CONTRIBUTION OF CONSORTIUM UNIVERSITY TOWARDS RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT, PEACE AND SECURITY: AFRICAN AND INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE BY PROF. GEORGE A. MAGOHA, VICE-CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

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1. Introduction
Collaborative approaches have become the norm for leveraging resources for development since resources are scarce. Collaboration through the establishment of a Consortium University is especially important for African nations, whose GPDs are comparatively low and subject to fluctuation depending on local, regional and global changes in the economy. Secondly, regional organizations such as IGAD bring together countries which share borders and resources, including movement of people across borders. This dynamic requires peace and security which can only be achieved through a common
understanding of related issues. Consequently, the conceptualization and establishment of a Consortium University has potential for providing a shared institution where pooled resources can be used for building careers on peace, security and development, as well as availing a platform for exchanging and sharing knowledge in this areas of research.

Apart from this introduction, this paper provides some conceptual thoughts on the planned Consortium university by highlighting its importance, followed by a discussion on African and international perspective of peace and security. It
will highlight on-going initiatives at the University of Nairobi that involve the collaborative programme with Kings College, London in the establishment of the African Leadership Centre. The paper uses this case to illustrate the importance of collaborative approach in addressing peace and security issues.

2. Conceptualising Consortium University
Consortium approach in responding to development issues is not new, although there is hardly any consortium university in Africa focusing on the theme of peace, security and development. Universities within the region, like many others
around the globe, focus on research and training. They generally hinge on two perspectives; relevant research which answers questions that directly contribute to development and knowledge generation which goes beyond answering specific research questions. Most universities grapple with perspectives, seeking to generate knowledge for its own sake but also zeroing to specific research issues that are relevant to society. One area that is of direct significance for society is in the areas of peace, security and development. The proposed IGAD Consortium University should address the challenges of peace, security and development facing the region
in order to generate knowledge for deeper understanding and management of the issues.

Consortiums of universities focusing on peace, security and development exist largely in the western world. This should provide a useful reference point for learning once the intended IGAD Consortium University is adequately conceptualized. Globalisation and related dynamics call for mutual interdependence which requires a network of collaboration and synergy. For example, the European Union (EU) principles of collaboration promotes interaction among universities and higher
learning institutions; facilitates students to study in other countries, respecting diversity in all forms; puts emphasis on life-long learning, creating flexible education pathways which allows learning and outlines structures of cooperation and ultimate goals.

Of particular mention is the EU 7th Framework Programme which focus on collaborative research, organization and management of collaborative science and technology programmes. The programme recognizes developing excellence through cooperation, networking and making universities
more attractive at international level. The Erasmus Mundus cooperation and mobility programme which many African universities, including the University of Nairobi have benefitted from is a programme to emulate as we think through the Consortium University. It is a cooperation and mobility programme steered by EU universities which are the main contracting bodies, charged with the responsibility of operating the programme. The aim of the programme is to enhance quality in EU higher education and promote inter-cultural understanding through cooperation with countries of the south. The programme has two schemes: a scholarship
scheme for graduates and senior scholars from the south which allows the two groups to go to Europe to participate in Erastus Mundus courses as students or lecturers; and a second aspect which aims at enhancing the international cooperation capacity of universities in the south by transferring knowledge and good practices in the field of student and academic staff mobility.

The European Union and the African Union are also collaborating on a Joint Research Centre (JRC). The cooperation aims at providing evidence based scientific and technical support to decision makers
as well as universities, research institutes and the scientific community at large. Areas of focus in this joint venture include conflict prevention, early warning, and sustainable development. The cooperation has assisted the AU Peace and Security Department to develop its capacity to monitor, gather and analyse up-to-date information relevant for decision making in the continent for peace and security. The cooperation further plans to develop early warning of conflict and socio political nature events.
2.1 The Importance of Consortium University

Efforts similar to those of EU collaborative programmes, including the Erasmus Mundus programme are only beginning to be initiated by African regional communities such as the IGAD. The consortium approach is indeed a panacea for leveraging resources, and undertaking tasks beyond the capacities of an individual or institution. It has potential of: (1) responding to on-going concern of Africa’s development; (2) pooling resources of diverse institutions which are already grounded in education and training with common interests; (3) producing scholars and practitioners who are able to address
peace, security and development challenges facing the region; (4) bridging the research policy nexus; and (5) providing opportunity for local, regional and global interaction.

