



WHITE PAPER

Cultural Geopolitics, Humanistic Technology and Spirituality: A Framework for Global Peace

White Paper of the Summer Peace University 2026

Summer Peace University 2026 · Belvedere Marittimo, Calabria · 5–16 October 2026

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About this White Paper

This White Paper gathers what the participants of the Summer Peace University 2026 (SPU26) wrote during and immediately after two weeks of lectures, workshops, diplomatic simulations and public forums held in Belvedere Marittimo, on the Tyrrhenian coast of Calabria, from 5 to 16 October 2026.

It is built on three bodies of text, all submitted by participants on the SPU learning platform:

- **three position papers** written specifically for the White Paper: on climate diplomacy (Moaz Eslam Hassan Ismail Mahmoud), on the ethics of technology (Seif Wael Metwally Mahdy Aboserawa) and on educational cooperation (Mohamed Ahmed Abdelrazek Mohamed Metwally), all three from May University in Cairo;
- **twenty Peace Memos** by nineteen participants, all but one written on 14 and 15 October at the end of the second week and filed by their authors under the five chapters of this document;
- **nine contributions to the SPU26 Artificial Intelligence Charter**. The Charter was proposed by Rania Mohamed Abdelmageed Abdelaziz in her workshop "Human Values, Ethics and Dialogue in the Era of Technical Innovation" on 12 October; the contributions were written after Nicola Leone's session "Artificial Intelligence and Human Responsibility" on 13 October.

The five chapters follow the five categories shared by the Peace Memo and the White Paper: Geopolitics, Power and Security; Climate Diplomacy and Shared Resources; Ethics of Technology and Information; Educational Cooperation; Global Citizenship, Cultures and Dialogue. Each chapter opens with the editorial framing of the question, then gives space to what participants wrote, and closes with recommendations. Where a recommendation comes from a named participant, the chapter says so.

Three editorial rules apply throughout. Quotations are reproduced as the participants wrote them, attributed by name and university; only evident typing errors have been corrected. Facts about the wider world are limited to what can be verified in the sources listed at the end. Where the editors add an interpretation of their own, the text presents it as such.

The material has limits that the reader should know. Contributions are uneven in length and depth: some Peace Memos run to a page, others to two sentences. The chapter on Geopolitics, Power and Security received no position paper, and the one on Educational Cooperation rests on two contributors. Most authors are Egyptian students, which gives the document a recognisable perspective and also a narrower one. These imbalances are visible in the chapters, and they have not been concealed.

The Programme in Brief

SPU26 ran for two weeks and 44 hours of activity, organised in two modules.

Week 1 (5–9 October): The Mediterranean as a Crossroads of Peace and Civilization. The week opened with the Oath of the Peacemakers and the keynote "The Mediterranean as a Bridge of Civilizations". Lectures covered sustainability and environmental security (Ahmed Elshazly), the dilemmas of peace between geopolitics, power and international order (Spartaco Pupo), information integrity and cognitive security in Egypt (Radwa Ibrahim Ali Hassan Ali), multipolarity and Indo-Pacific strategies (Amedeo Argentiero), and the principles of project management and peace project design (Przemyslaw Pawlak). Pavel Malyzhenkov introduced the three written outputs of the programme: the Peace Memo, the Local Peace Project and this White Paper. A diplomatic simulation, the Peace Lab, ran through the week and ended on 9 October with "The Mediterranean as a Laboratory of Coexistence", followed the same afternoon by the International Public Forum "The Sea Between Us: Peace and Cooperation in the Mediterranean".

Week 2 (12–16 October): Cultural Geopolitics, Humanistic Technology and Spirituality. The second week completed the Local Peace Project module and moved to the human side of technology and governance: the workshop "Human Values, Ethics and Dialogue in the Era of Technical Innovation" (Rania Mohamed Abdelmageed Abdelaziz), "Artificial Intelligence and Human Responsibility" (Nicola Leone), "Social Accountability: from Principles to Practice" (Shadwa Esmat Abdelkader Hassan), Peace Leadership Skills, "International Trade: Market Diversification and South-South Cooperation" (Ana Moran), the workshop "Art as a Universal Language" and the cultural lab "Food, Land and Memory: Gastronomic Diplomacy". The final Peace Lab, "The World Table: Narratives, Technology and the Future of Global Governance", took place on 16 October, and the programme closed that evening with the International Public Forum "New Global Equilibriums and the Future of Peace".

Alongside the White Paper, the participants designed twenty-four Local Peace Projects: twelve-month initiatives to be carried out in their own communities and followed by their universities. Several of the reflections quoted in the following chapters refer to those projects.

Chapter 1 · Geopolitics, Power and Security

1.1 The question

The classical vocabulary of geopolitics speaks of territory, military capability and competition between sovereign states. It took shape in the age of European empires, was inherited by the two blocs of the Cold War, and rests on the order of sovereign states that historians trace back to the Peace of Westphalia of 1648. That vocabulary still describes much of what happens in the world: the first week of SPU26, with its lectures on the dilemmas of international order and on multipolarity in the Indo-Pacific, made this plain. What the vocabulary describes less well is why states and communities perceive one another as they do, and what holds them together once a war is over.

The participants who wrote under this heading did not reject the language of power. They asked what it leaves out.

1.2 What the participants wrote

Kirollos Amir Fanous Atia Fanous (Galala University) opened his Peace Memo with a definition that several others echoed:

"Peace is not simply the absence of war; it is the presence of understanding, respect, and cooperation among people from different cultures and backgrounds. In a world shaped by cultural differences, political conflicts, and rapid technological development, we need to recognize our shared humanity and learn to live together peacefully."

