

ANOTHER ROUTE TO PEACE

CALL FOR SIGNING OF THE PETITION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PROPER UNITED NATIONS BODY RESPONSIBLE FOR INTERRELIGIOUS AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

PETITION

It has now been a little more than one year since the initiative was taken by Professor Albert Tévoédjrè – an African scholar, a Beninois political figure, President and founder of the Pan-African Social Prospects Centre (CPPS), former special representative of the UN Secretary General in Côte d'Ivoire – and other prominent experts from diverse fields (including culture and social engagement) and with varied professional experiences agreed to foster international support for the **African Education Initiative for Peace and Development through Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue**.

In light of the tragic impasse of military response to the terrorist threat that plunges our planet into mourning every day, these figures have agreed to offer their experience, their reputation and their lucid generosity with the aim of sharing intelligence and knowledge in the interest of public safety. In each country, they want a unifying focal point of creative energies to stand out and to shine, thus helping the African Initiative become a new chain of human security that goes beyond short-lived survival and defence operations. Other figures in the fight for human life will be welcome to help build the resolute and powerful network of engineers expected to come forth from this credible peace-bringing mechanism that will operate through collective and communal action, responding to the immediate needs of populations.

Through this movement, we wish to connect this initiative to citizens of the world who are fuelled by the same desire for peace and living together despite our differences.

The objective is to collect as many signatures as possible in Africa and across the globe to get the UN Secretary General to act by creating **an appropriate federative structure for interreligious and intercultural dialogue for peace to:**

Remit of the structure

- Create a framework for interreligious and intercultural dialogue within the Member countries;
- Promote meetings between young people from diverse socio-cultural and religious backgrounds to facilitate and strengthen the mechanisms of “living together”;
- Create a network of focal points in each country and give priority to joint actions for development with have been established and administered by inter-religious and intercultural groups;
- Develop joint social innovation projects, based on interreligious and intercultural dialogue which, within each country of African and the world, will culminate in a common minimum level of social development for all citizens;
- Increase the number of training centres and university institutions specifically focused on interreligious and intercultural dialogue specifically dedicated to joint actions of inclusive development;
- Contribute to the shaping of the proposal for an international day for interreligious and intercultural dialogue to foster development.

Appeal made in Cotonou, Benin, on Sunday, 3 July 2016

We are pleased to count you among the signatories of this petition.

TO SIGN THIS PETITION YOU MUST REGISTER YOURSELF ON THE LIST BELOW AND LEAVE
YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS (in place of a signature)

LIST OF SIGNATORIES

NAME & SURNAME	COUNTRY	EMAIL ADDRESS
Ousmane ALEDJI	Benin	ousaledji@yahoo.fr

What they said:

“Violent extremism is not a North-South or East-West problem.” It is not confined to a region or a specific religion. It transcends borders and is present throughout the world. It is not the religion that commits violence; it is men. We must promote dialogue as an antidote against sectarian tension.

We must address the issues that allow violent extremists to attract new recruits by acting together more vigorously to put an end to inequality, poverty and lack of opportunities, which together produce the main breeding ground for recruitment by extremists.

Missiles may kill terrorists. But I am convinced that only good governance founded on dialogue for "living together" will kill terrorism.”

BAN KI MOON, Secretary General of the United Nations (South-Korea)

“Faced with the impossibility of placing a soldier behind each citizen to guarantee his or her safety, the only credible, sustainable (and essential) option is to strengthen all the mechanisms that enable us to LIVE TOGETHER, despite all our differences. The mobilisation around the African Initiative for an educational culture of peace through dialogue and joint development action will serve to ensure public safety.”

ALBERT TÉVOÉDJRÈ (Frère Melchior) Benin

STRONG INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

Prominent figures from various cultural backgrounds, with diverse social engagement and professional experiences have agreed to provide international support for

ÍThe African Education Initiative for Peace and Development through Interreligious and Intercultural DialogueÎ .

AS AN INTRODUCTION,WE WANTED HIGHLIGHT THE EXCEPTIONAL SUPPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION OF FRANCOPHONIE BY SHARING SOME THOUGHTS FROM ITS LEADER:



Michaëlle Jean - Secretary General of the IOF in Paris on 6 June 2016

“Without security there is no stability, nor is growth possible. Without security the thriving of populations is compromised, all efforts made, all hopes, all the legitimate and just ambitions of humanity are placed under threat.

