

From: Amr Abdalla

Sent: Monday, April 22, 2013 7:11 PM

To: Staff Mailing List; Official Student Mailing Lists; 'alumni@upeace.org'

Subject: Message to UPEACers

Dear UPEACers:

After careful thought and reflection I have come to the conclusion that time has come for me to turn the page on the wonderful, decade-long, UPEACE chapter of my life. Sometimes in life we must allow for change to take place, and to give the universe the chance to show us the way to new doors and chapters which we would not recognize existed unless we moved on from where we are.

I had the best time of my life, personally and professionally, here at UPEACE. It has been everything that I had prepared myself for, for the last 30 years. I leave UPEACE full of pride and sense of fulfillment because I know that I gave it everything I got, and more importantly I know that I touched so many lives in very positive ways, and contributed significantly to where UPEACE is today.

During my nine years as a Dean and Vice Rector, I contributed to the great work that my colleagues had started with the Revitalization Plan in early 2000's. I feel grateful for representing UPEACE in the most professional, compassionate manner which contributed directly to opening many doors for us, and which set UPEACE as a leader in the field of peace and conflict resolution education. I also spearheaded the effort to bring projects which enriched our academic programmes (such as UPSAM and Karamoja) and which contributed millions of dollars to the UPEACE budget. But again, the greatest contribution that I feel that I have been blessed with was the connection with people especially students on campus and worldwide; this is priceless.

It is also important to state for the record that during my tenure as Vice Rector for the last five years UPEACE never defaulted on a payment, never owed money to anyone and never sought or endured any loans or debt. Yes we always struggled financially, due to the peculiar set up of UPEACE by the United Nations and the Costa Rican government, but we always came through during those years, thanks to the great efforts of many of my colleagues who always went the extra mile with much creativity, commitment and passion.

I learned so much during my time at UPEACE, and gained great insights into who I am as a person and as a professional. I feel that my years at UPEACE have prepared me for the next chapter of my life which I am ready to embark upon with the same passion and professionalism. I am already preparing for that next chapter in which I would like to resume my contribution to education for peace and conflict resolution in the Muslim world, and to build bridges of peaceful coexistence among Muslims and between Muslims and everyone else- in America, Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East and everywhere else. I already started some consultancies with organizations in Washington, D.C., where I plan to relocate to my Maryland home for the next few years. I will primarily take the position of Vice President of SALAM Institute for Peace and Justice- a Washington-based, non-profit organization that my friend and colleague Dr. Mohammed Abu Nimer of American University and I incorporated in 2003. Since then I came to UPEACE while Mohammed led SALAM to become a key organization in the field

of peace and conflict resolution. It is my turn now to contribute to the growth and success of SALAM just like I did ten years ago at UPEACE.

UPEACE will always remain as part of me, and I part of it. As long as UPEACE maintains that amazing spirit that my colleagues and I have instilled in the last few years; as long as it continues to be that worldwide pioneering, frontier seeker, compassionate organization, I am sure that I will continue to find many means of cooperation. One thing I am certain about in this regard is that I will always pursue UPEACE graduates everywhere I go for professional cooperation, like I have done in the last few weeks in Sri Lanka, Lebanon and Dubai. The UPEACERs Network we all established over the last decade is an excellent model for professional cooperation, and I will make sure to keep it vital and efficient.

As my contract calls for a 4-months termination notice, I hereby inform the UPEACE Administration that I plan to end my work at UPEACE under the current contract on August 31, 2013.

Thanks to everyone who has come my way during the last ten years. Those years were full of wonderful times of success and joy, but also had moments of trial, loss and struggle. While I rejoice in the success and joy of the last decade, I recognize that there were also not-so-pleasant moments and encounters. For those who may have experienced the latter with me, please accept my apology, and let us turn a new chapter which builds on the positive elements that we had together in our beloved UPEACE.

In peace. Amr

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