The idea of a Consortium University falls within the three priority areas of IGAD which include conflict prevention and resolution and humanitarian affairs. Tied to this priority is the objective of expanding areas of regional cooperation, increasing the members’ dependency on one another and promoting policies of peace and stability in the region. All these goals aim at attaining food security, sustainable
environmental management and sustainable development. The aim of the Consortium is in tandem with the African Union (AU) vision which aims at achieving prosperous, peaceful and integrated continent, as well as AU priority areas which include peace, security and stability in Africa. AU Commission works with member states, regional economic bodies, United Nations, African Development Bank and other partners.

Peace and security are acknowledged pre-requisites for development. However, in terms of knowledge generation within universities and higher learning
institutions within Africa, development of skills in these areas is a recent phenomenon. Cementing knowledge generation within universities through consortiums is even more recent, and the IGAD Consortium University is likely to be first of its kind. Such a consortium has a key role in running joint programmes, training faculty and exchanging information and resources. This can also include processing of course cross-registration, joint academic initiatives and student and faculty borrowing of resource materials. These areas of engagement remain least exploited among African universities and higher learning institutions.
Realization of the planned consortium is likely to open up many others collaboration opportunities among regional universities and the entire African region.

Let me draw some comparative experience from the University of Nairobi which has a joint programme with Kings College London. The programme, established in 2010, focuses on providing peace, security and development fellowship for African scholars that lasts 18 months. The programme entails rigorous training which includes 12 months MA programme at Kings College London and an
attachment to an African university to undertake independent research project focusing on peace, security and development. The programme exposes junior African scholars to the complexities of security and development issues facing African continent, and provides young scholars with an opportunity to interact with key policy makers and practitioners in key organizations within the continent. Scaling up, this type of initiative through a larger consortium offered by IGAD bears hope for addressing peace, security and development issues facing Africa.

In 2008, the African Leadership Centre conducted a mapping study of academic institutions on the continent involved in the study of peace and security. In the Eastern African region, it found very few institutions that have an independent focus on this area of study. In particular, it found that only at Gulu University in Uganda and at the University of Rwanda are there serious initiatives in research and teaching in peace and security studies. Of course, there are some other minor initiatives across the
region that deal with aspects of peace and security studies. But each one of them is affiliated to departments and programmes that are not necessarily primarily focused on peace and security. The research found this to constitute a lacunae in the institutional anchoring of peace, security and development.

3.1 Some ongoing initiatives
The lacunae explains why the University of Nairobi, through the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with King’s College London in 2008 to formally establish the
African Leadership Centre in Nairobi as a joint programme focusing on research and training in peace and security studies. The Centre is involved in training young Africans at the MA level and at the postgraduate certificate level.

The core focus of the Centre is three-fold:

- a. providing fellowships to young Africans interested in the peace and security studies especially in the areas of conflict, security and development and in International Peace and Security. This year, the ALC launched two new courses in Security, Leadership and Society and in Leadership and
Development. Both the ALC and IDS are currently developing courses in peace and security and will shortly synergise them to enable them deliver the courses simultaneously in London and Nairobi through an E-Learning platform and to create a cadre of young MA students with adequate training in peace and security studies.

b. providing professional training courses to mid-career and senior public sector officials, military personnel and civil society actors. These trainings are run through collaborative programmes with relevant organizations working in the area of peace
and security. So far, the Centre has trained military personnel from a number of African countries at a session held in Rwanda and also in Nigeria, and for AMISOM staff involved in peacekeeping at a training held in Nairobi. The ALC has also trained female leaders from Ekiti State in Nigeria at a training held in Nairobi in 2012. This was done in collaboration with Ekiti State Government. While the UNITAR training focused on peace and security, Ekiti state training focused on women and leadership.
c. finally, the ALC programme also engages in policy dialogues around peace building. Not only does the ALC lead or contribute to the policy dialogues of the AU Panel of the Wise, it has engaged policy practitioners as a matter of practice to ensure that research is done and simultaneously shared with policy makers and practitioners. To this end, the ALC has signed MoUs with AU, ECOWAS and more recently with the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) programme of IGAD.
Gaps in ongoing initiatives and recommendations: Put together, the initiatives of the ALC and those of the other universities identified above are few and far in between. The demand for peace and security in Africa are many and overwhelming. The need for properly trained professionals in peace building, peace keeping and especially in mediation is urgent. However, our institutions of higher learning are very weakly provisioned to provide this manpower in adequate numbers. This was obvious in Kenya in the 2007 post-election violence where the dialogue to end the violence was dominated by foreign experts. It remains evident in many conflicts in the region
where local input is minimal. This gap in skills around peace building and mediation requires our urgent attention.