He then separated the three terms of the week's title, assigning each a precise function: "Cultural geopolitics helps us understand how culture, identity, and beliefs influence relationships between nations and communities. Humanistic technology reminds us that technology should serve humanity, promote equality, and connect people rather than divide them. Spirituality encourages compassion, forgiveness, and inner peace, which are essential for building a more peaceful society."

Rawan Ayman Esmail Mohamed Abdelaziz (Galala University) went further and proposed a thesis:

"Traditionally, geopolitics has been driven by power dynamics, territorial disputes, and cultural divides. However, incorporating spirituality into this equation introduces a crucial dimension: shared human values such as compassion, justice, and empathy. These values transcend national borders and challenge the 'us versus them' narratives that often fuel conflict. [...] To achieve true and sustainable security, we must humanize our technology and spiritualize our geopolitical approaches."

Seif Wael Metwally Mahdy Aboserawa (May University in Cairo) gave the same idea a more analytical form, writing that "international relations are shaped not merely by economic or military power, but deeply by heritage, shared values, and narrative identities", and defined spirituality in terms that do not depend on any single faith: "a universal pursuit of compassion, inner peace, moral purpose, and mutual respect".

Malak Wael Ahmed Sadek and Mariam Mohamed Ashraf Anwar Megahed Zidan (both Galala University) summarised the week in two sentences each, placing empathy and tolerance at the centre. Mina Samir Hana Mikhail (Arab Open University Egypt) moved the argument from the international to the everyday: building peace "requires more than resolving conflicts; it also involves creating an environment where people feel respected, included, and encouraged to express their opinions."

The Peace Lab left its own trace. Abdallah Mohammed Abdallah Ali Aboabdallah (Arab Open University Egypt) wrote after the first week that his team did not accomplish the mission of the simulation, and that this was precisely what taught them: "we learnt a lot from our differences; discussions and negotiations made us hear each other better and be better at communicating our thoughts despite our differences."

1.3 Reading the contributions

Three ideas run through this chapter.

The first is that culture is part of the structure of international relations, not decoration on top of it. Identities, historical memories and narratives shape how a state defines its interests and reads the intentions of others. This is the core claim of the scholarly field known as critical or cultural geopolitics (Ó Tuathail and Dalby, 1998), and the participants reached it from their own experience of a multinational classroom.

The second is that security has to be measured on people as well as on states. The United Nations Development Programme formalised this in 1994 with the notion of human security, which covers economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security (UNDP, 1994). Rawan's phrase "human security from the ground up" belongs to this tradition. So does her Local Peace Project, which aims to empower young women through education and leadership in their communities.

The third idea is more demanding and less settled. It is that spirituality, understood as a set of shared values rather than as institutional religion, can change the way power is exercised. The editors note that this thesis is stated in the contributions more than it is argued. None of the texts explains how compassion would enter a negotiation over a border or a dam. The Peace Lab, where teams failed to reach agreement in spite of good intentions, showed how wide that gap is. The chapter therefore records the thesis as a direction of inquiry that the next edition of SPU could test, rather than as a conclusion.

1.4 Security as human security

The notion of human security entered international debate with the Human Development Report of 1994, which argued that for most people a feeling of insecurity "arises more from worries about daily life than from the dread of a cataclysmic world event". The report named seven dimensions: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security (UNDP, 1994). In 2003 the Commission on Human Security, co-chaired by Sadako Ogata and Amartya Sen, defined the goal as protecting "the vital core of all human lives" in ways that enhance freedom and fulfilment, and joined protection from above to the empowerment of people from below

(Commission on Human Security, 2003). In 2012 the UN General Assembly adopted a common understanding of the concept: the right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair, with an equal opportunity to enjoy their rights (United Nations General Assembly, 2012).

Three consequences follow, and the SPU26 contributions touch each of them.

The first is that the causes of conflict often lie in the conditions of daily life: poverty, exclusion, lack of opportunity, degraded land and water. Mohamed Ahmed Abdelrazek Mohamed Metwally (May University in Cairo) put it directly in his Peace Memo: "To achieve sustainable peace, we must address the root causes of global conflict by eradicating poverty through fair economic systems." The first lecture of the programme, on sustainability and environmental security, and Chapter 2 of this White Paper follow the environmental side of the same argument.

The second is that security includes empowerment as well as protection. People become more secure when they can take part in decisions that affect them. Rawan Ayman Esmail Mohamed Abdelaziz links her Local Peace Project to this: "My project aligns with this vision by empowering young women through education and leadership to promote peace and inclusion in their local communities." Fatmaelzahraa Amin Ibrahim Abdelrahman places health in the same frame when she writes that "access to safe medicines, reliable health information, and appropriate pharmaceutical care is essential to human well-being". Her reflection is discussed in Chapter 3.

The third is that human security does not replace the security of states. It changes the measure by which state security is judged. A policy that protects a border while impoverishing the population behind it does not meet the standard of human security. The editors note that the contributions state this principle without testing it against hard cases, such as counter-terrorism legislation or the control of migration. The Peace Lab of the first week, devoted to the Mediterranean as a laboratory of coexistence, brought participants close to that tension, because the security of each actor had to be negotiated with the security of the others.

