**Sebastian Angzoorokuu Paalo, Ph.D.**

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**Profile**

Sebastian Paalo is a lecturer at the Department of History and Political Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology-KNUST (Ghana). He obtained his Ph.D. in Political Science and International Studies from The University of Queensland (Australia). Sebastian is a Member of the Board of Directors for the International Peace Research Association (IPRA) Foundation, the Assistant Director for Research at the Institute for Research and Policy Integration in Africa (IRPIA), and a Fellow for energy policy research at the Brew-Hammond Energy Centre, KNUST. Sebastian’s publications and policy engagements focus on Governance, International Peace and Security, and International Relations. He has worked on several projects, the latest being his collaborative policy research with Chatham House on Forest Governance in Africa, and the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) APN Individual Fellowship project titled *Voice, Space, and Structure: Women’s Agency and Peacebuilding in Ghana and Sierra Leone*.

**Education and Qualifications**

2022Ph.D., Political Science and International Studies, The University of Queensland, Australia.

Specialized in Governance, International Peace and Security, and International Relations.

Dissertation title: Local Ownership, NGOs, and Peacebuilding in Africa: A study of conflict-affected zones in Ghana.

2017MSc. African Studies, University of Oxford, UK.

Specialized in Governance, African Politics, and International Peace and Security.

Thesis title: More Laws Less Peace: The Politics of Managing Farmer-Herder Conflicts in Ghana.

2016 MSc. Governance & Development, University of Antwerp, Belgium.

Specialized in Governance and International Peace and Security.

Thesis title: Political party youth wings and political violence in sub-Sahara Africa: A case of Ghana.

2012BA. (Hons.) History, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Ghana.

Specialized in African History & politics, World History, and International Relations.

**Academic research and teaching experience**

2021- Lecturer, Department of History and Political Studies, KNUST, Kumasi, Ghana.

**Postgraduate teaching, research, and supervision (Ph.D., MPhil, MA Political Science):**

* International Relations
* International Political Economy
* Governance and Politics of Developing and Emerging Economies
* Multipolarity and the Emergence of Non-Traditional Powers (China, the Gulf States, India, and Russia)
* Politics of Natural Resource Governance
* China-Africa Relations
* Social Science Research Methods
* Regionalism and International Organizations

**Undergraduate teaching and supervision (BA. Political Science, Bachelor of Public Administration, BA. History):**

* International Relations
* Governance and Politics of Developing and Emerging Economies
* Regionalism and International Organizations
* International Politics
* Indigenous Political Systems in Post-colonial States

2019-2021 PhD researcher and course tutor, School of Political Science and International Studies, University of Queensland, Australia.

2016-2017 Steering committee member, Oxford Network for Peace (Oxpeace), Oxford University, UK.

* Part of a team of Oxford scholars who conducted research and organized conferences on global peace and security, as well as advocating for the establishment of a Centre for Peace Studies at Oxford University.

**Publications**

***Selected Journal Publications***

**Paalo, S. A.,** Adu-Gyamfi, S., Badu Mills, G., Aggrey, K., & Ahensah, C. (2025). Beyond culture: economic strains and the transactional turn in Ghanaian vote-buying practices. *Contemporary Politics*, 1-17.

**Paalo, S. A.,** and Dramani, A. (2025). The Labyrinth of State Intervention in Communal Conflict in Africa: Ghana’s Maiden Official State-Led Efforts in Resolving the Bawku Conflict. *African Studies*, 1–18.

Anderson, E. A. B., **Paalo, S. A.**, and Dramani, A. (2025). Pandemic-induced border closures in West Africa and the perils of cross-border Ghanaian women traders. *Women’s Studies International Forum, 109*(10), 30-48.

**Paalo, S. A.,** Banchani, J-P. S., Arthur, D. D., Aggrey, K., and Godonoo, E. (2025). The Excessive State: How to Understand African States not as Coherent Sovereign Units, *African Renaissance*, 22(1), 311-328.

**Paalo, S. A.,** Degraft Arthur, D., Dramani, A., & Adu-Gyamfi, S. (2024). Exploring hybrid security strategies in Ghana: State and private sector partnerships. *African Security Review*, *33*(1), 81-97.

**Paalo, S. A.,** Adu‐Gyamfi, S., & Arthur, D. D. (2024). Nationalist secessionism and global order: A comparison of the dynamics and impact of secession movements in Africa and Europe. *Nations and Nationalism*, *30*(2), 219-234.