Second, what the above description of the work of the UoN through the partnership of the IDS/ALC suggests is that we need to develop networks of research that enhance our capacity to understand peace and security needs. We need networks because these are a useful way of quickly mobilizing research and of cumulating the diverse experiences of different researchers and organisations in dealing with emerging threats to peace and security. In the
area of peace and security studies, network have been helpful in bridging the gap between research and policy by ensuring that both are included in designing the research agenda, shaping the research process, sharing the research results and ensuring the active use of research results in policy making.

Third, our experience through the ALC shows that the UoN is able to lead the process of mobilizing researchers and policy practitioners in this area. It is also able to train young Africans in peace and security to be able to offer more professional contribution to peace building than before. However,
these processes need to be upscaled in the region in order to multiply impact. In its five years of existence, the ALC has been able to train over 70 young Africans and to put them into an alumni network where they act to reinforce each other’s competencies. Furthermore, we have been able to put some of these Africans in institutions where their skills are better utilized for peace building including within the UN system, in ECOWAS, IGAD and in a number of universities in Africa where they further their research. One University of Nairobi alumni, Njoki Wamai, recently won a major Fellowship to join Cambridge University for her Ph.D. studies.
Of course, we all are concerned about the dominance of foreign players and foreign paradigms in African security issues. We would like to see a co-equal relationship between local and foreign researchers and practitioners. The reason is simple: the dominance of foreign actors in African security issues has meant that peace building focuses on more formal and institutionalized mechanisms of peacekeeping. Unfortunately, these institutionalized mechanisms are trapped in idea that peace is kept only by or with the support of sovereign states. Where the sovereign state is the problem to its citizens, there are not yet clearly defined
mechanisms of dealing with the citizens outside the yet to be fully tested responsibility to protect approach. Thus, the assumption from an institutional perspective is that peace building is bound within the framework of formal organizations like the UN, AU, or related regional frameworks. But this formal approach does not touch close to two thirds of African countries where peace building is needed as an everyday exercise in managing tensions, some of which are yet to simmer into open conflict but which nevertheless continue to endanger the lives of communities and people.
This tension between institutional approaches to peace keeping (those sanctioned by formal institutions like the UN, AU, or sovereign governments with international acceptability), and non-institutionalized mechanisms that continue in our communities unnoticed represent an important research and policy gap that IGAD consortium on peace and security should deal with. Furthermore, there needs to be heavier investment in early warning systems and the mobilizing of political will to support the science that early warning represents. IGAD is more advanced in this than many regional groupings. CEWARN is indeed a useful initiative, but
CEWARN alone without the necessary leadership and political will has shown that early warning systems will not work as they are designed to.

4. Conclusions and recommendation for IGAD
In conclusion, let me reiterate some four points that are important. First, the consortium approach is an indispensable one for a regional initiative like the proposed one. It not only allows for leveraging on resources, both human and financial, but also helps draw the international connections that our professional endeavors demand. Second, that by its very nature, the consortium approach further directs
initiative and energy towards issues of development, peace and security that have not received as much attention from our universities and academics as their prevalence in society seems to demand. Thirdly, that given the dearth of institutions in Africa focusing on peace, security and development, the urgent need for deploying the IGAD framework to develop regional and international partnerships represents a bold and necessary initiative. Finally, the University of Nairobi, through its partnership with King’s College London in supporting the African Leadership Centre in Nairobi provides one model of proceeding with this urgent work.