1.5 Peace leadership

Peace Leadership Skills appeared in both weeks of SPU26: as a workshop on 8 October and as a lecture on 14 October. Its place in the programme reflects a simple observation. Changing how power and security are understood requires people able to lead in that direction, in a classroom, in a municipality or at a negotiating table.

John Paul Lederach's model of peacebuilding offers a useful map. It distinguishes three levels of leadership in a society affected by conflict. Top leaders are few, highly visible and bound by their positions. Middle-range leaders, such as university figures, heads of professional associations and respected local personalities, are connected both to the top and to the grassroots. Grassroots leaders work directly in communities (Lederach, 1997). Lederach regards the middle range as the most strategic level, because it can move ideas in both directions. The participants of SPU26, university students who are about to lead projects in their own communities, belong to this level or are on their way to it.

The contributions describe what such leadership requires, and on two points they are concrete. The first is responsibility for action, not only for analysis. Ahmed Sameh Saad Mostafa wrote: "The sessions on peace leadership, social accountability, and international cooperation encouraged me to think more critically about my responsibility toward society. I learned that being a responsible citizen means not only recognizing problems but also taking action to address them." Fatmaelzahraa Amin Ibrahim Abdelrahman made the same point in institutional terms: "Sustainable peace requires institutions and individuals to take responsibility for the consequences of their decisions, listen to different communities, and develop solutions that respond to real needs."

The second is the ability to create spaces in which others can take part. Mina Samir Hana Mikhail observed that "peacebuilding does not always require large initiatives; sometimes, creating a safe space for dialogue, encouraging teamwork, or helping someone feel included can make a meaningful difference." Several Local Peace Projects, described in Chapter 5, put this into practice. So does Steven Moheb Abdelmessih Asaad when he writes that "achieving peace requires responsible leadership, inclusive institutions, and cooperation between countries and communities."

From these contributions, and from the experience of the programme, the editors draw a working profile of peace leadership in four elements:

- **listening as a skill:** the capacity to hear positions one does not share and to restate them fairly before answering;
- **mediation:** helping parties separate interests from positions and find an arrangement that each can defend before its own people;
- **project discipline:** turning an intention into objectives, a budget, a calendar and indicators, as every participant did when writing a Local Peace Project;
- **integrity:** consistency between what a leader asks of others and what they do themselves.

The fourth element is the hardest to teach. It is also the one on which the credibility of the other three depends.

1.6 Recommendations

1. **Treat cultural literacy as a diplomatic skill.** Training for diplomats, officials and mediators should include the history, narratives and identities of the counterparts, alongside economic and military analysis.
2. **Measure security on people.** Policies described as security policies should be assessed also by their effect on the economic, health and environmental security of the populations concerned (UNDP, 1994).
3. **Use simulation to expose the limits of goodwill.** Peace education should keep diplomatic simulations of the Peace Lab type, in which participants learn that agreement requires reconciling interests and not only sharing values.
4. **Invest in middle-range leaders.** Universities, municipalities and professional associations should train the people who connect decision-makers and communities,

through programmes that combine mediation, project management and ethics (Lederach, 1997).

- 5. Hold leaders to the standard of human security.** Public office-holders and project leaders should report on what their decisions change in the daily security of the people concerned: income, health, safety and participation.
- 6. Make the spiritual dimension testable.** Programmes that invoke shared values in peacebuilding should state concretely where those values enter the process: in mediation, in reconciliation after conflict, or in the conduct of leaders.

Chapter 2 · Climate Diplomacy and Shared Resources

2.1 The question

Climate change, water scarcity and land degradation do not respect borders, and they reach most quickly those who have contributed least to them. For many SPU26 participants this is not an abstraction. The Nile is shared by eleven countries, and the dispute between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam has been one of the most closely watched resource questions in Africa for more than a decade. At the global level, the Paris Agreement of 2015 commits its parties to hold the increase in global average temperature well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5 °C, through nationally determined contributions that each party sets for itself (UNFCCC, 2015). The scientific basis for that target was restated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in its Sixth Assessment Report (IPCC, 2021).

The difficulty of climate diplomacy lies in the gap between those two levels. Commitments are made between governments, while the effects, and much of the remedy, are local. The first lecture of SPU26, on sustainability and environmental security, opened on this question.

2.2 Position paper

POSITION PAPER

Climate Diplomacy and Shared Resources

Moaz Eslam Hassan Ismail Mahmoud, May University in Cairo

Climate change represents a complex global challenge that transcends national borders, making climate diplomacy and the shared management of critical resources (water, land, and energy) essential for sustainable development and regional stability. In alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 13 (Climate Action), effective international cooperation and diplomatic frameworks are required to mitigate climate risks, build community resilience, and manage transboundary natural resources equitably.

A major challenge in climate diplomacy is the management of shared water and land resources, which are increasingly strained by changing precipitation patterns, rising global temperatures, and environmental degradation. Uncoordinated resource extraction and unsustainable waste disposal severely impact ecosystems and local livelihoods. Addressing these issues requires multilateral agreements that integrate community-level initiatives with high-level policy frameworks. Local action, such as promoting waste reduction, recycling, and environmental awareness, serves as a vital foundation for broader diplomatic goals by reducing localized environmental stressors and building grass-roots resilience.

Furthermore, the transition to sustainable energy systems requires diplomatic coordination to facilitate technology transfer, capacity building, and financial support for vulnerable communities. Public-private partnerships and municipal cooperation play a crucial role in mobilizing necessary resources, implementing climate education, and encouraging sustainable practices at the local level. By linking community action

with diplomatic mechanisms, stakeholders can ensure that environmental policies are both top-down and bottom-up.

