

***Just Peace X UN Youth Impact:
Statelessness and Peaceful Societies***
Monday 16th September 2019
The Hague University of Applied Sciences



On Monday 16th September, [UN Youth Impact](#) held an event with [The Lighthouse](#) at The Hague University of Applied Sciences. This event was part of the [Just Peace Festival](#) programme in The Hague. Comprising of three elements; a photography exhibition, crisis simulations, and a keynote speech from Ferry Zandvliet, this event attempted to question the meaning of peace in a less traditional sense. In the Netherlands we live in a conflict free society, but does that mean an inherently peaceful society? The photography exhibition explored the question ‘What does peace look like?’ The crisis simulations challenged participants to take into consideration the multiple and often contradictory dilemmas faced by all stakeholders when there is an intake of refugees into a city like The Hague. Finally, Ferry Zandvliet’s speech caused us to reconsider conventional reactions to an act of terror, namely anger and intolerance. Keep reading to find out more about these different elements!

Capturing Peace With Canon Nederland

UN Youth Impact teamed up with Canon Nederland to create a photography competition. The idea was to challenge participants to ‘capture peace’ through the lens of a camera. Canon’s philosophy of Kyosei - living and working together for the common good - compliments our aim at UN Youth Impact to work together to contribute locally toward the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We wanted to move beyond the conventional conversations around peace, experimenting with alternative mediums, like photography, to show the varied and often individualistic interpretations of peace. By doing this, we hope to contribute toward a wider discussion around peace.



We received many entries of a high standard, and the photographers approached the question from multiple and diverse perspectives. The judges were unanimous in stating how difficult it was to choose three winners from the ten that were shortlisted. Canon printed these ten photographs beautifully and we displayed them at The Hague University of Applied Sciences during the Just Peace week (16th - 22nd September). Attendees of our event on the 16th, as well as all the students and staff walking around the university, were able to admire these photographs throughout the day and for the rest of the week. To view the shortlisted photographs, click [here](#).

Crisis Simulations:

The event on the 16th kicked off with two rounds of crisis simulations in which participants experienced the opportunities and challenges that come with introducing refugees to a city like The Hague. Participants were confronted with real-life dilemmas and discussions the municipality is faced with when accommodating refugees, while still trying to adhere to the - often conflicting - voices of civil society. Participants stayed true to their role faithfully, even when discussing difficult topics like integration and tension among immigrants and citizens of The Hague, allowing for a truly immersive simulation that shed light on the difficulties refugees face when arriving in cities in Europe. A moment of reflection after each roleplay allowed for honest conversations among everyone and provided an



opportunity for people to share their personal stories. One participant shared how she experienced debates similar to those in the crisis simulation first-hand in her hometown in the south of the Netherlands, while another opened up about her own experiences of coming to the Netherlands as a refugee. Personal experiences like this allowed everyone to truly engage with the content of the simulation on a deeper level, and made the simulations feel all the more real!

Ferry Zandvliet's Keynote:

The final part of our event was a keynote speech by Ferry Zandvliet. Ferry was one of the attendees of the music concert in the Bataclan, Paris, which was the scene of a catastrophic terrorist attack in November 2015. In an incredibly humane, honest, and raw account, Ferry talked about everything from the instincts of survival experienced on the night, to his escape route, to the PTSD and other mental health issues which arose in the aftermath. Conversely, however, he also talked about how the experience made him happier and less angry than he had been before, demonstrating that inner peace can be born of the most violent of circumstances. Linking closely into the discussions just moments before during the crisis simulations, he stressed the importance of opening a dialogue, rather than judging those fleeing their countries. Always sprinkling his speech with humour, Ferry's talk was both deeply moving and wonderfully uplifting. The audience asked many personal and complex questions which further contributed to the aim of opening up the conversation around peace.



