

**Evropski centar
za mir i razvoj**
Terazije 41
11000 Beograd, Serbia

ECPD Headquarters

Attention:

Prof. Dr. Bela Balint
President of the National Council
for Higher Education
Nemanjina 22-26
11000 Belgrade

**European Center
for Peace and Development
Centre Européen
pour la Paix et le Développement
Centro Europeo
para la Paz y el Desarrollo
Европейский центр
мира и развития**



University for Peace established by the United Nations

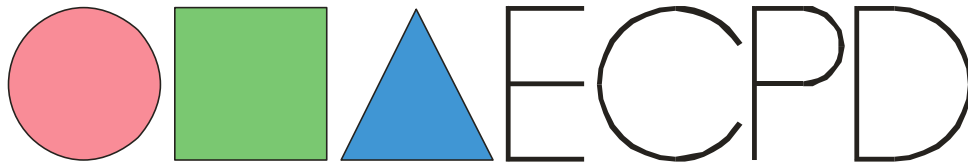
19 March 2021

Dear Mr. President,

We are writing to you as we find it necessary to inform you about the status, mandate and mission of the **European Center for Peace and Development UN University for Peace (ECPD)**. The direct cause for this letter comes from an allegation presented on the portal UCENTAR (*ucentar.rs*) that they received from the National Council for Higher Education “official and written response“ about the status of ECPD, which does not correspond to the facts.

You will find below the relevant information about the status of ECPD as an international, inter-governmental education and research organisation from the UN academic system.

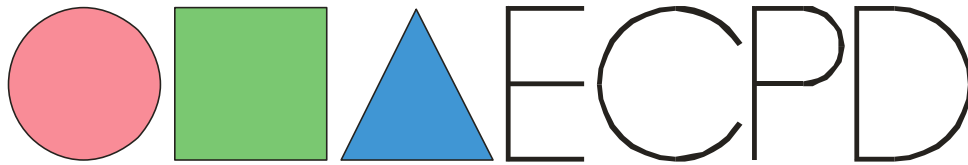
UN University for Peace was established in 1980 under the UN General Assembly Resolution no. 35/55. According to the Founding Charter, adopted by the UN General Assembly, the UN University for Peace is “an international institution of higher education for peace, with the aim to strengthen among all people the spirit of understanding, tolerance and peaceful coexistence, to encourage cooperation between nations and contribute to prevention and peaceful conflict resolution and development in the world, in the spirit of the United Nations Organisation Charter. The UN General Assembly entrusted the UN University for Peace with the mandate to deal with an important universal task of organizing education for peace, while focusing in education, research, postgraduate studies and dissemination of knowledge required for complete development of human personality and societies by applying an interdisciplinary approach to all peace-related issues”. ECPD UN University for Peace is an international, inter-governmental education and research organisation from the UN academic system, established according to the international Agreement concluded between the Government of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and UN University for Peace (“SFRY Official Gazette”– International Contracts, 9/85). We emphasize here international agreement because the same was registered as such with the Secretariat of the United Nations Organisation. According to this Agreement, the ECPD UN University for Peace “organizes and carries out



postgraduate studies at all levels, research and dissemination of knowledge contributing to the promotion of peace, development and international cooperation” (**Article 1, section 1, item a) of the said Agreement**). This Agreement was ratified on 15 July 1985 in the Assembly of SFR Yugoslavia, the highest **legislative body of the host country**, upon the agreements reached at all governments and assemblies of the republics and provinces, whereby in its entirety it became *lex specialis* and as such it is applicable today, which is supported by the fact that the ECPD UN University for Peace **has organised, without interruption, since its very foundation, postgraduate and doctoral studies carried out research projects and issued internationally recognised degrees.**