To strengthen climate diplomacy and shared resource management, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. *Promote Transboundary Cooperation:* establish collaborative diplomatic platforms for joint monitoring and equitable sharing of water, energy, and land resources.
2. *Integrate Local Climate Initiatives:* connect community-level project goals, such as localized recycling programs, waste reduction, and climate awareness campaigns, with national and regional climate policies.
3. *Enhance Education and Stakeholder Participation:* empower youth, educational institutions, and local authorities to actively participate in climate governance and resource stewardship.

In conclusion, advancing SDG 13 requires robust climate diplomacy grounded in shared responsibility and concrete local action. By fostering international dialogue while encouraging community-led sustainability practices, societies can effectively safeguard shared resources and build a resilient, sustainable future.

2.3 The local scale

The position paper insists that local action is the "foundation" of diplomacy, not its afterthought. Other contributions show what that means in practice. In his Peace Memo, Ahmed Sameh Saad Mostafa (Heliopolis University) describes the Local Peace Project he will run for twelve months with at least one hundred young people, which includes "youth dialogue, allowing participants to discuss social and environmental challenges affecting their communities", a "Local Peace and Sustainability Map, through which young participants will identify challenges, available resources, and possible opportunities for positive change", and at least three youth-led community initiatives, among them environmental campaigns.

The editors note one tension that the contributions leave open. Recycling, waste reduction and awareness campaigns build civic habits, but they do not by themselves change how a river is shared between states. The link between the two scales goes through institutions: municipalities, river basin authorities, national climate plans. The second recommendation of the position paper, which connects local projects to national and regional policy, is the one that addresses this link. It is also the most difficult to implement.

2.4 Recommendations

1. **Joint monitoring of shared resources.** Riparian states and neighbouring communities should establish shared platforms for monitoring and allocating water, energy and land (Moaz Eslam Hassan Ismail Mahmoud).
2. **Connect local projects to national plans.** Universities and municipalities should register local climate initiatives, including the Local Peace Projects of SPU26 participants, with the authorities responsible for national climate contributions, so that local results are counted and can be scaled (Moaz Eslam Hassan Ismail Mahmoud).

- 3. Give young people a seat in climate governance.** Youth, educational institutions and local authorities should take part in resource stewardship as participants, not only as audiences for awareness campaigns (Moaz Eslam Hassan Ismail Mahmoud).
- 4. Map before acting.** Community projects should begin by mapping challenges and resources with the people concerned, as in the Local Peace and Sustainability Map proposed by Ahmed Sameh Saad Mostafa.

Chapter 3 · Ethics of Technology and Information

3.1 The question

No subject of SPU26 produced more writing than technology. Nine participants contributed to the AI Charter (Annex I), six filed their Peace Memo under this chapter, and Seif Wael Metwally Mahdy Aboserawa wrote the most structured position paper of the White Paper. The concern is shared well beyond Belvedere Marittimo. In 2019 the European Commission's High-Level Expert Group published the Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy AI, which list seven requirements: human agency and oversight; technical robustness and safety; privacy and data governance; transparency; diversity, non-discrimination and fairness; societal and environmental well-being; and accountability (European Commission, 2019). UNESCO adopted its Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence in 2021 (UNESCO, 2021). In 2024 the European Union adopted the first comprehensive legal framework for AI, Regulation (EU) 2024/1689, known as the AI Act.

The first week had already shown the informational side of the question. The lecture on information integrity and cognitive security, with Egypt as its case, described a geopolitics fought over the beliefs and behaviour of citizens rather than over territory. The point was not new. In 2018 the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar found that Facebook had been a useful instrument for those seeking to spread hatred against the Rohingya (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2018).

3.2 Position paper

POSITION PAPER

Humanistic Governance and Ethical Frameworks for Emerging Technologies

Seif Wael Metwally Mahdy Aboserawa, May University in Cairo

In an era defined by rapid technological transformation, integrating humanistic principles into artificial intelligence and digital information systems is an urgent necessity for global peace and stability. Technology must not be evaluated solely through the lens of efficiency or geopolitical power; it must remain deeply rooted in human dignity, ethics, and fundamental human rights. When technological development operates without strong moral boundaries, it risks deepening systemic inequality, accelerating digital polarization, and eroding cross-cultural trust.

To cultivate a fair and inclusive digital civilization, tech policy must transition from purely market-driven regulation to human-centered governance. This requires building ethical AI architectures that prioritize algorithmic transparency, data sovereignty, and inclusive design. Systems must be trained to prevent cultural bias and actively foster mutual understanding across diverse global communities rather than amplifying division.

Moving forward, actionable strategies must focus on three core pillars:

1. *International Ethical Standards*: developing universal digital frameworks that require comprehensive ethical and human-rights impact assessments prior to the public deployment of generative AI technologies.
2. *Cross-Cultural Algorithmic Auditing*: establishing multi-disciplinary and culturally diverse advisory boards to regularly audit automated decision-making platforms against discrimination and socio-cultural harm.
3. *Digital Peacebuilding Infrastructure*: investing in ethical digital tools designed to restore civic trust, protect data privacy, and leverage humanistic technology as a platform for global diplomacy and intercultural cooperation.

