

Call for proposals for conference contributions

Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law Annual Conference 2024 (KPAC24)

Building trust, pacifying power, connecting realities

19th-21st November 2024

KPSRL (henceforth the Platform), Goree Institute and REPAOC are welcoming proposals for contributions to KPAC24. In this call, we equally address researchers, practitioners, policy-makers, artists and activists.

What is KPAC?

KPSRL Annual Conference is the Platform's flagship event. In the past, Annual Conferences have brought together several hundred practitioners, policymakers, and researchers to exchange on emerging challenges and approaches in the field of security and rule of law in fragile and conflict affected settings. The Conference was for a long time held in The Hague, The Netherlands, but in 2023, driven by the intention to host it closer to realities of fragile and conflict affected settings, it was organised in Nairobi, followed by uptake conversations in The Hague. You can find information on KPAC23, as an example, through this [link](#).

KPAC24 will take place in Dakar, Senegal, in November 2024, and we are happy to partner with the [Gorée Institute](#) and [REPAOC](#), as co-hosts of the Conference.

The content of the Annual Conference is split between sessions conceived and organized by co-hosts and sessions that result from this call, submitted by members of the Platform network.

This document presents the Conference theme and opens the call for contributions to the Conference.

Thematic focus of KPAC24

The participants in the KPSRL network identified the three key dynamic processes of trust building, pacifying power, and connecting realities as sites that sustain the promise of future positive impact for security and rule of law actions. They shared the intuition that engaging in these processes is the same as engaging to create positive impact.

Building trust, which is the firm belief in the reliability or ability of other groups in society, power holders, or others/outside, is the central process whose presence prevents social conflict but whose absence is becoming ever more conspicuous in world events, in the current crisis of democracy, geopolitical confrontations, and always-already haunting institutions and people emerging from colonial structures.

Power is needed to protect, sustain, and guarantee a decent life for the people, but all too often it turns on the people to repress their desires, creativity, and autonomy. **Pacifying power** is then the process of retaining and building the capacity of power structures to meet their communities' needs and desires (from the State to local and traditional authorities to self-organized collectives to regional/interstates organizations), but at the same time shifting the practices and

perspectives of power holders so they do not use power violently or outside of the rules of the game.

Connecting realities is essential for the social processes of building trust and pacifying power. Dominant narratives are bound to remain static and inadequate in describing actors, needs, and aspirations that they have no means to understand nor represent faithfully. The short-circuiting of dominant narratives happens only when familiar topics and concepts are looked at from marginalized perspectives and understandings and multidimensional and intersectional lenses that social learning happens. “Marginalized” refers here to communities or individuals that are excluded from processes of security and rule of law, but also socio-cultural practices, worldviews, or knowledge systems that one community considers marginalized.

What is KPAC24 aiming to achieve?

In parallel to the three processes outlined above, the Conference aims to mobilize participants’ knowledges, experiences and imaginations around three dimensions of reflection:

- **What**, in your experience, **seems to work** in building trust, pacifying power, and connecting realities?
- **What seems to not work and what are we learning from it?**
- **How to collectively imagine the future** of processes of trust building, pacifying power, and connecting realities?

KPAC24 then aims to make sense of multiple, diverse, contradictory, even opposing experiences and imaginations, recomposing the multiplicity into (at least some) collective meaning to energize and direct future actions at multiple levels, from local engagements to inter-state relations. By “collective meaning”, we mean that participants will better understand and appreciate the deeper reasons why they disagree with each other (or with themselves) on how to build trust, pacify power, and connect realities.

The collective sense-making emerging from the Conference will be presented and discussed in the Hague to draw implications for the international cooperation approach of the Netherlands (and possibly other partner countries).

What does success look like? A successful KPAC24:

1. Gives voice and space to many diverse perspectives on processes of trust building, pacifying power, and connecting realities, AND
2. Connects/makes sense of these diverse perspectives in such a way that participants better understand the origins of and deeper reasons for their disagreements and diverging practices, therefore
3. Gaining insights into the possibilities and contradictions open for future processes that can be embedded in more nuanced and useful organizational and policy documents and practices, whilst
4. Remaining in touch for future work with other KPAC participants.

What's in it for you as session lead? Session leads will:

1. Gain visibility with Conference participants, including the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Union, the African Union, and ECOWAS.
2. Become more closely linked to the KPSRL Secretariat for possible future events, funding for knowledge projects, and technical support.
3. Be invited to the follow-up policy event in the Hague.