**Paalo, S. A.,** Banchani, S. J-P, Dramani, A., and Atule, D. (2024). Global Governance, Glocalisation and Endemic Instability in Africa, *Journal of African Politics, 4*(2), 20-39.

Banchani, J. P. S., **Paalo, S. A.,** Acheampong, M., Kipo-Sunyehzi, D. D., and Dramani, A. (2024) The Challenge of Attaining Resilient Local Structures in Grassroots Peacebuilding: A Study of Post-1994/95 Peacebuilding in Northern Ghana. *Global Society*, 1–22.

**Paalo, S. A.,** Dotsey, S., Dramani, A., and Apeamenyo, R. (2024). Democracy as Electoral Ritualisation? The Illusion of Democratic Consolidation in Ghana. *African Journal of Democracy and Election Research, 4*(2), 29-47.

Anderson, E. A., Bob-Milliar, G. M., Adu-Gyamfi, S., & **Paalo, S. A.** (2024). Students' and Governments' Entanglements in Ghana's Political Transition: How (Not) to Understand Students' Relations with Civilian and Military Regimes, 1960–92. *Africa Today*, *70*(3), 75-97.

Adu-Gyamfi, S., **Paalo, S.A**, & Issifu, A.K. (2023). COVID 19 Border Policing in Ghana and its Impact on Trans-border Migration and Healthcare in West Africa. *Africa Development*, 48 (4), 103-123.

Dramani, A., **Paalo, S. A.**, Adu-Gyamfi, S. (2023). Emerging local voices and new possibilities toward attaining sustainable peace in Bawku, north-eastern Ghana, [*The African Journal on Conflict Resolution*](https://www.accord.org.za/ajcr/), 23(1), 107-134*.*

Paalo, S. A. (2022). Intergenerational gaps in women’s grassroots peacebuilding in Ghana: A critique of “inclusive peacebuilding”. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*, 14 (4), 287-303.

Issifu, A. K., Darko, F. D., and **Paalo, S. A.** (2022). Climate change, migration and farmer–herder conflict in Ghana. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, *39*(4), 421–439.

**Paalo, S. A.,** Adu-Gyamfi, S., and Arthur, D. D. (2022). Xenophobia and the challenge of regional integration in Africa: Understanding three cardinal dynamics, *Acta Academica*: *Critical views on society, culture and politics*, 54(2): 1-18.

**Paalo, S. A**., and Issifu, A. K. (2021). De-internationalizing hybrid peace: state-traditional authority collaboration and conflict resolution in Northern Ghana. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *15*(3), 406-424.

Penu, D. A. K., and **Paalo, S. A.** (2021). Institutions and pastoralist conflicts in Africa: A conceptual framework. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, *16*(2), 224-241.

Paalo, S. A. (2021). A Systemic Understanding of Hybrid Peace: An Examination of Hybrid Political Orders in African Peace Governance. *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review*, *11*(1), 1-31.

Paalo, S. A. (2020). The politics of addressing farmer-herder conflicts in Ghana. *Peacebuilding*, *9*(1), 79-99.

Boafo, J., **Paalo, S. A**., and Dotsey, S. (2019). Illicit Chinese small-scale mining in Ghana: Beyond institutional weakness? *Sustainability*, *11*(21), 5943.

Paalo, S. A. (2017). Political party youth wings and political violence in sub-Sahara Africa: A case of Ghana, *International Journal of Peace and Development Studies*, 8(1), 1-14.

**Paalo, S. A.**, Dramani, A., Banchani, S. J-P., and Mohammed, K. W. (forthcoming). (Re)threorising hybrid governance: Chieftaincy’s resilience and implications for post-pandemic political order in Ghana, *International Politics*.

**Paalo, S. A.,** Adu-Gyamfi, S., and Dramani, A. (forthcoming). COVID-19 governance, border closures, and emerging security risks in West Africa: A critique of pandemic-human security nexus, *Security Dialogue*.

Addo, B. K., Paalo, S. A., and Dramani A. (under review). The protection of persons with disabilities during armed conflict: A Study of selected conflict-affected settings in Ghana, *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict*.

***Selected journal manuscripts under review***

### **Paalo, S. A.** and Brigg, M. (under review). Digitalisation versus structural realities: The politics of online participation in youth peacebuilding in Ghana, *Third World Quarterly*.

