world – see over and above to come (see Document 25 C/20 of the General Conference of the UNESCO in 1989 ).

The new impetus given to the concept of peace first reported that the Yamoussoukro Congress has defined peace as a "behaviour", "a deep commitment to human principles of freedom, justice, equality and solidarity among all human beings. "Giving a new meaning to the Constitution of the UNESCO and its emphasis on the need to build the defences of peace in the minds of men and women, the concept of culture of peace underlines the principle that peace is not only a responsibility of governments and international organizations, but also non-governmental organizations, communities, whether local or ethnic and religious and even individuals, men and women, youth and adults. This is a refined meaning of the very idea of cooperation produced by culture of peace by joining task of the states and societies and at all levels, international, regional, national or local.

This new understanding of peace as a behaviour, also innovated by pointing a responsibility shared by everyone, of vigilance against risks posed by an increasingly complex global environment, where new threats emerge, non-military, against peace. The birth of the concept of culture of peace accompanies indeed the awareness that the conflict is not limited to the canonical form of war interstate but includes forms directly related to internal contradictions faced by nations, societies and peoples, such as unemployment, lack of development, unequal sharing of natural resources, extreme poverty or environmental degradation. The richness of the culture of peace consist in updating feedback between these challenges and provide the principles of response that calls to the deepest resources of humanity, solidarity, democracy, respect for human rights and cultural diversity. Genuine gift of Africa to the world, the culture of peace is a positive pressing need of caring for others, formulated in line with the Charter of Manden when indicated "Let each watch on his neighbour."

### **Key issues and topics of discussions at the celebration of "Peace in the minds of men and women"**

The relevance of the concept of culture of peace is often foreseen as that one heavily marked by armed conflicts, civil wars, the use of violence, socio-economic inequalities, social exclusion, discrimination and intolerance. Twenty-five years after the Yamoussoukro Congress on "Peace in the mind of men," Africa is the new place of thinking and rethinking the culture of peace, as these challenges are inherent to the continent and has answers to them. That is the purpose of the celebration of "Peace in the minds of men and women" whose sense is at the same time retrospective and prospective. The participants will work to build bridges between the past, present and future, offering courses of action to meet the stakes and challenges of contemporary Africa, especially through innovative modalities corporation such as the implementation of the network involving actors coming from different background, including the civil society.

The activities will focus on the following:

**1. CELEBRATION OF THE 25 YEARS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON  
« PEACE IN THE MIND OF MEN » - YAMASSOUKRO – CÔTE D'IVOIRE 26 JUIN – 1  
JUILLET 1989**

Objectives :

- Celebrate the 25 years of the birth of culture of peace in the presence of the participants of the International Congress in 1989.
- Collect testimonies and make a roadmap of the program « Culture of Peace » experiences 25 years after its launching.
- Launch of the campaign for the promotion of culture of peace « Make Peace Happen in Côte d'Ivoire »
- Launch of the history project of Culture of Peace in the framework of the UNESCO's history project

**2. MEETING OF THE NETWORK FOUNDATION AND RESEACH INSTITUTION  
PROMOTING A CULTURE OF PEACE IN AFRICA**

Objectives :

- Define the modalities of cooperation and development of the networks (Status adoption/ rules, communication, financial research, ...)
- Elaborate an action plan for the work of the Network (2 years)
- Elaborate a strategy to involve the civil society and partners for the development and mobilization of resources.
- Develop common projects :
  - o Research actions on the endogenous mechanism of prevention and resolution of conflicts (community practice)
  - o Exchange between students and doctoral students on research project related to peace in Africa.
  - o History Project of culture of peace