States and governments of the Francophonie, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Francophonie, our universities, our cities and municipalities, our institutional networks and civil society of the Francophonie – we all have reason to make concerted efforts to get involved in this critical issue.

Together, everything becomes possible. Because our collective success in terms of security influences everything else. Let us be very clear on this point; if we fail to protect our people, to secure our territories, we will not succeed at anything else. We will be unable to respond to the urgent need to provide our youth with a future, to

provide them with hope and trust in this future and offer an alternative to the deadly campaigns waged by these terrorist groups. We will be held accountable for our inability to guarantee human safety, to which all our populations have a right. It is a genuine revolution of the minds that we must work towards; break free from the blueprints of fear and powerlessness which keep us locked up every day in an ever restrictive straitjacket that only fosters inward-looking attitudes and narrow mindedness."

Other prominent figures from all continents have agreed to lend a helping hand.

lúṣ gun básanj



(Born on 5 March 1937) A Nigerian of Yoruba descent, he was a career soldier before serving twice as his nation's head of state, as a military ruler from 1976 to 1979 and as a democratically elected president from 1999 to 2007. He enlisted in the Nigerian Army in 1958, attending some training at Mons Officer Cadet School in Aldershot, in the United Kingdom. His military training also included periods in India and Ghana. From 1960-1961, he was deployed to the then Republic of Congo-Léopoldville (current DRC) as part of a unit of United Nations intervention troops. After returning home, he commanded the Army's 3 Marine Commando Division that effectively secured the

surrender of the secessionist Biafran state in January 1970. On 29 July 1975, he began serving as the second-in-command within the government, after Murtala Mohammed came to power in a bloodless coup. When the latter was killed on 13 February 1976, during a failed overthrow attempt, Abacha, then Chief of Army Staff, replaced him. He succeeded in transitioning rule of the country to democratic power, drawing up a new constitution and thus became the country's first military leader to voluntarily leave power, passing the reins of the country to Shehu Shagari, the first elected civilian president.

He retired from public affairs, and when the military regained power in 1983, he was neither involved nor did he give his approval for the overthrow of civilian power. Throughout the following years, he voiced his criticism of numerous human rights violations and of the widespread nepotism that existed in successive military governments. Under the Government of General Sani Abacha, in 1995, he was sentenced to life in prison for conspiracy. The sentence was commuted to 15 years under international pressure, and subsequently revoked upon the death of Abacha in June 1998. He states that he "found God" during his time in prison, becoming an evangelical Christian and he joined a Baptist church. He returned to the political arena under the banner of the People's Democratic Party and was triumphantly elected in 1999 with 62.6% of the votes against another Christian Yoruba man, Olu Falae. Paradoxically, his worst scores came from his home region, with local voters voicing their displeasure at power having been handed over to Muslim Hausas back in 1979 and having being subjugated to them ever since. However, his status as a born-again Christian is considered a political asset in other areas of the Christian south.

Nicéphore Dieudonné Soglo



Nicéphore Soglo is a Beninois politician, born on 29 November 1934 in Lomé (Togo). He was the president of the Republic of Benin from 4 April 1991 to 4 avril 1996.

After completing studies in economics at the University of Paris and the École Nationale D'Administration in France, he returned to Benin, (Former Dahomey). In February 1990, President Mathieu Kérékou suspended the Constitution of the Republic of Benin to deal with a popular movement, and set up a National Conference in Cotonou. On 12 March 1990, Soglo was appointed Prime Minister by the High Council for the Republic (HCR).

On 24 March 1991, he was elected president of the Republic at the first multiparty election since 1972. He won against the outgoing president Mathieu Kérékou with 67.73% of the vote. In 1992, his wife Rosine Soglo created the Benin Renaissance party and served as its president.

He married Rosine Soglo (née Vieyra) on 3 July 1958, and they have two sons: Lehady (born 18 December 1960) and Ganiou Soglo (born 4 November 1961).

In December 2002, he was elected Mayor of the city of Cotonou (economic capital of the country) and re-elected in 2008. In 2015, he retired from all political activity.

Koichiro Matsuura



1999-2009 Director-General of UNESCO (elected to a six-year term on 15 November 1999 and re-elected on 12 October 2005 for a second four-year term)

1998-1999 Chairperson, World Heritage Committee of UNESCO

1994-1999 Ambassador of Japan to France and concurrently to Andorra and Djibouti

1992-1994 Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs (Sherpa for Japan at the G-7 Summit)

1990-1992 Director-General, North American Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1988-1990 Director-General, Economic Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1985-1988 Consul General of Japan in Hong Kong

1982-1985 Successively Director of the General Affairs Division and Deputy Director-General of the Foreign Ministers' Office

1980-1982 Director of the Aid Policy Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

John Cardinal Onaiyekan,

Cardinal Onaiyekan, born 29 January 1944 in Kabba (now Kogi State, Nigeria), is a Catholic Bishop and Nigerian cardinal, firstly Bishop and then Archbishop of Abuja since 1992.



