

《 論 說 》

## Advancing strategic institutional cooperation to promote learning for peace:

the Peace Studies programme at the Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø, February 2018 - outcomes, lessons learned and future prospects

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This paper discusses the manner in which the planning and delivery of the second cycle of the intensive Peace Studies programme at the Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø in February 2018 contributes towards the advancement of strategic cooperation between higher education institutions in two different countries.

### 1. A conducive institutional environment

As the second decade of the 21st century draws towards a close, it could be argued that the present time represents something of an auspicious one for the instigation of new international initiatives across large sections of the Japanese higher education sector. In recent years a number of trends have come together to create an environment in which a considerable degree of support on both an institutional and a broader national level can now be found for the creation of international educational partnerships which offer a variety of exciting educational opportunities to university students in Japan. In a previous paper the author described several factors, notably the country's declining birth rate and the worsening positions that Japan's top universities hold on international university ranking tables, that have forced significant change upon governmental decision makers and, as a consequence, boards of directors within individual universities<sup>(1)</sup>. In terms of overall university management, what had hitherto been seen as largely acceptable policy with regard to curriculum development and international

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outreach has been revealed to be in reality no longer viable in the long term, and therefore a number of new strategies have been introduced both from above and below. With regard to this context, Short (2017) described the introduction in 2014 of a large scale governmental initiative which represents an important contribution to an ongoing drive to reinvigorate Japanese higher education, the Top Global University Project (TGUP). Promulgated by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), this initiative replaced one that had been launched with a similar goal but which had proved largely ineffectual, the Global 30 Project that had run from 2009 - 2014. Under the TGUP, in exchange for a sizable budget increase and 'Top Global University' status, over the course of ten years 37 selected institutions committed to instigating wide-ranging structural reforms aimed at developing their strongest academic fields in order to approach a global standard and also to significantly expand their international profiles. Various performance indicators were stipulated by MEXT to evaluate progress in achieving these goals, including indicators to assess 'internationalization', by which measure expansions in the institutions' international profiles are being evaluated<sup>(2)</sup>. Selected as one of the 24 Type B universities under the TGUP in 2014,<sup>(3)</sup> Toyo University underwent a first round of formal evaluation in September 2017. The result of this evaluation saw Toyo receive an 'A' grade from MEXT, thereby ensuring ongoing funding and Top Global University status, which will continue until a second round of evaluation scheduled to take place in 2020<sup>(4)</sup>.

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(1) Short, J. (2017), *Initiatives to promote internationalization in Japanese higher education: Prospects and difficulties encountered during the creation of an intensive course in Education, Development and Peace in cooperation with partners from the Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø*, 東洋法学第61巻第2号.

(2) MEXT, Top Global University Japan, *Top Global University Project*, online document, n.d.; <https://tgu.mext.go.jp/en/about/index.html>; see also Short (2017), op. cit., pp. 277 - 281.

(3) Shimmi, Y. & Yonezawa, A. (2015), *Japan's "Top Global University" Project*, International Higher Education, no. 81, p. 27.

The major changes that are taking place across large sections of Japanese higher education are providing impetus for an ongoing process of structural reform and internationalization within individual universities. These developments have created an institutional environment which is supportive of new cooperative educational initiatives undertaken with overseas partners, such as that instigated by the Faculty of Law at Toyo University and the Centre for Peace Studies at the Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø in February 2017 - the intensive course in Education, Development and Peace. The second cycle of this programme came to a successful conclusion in February 2018 and planning has already begun for a third cycle scheduled for February 2019. In respect of this programme, it is held that its planning and delivery represent a dynamic collaborative vehicle through which closer cooperation can be facilitated between universities in two different countries.

## 2. A tripartite programme - strategic priorities of the participating institutions

The first discussions pertaining to the creation of a new cooperative programme in Peace Studies took place between the author and his principal counterpart at the Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø (hereafter referred to as UiT) Professor Vidar Vambheim in September 2012. Subsequently, a period of almost five years elapsed before the first cycle of this programme actually took place at UiT in February 2017<sup>(5)</sup>. Until two months prior to the start of the first cycle, the understanding between Vambheim and the author was that the programme participants would quite naturally be drawn from students from Toyo University and UiT. However, independent of the

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(4) Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, Top Global University Project, interim evaluation results:

[https://www.jsps.go.jp/j-sgu/h26\\_kekka\\_saitaku.html](https://www.jsps.go.jp/j-sgu/h26_kekka_saitaku.html) ;

[https://www.jsps.go.jp/j-sgu/data/chukan/hyoka/sgu\\_29chukan\\_kekka\\_b16.pdf](https://www.jsps.go.jp/j-sgu/data/chukan/hyoka/sgu_29chukan_kekka_b16.pdf)

(5) A detailed description of the protracted process that led to the creation of the intensive course in Education, Development and Peace at the Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø is provided in Short (2017).

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formal negotiations that had been steadily progressing between Toyo and UiT since 2012, another Japanese university, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (hereafter referred to as TUFSS), had also been in the process of establishing formal links with the Norwegian institution. The result of these parallel developments was that in December 2016 what had hitherto been planned as a bipartite educational programme abruptly changed to become a tripartite one as students from TUFSS were invited to participate in it. The results of this late stage change to the student personnel of the programme were almost entirely positive;<sup>(6)</sup> moreover, these results were a catalyst that instigated negotiations between Toyo University and TUFSS, which ultimately led to the signing of an Academic Cooperation Agreement between them in December 2017<sup>(7)</sup>. As a consequence, since its inception in February 2017 and henceforth in future cycles the Peace Studies programme exists as a tripartite cooperative educational initiative involving the following partners: Toyo University, UiT and TUFSS.