### Arthur, D. D., Paddy, C., **Paalo, S. A.,** and Agbesi, E. K. A. (under review). Mapping the Local Perspectives on Driving Forces for Preventing Coups D’état in Postcolonial Africa: Experiences from the Fourth Republic of Ghana, *African Security Review*.

**Paalo, S. A.** and Dramani, A. (under review). Masculinity, Gun Culture, and Conflict Protraction: How Local Norms Reverberate in Security Volatility in Northern Ghana, *Conflict, Security and Development.*

Banchani, J. S. and **Paalo, S. A.** (under review). Affirmative Action from below? Grassroots economic empowerment and women’s agency in public policy in northern Ghana, *Oxford Development Studies.*

***Book chapters***

**Paalo, S. A.**, and Banchani, J-P. S. (2025). “Foreign Military and Security Bases: Implications for the Practice of Peace and Security in Africa.” In Bah, A. B. (ed.) *Glocalized Security: Domestic and External Issues in International Security* (pp. 227- 256). New York: SUNY Press.

**Paalo, S.A.,** Issifu, A.K. (2022). “De-internationalizing Hybrid Peace: State–Traditional Authority Collaboration and Conflict Resolution in Northern Ghana.” In: Spiegel, E., Mutalemwa, G., Liu, C., Kurtz, L.R. (eds) *Peace Studies for Sustainable Development in Africa. Advances in African Economic, Social and Political Development*. Springer, Cham. pp. 663–682.

Banchani, S. J-P and **Paalo, S. A.** (forthcoming). “Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD).” In Iroulo, L. and Boateng, O. (eds.) *The Evolution of African Regional Organizations*. Oxford University Press.

**Paalo, S. A.** and Banchani, S. J-P (forthcoming). “Regionalism and endemic instability: How to (not) understand the illusion of regionalism dividends in Africa.” In *Essays on Global Regionalism*. United Nations University Press.

***Policy Notes***

Throp, H., **Paalo, S. A.**, Oduro, K. A., Obeng, E. A., Guuroh, T. A., Andoh, J., Boudiaf, A., and Uehara, T. K. (2023). “Net-zero’s nature knot: A tug of war with rural realities”, *Chatham House*. https://forestgovernance.chathamhouse.org/publications/net-zeros-nature-knot-a-tug-of-war-with-rural-realities#:~:text=In%20the%20race%20to%20create,in%20forests%20and%20rural%20areas.

Boafo, J., **Paalo, S. A.** and Dotse, S. (2019). “Ghana’s traditional and state powers must collaborate to halt illegal mining”, *The Conversation,* 12 November 2019. <https://theconversation.com/ghanas-traditional-and-state-powers-must-collaborate-to-halt-illegal-mining-126072>.

**Selected Editorial and Peer Review Experience**

**Journal Peer Review:** Regular reviews for:

*African* *Affairs,* *Third* *World* *Quarterly,* *African* *Security* *Review,* *Peace* *and* *Conflict* *Studies,* *African* *Conflict* *&* *Peacebuilding* *Review,* *African* *Journal* *on* *Conflict* *Resolution,* *Peace* *and* *Development* *Studies,* *Politics* *&* *Policy,* *Journal* *of* *Student* *Affairs* *in* *Africa,* *Contemporary* *Journal* *of* *African* *Studies* *(CJAS), Cogent Arts & Humanities, etc.*

**Grants Application Reviews:** Regular reviews of applications for:

The International Peace Research Association Foundation (IPRA Foundation) Grants.

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology Research Fund—KNUST Research Fund (KReF).

**Selected Conferences, Seminars, Workshops, and Summer Schools**

Paalo (June 2025). The European Conference on African Studies (ECAS) themed *African,* *Afropolitan,* *and* *Afropean* *Belongings* *and* *Identities*, Prague, Czech Republic. Chairing a panel, *Changing* *Geopolitics,* *Violence,* *and* *Conflict* *Resolution* *in* *Africa:* *Emerging* *Challenges* *and* *Prospects* *for* *Peace*, and presenting a paper, “Changing geopolitics, human security, and sustained peace in post-COVID Africa,” June 25-28, 2025.

Paalo (July 2025). The 7th Global Conference on Women's Studies (7th GCWS), presenting a paper, “Voice, Space, and Structure: Women’s Agency and Peacebuilding in Ghana and Sierra Leone,” Copenhagen, Denmark, July 25-27, 2025.