He was ordained as a priest on 3 August 1969 for the diocese of Lokoja. In October 1980, he was appointed member of the International Theological Commission.

On 10 September 1982, Jean-Paul II appointed him Titular Bishop of Thunusuda and Auxiliary Bishop of Ilorin. He was consecrated on the following 6 January by the Pope in person at St. Peter's Basilica. On 20 October he was appointed Bishop of the diocese.

He was transferred to Abuja on 7 July 1990 as Coadjutor Bishop. He became Bishop on 28 September 1992. On 26 March 1994, the diocese of Abuja was elevated to the rank of Metropolitan Archdiocese, and he became the first Archbishop.

From 2000 to 2006, he served as president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria. From 2003 to 2009, he was headed the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Anglophone West Africa.

From 2003 to 2007, he was president of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM).

His efforts for fostering dialogue between religions, and in particular between Christians and Muslims, in Africa in general and within Nigeria in particular, earned him the International Pax Christi prize in 2012.

On 24 October 2012, at the end of the General Audience, Benedict XVI announced that he would be making him and five other prelates cardinals, during a consistory which would take place on the following 24 November.

On 24 November 2012, Pope Benedict XVI presided over his fifth ordinary public consistory and creates made him a cardinal with the title of Cardinal-Priest of San Saturnino. He participated in the 2013 conclave which elected Pope Francis.

António Guterres



António Guterres served as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees from June 2005 to December 2015 and his name has been suggested as a candidate for the post of Secretary-General of the United Nations.

He was formerly the Prime Minister of Portugal from 1996 to 2002 and a Portuguese Member of Parliament between 1976 and 1983, and later between 1985 and 1995. He also was a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg between 1981 and 1983.

António Guterres graduated from the Instituto Superior Técnico (IST) School of engineering in Portugal, where he also started an academic career. Through the 1970s he worked in academia and was an Assistant Professor in the departments of physics and telecommunications.

He equally taught as a Visiting Professor at the Instituto Superior Técnico, where he was oversaw studies related to development and sustainable innovation.

In addition to his extensive political, professional and academic activities, which also include several publications, Antonio Guterres has also actively participated in several non-governmental organisations. For example, he was a founding member of the Portuguese Council for Refugees in 1991. He is also a member of the Club of Madrid and the Ibero-American Forum

Professor Jean Ziegler



Jean Ziegler is a Swiss politician, anti-globalist and sociologist. He has served as Special Rapporteur to the United Nations on the issue of the right to food across the world. He is the author of numerous books in which he analyses this particular issue. Since 2009, he has been a member of the Advisory Committee of the United Nations Human Rights Council. In 1970, Jean Ziegler facilitated communication between the PLO's head of foreign policy - Farouk Kaddoumi, - (at a time when the PLO frequently carried out terror operations) and the Federal Council member in charge of foreign affairs, Pierre Graber. An informal

agreement was reached. He worked as a Professor of Sociology at the University of Geneva until 2002, as well as at the University of the Sorbonne. He was elected to the municipal council (as a Social Democrat) for the city of Geneva from 1963 to 1967, served as a Member of the Swiss Federal Parliament (canton of Geneva) from 4 December 1967 to 27 November 1983, and from 30 November 1987 to 5 December 1999. He was the leader of Geneva's first Emmaus community. He met with Abbé Pierre in Paris in 1952

Saâdeddine El Othmani



Saâdeddine El Othmani is a psychiatrist and Moroccan politician of Islamic faith. He was born on 16 January 1956 in Inezgane, near the city of Agadir in the Souss region. He has written numerous books on psychology and Islamic law, and has been the editor-in-chief of many magazines and publications.

Following the parliamentary elections of 25 November 2011, giving victory to his Justice and Development Party (PJD), King Mohammed VI appointed him the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, a position he held from on 3 January 2012 until 10 October 2013.

In 2002, he became member of the Maghreb Council of the Shura (the Consultative Council of the Arab Maghreb Union).