It goes without saying that decision makers at the three participating institutions granted approval for the programme to proceed due to the fact that its structure and learning activities were in line with the broader strategic priorities of their respective institutions. These specific priorities are elucidated in the following section. Firstly, the discussion will address the two Japanese institutions.

### 1. Toyo University

The strategic priorities of Toyo University which are of direct relevance to the Peace Studies programme are those that concern the promotion of internationalization across the university as a whole, which itself represents a key policy imperative that Toyo is addressing as part of its commitments under the TGUP. Of the ten performance

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(6) See Short, J. (2018), *Effecting meaningful educational cooperation with overseas institutional partners: Lessons learned from the delivery of an intensive course in Education, Development and Peace at the Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø in February - March 2017*, 東洋法學第61巻第3号.

(7) 東京外国語大学と連携・協力に関する基本協定を締結; <http://www.toyo.ac.jp/site/news/339784.html>

indicators for internationalization stipulated by MEXT,<sup>(8)</sup> the programme was granted approval in no small part due to its potential to contribute either directly or indirectly towards the achievement of tangible progress in line with the following indicators:

2. Increase the ratio of international students in the total student population.
3. Increase the ratio of students who have earned credits at foreign universities in the total Japanese student population.
4. Increase the number of students sent abroad under inter-university agreements<sup>(9)</sup>.

In addition to its potential to deliver tangible progress in line with these indicators, the delivery of the programme also created something of a historic first opportunity for the staff and students at Toyo University to cooperate with their counterparts at TUFs in a concrete educational venture. With regard to academic ranking and overall standing in Japanese higher education as a whole, it is an undeniable fact that TUFs represents an elite national institution in which a large number of its students are of the highest academic calibre. Consequently, the fact that as a result of its participation in this programme Toyo has entered into ongoing cooperation with TUFs likely represents an additional positive feature on the part of the former institution.

## 2. TUFs

With regard to the strategic priorities of TUFs, despite the fact that an undoubted disparity exists between the two institutions in terms of the general academic ability of their respective students,<sup>(10)</sup> it actually has much in common with the situation at Toyo. As a university which was also selected as a Type B institution under the TGUP in 2014, TUFs has similarly committed itself to a ten year process of structural reform and expanded internationalization, and as a consequence also underwent formal evaluation by MEXT in September 2017. The result of this evaluation was that in a

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(8) See note 2 above, and Short (2017), op. cit., p. 278.

(9) MEXT, Top Global University Japan, *Top Global University Project*, online document, n.d., op. cit.

(10) Meaning that on average students at TUFs possess higher academic abilities than their counterparts at Toyo.

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similar manner to Toyo, TUFs was awarded an 'A' grade, thereby ensuring its continued additional funding and TGU status until the second round of evaluation in 2020<sup>(11)</sup>. Therefore with regard to the key policy imperative of expanding internationalization under the TGUP, despite the fact that the starting conditions of the two universities reveal significant differences, due to its TGU status TUFs faces comparable challenges to Toyo. Therefore it can be argued that the aforementioned three performance indicators for internationalization are also relevant in the case of TUFs.

In addition, due to the unique curriculum offered at TUFs which in its position as a leading national university (国立大学) specializes in the teaching of over 70 foreign languages, due to the overall educational strategy pursued at the university it faces an additional financial challenge. This is related to the fact that in order to further the studies of its students in a variety of ways but most importantly to enhance their linguistic abilities, TUFs strongly encourages its students to spend extended periods overseas in the countries where their chosen language or languages of study are spoken. To facilitate these periods of overseas study, TUFs seeks to identify sources of supplementary funding, including from that provided under the TGUP. With regard to the Peace Studies programme, towards the end of 2016 decision makers at TUFs came to the conclusion that it represented an appropriate endeavour which could be integrated into one of the university's broader international teaching and research ventures, the 'Conflict Resilience Project' (in Japanese 「コンフリクト耐性」プロジェクト)<sup>(12)</sup>. Hitherto this project has been financed by a separate fund provided by MEXT which is unrelated to the TGUP. Therefore seen from both a financial and an

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(11) Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, Top Global University Project, interim evaluation results:

[https://www.jsps.go.jp/j-sgu/h26\\_kekka\\_saitaku.html](https://www.jsps.go.jp/j-sgu/h26_kekka_saitaku.html);

[https://www.jsps.go.jp/j-sgu/data/chukan/hyoka/sgu\\_29chukan\\_kekka\\_b02.pdf](https://www.jsps.go.jp/j-sgu/data/chukan/hyoka/sgu_29chukan_kekka_b02.pdf)