3.3 What the other participants wrote

Fatmaelzahraa Amin Ibrahim Abdelrahman (Galala University), a pharmacy student, brought the debate onto her own professional ground:

"Access to safe medicines, reliable health information, and appropriate pharmaceutical care is essential to human well-being. However, technological solutions in healthcare should not deepen existing inequalities or exclude people who lack digital literacy, resources, or access to healthcare services. Artificial intelligence can contribute to better medication management and health education, provided that patient safety, privacy, professional responsibility, and accessibility remain central priorities."

Her conclusion gives a working definition that the whole chapter can adopt: "Technology becomes a meaningful tool for peace when it serves people, respects their dignity, and helps ensure that the benefits of progress are shared fairly."

Rawan Ayman Esmail Mohamed Abdelaziz named the risk directly: "In an era where technological advancements often serve as tools of surveillance or control, humanistic technology redirects innovation toward serving human dignity and fostering intercultural dialogue." Abdallah Mohammed Abdallah Ali Aboabdallah put the same conviction in one image: "Our values should always prevail and guide us through this new era and be our moral compass through the oceans of AI."

Other contributions were personal rather than programmatic. Maria Sameh Samir Gaied (Galala University) wrote that the lectures on AI taught her "how to limit my usage of AI and how it affects our humanity and values". Rodina Mohamed Mostafa Elgohary (Galala University) called AI "a double-edged sword" that "should only be used to assist, not to innovate and create". The editors record this last position as one participant's view, because it is contested. Other contributions, including the position paper, see a legitimate role for AI in innovation provided that it is governed.

Farah Hesham Mahmoud Ahmed (Galala University), whose project is filed under Chapter 5, noted that her dialogue workshops also belong here "if its digital awareness activities explicitly address respectful online communication". The remark matters, because it places the ethics of information within everyday conduct as well as within regulation.

3.4 Information integrity and misinformation

The first week of SPU26 approached technology from the side of information. The lecture "Building Trust in Public Life by Information Integrity and Cognitive Security: case of Egypt" (7 October) started from a premise stated in its course materials: in the digital age the battlefield of geopolitics has shifted toward "cognitive terrain", the beliefs and behaviour of citizens.

Three terms help to order the discussion. Following the framework prepared for the Council of Europe by Claire Wardle and Hossein Derakhshan, **misinformation** is false information shared without intent to harm. **Disinformation** is false information created or shared deliberately to cause harm. **Malinformation** is genuine information used to cause harm, for example private data made public to intimidate (Wardle and Derakhshan, 2017). The distinction matters because each calls for a different response: correction and education for the first, investigation and accountability for the second, protection of privacy for the third.

The harm is documented. In Myanmar, the UN fact-finding mission cited in Section 3.1 described the role of social media in spreading hatred against the Rohingya before the violence of 2017 (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2018). Researchers at the Oxford Internet Institute found organised social media manipulation campaigns in 70 countries in 2019, up from 28 in 2017 (Bradshaw and Howard, 2019). Platforms whose algorithms reward engagement tend to amplify emotionally charged content, and false or inflammatory content is often of that kind.

The responses fall into four groups, and none is sufficient alone.

- **Media and information literacy.** UNESCO's handbook *Journalism, "Fake News" and Disinformation* (Ireton and Posetti, 2018) gives educators and journalists a practical method for verifying sources, images and claims. The SPU26 lecture applied it to the Egyptian context.
- **Independent fact-checking.** Organisations such as Misbar, which works in Arabic, verify viral claims and publish their corrections. They depend on independence and on public trust, and both are fragile.
- **Platform accountability.** In the European Union, the Digital Services Act requires the largest online platforms to assess and mitigate systemic risks, including the spread of disinformation, and to open their data to researchers (European Union, 2022).
- **Proportionate regulation.** Any legal response must respect freedom of expression, protected by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Laws against "false news" can be used to silence legitimate dissent. The SPU26 lecture placed this tension at the centre: institutional responses must protect both public security and the right to free expression.

The participants' contributions approach the question from the side of conduct. Farah Hesham Mahmoud Ahmed proposes digital awareness activities that "explicitly address respectful online communication". Kirollos Amir Fanous Atia Fanous commits to "use technology to spread understanding and positivity rather than conflict". Four of the nine contributions to the AI Charter exclude the use of AI to spread misinformation or to mislead (Annex I). The editors observe that this personal commitment is necessary and is the level at which students can act

at once. The institutional measures listed above remain the responsibility of governments, platforms and universities, and the recommendations of this chapter address them.

3.5 Reading the contributions

Two levels of response emerge, and both are needed. One is institutional: impact assessments before deployment, audits of automated decisions, standards that cross borders. This is the level of the position paper, and it converges with the European and UNESCO frameworks cited above. The other is personal: limiting one's own use, keeping one's judgment, refusing to use AI to deceive. This is the level of most Peace Memos and of the AI Charter. A peace-oriented approach to technology cannot rely on the second level alone, because individual restraint does not correct a biased system. Nor can it rely on the first alone, because rules are only as good as the people who apply and observe them.

The contributions say less about one point: who carries the cost of the transition. Abdallah's charter mentions "the economical dangers that could happen from over usages of AI", and Fatmaelzahraa warns against excluding those without digital literacy. Neither theme is developed. The question of work and income in an economy transformed by AI deserves a place in the next edition.