Saadeddine El Othmani is from a prominent Amazigh family in Souss which, according to Mohamed Mokhtar Soussi, is ~~one~~ of the only two families in Morocco within which science has been ever-present for over a thousand years.+

After completing a Bachelor's degree in mathematics in 1976, Saadeddine El Othmani began medical studies in Casablanca, obtaining a doctorate in general medicine at the Faculty of Medicine within the University Hassan II in 1986, and a diploma of specialisation in Psychiatry in 1994. He also acquired a bachelor's law degree Islamic Law (Shari'a) in 1983, and then a master's degree in Islamic law from Dar al-Hadith al Hassania in 1987, followed by a higher diploma in Islamic studies in November 1999 from the Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences at the Université Mohammed V in Rabat.

Upon becoming a doctor of medicine in 1987, Saadine El Othmani began working as a general practitioner, and then from 1990, in pursuit of his medical studies, he also began practising as a doctor in psychiatry at the University Hospital in Casablanca. In 1994, he became a resident psychiatrist at the psychiatric hospital of Berrechid, staying there until 1997.

His career then shifted resolutely towards the politics, resulting in him taking on various responsibilities. Following the legislative elections of 1997, he became a member of parliament in Inezgane, his hometown, where he stayed until 2007. At the same time, he was the Vice-Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee in Parliament for the 2001-2002 period; he then became a member of the Maghreb Shura Council (Consultative Council of the Arab Maghreb Union) in 2002 and evolved within its political framework.

In January 1998, he became the Director of the Popular Democratic and Constitutional Movement (MPDC), born from a split of the Popular Movement (MP) party and the ~~ancestors~~ of the Justice and Development Party (PJD), Islamist Obedience; in December 1999, he became the Deputy Secretary-General of the PJD; and from 2004, after the political retirement of Abdelkrim Al Khatib (founder of the MPDC), he became its Secretary general.

At the 2008 party elections, where he did not put himself forward for Secretary-General, he was replaced by Abdelilah Benkirane, but he went on to win the Presidency of the National Council. He also became the Chairman of the international relations committee of the Party for Justice and Development.

Henriette Diabate



Henriette Diabaté, born on 13 March 1935 in Bingerville, is an Ivorian female politician. A professor of history at the University of Cocody in Abidjan, she held the position of Minister for Culture in 1990, within the cabinet of Félix Houphouët-Boigny, and then held the position of Minister of Justice in 2004, within the cabinet of Laurent Gbagbo. Since 1999, she has been Secretary General of the Rally of the Republicans (RDR) political party led by Alassane Ouattara. She is one of the founding members of the RDR party.

A group of the RDR leaders, including Diabaté, was arrested on 27 October 1999, due to their alleged responsibility for the violence which occurred during demonstrations organised by the party. In November, they were tried and given a prison sentence.

When the soldiers revolted on 23 December 1999, one of their demands was the release of the imprisoned RDR leaders. When President Henri Konan Bédié denied the requests, they seized power on 24 December and swiftly released the leaders of the RDR.

Diabaté held the post of Minister of Culture and Francophone Affairs in 2000 during the transitory military regime. She is married to Lamine Diabaté, a former state minister, and they have five children. On 18 May 2011, she was appointed Great Chancellor of the National Order of the Republic Of Côte d'Ivoire by President Alassane Ouattara.

Katherine Marshall



Katherine Marshall has worked for almost four decades on international development, with a focus on issues facing the world's poorest countries. She is a senior fellow at Georgetown's Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs and Professor of the Practice of Development, Conflict, and Religion in the School of Foreign Service. Her long career with the World Bank (1971-2006) involved a wide range of leadership assignments, many focused on Africa. From 2000-2006 her mandate covered ethics, values, and faith in development work, as counsellor to the World Bank's President. She was Country Director in the World Bank's Africa region, first for the Sahel region, then Southern Africa. She then led the Bank's work on

social policy and governance during the East Asia crisis years. She worked extensively on Eastern Africa and Latin America. As a long-time manager she was involved in many task forces and issues, among them exercises addressing leadership issues, conflict resolution, the role of women, and issues for values and ethics.