(12) 東京外国語大学の「コンフリクト耐性」プロジェクト, <http://www.tufs.ac.jp/blog/project/cr-proj/cat2/>; <http://www.tufs.ac.jp/blog/project/cr-proj/cat1470/>

educational point of view, participation in the Peace Studies programme represents an attractive proposition for TUFS. The reasons for this are as follows: Firstly, it creates a new opportunity for students at TUFS to travel to Norway to study a variety of issues which are closely related to the central themes of the Conflict Resilience Project. Secondly, it is possible for TUFS to draw the funding for the participation of these students from a separate fund, and therefore it is not necessary to draw upon the standard university budget nor from the additional funding provided under the TGUP. Furthermore, in terms of the actual delivery of the programme, there is an additional practical feature which is likely attractive to decision makers at TUFS, that being that a staff member from Toyo University who is not only specialized in the field of Peace Studies but who also actually co-designed the whole programme in collaboration with colleagues at UiT accompanies the students of both universities throughout its entirety, including during the travel to and from Norway<sup>(13)</sup>. In the role of programme coordinator on the Japanese side, this staff member is thereby responsible for the safety and well-being of the whole group of students and is also present in person to provide a wide variety of educational and linguistic support. Despite the fact that a large percentage of TUFS students spend significant periods of time outside Japan to further their studies, as a national university which receives the majority of its funding from MEXT, to a large extent TUFS does not possess financial resources which can be allocated to cover the costs of accompanying members of staff on overseas programmes of this nature. However, due to the fact that Toyo University is a private university (私立大学) which raises the majority of its funding from fees paid by its students, its decision makers possess the wherewithal to allocate funds to cover the costs of accompanying staff in cases which are deemed appropriate, as it is doing in this case.

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(13) The staff member in question is the author.

### 3. UiT

With regard to the strategic priorities of UiT, it is first necessary to consider the broader context of higher education in Norway on a national level. In terms of the promotion of international cooperation in Norwegian higher education, the policy landscape for developments in this area was elucidated in a speech given by Mr. Tord Tukun, Minister-Counsellor and Deputy Chief of Mission at the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Tokyo on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Erling Rimestad, the Ambassador of Norway to Japan, at a reception held to mark the signing of an Academic Cooperation Agreement between the Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø and Toyo University at Bunkyo Ward Office, Tokyo on October 10<sup>th</sup> 2017<sup>(14)</sup>. At this reception Tukun described how the Norwegian government is placing emphasis on the promotion of international cooperation in education and research in three specific geographic regions: i) the Nordic countries of Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Iceland; ii) the countries of the European Union;<sup>(15)</sup> and iii) six more geographically distant ‘Panorama’ countries located in different parts of the world. The national education strategy vis-à-vis the Panorama countries of Brazil, China, India, Japan, Russia and South Africa is elucidated in a policy document promulgated by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research in October 2015<sup>(16)</sup>. As one of the Panorama countries, Japan represents a location in which closer cooperation with Norwegian educational institutions is being strongly supported at a governmental level, particularly in the fields of environmental science, the sustainable management of fisheries, and the protection of the ecosystem

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(14) New Cooperative and Exchange Agreements with Tromsø in Norway, ノルウェー王国トロンソ大学と新規協定を締結; <http://www.toyo.ac.jp/site/tgd/333139.html>

(15) The European Union is currently made up of 28 countries: [https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries_en)

(16) Norwegian Ministry for Education and Research (2015), *Panorama - Strategy for cooperation on higher education and research with Brazil, China, India, Japan, Russia and South Africa (2016-2020)*, online policy document; [https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/ca08629ce24349aab4c7be35584707a5/f-4418-e\\_panorama.pdf](https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/ca08629ce24349aab4c7be35584707a5/f-4418-e_panorama.pdf)



of the arctic region. For this reason since 2015 the Norwegian Embassy in Japan has been active in facilitating cooperation between universities in Norway and Japan, including of course that taking place between UiT (Norway's largest university in the arctic region) and Toyo, and also that between UiT and TUFs.

In this context, with regard to UiT there are a number of strategic priorities that are directly relevant to the Peace Studies programme. Firstly, in line with the aforementioned national educational strategy, it represents an ongoing cooperative venture which is being carried out in partnership with two highly regarded educational institutions that are located in one of the six Panorama countries. Secondly, due to the fact that the lectures of the programme are delivered entirely in English, it contributes to a drive being implemented across the university as a whole to increase the number of courses that are taught in English. Thirdly, with regard to the Academic Exchange Agreement signed with Toyo in October 2017 which provides the institutional foundation to the programme, as a matter of course this agreement works also in the opposite direction, thereby enabling UiT students to enrol at Toyo as exchange students and study a wide range of courses offered at the partner university. In this way, reciprocal educational access to Toyo's courses contributes towards another UiT-wide priority which is to provide additional incentives to UiT students to travel outside of their home country to pursue periods of study.

With regard to the educational body within UiT that has direct responsibility for the administration of the programme, the Centre for Peace Studies (hereafter referred to as the CPS), future cycles of the programme (meaning those scheduled to take place in 2019 and beyond) represent the realisation of a long-held intention to deliver undergraduate level courses at the Centre<sup>(17)</sup>. Furthermore, the holding of the programme at the CPS represents an opportunity for the staff and students at the Centre

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(17) Hitherto all courses offered at the Centre for Peace Studies at UiT have been at the Masters (postgraduate) level. See section 5 below and: [https://en.uit.no/om/enhet/forsiden?p\\_dimension\\_id=88157](https://en.uit.no/om/enhet/forsiden?p_dimension_id=88157)

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to welcome guests from East Asia for a three week period who may find it a stimulating experience, and subsequently decide to further their studies in the field by enrolling in the main course offered at the CPS, the Master's Degree Programme in Peace and Conflict Transformation<sup>(18)</sup>.