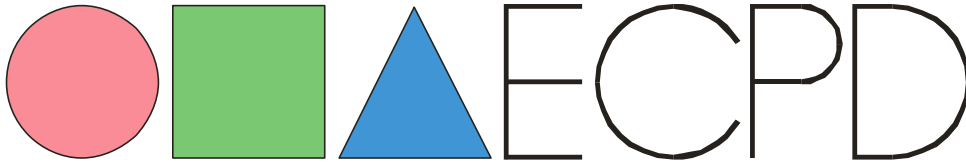
It should be noted that the ECPD UN University for Peace is a European institution of the UN University for Peace and operates in the territory of the Helsinki Europe (all signatory states of the Final Act of the Conference held in Helsinki in 1975). **University for Peace and ECPD as its European affiliate**, are granted, *inter alia*, an authorization of the **UN General Assembly**, “**to award diplomas at all levels of postgraduate studies, including doctorates**”. This unique authorization to award academic degrees, **recognized by all member countries of the United Nations General Assembly**, has been the basis of the work of the UN University for Peace and ECPD ever since their establishment. According to the above-mentioned, ECPD UN University for Peace has **an international authorisation and mandate** to carry out its study programs in all UN member states. The UN University for Peace and ECPD have performed this mandate for 40 years by carrying out international education, postgraduate programs at specialist, master’s and PhD levels, as well as research and training programs and dissemination of knowledge, fundamental to the full peaceful development of societies and individuals. Building on the strength of this unique and universal international mandate, the UN University for Peace and ECPD have established the **International Academic Council**, confirmed by the **UN General Assembly** and composed of high-ranking UN officials and distinguished scientists from around the world, to review, validate and ensure the highest **academic standards** of their programs and courses. The unique multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural approach of the UN University for Peace and ECPD draw upon the best pedagogical and educational practices in the fields related to peace and development studies. In addition, the UN University for Peace and ECPD continuously expand their academic reach through partnerships with appropriate specialised institutions from the UN system and the leading universities in all geographic regions.

We would like to mention that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia as ECPD’S host country confirmed in its Notes in 2006, 2007 and then in 2019 by Note no. 3625/19 implementation, that is, **continuity of validity** of the mentioned **International Agreement** on the Establishment and Mission of ECPD UN University for Peace. The Note states the following:



“Pursuant to the provisions of the Agreement, as well as the Conclusion of the Federal Executive Council of the SFRY dated 2 February 1989 on the registration of the International Regional European Center for Peace and Development University for Peace of the United Nations as a foreign representation with diplomatic status under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961), the **Center has been registered at the Diplomatic Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia and has been operating continuously as a foreign representation. The provisions of Article 1 of the mentioned Agreement define the tasks of the Center in the sense that it “organizes and conducts appropriate postgraduate studies, research and dissemination of knowledge that contribute to the promotion of peace, development and international cooperation”. Based on the character and contents of the founding agreement as a starting point, ECPD as a European part of the UN University for Peace enjoys international, extraterritorial and diplomatic status and as such has a *sui generis* position; it is neither a state or private university, but an international, inter-governmental education and science-research institution and since it is a supranational institution, it may not be liable to accreditation and licencing procedures by any national institutions in any country whatsoever.** Therefore, for that reason, **ECPD UN University for Peace** has never applied for or can apply for accreditation according to the national legislation in any of the countries where it conducts its study programs. If **ECPD UN University for Peace** ever applied for such national accreditation, it would lose its **international status** and would bring into question its **international mandate and mission** for which purpose the institution was established by the UN General Assembly Resolution no. 35/55.

It is important to mention that **diplomas of the European Center for Peace and Development UN University for Peace are recognised in all UN member states, including the Republic of Serbia and all countries created in the territory of former Yugoslavia.** Namely, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia (host country) confirmed in its Notes dated 16/11/1999 and 17/03/2014 that it recognizes diplomas issued by ECPD UN University for Peace without equivalence and validation procedures. Below is the quote from the 1999 Note: “...we would like to inform you that the diplomas on acquiring postgraduate studies degrees, certificates on concluding international specialist seminars, courses and other forms of postgraduate professional advanced training, issued by ECPD UN University for Peace in the Republic of Serbia are legally valid without equivalence and validation procedures” and from the 2014 Note: “According to the mentioned Agreement, i.e. international agreement which has legal effect in the Republic of Serbia, the European Center for Peace and Development of the University for Peace established by the United Nations has the right to carry out all forms and levels of postgraduate studies and issue diplomas on the completed studies which this Ministry considers to be recognized”.



Given the above-mentioned, we would like to emphasize that you have overlooked the **sui generis international status of ECPD UN University for Peace**, which is supported by all relevant documents enclosed hereto. In that regard, we kindly expect the National Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Serbia to provide true and complete information about ECPD UN University for Peace in order to avoid any unnecessary misunderstanding and dilemmas in public, including our present and potential candidates of international postgraduate and doctoral studies.

We remain available for any further information you may need.

Sincerely yours,

President
ECPD Academic Council



Prof. Dr. Don Wallace
(President of the International Law Institute
Washington D.C.)

Copies:

Mr. Branko Ružić

*Minister of Education, Science and Technological Development
of the Republic of Serbia*

H.E. Mr. Nikola Selaković

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia

Prof. Dr. Francisco Rojas Aravena

Rector of the United Nations University for Peace

Prof. Dr. Federico Mayor Zaragoza

President of the ECPD Council

H.E. Yasushi Akashi

Honorary President of the ECPD Council