



## THE YALA PEACE INSTITUTE IN HONOR OF NELSON MANDELA

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### PRACTICAL PEACE: AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME

Up until now, peace studies programs have traditionally been based on theories developed by Western academics, scattered with occasional case studies from those who have been directly involved. Yet there is no greater opportunity to inspire passion and education for real peace progress than from those who were directly on the front lines curbing conflict and building peace.

With this in mind, the [YaLa Academy](#)'s Peace Institute in Honor of Nelson Mandela was launched in May 2014. The Institute is a ground-breaking 'practical peace' studies program to supply the young leaders of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) with the necessary tools to create a future of self-sustaining and durable peace. Students learn online directly from the men and women who pioneered, implemented and sustained the processes of peace negotiation, human rights, transitional justice, peacebuilding, reconciliation and good governance in South Africa, Rwanda, Northern Ireland, the Balkans and the Middle East.

YaLa is taking peace studies out of the university and into the streets of Ramallah, Tel Aviv, Amman, Cairo, Beirut and beyond, tapping into internet-inspired activism of the Arab Spring. With the creation of the Institute, YaLa is leveraging the know-how and experience of peace practitioners so that young leaders in the MENA region and beyond can forge a brighter and more peaceful future.

### THE TOPICS

1. **Peace Negotiations**, mediation, treaties and peacemaking processes, with a focus on practitioner experiences and the role of women and civil society.
2. **Human Rights & Transitional Justice** with a focus on human rights values and transitional justice approaches, including symbolic and civil society-led initiatives that have been successful in addressing the legacies of conflict in careful balance with the need to re-build trust and a shared sense of community.
3. **Reconciliation & Peacebuilding** with a focus on the approaches, experiences and successes of reconciliation commissions and grassroots peacebuilding efforts, in particular those led by men and women who have lost loved ones in conflict yet have found paths to forgiveness and reconciliation with their former enemies.
4. **Good Governance & Development** with a focus on building the institutions that form the foundation of a stable and peaceful society and the economic development which sustains it. Strengthening legitimate institutions and governance to provide citizen security, rule of law and jobs is crucial in breaking cycles of violence and building sustainable peace.

## THE PROGRAM

With the creation of this 'practical peace' program, YaLa is leveraging the know-how and experience of practitioners in these fields for the sake of the young generation of the Middle East. By delivering online lectures and activities to hundreds of Israeli and Arab students, the program is providing valuable and practical knowledge of successes in conflict transformation and good governance to the burgeoning youth population of this troubled region.

Students not only watch video lectures from these experienced practitioners, but also answer discussion questions, share insights and experiences in biweekly chat discussions with fellow students, and put into practice their new knowledge through online activities and the development of a final project. Students successfully completing the program will receive a certificate signed by the Institute's lecturers and be eligible for additional opportunities through the YaLa movement.

The activities take place on the new state-of-the-art website – [www.YaLaAcademy.org/intercast-classroom](http://www.YaLaAcademy.org/intercast-classroom) – donated by the creative agency, Brand Knew, and featuring the innovative Intercast technology that allows video streaming sessions with real-time, translated chat discussions. The website also provides supplementary resources such as articles, book excerpts, documentaries and other materials in each of the four subject areas.

## THE PILOT & THE INAUGURAL SEMESTER

Working upon the success and experiences of the YaLa Academy's 2013 pilot program, the Institute was shaped according to feedback from YaLa members and tested in a pilot program in March/April 2014. On May 25<sup>th</sup> 2014, the YaLa Peace Institute in Honor of Nelson Mandela was launched with a blockbuster online event that featured dignitaries and leaders from around the world.

Over 750 students enrolled in the first two cycles of the Institute, which took place June-December 2014 and May-August 2015. Based on the experiences during these semesters and on participant feedback, the study program is being refined and will be replicated with a new group of students beginning in late 2015.

## THE LECTURERS

Among some of the lecturers at the Institute are:

- **Denis Haughey**, Peacemaker & founder of the Social Democratic & Labor Party, Northern Ireland
- **Amb. Uri Savir**, Co-Founder of Peres Center for Peace and Israel's negotiator of the Oslo Accords
- **Ahmed Qurei**, former Prime Minister of Palestinian Authority & negotiator of Oslo Accords
- **Gershon Baskin**, founding Co-Chairman of Israel Palestine Center for Research and Information
- **Rama Mani**, Transitional justice expert and Senior Research Associate, Oxford University
- **Mary Shuttleworth**, Founder & President of Youth for Human Rights International, South Africa
- **Donna Hicks**, Founder of 'Declare Dignity' and Associate at Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University
- **Archbishop Desmond Tutu**, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, South Africa
- **Paul Rusesabagina**, Peace practitioner, inspiration for the Hotel Rwanda film, Rwanda
- **Jo Berry and Pat Magee**, Peace activists and former victim and combatant, Northern Ireland/UK
- **Katarina Kruhonja**, Co-Founder of Centre for Peace, Non Violence and Human Rights of Croatia
- **Jean-Paul Samputu**, Award-winning singer, founder of Samputu Forgiveness Campaign, Rwanda
- **Svetlana Broz**, Director of GARIWO Bosnia & Founder of "Education Towards Civil Courage"
- **Leymah Gbowee**, Peace and Women's Rights Activist, 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate
- **Franklin Oduro**, Head of Research & Programs at the Ghana Center for Democratic Development
- **David Fischer**, Vice President of Facebook