Ms. Marshall has been closely engaged in the creation and development of the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD) and is its Executive Director. She serves or has served on the Boards of several NGOs and advisory groups, including AVINA Americas, The International Shinto Foundation, the Niwano Peace Prize International Selection Committee, and the Opus Prize Foundation. She was part of the founding members of IDEA (International Development Ethics Association) and is part of the International Anti-Corruption Advisory Conference (IACC) advisory council. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. She served as a core group member of the Council of 100, an initiative of the World Economic Forum to advance understanding between the Islamic World and the West. She was a Trustee of Princeton University (2003-9). She co-moderated

the Fes Forum which is part of the Fes Festival of World Sacred Music from its inception. She speaks and publishes widely on issues for international development

Reckya Madougou



Reckya Madougou holds a degree in Business Engineering from the 'Institut supérieur européen de gestion in Lille (1998), as well as a degree from the Écoles des hautes études internationales of Paris.

She began her career as a sales director for the Benin branch of the carmaker, Volkswagen. In 2006, she founded her own consulting firm, International Key Consulting.

In 2008, she was appointed within Boni Yayi's government, firstly to the position of Adviser to the transitional authority for the regulation of the post and telecommunications, then as the Minister for Microfinance, Employment, Youth and Women, then as the Minister of Justice, Legislation and Human Rights,

and subsequently the Government spokesperson. Her time within Government from 2008 to 2013 all occurred under the Presidency of Boni Yayi. She previously worked in the private sector.

In August 2013, following the Patrice Talon case, Boni Yayi removed several ministers, including Reckya Madougou, suspected by the president for having communicated with Patrice Talon while she was on maternity leave in France. Valentin Djènonstin succeeded her in the position of Minister of Justice.

Since 2013, she has worked as an international expert in inclusive finance and development projects on behalf of some international agencies and African governments.

Awards and distinctions

1. 2007: Woman of Courage Award+bestowed by the U.S. Government.
2. 2014: Included among the 50 most influential Africans in the world according to *Jeune Afrique*.

Olivier Stirn



A member of the French Académie des sciences d'Outre-Mer, Olivier Stirn holds degrees from SciencesPo in Paris as well as higher degrees in public law and political science. He is the founder of the Social-Liberals movement and co-founder of the Social Democratic Crossroads (Carrefour social-démocrate) party (1977).

Chief of staff for the prefect of the Meuse region (1961-1964); then Chief of staff (1965) for Louis Jacquinot (Minister of State in charge of departments and overseas territories); for Jean Charbonnel (Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs & Cooperation) between 1966 and 1967; for Jacques Chirac (Secretary of State for Social Affairs, Responsible for Employment) between 1967 and 1968; he served as Secretary of State to the Minister in charge of Parliamentary relations (1973-1974) at the

Dom - Tom (1974-1978), then to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (1978), placed at the disposal of the Minister of defence (1980-1981). Deputy of Calvados (1981-1986), Deputy of the Manche (1986-1988), Delegate Minister for the French Overseas Territories (1988) and Tourism (1988-1990), Departmental Councillor for Calvados (1970-1988, 1994-2001); he was elected Mayor of Vire (1971), President of the Louis Harris Council (1990-1991), President of the Urban Community of Strasbourg (1989-1990), Ambassador, and the permanent representative of France to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg (1991-1993). International consultant (since 1993) and President of EOS Conseil international (1998-2001), he successively worked as an Adviser to *Rothschild & Cie* (1998-2001) and as Director of Collections at Éditions du Félin (since 2005). He founded and chaired the *Union centriste et républicaine* party (1984), then became a national delegate of the Socialist Party (1986) and a member of the national council for the left and the Forces du progrès (1987). He also acts as president of Dialogue 2000 (since 1988).

Advisor to the Presidency of the Republic on the relationship between the Union for the Mediterranean and the African Union (since 2009), Olivier Stirn was named an associate member of Édifice capital, an investment management company whose work is primarily focused in Africa and Asia.

Mussie Hailu

Ambassador Mussie Hailu is a peace activist who is working at national, regional and international



levels for peace, reconciliation, interfaith harmony, disarmament, the Golden Rule, world citizenship, right human relationships and international cooperation. He considers himself as a Citizen of the World and strongly believes in the interdependence of human beings and celebrates cultural diversity, seeing the differences in race, ethnicities, religions, politics, and nationalities as important elements of the one and indivisible humanity. He has served many national and international organizations including the United Nations. Currently he is the Regional Director of URI for Africa and representative of URI at the Economic Commission for Africa and African Union. He is a founding member of URI (United religion Initiative).

Ivanir dos Santos



Ivanir dos Santos was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1955. Son of Sandra Maria Ivanir dos Santos - a former field worker on the Goytacazes sugarcane plantations who moved to Rio de Janeiro to work as a domestic servant - and José Carmo Santos - an engineer.