### 3. Programme delivery: learning activities at UiT and the excursion to Finnmark

It goes without saying that the second cycle of the Peace Studies programme delivered at UiT between February 4<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> 2018 sought to build upon the positive results that had been achieved in the first cycle a year earlier in order to produce a generally more effective programme for the participating students. Due to the fact that the fundamentals had already been established and tested during the pilot phase of 2017, the coordinators on the UiT and Toyo sides (Professor Vidar Vambheim and the author) had confidence in both the venture as a whole and its potential to deliver a valuable educational and cultural experience.

In terms of the structure of the second cycle, this largely followed the model of the previous year with some adjustments which were made as a result of lessons that had been learned in 2017<sup>(19)</sup>. With regard to the overall length of the programme, this was increased by one day in order to ease the schedule for the return journey to Japan, and the start date was brought forward by one week in order to coincide with the many cultural and educational events which take place every year in the city of Tromsø to celebrate the National Day of the Sami People on February 6<sup>th</sup><sup>(20)</sup>. As in the previous

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(18) Centre for Peace Studies, Masters Degree Programme in Peace and Conflict Transformation, [https://en.uit.no/om/enhet/utdanning?p\\_dimension\\_id=88157](https://en.uit.no/om/enhet/utdanning?p_dimension_id=88157)

(19) A detailed discussion of the lessons learned from the 2017 pilot phase cycle of the Peace Studies programme can be found in Short (2018), op. cit., pp. 510 - 520.

(20) These cultural and educational events take place during the course of one week - Sami Week - that is centred on the Sami National Day of February 6<sup>th</sup>. [http://www.msm.no/program-sami-week-2018.455223\\_en.html](http://www.msm.no/program-sami-week-2018.455223_en.html); [http://issuu.com/karlstroem/docs/msm\\_samiskukeavis2018?e=11445325/57959622](http://issuu.com/karlstroem/docs/msm_samiskukeavis2018?e=11445325/57959622)

year, the learning activities took place over a period of three weeks during which the students attended two weeks of lectures and seminars at UiT, followed by a three-night, four-day excursion to Finnmark in the far north of Norway which took place during the final week. The following section outlines the main differences in the programme from the previous year in terms of the curriculum delivered at UiT and the activities that took place during the excursion to Finnmark.

#### Lectures and seminars at UiT

In terms of the content of the lectures delivered to the students during the two weeks of study at UiT, in contrast to that of the previous year this was mainly focused on the subject of Peace Education - its fundamental concepts and purpose, practical application in real-world scenarios and methods of evaluation. During the 2017 cycle this subject had been proposed as one which could supplement the more general lectures that were given to introduce the field of Peace Studies as a whole, but ultimately it had not been possible to address this subject due to insufficient time. On this occasion Professor Vambheim delivered three comprehensive lectures on Peace Education as well as an additional more informal lecture in which he described his personal motivations for teaching and carrying out research in the field of Peace Studies. The students also attended two special lectures that were arranged at the CPS as part of the various events held at UiT to celebrate Sami Week which focused on the following themes: i) the relations between the indigenous Sami people and the majority population of Norway,<sup>(21)</sup> and ii) the relations between powerful and weaker groups in human societies in many parts of the world, viewed as relations of humiliation or dignity<sup>(22)</sup>. The lectures given by Vambheim, Berg and Lindner provided the main material for the five seminars that were led by the author which are discussed below.

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(21) First special lecture delivered by a guest speaker at the Centre of Peace Studies, UiT to celebrate Sami Week: *The historical background for and recent debate about the Norwegian Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, Professor Bård A. Berg, Department of Philosophy, UiT, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

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In addition, the students attended a special lecture given by Ms. Elisabeth Sandersen which focused on the development of and current condition of gender relations in Norway. Furthermore, in order to gain a broader view of the various peace-related research that is carried out at the CPS, they also attended presentations given by three PhD students who presented the progress of their research into the following topics: i) Individual and social values as the prerequisites of social changes; ii) Energy security in the Black Sea - Caspian region; and iii) Conflict in Ukraine - a multiplicity of narratives<sup>(23)</sup>.

A significant change from the previous year which was made to the two weeks of learning activities that took place at UiT was the introduction of a new element which required specific *production* from the students. This production took the form of group presentations which the students prepared in response to specific research themes selected by Professor Vambheim. In 2017 following their attendance in Vambheim's lectures, during the subsequent seminars led by the author the students were tasked with confirming their understanding of the lecture content and then expressing their own opinions in relation to it in a discussion format. In general, this approach proved to be a successful method of study during the pilot phase since lively discussions were observed in each of the seminars<sup>(24)</sup>. However, a specific activity which required new, self-generated output from the students had not been included as part of the learning activities at UiT during the first cycle, and in the post-programme analysis which took place during the spring of 2017 this was viewed as a shortcoming by both Vambheim and the author. As a consequence, during the planning discussions for the second cycle

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(22) Second special lecture delivered at the Centre for Peace Studies, UiT to celebrate Sami Week: *Honour, Humiliation and Terror, an explosive mix and how we can defuse it with dignity*, Professor Evelin G. Lindner, Founding President of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

(23) PhD research presentations given at the Centre for Peace Studies, UiT by Ms. Daria Miseng, Ms. Valeria Gergieva and Ms. Valerie Lazarenko on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> 2018 respectively.

