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**SENATE INQUIRY INTO AUSTRALIA'S INVOLVEMENT IN PEACEKEEPING
OPERATIONS**

Re the training of Australians likely to participate in peacekeeping operations

In August 2007 the Australian Government's Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education funded a one year project for the *Professionalization of Peace Education through Wiki, Networking and Innovative Teaching Methods*.

This project brings together a Consortium of Universities and of stakeholders in peace education. The stakeholders are broadly defined as the potential or actual employers of people engaged in peace studies from the defence forces and police through to members of government departments and NGOs engaged in activities associated with peace building. At the core of the Consortium are the four main peace studies Centres based at the University of New England, the University of Queensland, the University of Sydney, and more diffusely within the Australian National University. However academic membership of the Consortium is open to any academic based in Australia who is engaged in teaching and/or research on peace studies which are widely defined to cover the full gamut of areas such as the application of human rights law; genocide studies; defence studies; strategic studies; conciliation etc. I am formally the Project Director but we work collaboratively within the Consortium and are very open to suggestions from members and well-wishers. We have already canvassed a broad range of stakeholders to ensure that their views are taken on board and we will be further expanding this canvassing, for example, following up on points raised by those who have given evidence before the Senate Inquiry into Australia's Involvement in Peacekeeping Operations. A selection of the stakeholders will be members of our advisor panels.

The aim of the project is to develop a network of peace studies' educators by creating a sustainable community of best practice based on a continuing investigation of issues of concern, needs and priorities of peace studies and its delivery within and in association with the higher education sector. We will endeavour to gauge the impact of effective learning outcomes within the discipline especially for those who are professionally

engaged in the discipline but also for those who have a more general interest. For example there is considerable evidence from around the world (including from the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre in Canada and United Nations training exercises) that peace studies is an area where problem based learning and using a range of case studies is highly effective in engaging deeper learning and the development of practical skills.

The reasons for the project's focus on ICT-technology such as the use of the wiki is threefold. Firstly, we want to have an interactive process – one institution, one person puts forward a view and others comment and improve upon the statement with the benefit of additional insights and information. This is the way in which government report writers often work but is somewhat unfamiliar in academic circles (where, for example, only 6% of all history texts and articles have more than one author). Secondly, this is an area where information and materials become dated very rapidly and where new insights are constantly emerging. Internet materials can be both readily changed and readily shared for collaborative work on ensuring their accuracy and practical value. For example, it is possible to draw on United Nations and national sources to examine governmental and NGO developments with regard to the responsibility to protect and to keep such information current and annotated with commentary on the on-going debate. Finally, the technology makes it possible to overcome the tyranny of distance, both across Australia, and for the many distance students who can continue to study even whilst overseas on missions.

As a discipline, those involved in peace studies are unusually committed to promoting teaching and learning as well as to research. This is because those who study peace tend to believe that their discipline can have some impact on the world and therefore are highly motivated to teach as effectively as possible. Peace studies is by its nature a collaborative enterprise, built upon the conviction that there is a scientific basis to the achievement and maintenance of peaceful outcomes, usually undertaken by people with a practical interest in improving outcomes in the field. Lecturers in peace studies tend to have a geographical focus so that a national network can offer a wide range of specialist expertise in areas where knowledge of the local culture can be vital. Peace studies is more concerned with battlefields and refugee camps than ivory towers which means that lecturers can usually draw upon their own practical experience as soldiers, diplomats, lawyers, aid/development/community workers etc. in their teaching.

The Consortium's investigation strategy will focus on firstly, creating a complete and sustainable current listing of those involved in the field as teachers plus major stakeholders from outside the university sector (that is those in defence etc. who employ professionals on peace operations); secondly, meeting to create a common vision of who should be involved and what should be the first priorities for teaching advances and enhancements within the discipline. This will include the discussion of the range of competencies to be developed by students. The third objective is to initiate an exploration of the use of innovative teaching and learning strategies appropriate for peace studies in the new millennium. An example would be working on how to make a broad range of interactive case studies available to students.