3.6 Recommendations

1. **Ethical and human-rights impact assessment before deployment** of generative AI systems in public use (Seif Wael Metwally Mahdy Aboserawa).
2. **Culturally diverse audit boards** for automated decision-making platforms, to detect discrimination and socio-cultural harm (Seif Wael Metwally Mahdy Aboserawa).
3. **Public investment in digital peacebuilding tools** that protect privacy and support dialogue and diplomacy (Seif Wael Metwally Mahdy Aboserawa).
4. **No exclusion by design.** In health, education and public services, digital solutions should be introduced only together with alternatives for those without digital access or skills (Fatmaelzahraa Amin Ibrahim Abdelrahman).
5. **Teach the ethics of information as conduct.** Universities should include respectful online communication and the verification of information in their curricula, together with the technical subjects.
6. **Media and information literacy for every student.** Partner universities should offer a short course on verifying sources, images and claims, based on the UNESCO handbook (Ireton and Posetti, 2018), open to students of all faculties.
7. **Support independent fact-checking.** Universities and civil society should cooperate with independent fact-checking organisations working in the languages of their communities, and train students to contribute to them.
8. **Regulate platforms, protect speech.** Measures against disinformation should target the systemic behaviour of platforms (transparency, risk assessment, access for researchers) rather than individual speech, in line with Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Chapter 4 · Educational Cooperation

4.1 The question

The Summer Peace University is itself an act of educational cooperation. Its students came from Egyptian universities (Galala University, May University in Cairo, Arab Open University Egypt and Heliopolis University), from the Universidad Nacional de Río Negro in Argentina, from the University of Social and Media Culture in Toruń (AKSiM) in Poland, and as independent participants. They studied for two weeks in a small town in southern Italy with lecturers from several countries. The contributions to this chapter are few, two authors and three texts, but they come from people who have just lived what they describe.

4.2 Position paper

POSITION PAPER

Educational Cooperation

Mohamed Ahmed Abdelrazek Mohamed Metwally, May University in Cairo

Educational cooperation across borders is essential to building inclusive and sustainable knowledge-sharing frameworks worldwide. Partnering for quality education helps bridge global disparities and empowers marginalized communities with vital skills. Collaborative academic initiatives drive decent work opportunities by aligning curricula with future economic and technological demands. Eradicating poverty globally relies on joint educational investments that unlock human potential and foster long-term innovation. Through strong international partnerships and shared educational visions, we can create a more peaceful and prosperous global society.

In his Peace Memo the same author links education to justice: "Quality education serves as a fundamental pillar that empowers individuals, fosters tolerance, and promotes mutual understanding across diverse cultures", and "strong, just, and transparent institutions are essential to upholding human rights and ensuring equal access to justice for all."

4.3 The experience of cooperation

Daniela Dominguez Di Prisco, who took part from Barcelona, described SPU26 as a working model:

"Summer Peace University has been a small example of how international educational cooperation could be. What all of us have learnt has been exponentially improved and enriched with the knowledge, traditions, culture, point of view, context and so much more, that came from the different teachers, people from the staff, coordinators, classmates, local citizens. We leave this course full handed and wanting to repeat."

The list at the end of her text is worth noticing: teachers, staff, coordinators, classmates, local citizens. Learning did not happen only in the classroom. It happened in the streets of the borgo, at the tables of the gastronomic lab, in the evenings. Sofia Orellana Cornejo (Universidad Nacional de Río Negro) said the same in her own way: "I highly recommend everyone to have

an experience like this at least once in their lives. It can truly change the way you see the world."

4.4 Peace education and non-formal learning

Peace education is the field that studies how knowledge, skills and attitudes for peace can be taught. In the tradition that Betty Reardon helped to establish, it prepares people to understand the causes of violence and to imagine and build alternatives to it (Reardon, 1988). The literature usually distinguishes five features, and they correspond closely to the method of SPU26:

- it is **transformative**: it aims at attitudes and conduct, not only at knowledge;
- it is **participatory**: learners take part in dialogue, simulation and shared work rather than listening passively;
- it is **critical**: it examines assumptions, narratives and relations of power;
- it is **holistic**: the learning environment itself teaches, through how people are treated within it;
- it is **oriented to action**: learning is completed when it is applied.

Much of this happens outside formal education. The international classification of education adopted by UNESCO defines non-formal education as education that is institutionalised, intentional and planned by an education provider, and that complements or offers an alternative to formal education. It typically takes the form of short programmes, workshops and seminars (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012). Its strengths for peace education are clear. It is flexible, it can reach people outside schools and universities, it relies on experience and practice, and it reduces the distance between teachers and learners.

SPU26 belongs to this category, and its design shows how each feature works in practice. The Peace Lab was a participatory method: participants learned the logic of negotiation by negotiating, and, as Abdallah Mohammed Abdallah Ali Aboabdallah wrote, they learned even from the failure of their mission. The Local Peace Project made the programme action-oriented, because each participant left with a twelve-month plan. The cultural workshops, "Art as a Universal Language" and "Food, Land and Memory: Gastronomic Diplomacy", were part of the curriculum. Steven Moheb Abdelmessih Asaad described their effect: "art, food, and shared traditions can bring people together despite their different nationalities, languages, and beliefs." Ahmed Sameh Saad Mostafa reached the same conclusion: "peace can be promoted through simple human interactions."

The transformative aim is visible in how participants describe their own change. Farah Hesham Mahmoud Ahmed wrote: "During my experience with peace education, I learned that peace begins with the way we treat and listen to one another." Sofia Orellana Cornejo said the experience "can truly change the way you see the world."

Non-formal education also has limits that a programme of this kind should face openly. Its results are harder to certify and to recognise in academic careers. Its effects can fade when participants return to environments that do not support them. Short residential programmes can produce intense experiences that are not followed by sustained practice. SPU26 responds to these risks with three instruments: attendance-based certificates, the twelve-month Local

Peace Projects followed by partner universities, and the presentation of results at the next edition. Whether these instruments are sufficient will be visible only at the next edition.