He was born and raised in the slums where the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) now stands. His story is intertwined with the flags of the struggles for freedom, justice and the end to racism.

Babalao Ivanir dos Santos has been a tireless advocate of the constitutional right to religious freedom. In 2007, he attended the Inter-faith seminar and the 3rd march for life and religious freedom, which brought together 5,000 participants.

Against the increase in the practice of religious intolerance, he created the Commission for the struggle against religious intolerance. Ivanir dos Santos founded "March for the Defence of Religious Freedom". It is a landmark in the city, where more than 20,000 people walk along Copacabana beach (Forum of interreligious dialogue, bringing together representatives of African religions, the Catholic Church, Jews, Muslims, Presbyterians, Umbanda, Gypsies, among others).

The strength of this movement led to the president receiving a letter, on 20 November, from a religious commission led by Babalao Ivanir dos Santos demanding that the Head of State guarantee the secular nature of the Brazilian state.

Married and a father of five, Ivanir dos Santos grew up fighting inequality and fighting for a country where justice exists for all. Internationally known, he is a legitimate representative of the black Brazilian community.

Diango Cissoko



Diango Cissoko (born in 1948), is a Malian statesman who served as a transitional Prime Minister of Mali from December 2012 to September 2013.

He graduated from Mali's École nationale de l'administration (General administration Section), and also holds a doctorate in law from the University of Rouen.

He has taught at several prominent universities such as: École des Hautes Études Pratiques (EHEP), l'École nationale d'administration (ENA), l'École nationale d'ingénieurs (ENI), l'Institut de Gestion et de Langues Appliquées aux Métiers (IGLAM), le Centre de Formation et d'Appui Conseil pour le Développement local (DELTA-C), the University of Bamako.

He is author of several publications on the topics of general criminal law and penitentiary science, administrative writing, justice, civil service, administrative science, among others. His book entitled 'Rédaction administrative' (Administrative Writing), which was published in 2005, received the Institut de France's Baron Malouet academic prize for Academy of moral

and political sciences (2006).

He is a member of several international organisations, such as the International Institute for the freedom of expression and French Inspiration (IDEF), the International Civil Service Association and the Franco-African Working Group on governance in the South.

Valerie Stessin

Valerie Stessin is the first woman to be ordained as a conservative Rabbi in Israel, as well as the first woman to be ordained by the Schechter Institute of Jewish studies; she was ordained in 1993. Born in France, she was involved with the Bnei Akiva youth movement, but emigrated to Israel at the age of 17. In 2009, she and Rabbi Miriam Berkowitz founded Kashouvot, a Jerusalem-based organisation, the mission of which is to introduce chaplaincies (or pastoral care and spiritual support) in Israel and to provide health care and spiritual support in social services.



She was one of the few women to be actively involved in the success of the international symposium to launch The African Education Initiative for Peace and Development through Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, organised in Cotonou, Benin, from 26 to 28 May 2015.

VALENTIN AGON



Dr Valentin AGON, President of the Board of the Pan-African Social Prospects Centre(CPPS) wins the top spot for the 2016 Innovation Prize for Africa.

Last Thursday, the Beninois researcher, Dr Valentin AGON, inventor of the medicine API-PALU, won the 1st place in the 2016 Innovation Prize for Africa in Gaborone, Botswana. Dr Imogen Wright from South Africa took home 2nd prize while Nigerian national Dr Eddy Agbo was awarded the special prize for social impact. Both prizes were worth \$25,000.

Upon returning home on Saturday, the happy researcher from Benin was received at the airport by the Health Minister Alassane SEIDOU and a colleague from within higher education, Odile Atanasso who passed on the congratulations of the Head of State and who encouraged him to continue pursuing his research efforts. They took the opportunity to urge young researchers to build on this success story by investing more in research.

This prize of \$100,000, which is awarded to the best researchers on the continent, confirms that international recognition of this medicine made in Benin . API-PALU . as the African solution to malaria.

It should be noted that on May 9th the African Innovation Foundation (AIF) announced the last 10 finalists of its flagship programme, the Prize for Innovation in Africa (PIA). The PIA, which is celebrating its 5th anniversary under the theme of 'Made in Africa+', is a unique innovation initiative on the African continent. Created with the aim of stimulating economic growth and prosperity in Africa by favouring local solutions, the PIA offers the continent's best innovators the chance to win a \$150,000 prize, which also comes with other benefits.

THE SIGNS ARE CALLING OUT...

Rennes. A university degree against Islamist radicalisation?