Compiling a listing of those involved in teaching and researching in the area of peace studies is a vital first step. Whilst some peace academics work in the four major peace studies centres, the majority are engaged elsewhere, often in very different disciplines such as law, strategic studies, international relations, geography, history, anthropology etc. Just looking at the backgrounds of academics who have made submissions to the Senate Inquiry, whilst they cover areas such as law, strategic studies, history and governance none actually has a reference to peace in their title. At present there is no Australian peace studies association through which experts can be contacted (although many Australians would belong to international and regional peace research and promotion organizations).

The fact that it is currently difficult to track down the experts has many practical applications. For example Federal government departments tend to talk to the ANU because they are close at hand, and the ADF Peacekeeping Centre at Williamstown find it difficult to know who they should be talking with (although they did invite Professor Ware to present at this year's International Peace Operations Seminar – an experience which was hopefully equally rewarding on both sides).

This Senate Inquiry has highlighted the need to know what is being done internationally in terms of the professional training of those engaged in Peace Operations. One of the virtues of the wiki format is that it can be used to write draft reports which are then opened up for public discussion. The consortium intends to create a draft statement on the training available for professional peace workers around the world which will go beyond a simple listing to giving information on the subject focus of the training and the theory and ideology behind it. Examples of the centres which would be covered include both centres within the military context and those which are more independent such as the Institute for the International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict, (IFHV) at Ruhr-Universitat-Bochum, Germany); the Austrian Peace Centre in Stadt Schläining; The Clingendael Institute of International Relations in the Netherlands; the Bradford University Peace Studies Centre in England; the Folke Bernadette Academy/Sewdish Armed Forces International Centre (SWEDINT) in Sweden; the European Union Institute for Security Studies and the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute in the United States. We would be seeking comments and suggestions of additional teaching focused centres to examine from the centres we contact. In general, especially in Europe and the United States, there are many more peace centres which are engaged in research than are involved in training.

Another feature of the wiki will be a constantly updated e-bibliography of peace studies relevant to the neighbouring region and to Australia's broader engagements and of research underway. This will extend beyond academic works to include background studies by NGOs, evaluation reports and so forth. It will thus be possible, for example, to see who in Australia has written on Darfur and who is currently working on Afghanistan. The emphasis will be on practical utility rather than academic purity or total inclusiveness although we will endeavour to provide full coverage of work on the Pacific Island countries especially by Islanders themselves (which, unfortunately, is not very extensive).

The Consortium is not yet in a position to have developed a common view on the training and preparedness of Australians likely to participate in peacekeeping operations.

Professor Ware 's Personal View

As someone who has reviewed the ups and downs of the history of peace studies in Australia Professor Ware would like to make a couple of points in her personal capacity. Firstly, proponents of a fully independent centre need to understand that the Canadian Pearson Peacekeeping Centre is having continued difficulties in securing funds – this is despite excellent performance recognized around the world, and the fact that 69% of Canadians believe that peacekeeping is an essential characteristic of the country and that its disappearance would fundamentally alter Canada's nature. History shows that independent government funded peace centres are very much exposed to the political winds of change and frequently die in the midst of useful service. Such centres need an enduring institutional base and powerful champions who will ensure their survival through successive changes of government. A base within defence could have much to commend it if defence culture were to start to give peacekeeping training and policy work rather more attention in the allocation of resources [say a fixed 0.1% of the annual defence budget] and if defence could host a regional centre jointly with the AFP and AusAID. Wherever the centre is to be located, the vital element is that it should be somewhere where academics and military, police and NGO practitioners from Australia and across the Pacific region should feel comfortable as short or longer term visitors in a culture that encourages the free and frank exchange of views. This would appear to preclude a site where the checking of security passes is a constant requirement.

We trust that the information provided here clarifies the role of the Carrick Project and of our consortium. We would be very happy to answer any questions you may have.

Yours sincerely,

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