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DPCR Alumni Association Annual Report 2021 – 2022

The board of the DPCR Alumni Association for the period 2021 – 2022 consisted of Mert Can Yilmaz (President), Marcellina Priadi (Vice-President), Jenniina Kotajoki (Secretary), Kristina Petrova (Treasurer), and Juan Diego Duque Salazar (Department Liaison). Below follows an overview of the Association's activities during 2021 – 2022.

Activities

During the past year, the DPCR Alumni Board focused on reaching out to prospective alumni at both bachelor's and master's level, connecting current student members with other alumni, and providing a platform for alumni around the world to communicate. Though our plans were still affected by the then-ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to organize in-person events. We maintained the core activities of the organization's mandate.

On October 14, 2021, the Department celebrated its 50th anniversary with a symposium in the Grand Auditorium and we had a booth set up there all day at the entrance of the hall to spread information about the Association and its work. We aimed to recruit new members and keep in contact with existing ones on this historic day.

On March 23, 2022, a mingle for the DPCR alumni was organized with the support of the student organization of the master students at the Department, Pax et Bellum. This in-person event at Teaterbrasseriet in Stockholm was a success, with approximately 30 guests attending. The event facilitated connections between alumni that had not previously met, especially between current or recent students and more senior alumni. It also provided an opportunity for those who studied together to reunite. There were discussions regarding career development within different fields and overall, the event received positive feedback.

Initiated at the beginning of 2021, the Association's mentorship program continued throughout the period 2021-2022. Early-career professionals from the master's program at the Department were in contact with more senior alumni to share advice and guidance on post-master career and professional life. We sent out an evaluation survey in May 2022 to the participants to assess the progress of the 36 mentorship relations that were built for the first two years of the program. Our goal was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the project. The survey provided significant insights on how to move forward next year when the new round of the mentorship program will be initiated.

On May 23, 2022, our annual Alumni Talks took place in a lecture hall on Gamla Torget 6, Uppsala. This annual event serves as a source of inspiration to current and recent students and shows fellow alumni where former classmates are currently working. The talks offer an extensive opportunity to hear from alumni about their current work and career paths that led them there. It also grants the department the opportunity to keep in touch with former students and employees. This year we

were thrilled to host Julia Wittig and Henrique Garbino, who talked about the connection between humanitarian action and peace research. While Wittig shared her experiences at the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs as the Humanitarian Affairs Officer & Anticipatory Action Lead at the Central Emergency Response Fund, Garbino provided his insights on humanitarian action as an associate specialist at the Brazilian Research Network on Peace Operations and a doctoral candidate at the Swedish Defence University. Both participants shared many insights that they have gained from working in many different capacities in varied contexts. They gave advice to students and recent graduates who might be interested in an international career, and a career in humanitarian action. The event was moderated by Corinne Bara, and we received positive feedback from the participants.

Information on all activities throughout the year has been distributed via email lists to members, as well as posted in the Association's Facebook and LinkedIn groups. We also received help from the Department's Communication Officer Karolina Schützer to spread our announcements.

Newsletter

The annual newsletter was sent out by mid-June 2022. The newsletter includes, among other items: a few updates from alumni around the world as well as from the department. This year, we had three in-depth interviews in the newsletter. Firstly, we conducted an interview with Mathilda Lindgren who defended her Ph.D. dissertation on mediation styles at the Department in 2016 and who has been employing filmmaking as a medium for education and activism, with recent experience in the implementation and evaluation of a program teaching a holistic approach to leadership. Second, we held an interview with Marcus Tan de Bibiana, a Canadian DPCR alumnus from 2017, with over ten years of experience in humanitarian, development, academic and artistic sectors and who held the role of Deputy Country Director for Committed to Good in Somalia, facilitating the operations of humanitarian and development organizations. Lastly, we spoke with Nina von Uexkull, an associate professor in the Department and the director of the Uppsala Rotary Peace Center, about her project on climate mitigation policies and social unrest.

The newsletter also features news from the Department, as well as Class Notes. Class Notes are a collection of brief updates from our former bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. students (as well as staff members) from all around the world. We aim to improve a sense of community and strengthen the bonds between alumni and the Department.

Finances

The Department of Peace and Conflict Research supported the Association by covering various costs in connection with the Association's activities. Examples of such costs include refreshments to accompany events, such as the Alumni Talks.

Administration

The board worked on strengthening the Association and making it more visible, both through social activities and through contacts with alumni members abroad. An equally crucial part of this work has been to establish routines and meet with other alumni associations through the Uppsala University Alumni Network. Members of the board have participated in the network's meetings and exchanged ideas on how to work with alumni activities etc.

The Association was invited to a network kick-off meeting organized on March 31, 2022, by Uppsala University Alumni Network. The alumni network highlighted our mentorship program as one of the “best practice examples” and invited us to present the program to the wider alumni network. Kristina Petrova attended and informed the network about this ongoing project.

Collaborations and communication

The Association has worked to build and maintain cooperation and contact with the two student organizations at the Department, UPaD and Pax et Bellum. With Pax et Bellum, the Association has collaborated on organizing the mingle and the Alumni Talks. In addition, with both Pax et Bellum and UPaD, discussions were held on how to improve the mentorship program.

On the communications front, we maintained the Facebook and LinkedIn groups. We hope that our alumni continue to join these and use them to spread information and connect with one another. Together with the Department’s communication officer, we developed a strategy to spread our announcements. We reached the decision that we no longer need an Instagram account, as the Department will continuously be supporting the Association’s online presence.

Mert Can Yilmaz
President, DPCR Alumni Board
June 15, 2022