(24) See Short (2018), op. cit., pp. 498 - 502.

a decision was taken to add a session to the schedule for the second week in which the students would be given the opportunity to demonstrate the extent of their learning from the lectures and seminars that they had attended up until that point. An additional motivation for the inclusion of this new element was the unfortunate situation which had arisen in March - April 2017 when, as a result of a misunderstanding that occurred between the coordinators on the Norwegian and Japanese sides, following their return to Japan none of the participants of the first cycle of the programme submitted a formal essay via UiT's online evaluation system<sup>(25)</sup>.

Therefore in the seminar held on the Tuesday of the second week at UiT (February 13<sup>th</sup>) the author explained the research themes that had been selected for each group,<sup>(26)</sup> after which the students were given until midday on the subsequent Friday (February 16<sup>th</sup>) to prepare their presentations. The themes selected by Vambheim were as follows:

- ◇ Group 1: Investigate the effects of the melting sea ice in the arctic on both plant and animal life and the lifestyles of people in the region.
- ◇ Group 2: Describe the adaptation strategies of the Sami people to the arctic environment from the past until the present.
- ◇ Group 3: Describe the conditions and activities of the main Sami institutions in northern Norway.
- ◇ Group 4: Create a definition of 'humiliation' that is satisfactory to you as Japanese people.

In the days following the Tuesday seminar and prior to the presentations given on the Friday the students made educational visits to three sites within the city of Tromsø, the Polaria Arctic Aquarium, the Tromsø University Museum and the Arctic Cathedral<sup>(27)</sup>.

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(25) Ibid, pp. 507 - 510.

(26) The membership of the four groups was the same as that which had been arranged for the preparatory research tasks that were carried out during the five orientation sessions for the programme between November 2017 and January 2018.

(27) These sites were also visited during the previous year's cycle, see Short (2018), op. cit., pp. 505 - 506.

### Excursion to Finnmark

The most significant difference between the excursion to Finnmark in 2018 and that of the previous year was its overall length. In 2017 the excursion had proved to be one of the highlights of the first cycle of the programme, which was in no small part due to the fact that several Master's students from the CPS of a number of nationalities joined the group of Japanese students. However, despite the fact that the expanded group of students undoubtedly enjoyed visiting the various Sami institutions in northern Norway and in the process forged a number of new friendships with each other, the greatest drawback of the excursion was that the two-night, three-day programme proved to be too short, and as a consequence it was difficult to elicit the maximum educational benefit from the sites that were visited. A particular problem arose with regard to the geographical remoteness of two of the sites, the Sami towns of Karasjok and Kautokeino, which are located in the heart of the tundra in central Finnmark. This situation necessitated several long periods of bus travel, including an arduous return journey from Kautokeino to Tromsø on the final day which took over ten hours<sup>(28)</sup>. To overcome this difficulty, during the preparations for the second cycle Professor Vambheim, Ms. Elisabeth Sandersen<sup>(29)</sup> and the author decided to extend the excursion by 24 hours so that it became a three-night, four-day exercise. The results of this change were almost entirely positive (the only negative consequence being an increase in the overall cost), and as a consequence the long periods of bus travel were reduced and it also became possible to add a number of new activities to the programme.

In terms of the geographic route of the excursion, to a large extent this followed that taken in 2017 except for the additional final day which was spent in the city of Alta, with the return journey to Tromsø taken not by bus but by commuter plane. The specific activities of the first two days were similar to those of the previous year;

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(28) See Short (2018), *op. cit.*, pp. 502 - 505.

(29) The Chief Administrator at the Centre for Peace Studies, UiT.

however, on the third day in Kautokeino the more flexible schedule allowed more time to be spent at both the Sami High School and Sami University, and also enabled a visit to be made to the unique jewellery artisan centre in the town, Juhl's Silver Gallery<sup>(30)</sup>. On the morning of the final day the party visited the Alta Campus of the Arctic University of Norway and received a special lecture that focused on arctic tourism from Professor Young-Sook Lee of the Faculty of Sports, Tourism and Social Work, Department of Tourism and Northern Studies. Following this lecture, and prior to the evening return flight to Tromsø,<sup>(31)</sup> the party visited the beautiful Sorrisniva Ice Hotel which is located a short distance from the Alta<sup>(32)</sup>.

#### 4. Student performance

The following section provides an evaluation of the overall performance of the students during the two central elements of the programme, the learning activities at UiT and the excursion to Finnmark, which is primarily based upon observations made by the author during the course of the three weeks.

##### Learning activities at UiT

In order to offer an evaluation of the overall performance of the students in the learning activities at UiT, two aspects of this element of the programme will be discussed: i) the lectures and seminars, and ii) the group presentations. With regard to the former, in terms of levels of student attendance and punctuality, in a similar respect to the performance achieved by their predecessors in the previous year, the students' results were excellent and once again a perfect score of 100% attendance was achieved in each. However, with regard to maintaining high levels of concentration in order to facilitate active engagement in the lectures, it must be recognised that success in this

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(30) Juhl's Silver Gallery, Kautokeino: <https://www.juhls.no/>

(31) This flight on a small propeller plane took only 45 minutes. Had we returned to Tromsø by bus it would have likely taken up to six hours.

