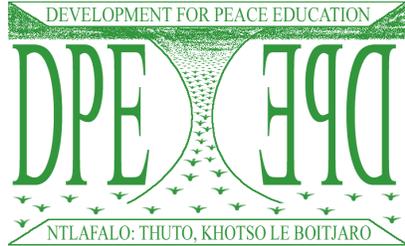


DEVELOPMENT FOR PEACE EDUCATION



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PRESS STATEMENT ON 'E EA KAE BANENG' EDUCATION DIALOGUE

Development for Peace Education will hold dialogue on the education sector with a focus on the causes and potential solutions of the on-going industrial action by teachers. **The dialogue will be held at the A.M.E Hall in Maseru from 8:30 a.m. to 16:45 p.m.** DPE has invited all teachers' unions, the Ministry of Education, the ministerial sub-committee working to resolve the issue, the National Assembly's Social Cluster, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Social Development, other trade union congresses, civil society organisations, parents and students to participate in the dialogue.

The basis for the multi-stakeholder dialogue is that the engagement between teachers and the government seems to have been stretched to the limits manifesting in a protracted hostile exchange in public which culminated with a strike. The description of the industrial action by teacher organisations leading the struggle shocked Basotho. The strike which is to be rolled out for the whole year will see teachers in class one of the four weeks each month. Followed to its logical conclusion this is a total shut down on education, it is a disaster that has befallen this nation more so when it targets youth. Put differently this eventuality is an onslaught on the future of students. Looking back at what happened in the previous year when the teachers embarked on a go slow, there is a potential for a reaction that may go out of hand undermining the very purpose of education "turning students into leaders".

It is the considered view of Development for Peace Education (DPE) that this strike should be stopped, and its causes be addressed. DPE holds a very strong conviction on the culture of peace defined as, **'a set of values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations.** The teachers-government feud negates this culture and directly promotes culture of violence. It is against this background that DPE proposes "E ea kae Baneng" Education dialogue.

Negotiations are a peaceful way of dealing with differences. However, where belligerent parties have reached a level where they may not on their own make head way, facilitation, mediation or any other form of third-party involvement becomes helpful. Since it appears that government and teachers have run out of energy to engage, DPE proposes a dialogue that brings together various stakeholders to find a solution. DPE expects that the dialogue shall agree on a constructive engagement framework based on new commitments that will help teachers and government to find one another as responsible parties, see teachers in class, teacher demands addressed and other stakeholders meaningfully involved.

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