

Keynote Speech by Dr. Patrick M. Maluki,
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International Organizations and Global Governance: A Discourse at the University of Nairobi

Distinguished guests, ladies, and gentlemen, good morning/afternoon/evening.

I am very grateful to the Beijing Foreign Studies University, and the Chinese Consortium on Country & Area Studies for this invitation as you launch the Committee on Professional Education for International Organizations (CPEIO). I want to extend my sincere thanks to Dr. Yang Dan, Professor Jia Wenjian, Professor Zhao Lei, and the entire Beijing Foreign Studies University for inviting me here to speak today.

Allow me also to congratulate the leadership of Beijing Foreign Studies University and in particular the Secretariat of the Chinese Consortium on Country & Area Studies on the successful launch of a one of its kind platform in the larger Asia-Pacific region earlier in the year. It is evident that this program seeks to bring scholars and researchers from diverse backgrounds together in the examination of global issues from a multi-perspective lens with a bid to improve the global governance system; well done.

Now that you have established a channel for creating and sharing unified education tools for the training of international organization professionals, one must ask the important question of how to achieve this. It is very wise, to begin with, for universities and scholars to encourage the values of equality and mutual understanding in future public servants. The main message that I hope you take away from this includes the three methodological commitments of this committee: 1) analyzing unbiased and inclusive education models focused on development & governance; 2) creating a curriculum based on those models; and 3) and collaborating with others to do the same.

Your consortium of scholars and education experts holds the authority over the knowledge that can be transferred worldwide. Your expertise can create an integrated and comprehensive curriculum for international organization professionals. Our two institutions, the Beijing Foreign Studies University and the University of Nairobi, both value strong and functional teaching methodologies to foster unbiased and multicultural education systems. We cultivate education systems that use knowledge as something not to just experience but to actively participate in. There is a strong need for deepening research on the professional education of international organizations.

This collaborative platform will provide the world a chance to foster an environment of creating new leaders to tackle the most pressing issues of our time, by creating an understanding across cultures, where if we learn from each other, we can better combat the planet's most contentious and detrimental issues related to our survival. International organizations are a necessary platform for development and governance. You are cultivating the next generation of leadership in the United Nations, World Bank, and other international organizations that can help facilitate peacebuilding processes worldwide.

The world of today is significantly different from the world of yesteryears. We are confronted by very unique and dynamic challenges. Methods of addressing these challenges must correspond with the times. The strategies that worked yesterday, cannot work today.

Globalization has redefined us – we are no longer citizens of our geographies only (I am not just a Kenyan); we are global. And that is why your problem, issue, or challenge, will affect me. Owing to globalization and global forces, the challenges facing one country, region, or continent are felt across the globe many miles apart.

The complexities and realities of globalization have made it inexorable for national problems to be inextricable from global problems. The consequent interdependency of globalization, the proliferation of non-state actors and the recasting of the concept of world government have become core elements in the emergence of the global governance discourse among the policy wonks and academic walls. Scholars have used the term 'governance' to denote the regulation of interdependent relations in the absence of an overarching political authority. This encompasses the institutions, policies, norms, procedures and initiatives through which states and their citizens try to bring more predictability, stability and order to their response to transnational challenges. There is an

increasing need to manage global problems more effectively in the face of increased interdependence.

Various mechanisms have been adopted to deal with the challenges facing us. One of them is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a blueprint for ending poverty and other deprivations and an urgent call for action by all countries. Through my own experience as a professor, I have instructed my students on the SDGs. As I am sure you are all aware, these 17 milestones are meant to be achieved by 2030, and we certainly have a lot of work to do before we can say we as an international community, have met our goals. Cooperation between scholars, researchers, public servants, and other influencers of international discourse must work together to better our world and lessen the frequency of conflicts on our planet, eradicate poverty, eliminate hunger, combat climate change, facilitate economic growth, improve access to clean drinking water and sanitation and realize all the SDGs.

One of the re-emerging problems for International Relations scholars is explaining the degree of order, stability and predictability of the anarchical system of global politics. Some of the questions posited to this end include: How is the world governed in the absence of a central authority and how does this system engage with global treaties and problems such as climate change, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, humanitarian crisis, terrorism, financial instabilities, economic development, international migration flows, new technologies or pandemics?

Although international organizations have long played a substantial role in social policy, scholarly research on their nature, discourse and impact is a fairly recent phenomenon. It is therefore almost safe to state that it is comparatively rare for academics to get together to discuss challenges related to teaching and especially of a discourse like the one we are discussing today – Professional Education on International Organizations. The call for a forum such as this one makes it clear that International Organizations and Global Governance as areas of study within the broader International Relations module are in a state of flux and that considerable uncertainty exists both about what to teach and how to teach it. Among competing priorities, one of the key questions that we constantly seek to address is ‘how can universities equip their students with capabilities that will enable them to serve in international organizations and make a difference in a fluxing global system? I am certain that we will emerge out of this forum with many ideas and suggestions in this regard and that the exchange of ideas will be very useful.

The experience, practice and achievement of the University of Nairobi in professional education for international organizations/global governance

From the foregoing, it is evident that teaching of International Organization (IO) and Global Governance as a Rubric pose unique challenges.

The scholarly research on International Organization is domiciled within the disciplines of International studies and Diplomacy. Some of the key considerations we make at the Department of Diplomacy and International Studies in our pedagogical structure, is whether to take a broad global governance – IO approach in dealing with the creation, revision, and enforcement of rules that mark different governance arrangements, the roles of formal, informal, intergovernmental IOs and the politics, dynamics and processes of problem-solving and governance in various issue areas; or an IOs approach focusing primarily on select formal intergovernmental organizations and possibly nongovernmental organizations emphasizing structures, charters, mandates, and functions. I am glad to note that because of the diversity of the students that we have at the department, we have successfully implemented both of these approaches at the various levels of study. We have taken cognizant and integrated the various international relations and IO-related theories such as the theories of cooperation, regime and institution formation and evolution, functionalism, constructivism and others into the course with great success. Our students have also been introduced to the currents of critical theory such as postmodernism, Marxism, feminism and post-colonialism in relation to global governance.

Overall, this course unit examines the role, the development, the political process as well as the activities of international organizations in the contemporary global political system in a bid to prepare and equip our students with competencies not only in the international organizations but also in the emerging global governance system rubric.

What are the good practices / lessons learned / innovative initiatives in UoN's professional education for global competencies development?

- We create classroom environments that value diversity and global engagement
- We integrate content-aligned global learning experiences
- We review and assess the range of resources available for international exposure and their accessibility to both the students and the faculty members
- We foster development of internationally oriented rubrics through workshops and other internationalization strategies
- We have developed local and global partnerships – we recently launched a Center for the Study of the US domiciled within our department.

There is huge potential for collaboration on professional education for international organizations between China and Kenya. This could be through advocacy for international cooperation in higher education to promote global governance and international cooperation especially in dealing with global challenges:

- Expand the agenda
- Stretch the Institutional Capacities

Conclusion

The collective management of common problems at the international level is at a critical juncture. The growing number of issues on the international agenda and complexity including power shifts are complicating global governance. The deepening interdependence, interconnected problems and the mingling of domestic politics with international issues are all features that are transforming the scale and nature of the challenges facing the international community. This mix of old and new challenges generates new requirements for collective problem-solving – more international cooperation and innovative approaches. What does a revamped Professional Education on International Organizations discourse portend? I will leave us with this question to ponder as we prepare to develop a matrix that will deliver a scholarly discourse that will be an antidote to the current global challenges.

Thank you!