4.5 Reading the contributions

The position paper ties educational cooperation to three Sustainable Development Goals without naming them: quality education (SDG 4), decent work (SDG 8) and the eradication of poverty (SDG 1). The ambition is right. The editors add the condition that the text leaves implicit. Cooperation produces these effects only when it lasts beyond a single event: joint courses, recognised credits, mobility in both directions, shared supervision of projects.

SPU26 has already set up one such mechanism. Each partner university will follow its students' Local Peace Projects for twelve months, and the results will be presented at the next edition. This is educational cooperation in a precise form. The universities share responsibility for a result that will be verified, beyond hosting a delegation.

4.6 Recommendations

1. **Joint educational investment.** Partner universities should agree on shared programmes with recognised credits, so that cooperation continues between editions (Mohamed Ahmed Abdelrazek Mohamed Metwally).
2. **Align curricula with decent work.** Peace education programmes should include project management, budgeting and evaluation, the skills that SPU26 participants used to design their Local Peace Projects (Mohamed Ahmed Abdelrazek Mohamed Metwally).
3. **Shared supervision of field projects.** Each partner university should appoint a referent for its students' Local Peace Projects and report on their progress at the next edition.
4. **Learning beyond the classroom.** Residential programmes should keep the encounter with the host community, its history, food and daily life, as part of the curriculum and not as leisure.
5. **Recognise non-formal peace education.** Partner universities should recognise participation in programmes such as SPU, together with the Local Peace Project, through academic credits or a formal record in the student's file.
6. **Simulation and project work in the curriculum.** Courses in international relations and development should include diplomatic simulations and project design, the two methods that SPU26 participants described as most formative.
7. **Follow-up after the programme.** Non-formal programmes should plan the months after the residential phase, with mentors, intermediate milestones and a final report, so that the experience becomes practice.

Chapter 5 · Global Citizenship, Cultures and Dialogue

5.1 The question

Global citizenship is not a legal status. It describes a sense of belonging to a wider human community and of responsibility toward it, alongside one's national and cultural identities. Target 4.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development names global citizenship education among the aims of quality education (United Nations, 2015). The philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah describes the same disposition as cosmopolitanism: universal concern combined with respect for legitimate difference (Appiah, 2006).

This chapter received six Peace Memos, as many as Chapter 3. Several of them describe a concrete project, which makes it the most practical chapter of the White Paper.

5.2 What the participants wrote

Ahmed Sameh Saad Mostafa (Heliopolis University) set out the premise:

"I came to understand that peace is much more than the absence of war or conflict. Peace is about creating communities where people respect one another, accept differences, communicate openly, and work together toward a better future. [...] I believe that young people should not only be considered the future of peace, but also active contributors to peace today."

He then gave his project figures: at least one hundred young people engaged over twelve months, at least three youth-led community initiatives, and a Sustainable Peace Youth Network intended to outlast the project.

Farah Hesham Mahmoud Ahmed (Galala University) described the method of dialogue with unusual precision:

"I want participants to practice listening before responding, disagreeing without disrespect, and working with people whose experiences are different from their own. [...] For me, peace is not an abstract idea. It is reflected in everyday decisions: inviting someone who feels excluded, questioning stereotypes, finding common ground and choosing dialogue instead of hostility."

She also set the limits of her own ambition, a rare quality in project writing: "I know that four workshops cannot solve every conflict or end exclusion. However, they can create a starting point: a community of students who are more confident in communicating respectfully and more willing to collaborate across differences."

Ali Ashraf Ali Gomaa Aboutaleb (Galala University) turned the university itself into the object of his project:

"I believe a university should be more than a place where students attend lectures within their own faculties. It should also be a community where different perspectives are welcomed and where students learn how to listen, respect one another and cooperate. [...] For me, a culture of peace begins when we choose to listen to each other and work together."

Steven Moheb Abdelmessih Asaad (Galala University) connected the week's sessions on social accountability, peace leadership and South-South cooperation to the idea of responsibility: "this week encouraged me to think beyond my own community and recognize my responsibility as a global citizen." He also explained how the cultural activities worked: "Activities such as Art as a Universal Language and Gastronomic Diplomacy highlighted how art, food, and shared traditions can bring people together despite their different nationalities, languages, and beliefs."

Sofia Orellana Cornejo (Universidad Nacional de Río Negro) gave the shortest definition: "being a global citizen means being open to learning from others." Karine Maged Barsom Ghaly (Galala University) named the sessions she found most useful: social accountability, project management, ethics and art.

5.3 Reading the contributions

Taken together, these texts describe global citizenship as a practice with three components, which the editors draw from the contributions:

- **a skill:** listening before responding, and disagreeing without disrespect;
- **a space:** a place where people can speak without fear of judgment, whether a workshop, a faculty or a youth network;
- **a responsibility:** acting on what one has understood, in one's own community.

The contributions do not dwell on the difficulty of dialogue between groups that have real grievances against each other. Dialogue between students who already share a university is a necessary first step. It is not the same as dialogue across a line of conflict. The projects described here would be stronger if they planned, in a later phase, for encounters with groups the participants do not usually meet.