4. Receive support from the KPSRL Secretariat to develop their session ideas.
5. Be more likely to be considered for support to travel to and stay in Dakar for KPAC24.

Approach

The Conference will achieve its objective through a call for contributions to allow the proactive action of the KPSRL network in creating the most relevant sessions.

Aspiring contributors can orientate themselves using the following three guiding dimensions.

1. Contributions can/should **engage** with the key three processes of trust building, pacification of power, and connecting realities **at different levels**, from the local/community resilience to the national/people/State level, to the inter-state level.
2. Contributions should **engage** with the key three processes as they take place **in priority sub-themes of the contemporary security and rule of law environment**, such as:
 - a. Preventing political violence and consolidating the rule of law.
 - b. Building trust with and in newly/unconstitutionally established military regimes and in shrinking civic space.
 - c. Considering the role of climate change as a barrier to economic and social development.
 - d. Countering Violent Extremism through collaborative security approaches.
 - e. Understanding (mis/dis) information role in building or shattering trust across society.
 - f. Tracing the implications of interests arising from below and in different parts of societies for interstate relations.
 - g. Focusing on the role of locally led, people-centered, and feminist approaches in building trust, pacifying power, and connecting realities.
 - h. Balancing people's need to move with the State's interest in controlling borders.
 - i. Youth perspectives and actions in security and rule of law.
 - j. Women, gender, and sexual orientation, and their connection with security and rule of law.
3. Contributions should engage with the three key processes from a diversity of subjective standpoints, including perspectives from communities, civil society, implementing partners, government institutions, and inter-governmental organizations.

Contribution formats

We are looking for three forms of engagement:

Stands at a marketplace of ideas. A marketplace of ideas is a metaphor, where truth is represented as emerging from the competition of ideas in free, transparent discourse. Our marketplace of ideas will concretely look like an actual market, with stands where presenters engage participants as they stroll through the market guided by their curiosity. A stand in our marketplace of ideas will be about an idea with the potential to support processes of building trust, pacifying power, and engaging the materialized.

Our marketplace of ideas, to be held on day one of the conference, will also be a space for networking in a more personal way, and sharing and promoting the work of different people and organizations. It will be an open area in which participants can browse and talk to the different exhibitors. In short, it is an ideal set-up to provide many with the opportunity to contribute and share their stories and their work on building trust, pacifying power, and connecting realities.

Session proposals of an hour and a half-length. In contrast to the marketplace of ideas, a session proposal brings together multiple experiences and ideas, collected through forms of knowledge(s) ranging from the scientific, to the personal, to the dialectic. Ideas and perspectives can well be in tension with, even opposing, one another. We strongly prefer:

- Interactive sessions that do not rely on the standard panel presentation followed by questions and answers.
- Sessions that propose to reflect on and synthesize knowledge from across programs, policies, and lived experiences rather than those confined to the limits of any given policy or programming process.

Art exhibition, musical performances, and storytelling.

On day one of the conference, we will also have an art exhibition combined with a musical/storytelling/dancing performance. We call on artists, activists, creatives, dreamers... to share creative expressions of the processes of building trust, pacifying power, and connecting realities.

Artistic contributions should be about the reality beyond the real, to, for example, outline how things really appear to people beyond the way that people believe that things appear to them, or to express possibilities that are currently masked by feelings that things are by necessity the way they are.

Contributions can be in the form of musical pieces, fictional stories, poems, films, photographic material, theatrical pieces, or objects or representations.

You can share something that you created yourself; or share something made by someone else that you appreciate and resonate with, that inspired you or others. For example, think of a song that became an anthem of a protest, a piece of street art that connected conflicted communities, a poem about security, or a performance for reconciliation.

Process and key dates

- Open call for proposals: August 1st-September 9th, 2024. You can submit the proposal via this [link](#)
- Attendee registration: You can register via this [link](#).
 - Registrations will be open from August 1st to September 9th, 2024, for participants who require support for obtaining VISAs and travel stipends to travel to and stay in Dakar.
 - Registrations will open from August 1st to October 1st, 2024, for participants that do not require support to travel to and stay in Dakar.
- Evaluation and announcement of selected sessions: September 10th-16th, 2024.
- Annual Conference: November 19-21st, 2024.