20/06/2016 07:30 Rennes (Breizh-info.com) A university degree on religion, law and social life will be launched in September 2016 as part of the continuous education programme of the University of Rennes 1. And the least we can say about it is that its implementation in a period of growing Islam and increased Islamism in France as well as its content suggests the creation of a degree that will almost exclusively be catered to a Muslim audience.

Moreover, the French Committee for the prevention against radicalisation, violence and suicide in prison, founded by Mohamed Loueslati, a regional Muslim chaplain, welcomes the creation of this degree, which was conceived and set up by Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of the Interior following the Charlie Hebdo attacks.

In rather sharpened but long-winded language, the University states that, *“This course targets religious leaders, employees of cultural organisations, local authorities, people from the various public administrations (education sector, the healthcare field, the prison system, retirement homes), companies wishing to have a religious reference, members of various associations, students, and all those interested by the exercise of religious freedom in our secular society.”*

“This course responds to a request expressed by both the Government and various religious denominations. Within French society, many religions coexist. The purpose of the law, especially through the principle of secularism, is to ensure that people live together with respect for the freedom of conscience and the free exercise of religion. This course therefore aims to present this situation of plurality of religion, and especially shed light on the rules that enable us to live together.”

It will allow students to better understand the rights afforded to religions as guaranteed by law, particularly within companies, public services, public spaces or within individual relationships, explain those who run the course that “should enable graduates to offer themselves as religious advisers within companies or within management.”

Courses will be delivered from September to February, through each academic year.

In addition to the methodology, a part on law, ethics and religion will present different normative systems (law, ethics, religion), as well as the sources of law or the presentation of fundamental rights. A teaching unit will focus on “The State and religions” (the principle of secularism and the neutrality of the State and public services). We are still looking for outlier examples of the Catholic or Buddhist religion within public services ... It will also cover the issue of “the individual and the freedom of religion” at work, in personal life, in family life, and in the public sphere. Further topics to be covered include the rights of religious organisations, religious history in France, the sociology of religion and finally, an overview of the country’s 4 major religions: Catholicism, Islam, Judaism and Protestantism. Other religions will not be studied ...

It should be noted that this diploma - funded in part by the State, unlike other university degrees - already exists in other universities such as those of Lille, Bordeaux and Toulouse for example.

Peres suggests a “UN for religions”.

The former president of Israel, Shimon Peres, who was granted a private audience with Pope Francis at the Vatican on Thursday, said that he proposed the creation of a “United Nations of religions” given the ineffectiveness of current United Nations policy. “Today, wars break out and the main pretext is religion. “We are faced with hundreds, or even thousands of terrorist movements that claim to kill in the name of God”, said Shimon Peres, 91, in an interview with the Italian Catholic weekly magazine *Famiglia Cristiana*.

“To combat this abuses, we have of the United Nations. “It is a political institution, which does not have the armed forces to match those of countries nor the conviction that drives religion”, added the former Israeli president, whose term ended at the end of July 2014. “And so, noting that the United Nations has had its day, what would best serve us, is an organisation for united religions, a United Nations of religions. It would be the best way to fight the terrorists who kill in the name of faith!”, Shimon Peres further added.

ANSAR DINE

An international conference on Islam and peace was held in Dakar with the adoption of a declaration. This conference was organised by the Ansar Dine association, influential enough to obtain the participation of the Senegalese president, Macky Sall, and guests from around the world.

Ansar Dine must not be confused with the Malian Tuareg jihadist organisation. The organising association of this **Dakar conference** advocates an Islam of peace and progress. It was founded by Cheick Ibrahima Niass in 1940 in Kaolack, in the centre of Senegal. After being proclaimed as the spiritual heir of the founder of the Tij niyyah brotherhood, he was joined by a large number of faithful followers today known as the Niassenes. Ansar Dine is the humanitarian avatar of this marabout family that today claims tens of millions of supporters across the world, particularly in Nigeria where Cheick Ibrahim Niass had forged ties with the emir of Kano. Strong ties are still maintained through matrimonial relationships.

Ansar Dine is so influential in the North of Nigeria where **Boko Haram** is active and the association has declared itself available to help work for peace where if called upon. Cheick Mohamed Khouraihi Ibrahim Niass is president of Ansar Dine Senegal. He is also a member

of the coalition in power. *“We respect what Cheick Ibrahima Niass taught us, namely to not just do anything anywhere, to try to respect the laws in force in each place of the world”, he says. If tomorrow, Nigeria requests our family’s help, I think that we can mobilise and do our best.*”

WHAT MORE TO DO...?