5.4 Recommendations

1. **Protected spaces for dialogue in universities.** Each partner university should host at least one recurring dialogue forum open to students of all faculties, with agreed rules for respectful disagreement (Ali Ashraf Ali Gomaa Aboutaleb; Farah Hesham Mahmoud Ahmed).
2. **Measure what dialogue changes.** Dialogue projects should define in advance what they expect to change, for example the number of participants, follow-up initiatives and relationships that continue, and report on it, as the SPU26 Local Peace Projects are required to do.
3. **Youth networks that outlast projects.** Projects should plan from the start the network that will continue after their twelve months (Ahmed Sameh Saad Mostafa).
4. **Culture as a curriculum.** Art, music and food should be treated as methods of intercultural learning, with their own objectives, as in the SPU26 workshop "Art as a Universal Language" and the gastronomic diplomacy lab.

Conclusion

What the five chapters share

Read together, the five chapters converge on a few positions that the participants of SPU26 hold in common.

Peace is a positive condition. Almost every contribution repeats, in its own words, that peace is more than the absence of war. This is the distinction Johan Galtung drew in 1969 between negative and positive peace (Galtung, 1969). The participants did not cite it, but they reached the same place.

The local scale is where commitments become verifiable. Climate diplomacy, the ethics of technology and educational cooperation are all argued at the international level and tested at the local one. The twenty-four Local Peace Projects are the participants' answer to this: twelve months of work in their own communities, followed by their universities.

Technology must stay under human judgment. This is the most widely shared principle of the White Paper. It appears in the position paper on technology, in most of the Peace Memos filed under Chapter 3 and in seven of the nine contributions to the AI Charter.

Values need institutions. Spirituality, empathy and respect recur throughout the texts. The most persuasive contributions are those that give these values an institutional form: an audit board, a joint monitoring platform, a dialogue forum with rules, a network that outlasts a project.

What remains open

An honest White Paper should also say what it has not resolved. Three questions remain open. How shared values enter the hard bargaining over borders, water and security. Who bears the economic cost of technological change. How dialogue between people of goodwill can extend to people divided by real conflict. They are offered to the next edition of the Summer Peace University as starting points.

What follows

The participants leave Belvedere Marittimo with a project and a commitment. Ahmed Sameh Saad Mostafa summed it up: "Not every challenge can be solved immediately, but I believe that small actions can create long-term impact when people work together toward a shared purpose." Their universities will follow the projects. The results will be presented at the next Summer Peace University, which will be held in Egypt.

Annex I · SPU26 Artificial Intelligence Charter

The Charter was proposed by Rania Mohamed Abdelmageed Abdelaziz in her workshop "Human Values, Ethics and Dialogue in the Era of Technical Innovation" (12 October 2026). After Nicola Leone's session "Artificial Intelligence and Human Responsibility" (13 October 2026), participants were invited to write the principles of a charter for the use of artificial intelligence. Nine contributions were submitted. The editors grouped their principles as follows. The number in brackets shows how many of the nine contributions state each principle.

- 1. Human control and human judgment (7 of 9).** AI remains a tool controlled by people and does not replace their decisions or their critical thinking. "A.I. should be controlled by humans, not [control] the human beings" (Sofia Orellana Cornejo); "AI should be a tool for humans, not a substitute of humans" (Daniela Dominguez Di Prisco); the commitment to ensure "that AI supports human decision-making rather than replacing independent judgment" (Mina Samir Hana Mikhail).
- 2. Privacy (6 of 9).** Personal data must be protected, and limiting one's own use of AI is also a way of protecting one's privacy (Kirolos Amir Fanous Atia Fanous).
- 3. Human dignity and human values (6 of 9).** Dignity is the priority in both the design and the use of AI (Daniela Dominguez Di Prisco; Karine Maged Barsoom Ghaly).
- 4. Responsibility and accountability (5 of 9).** People remain responsible for the process and for what they do with AI's suggestions. "Humans must be responsible for AI suggestions" (Sofia Orellana Cornejo).
- 5. Truth and fairness (4 of 9).** AI must never be used to spread misinformation, to discriminate or to mislead (Ahmed Sameh Saad Mostafa; Mina Samir Hana Mikhail; Steven Moheb Abdelmessih Asaad; Sofia Orellana Cornejo).
- 6. Serving human well-being (4 of 9).** AI should make lives easier, support education and sustainable development, and be used in peaceful ways (Abdallah Mohammed Abdallah Ali Aboabdallah; Ahmed Sameh Saad Mostafa; Mina Samir Hana Mikhail; Steven Moheb Abdelmessih Asaad).
- 7. Rules and guardrails (3 of 9).** AI should be governed by rules and laws, with guardrails and a human always in the loop (Abdallah Mohammed Abdallah Ali Aboabdallah; Karine Maged Barsoom Ghaly; Maria Sameh Samir Gaied).
- 8. Measured personal use (3 of 9).** "Start small and limit your AI use", with an "AI time count like screen time count" (Kirolos Amir Fanous Atia Fanous; Karine Maged Barsoom Ghaly; Maria Sameh Samir Gaied).
- 9. Integrity in study and work (3 of 9).** Using AI to deepen one's own understanding and to support research, while making sure the work reflects one's own effort (Ahmed Sameh Saad Mostafa; Mina Samir Hana Mikhail; Steven Moheb Abdelmessih Asaad).

Single contributions also proposed an emergency "kill switch" for AI systems in rogue situations, attention to the economic risks of overuse (both Abdallah Mohammed Abdallah Ali Aboabdallah) and more advanced systems for detecting AI-generated content (Karine Maged Barsoom Ghaly).

Annex II · Contributors

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