(32) Sorrisniva Ice Hotel, Alta: <https://sorrisniva.no/>

regard was far from universal. In this context it goes without saying that the lectures were delivered entirely in English and to a large extent addressed material that many of the students had not encountered before. Furthermore, it is not in doubt that all of the students found themselves in a learning environment that was unfamiliar both educationally and geographically, which likely undermined levels of individual confidence. As a result, this combination of factors led to a situation where in general the older students (meaning those who were in the second grade and above), and those who possessed good English speaking ability found themselves able to participate actively in the lectures and contribute towards the discussions that took place in them, whereas their younger counterparts and those with weaker English ability were largely unable to do so. As the two weeks of learning activities at UiT progressed, a situation frequently arose where in response to questions posed by the lecturers the same group of four or five students would respond with their ideas, whilst some others would say nothing and it was unfortunately clear from their demeanour that they were unable to participate in this manner. Moreover, likely due to a lack of understanding about the topic in question and also insufficient English ability,<sup>(33)</sup> on a number of occasions some of these students were actually unable to *remain awake* during the lectures which was to the considerable consternation of the author.

It is important to stress that the disparity in performance which was observed among the students during the lectures in all likelihood did not occur as a result of a lack of effort or motivation on their part. During the programme as a whole, which of course includes the learning activities at UiT, the author never once had the impression that the students who appeared to be struggling lacked interest in the subject material or were merely 'going through the motions' during the formal sessions. By contrast, he is of the opinion that the disparity arose due to the fact that these students simply found some of the lecture proceedings very difficult to follow and were therefore unable to

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(33) A situation which was likely not helped by some students also suffering from the effects of jet lag.



contribute actively.

This impression was borne out by the performance of the whole group of students in the seminars which were conducted almost entirely in Japanese. In these sessions, in a similar manner to the attitude which they had demonstrated in the five pre-departure orientation sessions,<sup>(34)</sup> their performance was almost universally excellent with each member of the group making numerous valuable contributions. Furthermore, the attitude which the students demonstrated towards each other was consistently encouraging and respectful which had a positive effect on the progression of seminar discussions. With regard to the subject material drawn from the lectures that was discussed in the seminars, which in of itself frequently challenged *all* of the students on both an intellectual and a linguistic level, on a number of occasions the author held additional intensive study sessions at a group level in order to provide supplementary explanations prior to and following the seminars. In these group meetings the engagement and general attitude demonstrated by the students were once again exemplary.

With regard to the group presentations, the performance of the students in this activity was also of a very high standard. The research tasks decided by Vambheim required the students to carry out further investigation into a theme which was drawn from some of the subject material they had already studied during the programme, and all of the groups were under instruction to present the findings of their research in a manner which would be as visually and intellectually stimulating as possible to an audience of their peers. In terms of the contributions made by each individual student and the presentations as a whole, both Vambheim and the author were very satisfied with the educational product of this activity, and also appreciated the highly creditable efforts that the students had made to prepare their presentations<sup>(35)</sup>. The positive results

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(34) See note 26 above.

(35) All of the group presentations and subsequent question and answer sessions carried out with Professor Vambheim were filmed and have been archived at both UiT and Toyo.

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achieved in this activity highlighted one of the principal lessons that was learned during the second cycle of the programme:

Generally speaking, in highly structured activities in which the students clearly understood the parameters of the task at hand, such as in the case of carrying out research into a specific theme in order to prepare a presentation in English about it some days later, the students performed very competently. However, in less structured activities, such as in lecture discussions carried out in English which tackled new and intellectually challenging subjects, some of the members of the group were seen to really struggle.

#### Excursion to Finnmark

With regard to the performance of the students during the excursion to Finnmark, in terms of overall behaviour, cooperativeness and enthusiasm this was in general very good. The students consistently listened attentively to the explanations and instructions given regarding the sites to be visited and were highly engaged throughout the course of the four day activity. On a few occasions when the staff at the various sites presented detailed explanations about them in English some declines in levels of attention were observed among a few students; however, this was not on a par with what had occurred during some of the lectures at UiT. During Professor Young-Sook Lee's lecture at the Alta Campus a similar situation arose whereby the older students with greater English ability responded well to the questions posed by Lee, whilst some of the others held back. However, this situation did not adversely affect the progress of the session to any significant extent.

The excursion activities in which the students responded most actively were those in which they had the freedom to explore the sites at their own pace without direction from either the coordinators or local staff. This was observed in particular during the visit to the Sami High School in Kautokeino which, as a result of pure coincidence, was holding its whole-school open day on the same day as our visit. As a consequence, following a brief introductory talk from the Vice-Principal, the students were free to

explore the entire site, including a number of areas where special events were taking place outside in the school grounds,<sup>(36)</sup> and also participate in craft activities in the classrooms together with local students of many ages. This was undoubtedly a highly memorable experience as many of the students commented later. In addition, following the lecture from Professor Lee at Alta Campus which introduced the subject of arctic tourism, the students also greatly enjoyed experiencing an example of this first hand when we visited the Sorrisniva Ice Hotel.

