

ECPD Appoints U.S. Special Representative to Lead Transatlantic Academic Collaboration and Peace Education Initiatives

The European Center for Peace and Development names U.S.-based liaison to strengthen research and diplomatic outreach in North America.

LOUISVILLE, KY, UNITED STATES, June 25, 2025

/EINPresswire.com/ -- The [European Center for Peace and Development](#) (ECPD), a regional academic institution under the framework of the United Nations University for Peace, has appointed Dr. Brian C.T. Beckham as its Special Representative to the United States. This strategic move is intended to enhance transatlantic cooperation in academic research, policy dialogue, and education-driven peacebuilding.

Dr. Brian C.T. Beckham (Count of Nysa) formerly served as a commissioner with other U.N. intergovernmental organizations. His appointment to ECPD supports the center's goal of expanding institutional partnerships in the U.S. through international education and research programming.



ECPD is headquartered in Belgrade, Serbia, and serves as an international hub for postgraduate education and training, with a mission to support development and peace initiatives through academic collaboration and professional capacity-building. With this new appointment, the ECPD aims to expand its footprint in North America, developing mutually beneficial partnerships with U.S.-based institutions.

Strategic Diplomatic Appointment

The appointment of Dr. Beckham marks an institutional milestone for the ECPD. As Special Representative, he will act as a liaison between the ECPD and American educational institutions, think tanks, nonprofit organizations, and relevant government agencies. His responsibilities will include cultivating bilateral programs in education and research, coordinating academic events, and supporting ECPD's mission to advance peace through scholarly cooperation.

While the position is not political in nature, it does carry institutional weight as part of the ECPD's



I look forward to building constructive academic partnerships that promote peace and mutual understanding between the United States and Europe.”

Dr. Brian C.T. Beckham

broader diplomatic outreach. By working with universities, civil society actors, and interdisciplinary networks, the role is designed to facilitate a two-way flow of knowledge, innovation, and policy insight.

“This appointment allows the ECPD to deepen our engagement in the U.S., where higher education institutions have long played a central role in advancing international peace and development discourse,” said an ECPD official. “Our goal is to build enduring academic ties

that transcend geographic boundaries and promote shared goals.”

Role Within the UN Framework

The ECPD functions under the umbrella of the United Nations University for Peace, which was established by the UN General Assembly in 1980. The university provides a global academic platform for graduate education in peace and conflict studies, international relations, and sustainable development. The ECPD extends this mission regionally through its European network of postgraduate programs, training seminars, and public policy research.

ECPD’s unique position within the UN structure offers its representatives and affiliates access to a network of multilateral organizations, educational institutions, and governmental stakeholders. This allows the center to pursue interdisciplinary research and educational initiatives that align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those focused on peace, justice, strong institutions, and quality education.

Dr. Beckham’s appointment serves as a direct extension of this multilateral engagement, with an emphasis on fostering educational diplomacy between Europe and the United States.

U.S. Focus on Education, Research, and Peace

Based in Louisville, Kentucky, Dr. Beckham will coordinate efforts to build new academic partnerships and research consortia. These may include exchange agreements for students and faculty, co-hosted international symposia, and shared curriculum development for programs focused on global governance, human rights, environmental policy, and public health systems.

This collaboration is expected to result in increased access to ECPD’s postgraduate programs for U.S.-based students and researchers, as well as new opportunities for American institutions to host [visiting ECPD](#) scholars and participate in joint publications and conferences.

Beyond academic outreach, the Special Representative’s role includes engagement with policymakers and public sector stakeholders who support initiatives aligned with international cooperation and peace education. ECPD sees this appointment as a way to integrate its educational programming into broader societal efforts aimed at conflict prevention, intercultural

dialogue, and sustainable development.

“In a world increasingly shaped by geopolitical uncertainty and global crises, we believe that education can serve as a cornerstone for mutual understanding and peacebuilding,” said the ECPD’s leadership in a prepared statement.

History and Impact of ECPD

Since its founding, the ECPD has maintained a strong presence in the Balkans and Central Europe, offering a variety of academic degrees, certification programs, and policy workshops. Its educational philosophy centers on the interdisciplinary study of peace, development, and global justice.

ECPD has collaborated with numerous intergovernmental agencies, national governments, and academic institutions to provide training for professionals in international law, economics, diplomacy, healthcare administration, and environmental science. These programs are grounded in academic rigor but remain closely linked to real-world challenges facing post-conflict societies, emerging democracies, and developing regions.

Through its faculty and research affiliates, the ECPD has produced studies on topics ranging from transitional justice to climate policy, and from digital governance to health equity. Its alumni network includes public officials, scholars, NGO leaders, and consultants working in more than 50 countries.

The decision to establish a permanent U.S. representative reflects the organization’s recognition of the United States as a key partner in global education and diplomacy. With more than 4,000 higher education institutions and a long history of international academic exchange, the U.S. represents fertile ground for cooperation.

Engagement Strategy and Next Steps

The ECPD's expansion into North America will take a phased approach, beginning with exploratory discussions with universities, consortia, and research bodies in the Midwest and East Coast. Louisville, due to its geographic centrality and growing academic sector, has been chosen as a base of operations for this effort.

Key objectives over the next 12 months include:

- Establishing formal partnerships with accredited universities for faculty and student exchange programs.
- Coordinating transatlantic research initiatives in fields such as public policy, global health, and peace studies.
- Hosting joint forums and roundtables on topics related to conflict resolution, sustainable development, and post-crisis recovery.
- Creating digital platforms for collaborative learning and professional training.

Institutions interested in participating are encouraged to reach out to the Office of the U.S. Special Representative through the contact details listed below.

A Model for Educational Diplomacy

ECPD's approach blends traditional academic collaboration with the principles of international diplomacy. By situating education as both a tool for professional development and a pathway to peace, the institution aspires to contribute to long-term global stability.

As global challenges, such as forced migration, climate change, political polarization, and emerging technologies, continue to evolve, the ECPD seeks to equip professionals with the knowledge and intercultural competencies required to address these issues constructively.

The Special Representative's role in the U.S. will be to build networks that support this mission. These networks may include law schools, business faculties, public health departments, and interdisciplinary centers that align with the ECPD's thematic pillars.

[About the European Center for Peace and Development \(ECPD\)](#)

The European Center for Peace and Development is a regional academic and research institution affiliated with the United Nations University for Peace. Headquartered in Belgrade, the ECPD promotes postgraduate education, training, and public policy research in areas including diplomacy, international law, economics, sustainable development, and healthcare systems. Its activities support the broader goals of the UN to advance global peace, justice, and cooperation through education and knowledge-sharing.

Dr. Brian C T.Beckham

European Center for Peace and Development (UN University)

+1 502-773-3406

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