

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

ECPD Headquarters

Attention:

Mr. Branko Ružić
Minister of Education, Science and
Technological Development of Serbia
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**



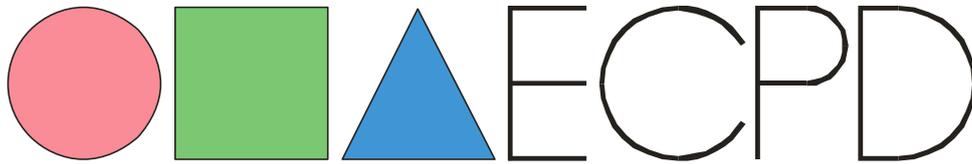
University for Peace established by the United Nations

Belgrade, 22 March 2021

Dear Mr. Minister,

The European Center for Peace and Development UN University for Peace (ECPD) has the honour to draw to your attention certain misunderstandings that have recently arisen about its status, mandate and mission within the UN academic system. In that connection we take the liberty to provide some information about the ECPD UN University for Peace.

The UN University for Peace was established in 1980 under the UN General Assembly Resolution no. 35/55. **According to the Founding Charter, the University 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 mission to deal with an important** universal task of organizing education for peace, while focusing on 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”. The ECPD UN University for Peace is an international, inter-governmental education and research organisation within 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**). This is an ‘international agreement’ **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, **after the agreements were reached in all governments and assemblies of the republics and provinces], becoming *lex specialis* in force and**

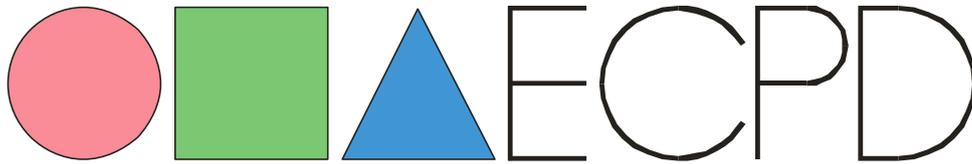


applicable to this day. Accordingly, the ECPD UN University for Peace has organised, **without interruption, since its foundation**, postgraduate and doctoral studies, carried out research projects **and issued** internationally recognised degrees.

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 (in all signatory states of the Final Act of the Conference held in Helsinki in 1975). The **University for Peace and ECPD as its European affiliate** are authorised, by the **UN General Assembly**, “**to award diplomas at all levels of postgraduate studies, including doctorates**”. This **authorization t**, has been the basis of the work of the UN University for Peace and ECPD ever since their establishment. 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. The UN University for Peace and ECPD have established the **International Academic Council, approved by the UN General Assembly** and composed of most prominent academics from around the world to review, validate and ensure the highest **academic standards** of their programs. 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 University for Peace and ECPD as its European affiliate continuously expand their academic reach through partnerships with appropriate specialised institutions from the UN system and the leading universities in all geographic regions.

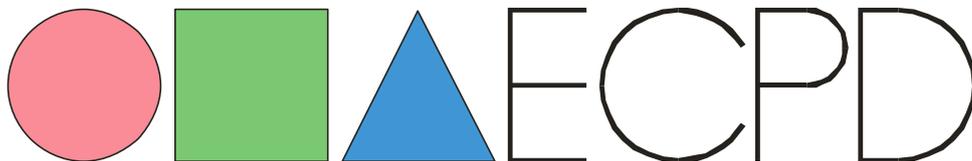
Over the past years, our colleagues (including the two of us) from the UN University for Peace and ECPD have had several meetings with your predecessors in which all issues defined in the Founding Act (“SFRY Official Gazette, 26 July 1985 were clarified. In that connection, the Rector of the UN University for Peace, H.E. Prof. Dr. John Maresca sent a letter to the Minister of Education, Science and Technological Development of Serbia on 16 November 2012 with copies of relevant UN General Assembly resolutions enclosed and afterwards also paid an official visit to the then Minister of Education, Science and Technological Development and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

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, 2017 and in 2019 by Note no. 3625/19 the **continued validity** of the above-mentioned **International Agreement (“SFRY Official Gazette”, 9/85) The 2019 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 at all levels, 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 the 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”.

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.** The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, as our host country, confirmed in its Notes dated 16/11/1999 and 17/03/2014 that it recognizes in continuity diplomas issued by the 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 the 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”.



Our international status is **sui generis and as such unchallengeable**. Given these facts, we will be grateful that in the future no more untrue information or incorrect answers be given to potential candidates of ECPD international postgraduate and PhD studies and media representatives. We will appreciate it if the Ministry under your leadership will continue, in the light of the long-standing good cooperation between the ECPD UN University for Peace and the Ministry of Education of Serbia, to recognise diplomas issued by the **ECPD UN University for Peace** as valid, without equivalence and recognition procedure.

We would also kindly request that the information about the ECPD UN University for Peace be posted again on the website of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, as it was the case for many years in the past .

We remain fully available for any further information you may need. We will be happy to visit you and your colleagues at any time as soon as epidemiological situation improves fairly enough. In the meantime, we are open for communication via zoom or Skype at any time you find convenient.

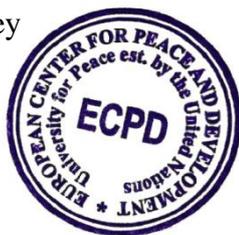
Sincerely yours,

President of the ECPD Executive Board

Prof. Dr. Jonathan Bradley

President of the ECPD Academic Council

Prof. Dr. Don Wallace



Enclosures: - as mentioned above

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