



## HEKIMA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations

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### 5<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL STUDENTS-LED CONFERENCE

### THE EVOLUTION OF DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA

The political systems of post-colonial Africa have evolved from Ghana's independence in 1957 and the declaration of Kwame Nkrumah as president for life, until the most recent development of a High Court overturn of the Kenyan 2017 general election. While some will argue that there have been significant gains captured in the continents democratic consolidation, others will vehemently deny that we have made any progress, while others still will suggest that for African democracy to have positive effect, it has to be based on its culture and history or should be a separate species to that practiced in the liberal democracies of the West. Whatever position one may hold, we cannot ignore the fact that democracy is a process in itself and a means to an end. It is a system which incorporates: often times ambiguous and un-predictable election processes; a multitude of social, economic and cultural dynamics; influences by various local, regional and global players; various levels of development within the very institutions tasked with upholding it; and resultant relationships between the governed and the authorities that preside over it. What are the trends in the various national systems we live in? Is it yielding the promotion and protection of fundamental freedoms and rights of the people? Is the visible evolution we are witnessing a natural trend to the general law of natural progress or was its imposition misguided and premature?

The Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations of Hekima University College is organizing and hosting a **one day Students-Led Conference on Thursday October 19, 2017, on the theme: The Evolution of Democracy in Africa** to explore in-depth from a scholarly angle the issues raised above under the following sub-themes:

1. The Election Process

2. Separation of power
3. Social, economic and human rights aspects
4. External influences and dynamics
5. Is democracy resolving or refueling conflicts?
6. Is democracy a utopia and are there alternatives?

From the forgoing, the purpose of this Students-led Conference is to bring together students from various institutions of higher learning to think and discuss on these issues in depth, and carve a way forward.

**We kindly invite graduate and post-graduate students who would like to present papers on any of the sub-themes above to submit an abstract of no more than 250 words by latest 6 October 2017.**

For further information or any other inquiry, please call the numbers above or send an email to [studentsconference.hipsir@hekima.ac.ke](mailto:studentsconference.hipsir@hekima.ac.ke)