AND WITH WHOM ?

“GO TO MY BROTHERS AND SAY TO THEM...!” (John 20:17)

The man who his compatriots liked to call “Professor Albert Tévoédjrè” prefers they address him differently. Ever since he served as a UN mediator in Côte d’Ivoire and ever since the publishing of a book titled “*Un frère parmi nous*” (A brother among us) by Venance Konan at the end of this mission,



Albert Tévoédjrè prefers to go by another name: “Frère Melchior”! (Brother Melchior) Melchior is in memory of the founder of the Society of African Missions (SMA), the missionary Institute that trained him and to which he never fails to pay tribute to. The education received turned this child from the depths of Africa into a Christian who gives thanks for being able to be a member of his country’s government many times over, for being a founder of the “contract of solidarity”, an Associate Professor of moral and political science at the Sorbonne University of Paris, and who stood alongside Stéphane Hessel, a great French figure in

the fight for freedom and human rights to receive the UNESCO “Universal Citizenship Passport” on 22 May 22 2013.

Brother Melchior is often surprised at how well his book (The poverty, wealth of the people) is received, thanks to the lucid generosity of Abbé Pierre. He was also surprised that the name of a child of peasants from Adjati could be remembered by HEC-Montréal as a leadership case worthy of attention (case No. 9402004038-“An African exception”)... And that the Centre for International Affairs of Harvard University has credited his efforts as conveyed within “Pan Africanism in action”.

The thanksgiving continued when he was invited to Rome in 1987 as auditor and rapporteur for the Synod of bishops on the vocation of non-clergy members, while he was concurrently the Assistant Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Director of the International Institute of Social Studies.

It was from this experience that divine Providence aimed to positively touch the largest number of people by fostering the spread of pedagogy and education - the appearance of a compass of hope through African Education Initiative for Peace and Development through Interreligious and

Intercultural Dialogue. "A movement for finding peace via another path, the path of working together for development in the name of the values of "consciousness in action".

The time has come to discover together that development is the new name for peace!



12 January 2006

Cote d'Ivoire: The right to read - "A brother among us", by Venance Konan: "To love is to act"

By Amour Gbovi

Having first appeared in the first quarter of 2005, "A brother among us: Albert Tévoédjrè contribution for a real way out of crisis in Côte d'Ivoire" is a 127-page document published by the Pan-African Social Prospects Centre (CPPS), where Venance Konan, journalist with daily newspaper "Fraternité Matin", takes a walk in the steps of this peacemaker to share the actions undertaken to ensure Côte d'Ivoire makes it out of a crisis. "A brother among us" is the second book of Venance Konan. Albert Tévoédjrè will leave behind him a life of devotion. That is for sure. Furthermore, he loves. This is what made him a man of action. He loves his African brothers. It was Victor Hugo who said that to love is to act. Professor Tévoédjrè "will engage fully in the resolution of the Ivorian crisis: As an African intellectual and president of the Pan-African Social Prospects Centre (CPPS), he and other African intellectuals, will try to contribute to a peaceful resolution in Côte d'Ivoire. For nearly two years, Albert Tévoédjrè will give body and soul to the Ivory Coast. For nearly two years, he will take blows from all sides. But for almost two years, with perseverance, stubbornness, and even with age, the eminent intellectual has pulled out all the stops to ensure peace returns to the land of old Houphouët. It should come as no surprise that Venance Konan dedicated this beautiful book to him. In "A brother among us: Albert Tévoédjrè contribution for a real way out of crisis in Côte d'Ivoire", the Ivorian journalist walks in the footsteps of this peacemaker to share the measures taken by the "Fox". For the author, his main sin is being ahead of his contemporaries.

WE ARE COUNTING ON YOU!

IF YOU WANT TO OFFER YOUR SUPPORT TO THE PAN-AFRICAN SOCIAL PROSPECTS CENTRE (CPPS)

YOU CAN DO SO WHICHEVER WAY SUITS YOU BEST:

- BY POST: BP 1501 PORTO- NOVO (Benin)
- BY TELEPHONE: 00229 20 22 44 26
- BY EMAIL: cpps.iat@gmail.com
- THROUGH THE FOLLOWING BANK ACCOUNT:
Bank OF AFRICA (BOA) Benin
INTERNATIONAL IDENTIFICATION
IBAN BJ66 BJ06 1010 0200 1911 3352 8208

THANK YOU!