Paalo, S. A. (2024). Conference on *Re-imagining* *Africa:* *Prospects* *and* *Opportunities*, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa, paper presented: “Optimizing youths' contribution to sustainable peace in Africa: A decolonial reading of youth peace-building in Northern Ghana,” April 18-20, 2024.

Paalo, S. A. (2023). Research Workshop: Annual Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research, the Maxwell School, Syracuse University, Certificate acquired, June 20-30, 2023.

Banchani, S. J-P. and **Paalo,** **S.** **A.** (2023). Workshop on *The* *Evolution* *of* *African* *Regional* *Organizations*, Georgetown University Qatar (Doha), paper presented: “The Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD),” January 29-30, 2023.

**Paalo,** **S.** **A.** and Adu-Gyamfi, S. (2022). Conference on *Stereotyping* *in* *Africa:* *Root* *Causes,* *Consequences,* *and* *Solutions,* by The British Academy and Department of History and Political Studies, KNUST, paper presented: “Understanding stereotypes and the violence of Western universalism in pandemic governance: A case of the Madagascar COVID Organic,” November 9-10, 2022.

Paalo, S. A. (2021*).* *Global* *Minority* *Rights* *Summer* *School* *2021*, “Conflict Prevention and the Human Rights of Minorities,” by the Tom Lantos Institute (TLI, Budapest-Hungary), the National University of Public Service (NUPS, Budapest-Hungary), the Human Rights Consortium (University of London), and Minority Rights Group International. Paper presented: “Language governance, linguistic discrimination, and the question of linguistic minorities in Ghana’s educational system,” Online, July 5-16, 2021.

Adu-Gyamfi, S., **Paalo,** **S.** **A.,** **Arthur,** **D.** **D.** **(2021)**. *Peace* *and* *Conflict* *Studies* *Journal* *Conference,* “Unilateralism, Nationalism, and Globalism—the ‘isms’ these schisms create.” Paper presented: “Nationalism, separatism and the pursuit of international peace: A comparative study of nationalist movements in Africa and Europe,” February 10, 2021, Nova Southeastern University, Florida, United States.

Co-convener and Discussant: The *University* *of* *Queensland* *School* *of* *Political* *Science* *and* *International* *Studies* *and* *the* *African* *Centre* *for* *the* *Constructive* *Resolution* *of* *Disputes* *(ACCORD)* *collaborated* *seminar*. Theme: ‘Political Violence in Africa: The Role of Political Parties,’ October 29, 2019, POLSIS, UQ, Australia.

Paalo, S. A. (2016). *Oxford* *University* *Research* *Colloquium*. Paper "Dangerous Mentorship? Assessing the relationship between Political Party Youth Wings and Political Violence in Sub-Sahara Africa: A Case of Ghana,” November 17, 2016, St. Antony's College, Oxford University, UK.

Co-convener and Discussant: *Oxford* *Network* *for* *Peace* (Oxpeace) Ninth Annual Conference. Theme: ‘Positive Peace: Concepts and Practice,’ May 6, 2017, St John’s College, Oxford University, UK.

**Selected Research Grants and Projects**

2024/2025 (No. SSRC-34990) The Social Science Research Council’s (SSRC) African Peacebuilding Network (APN) 2024 Individual Research Fellowship Award, for project, “Ambiguous Empowerment? A Feminist Critical Peace Reading of Women’s Empowerment in Peacebuilding, Ghana and Sierra Leone”. Principal Investigator (PI).

2023 Chatham House Africa Porgramme on Forest Governance, “Net-zero’s nature knot: A tug of war with rural realities”. Researcher and co-author (remote).

2022/2023 (No. KReF7) 7th KNUST Research Fund (KReF) Award for project, “Enhancing inclusive local governance through economic interventions for women: A case of Ghana”. Co-PI

2021 Tom Lantos Institute grant for participation in *Global Minority Rights Summer School 2021* on “Conflict Prevention and the Human Rights of Minorities”.

2019/2020(No. PRG 2019) International Peace Research Association (IPRA) Foundation Grant (2020) for field research in Ghana. (PI)

2019-2021 University of Queensland Graduate School Fellowship, PhD (Political Science and International Studies).

2016-2017 Oxford-Mitsui Graduate Fellowship, Oxford University.