#### 5. Beyond the 2018 cycle - advancing strategic institutional cooperation

In section 2 above the discussion elucidated the strategic priorities of the three higher education institutions which lay behind their decision to participate in the Peace Studies programme taken in 2016. Prior to the start of the second cycle on February 4<sup>th</sup> 2018, each of the institutions independently decided to continue their participation in the programme; therefore it is expected that it will continue in largely its current form in the coming years. It goes without saying that in the case of unforeseeable changes at either of the institutions, adjustments to the design or delivery of the programme or temporary pauses in it may occur. However, amongst the key decision makers at Toyo, UiT and TUFS there is currently clear commitment to facilitate the delivery of a third cycle of the programme in 2019, with a view to continuing it in subsequent years. The following discussion outlines what it is held can be expected from the delivery of future cycles of the programme with regard to the advancement of strategic cooperation between the three participating institutions.

#### The Japanese side - Toyo and TUFS

Looking first at the two Japanese institutions, as stated above the delivery of the programme and its concomitant educational outputs represent tangible contributions

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(36) These events included practising lassoing, riding a sled pulled by reindeer and drinking coffee in front of an open fire inside a Sami tent called a *lavvu*.

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towards the promotion of internationalization at both Toyo and TUFS, which is an essential policy imperative facing the two universities under the Top Global University Programme. Furthermore, it represents an ongoing collaborative venture through which closer cooperation can be forged between the staff and students of the two universities (which have hitherto experienced almost no direct interaction), which in of itself represents something of a novel mode of domestic higher education cooperation in Japan due to the different types of university (national versus private) and the contrasting academic levels of their respective students. An additional broader tangible benefit which has come into effect with the commencement of the new academic year in April 2018 as a result of the Academic Cooperation Agreement signed between the two institutions in December 2017 is that students from all faculties at Toyo and TUFS now have the opportunity to study courses offered at the partner institution, and can thereby earn credits which count towards their degree qualifications.

With regard to the participating students in future cycles of the programme, on the Toyo side its students will continue to have the opportunity to meet and study together with students from an elite national university for an extended period, and can thereby gain intellectual stimulation and linguistic support from their counterparts at the partner institution. On the TUFS side, its students will continue to have the opportunity to participate in a unique and exciting Toyo overseas programme which is overseen from start to finish by a member of Toyo's academic staff, who is himself one of the original architects of the enterprise. Therefore as a consequence of a process of continual improvement which began immediately following the conclusion of the first cycle in March 2017, it is likely that future groups of students from the two universities will be able to participate in a more educationally and culturally stimulating programme, the cooperative planning, delivery and evaluation of which will contribute towards the further development of mutually-beneficial links between Toyo and TUFS.

#### The Norwegian side - UiT

With regard to the situation at UiT, in keeping with the aforementioned national policy

priority of the promotion of international cooperation in higher education with institutions located in the six Panorama countries, in this context UiT's commitment to the delivery of the programme in partnership with Toyo and TUFs is expected to continue. In terms of internal priorities within UiT, the programme's continuation also provides opportunities for tangible progress to be made in other areas which relate to curriculum development both at the university as a whole and at the Centre for Peace Studies.

In respect of this, following the completion of the first cycle of the programme, an internal review was carried out at UiT which came to the conclusion that as a cooperative educational venture the programme had much to recommend it, not least the various results that had been achieved with the staff and students from two of UiT's overseas institutional partners, and that it should therefore continue in subsequent years. However, the review also identified a number of serious shortcomings which required clear redress if the programme was to become a long-term enterprise. The first of these was mentioned in section 3 above: the failure of the participants of the first cycle to submit a formal essay to UiT following the end of the programme in March - April 2017 which came about as a result of a misunderstanding that arose between the Norwegian and Japanese coordinators. Further shortcomings were identified with regard to the actual teaching of the course which related to the fact that Professor Vambheim's teaching time and administrative energies were to some extent diverted from his regular responsibilities within the Faculty of Humanities, Social Science and Education and towards the activities of the programme that were taking place at the CPS, and also in particular during the excursion to Finnmark when he travelled together with the party outside the city of Tromsø. The delivery of the programme also caused difficulties relating to the reservation and use of classrooms at UiT, added administrative burdens that were experienced by CPS staff and a number of unforeseen financial costs that the programme incurred.

On the basis of the internal review, in late 2017 and early 2018 a number of discussions

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were held at UiT with the intention of ensuring the continuation of the programme at the same time as addressing these shortcomings. As a result of this process, a decision was taken to the effect that from 2019 (meaning from the start of the third cycle and thereafter) the programme will no longer exist as a stand-alone exercise that is separate from the broader UiT curriculum, and instead it will be fully integrated into the curriculum and therefore open to all UiT students. This change in status requires that all future participants, including those who will join the programme from UiT's partner institutions in Japan, officially register for it beforehand via UiT's online registration system and then submit a formal essay following its completion, thereby earning academic credit. To a large extent this development clarifies Vambheim's teaching and administrative responsibilities vis-à-vis the programme and will likely also simplify a number of logistical (including financial) arrangements relating to it. Furthermore, in a development which is of particular significance to the CPS, in terms of location within the UiT campus the programme will henceforth be officially based at the CPS, and in terms of academic level it will become a Bachelor's level course. Since the establishment of the CPS in 2002, this development represents the first time that the Centre will have the opportunity to deliver a course at the Bachelor's level, which in of itself has been a long-held wish of both its former and current staff. This decision about the academic level of the programme is also significant for future participants from Japan since it will reduce the likelihood that some of the lectures delivered during this element of the programme will prove too demanding for them either intellectually or linguistically, as was observed on several occasions during the second cycle in February 2018.