2017 Patrick Duncan Graduate Fellowship, Oxford University.

**Selected Policy-Based Experience**

2024-2028 **Member of the Board of Directors**, International Peace Research Association (IPRA) Foundation.

* Provide oversight of management and finances.
* Participate in strategic planning.
* Contribute to the organization’s development.
* Improve organization’s visibility etc.

2024- A**ssistant Director for Research**, Institute for Research and Policy Integration in Africa (IRPIA),

* Leading a renowned network of scholars and policy experts and institutions conducting research and policy analysis in the areas of Security and Peace, Environmental Sustainability, Public Health, Education, Migration, and Governance in Africa, the United States, Europe, and Asia.
* Drafting grant proposals, collecting and analyzing data, and writing and implementing scholarly and policy works in the areas of governance, peace and security.

2024- **Fellow**, for energy policy research and seminar planning The Brew-Hammond Energy Centre, KNUST

* Contribute to research proposal development, management, and coordination of projects to address energy sector challenges in Ghana and Africa.

2023- **Co-founder and Director**, *Sankofa Analytics*, Department of History and Political Studies, KNUST

* Conduct and supervise research, advocacy, and partnerships with governments and civil society.
* Monitor Working Groups on: Governance; Democracy and human rights; Peace and Security; Education; Health; Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability; International Relations; Economic and Financial Sector Management.

2023- **Founding Assistant** **Director**, Democracy Without Borders (DWB)-Ghana.

* Sourcing project grants and developing proposals for funding DWB-Ghana activities.

2020- **Partner**, National Peace Council, Ghana

* Part of the Ashanti Regional Peace Council community outreach team, which engages in routine forums, seminars, and other programs targeting social cohesion and democratic governance in local settings.

2018 **Policy, Networks, and Partnerships Coordinator**, YouthLEAD Africa (YOLA).

* Coordinated the policy advocacy desk of YOLA
* Created a network of young people, both vulnerable youth and young achievers so that they benefit from YOLA programming
* Established and sustained YOLA partnerships including donors, professionals, and collaborators
* Organized YOLA clubs interested in youth-related research to explore opportunities for their contributions to ongoing research works
* Led the development of YOLA’s ‘Club Development Plan (CDP)’ which is being implemented.
* Led and coordinated activities and actions of Regional Coordinators
* Ensured that all Regional Coordinators develop action plans and are implementing and reporting on their plans etc.

2017 **Volunteers’ Trainer and Facilitator**, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO-London).

* Trained VSO 100+ international volunteers
* Facilitated conferences and events for VSO-UK

2017 **Assistant team leader**, Oxfordshire County Council National Citizen Service (NCS).

* Led teams of young people to carry out social action programs, targeting three crucial pillars of social cohesion, civic engagement, and social mobility

2017 **Consultant**, Oxford Student Consultancy Team.

* Consulted for businesses, NGOs, and the public sector.

**Professional Membership**

* Member of the Board of Directors, International Peace Research Association Foundation
* Member, Africa Peace and Development Network
* Associate Member, International Society for Development and Sustainability (ISDS)

**Committee roles since permanent appointment at KNUST**

***Member of the following committees of the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, KNUST:***

* Faculty Conferences and Public Lectures Committee, Faculty Disability Committee, Faculty Alumni and Fundraising Committee.

***Member of the following committees of the Department of History and Political Studies, KNUST:***

* Research, Conferences, Publications Committee, Examinations Committee, Tracer Studies Committee, Welfare Committee, Accreditation and Programmes Development Committee, Media and Digitilisation Committee, Appointed Department’s Exams officer.

**References**

Dr. Linda M. Johnston, President, International Peace Research Association Foundation (IPRA Foundation), [ipraf.president@gmail.com](mailto:ipraf.president@gmail.com).

Prof. Abu Bakarr Bah, Presidential Research Professor & Chair, [Department of Sociology](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.niu.edu_bah_index.shtml&d=DwMFAg&c=eLbWYnpnzycBCgmb7vCI4uqNEB9RSjOdn_5nBEmmeq0&r=__h3ayj-XnqAXvs2qZWIhloIBwK0GgAkeY-VOqqfTak&m=zbKf5Vh_wfOnfO5d2gb6ERdy52B5QwdFurb8PNncwm6IkQjkmRq3q6I1ytCjIeXV&s=QUtwUEYGQtjdTNbv8TZRAYMjCy1bKn4T80lSZaSabXc&e=)  
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