The continuation of the programme beyond 2018 offers two further strategic benefits for UiT. Firstly, as stated in section 2 as a result of the Academic Cooperation Agreement signed between UiT and Toyo in October 2017,<sup>(37)</sup> students from the

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(37) See note 14 above.

Norwegian institution now have the opportunity to study a wide range of courses on offer at Toyo and can thereby earn credit towards their own degrees. In fact at the time of writing,<sup>(38)</sup> preparations are underway for three UiT students to enrol in Toyo University's foreign exchange student programme from the autumn 2018 semester. This arrangement naturally works in the other direction and it is therefore hoped that in the coming years Toyo students of other academic disciplines will take the decision to pursue parts of their studies at UiT. Secondly, as a result of the extended programme implemented in the excursion to Finnmark during the second cycle which enabled our party to visit UiT's Alta Campus and receive a special lecture from Professor Young-Sook Lee, substantive links have now been established between two geographically-separate branches of UiT to the educational benefit of the programme, and it is hoped that this cooperation will continue in future cycles and may potentially be expanded into other educational and research fields.

## 6. Future prospects

On the basis of the institutional climate that currently surrounds the Peace Studies programme on both the Japanese and Norwegian sides, the author is of the opinion that prospects for its future development look encouraging. As the discussion in this paper has highlighted, its structure, delivery and educational outputs are in line with a number of the broader strategic priorities of the three participating institutions, and decision makers at Toyo, UiT and TUFs have expressed their commitment to its continuation in the coming years. On the Japanese side, two cycles of educational and administrative preparation have served to establish a largely effective pre-departure orientation process which is likely in need of only slight adjustment in order to ensure that future participants from Toyo and TUFs are in the best position to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the programme as soon as they arrive in

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(38) This paper was written in March — April 2018.

Advancing strategic institutional cooperation to promote learning for peace [James Daniel Short] northern Norway. At UiT the process of curriculum systematization which is currently underway will ensure that the programme is formally incorporated into the broader curriculum of the whole university in time for the start of the third cycle in February 2019. This process will endow it with stronger foundations both educationally and geographically, and will also clarify the teaching and administrative responsibilities of the teaching and administrative staff at the CPS who are involved with its delivery. Furthermore, continued substantive cooperation carried out with the staff and students at UiT's Alta Campus prior to and during future excursions to Finnmark will likely provide both tangible educational benefit to the programme and strengthen professional and personal links between colleagues at two of the main branches of the Arctic University of Norway.

In terms of the learning activities of the programme, the results achieved during the 2017 and 2018 cycles have clarified the specific subject matter which will form the core curriculum of future cycles, and also the means by which this will be delivered in the classroom in terms of lecture content, seminar discussions and the formal tasks that the students will be expected to complete in relation to it. In addition, in a process of continual experiential learning on the part of the Japanese and Norwegian coordinators, a number of not inconsequential logistical issues have been identified which will be addressed in future cycles in order to aid the overall smooth running of the programme<sup>(39)</sup>.

One of the most significant lessons learned during the second cycle in February 2018 relates to the ages and linguistic ability of the participating students. As was elucidated in section 4, during several of the lectures at UiT a number of the students experienced difficulties following the thrust of the discussions and were therefore unable to

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(39) This refers to changes that will be made to the following aspects of the programme in future cycles: i) the travel arrangements on the outward journey from Japan to Norway; ii) activities carried out in Tromsø which incurred additional costs in February 2018; and iii) travel arrangements and additional activities carried out on the final day of the excursion to Finnmark.



participate in question and answer sessions related to them; this difficulty was frequently compounded by the students' lack of spoken English ability. As a consequence, due to the fact that the majority of the students who struggled in this way came from the first grade, in future cycles the author has taken the decision that henceforth the participants will be drawn from the second grade and above. Furthermore, in order to be accepted on the programme all of the participants will be required to attain a minimum score of 650 points on the TOEIC test.

Despite the fact that some of the students were unable to gain as much benefit as their peers during the lectures at UiT, the author is of the opinion that in terms of the programme as a whole, it is likely that they found it a rewarding educational and cultural experience. Indeed, since their performance in the seminars and group presentations was uniformly excellent, as was the interest and engagement they demonstrated during the excursion to Finnmark, this suggests that the difficulties they encountered in one element of the programme did not excessively cloud their overall experience. In contrast, several of the students in the 2018 cycle performed extremely well in all aspects of the programme, which is of course to their credit and also thanks to the outstanding support we received from colleagues at the CPS and from the staff at the other sites we visited in Tromsø and Finnmark. Therefore, considering the current highly encouraging institutional climate, the clear commitment expressed by decision makers at the three participating universities and the continuing process of improvement carried out by the author and his peerless colleagues at UiT, it is to be hoped that future cycles of the Peace Studies programme will deliver yet richer educational and cultural experiences for their participating students.

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