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CONSEIL DES DROITS DE L'HOMME

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31ème session (29 Février /24 Mars 2016)

Interactive Dialogue - Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights

OIDEL, as one of the founders of the NGO Platform on Cultural Rights and Diversity would like to congratulate the new Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights. OIDEL had worked for the creation of this mandate since 2001. We would like to assure you of our commitment to collaborate with you in whatever way you would need or wish. We are convinced that the other members of the Platform share the same point of view.

We would like to recall that Cultural Rights do not have the priority attention that they deserve in order to face the main challenges of the international scene. In fact, its promotion causes mistrust due to its politicization and misconception. Although not very visibly and dispersed, these rights are included in different international instruments and submitted to different definitions and regimes.

We would also like to mention the impact of Cultural Rights on peace and human security that has been neglected so far. Collective humiliations, identity injuries or the disdain toward a culture have been a fertile ground for the spread of violence, terrorism and war. In order to fight terrorism it is fundamental to take into account the cultural dimension of crisis.

At a policy level, cultural rights deal with a triple challenge. Firstly, cultural rights remain one of the weakest and most forgotten rights within the human rights international instruments. Secondly, cultural rights are at a crossroad between Civil and Political Rights, Economic and Social Rights and Minority Rights. Thirdly, due to the multiple dimensions of these rights, it is hard to find a clear delimitation. Once this complexity is recognized it is essential to move towards the definition of the terms that define these rights in order to accomplish their realization. We appreciate, in this regard, the efforts done by the Special Rapporteur to define key terminologies such as identity and community; and we encourage her to continue in this way. This is in this sense that the Fribourg Declaration on cultural rights oriented its vision which represents an important step towards the legitimation of these rights.

We encourage Ms Bennoune to adopt a global and transversal approach of these rights, by using all the international human rights instruments. We understand that this approach would allow a better comprehension and implementation of these rights.

Finally, we welcome the importance given by the Special Rapporteur to the right

of education. Moreover, we reaffirm that the cultural dimension is crucial to turn education “acceptable” for all students and their families, as education is essentially a cultural right.

General Debate – Freedom of Education Index 2016

2015 has been a really important year due to the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals and Education 2030. We welcome the inclusion of a human rights-based approach in these documents. As stated by these, the scenario and the main challenges of the right to education have changed and this requires new answers. The rise of stakeholders who want to be involved in the right to education and the demand for greater transparency require a new paradigm of governance. In this regard, the Incheon Declaration urges States to turn to « participatory governance and coordinated partnerships at all levels and across sectors, and to uphold the right to participation of all stakeholders».

Also the Human Rights Council, in the last resolution on the Right to Education, recognizes the need of the States to strengthen their engagement with civil society to contribute to the realization of the right to education. . The same ideas appear in the important document of UNESCO Rethinking Education, Towards a global common good?

The existing civil society participation mechanisms are clearly insufficient. It is necessary to establish new mechanisms to assess the attitude of the public authorities. It is in this context that OI DEL, together with the Novae Terrae Foundation, has published a new Index. This instrument monitors the attitude of States towards civil society. For example: Do States foster the creation of civil society schools?

We realize that most of the States are already aware of the importance of this new governance in education. Almost 73% of the States have some type of financial partnership with civil society schools, even if the financial aid is low or poorly defined in 43% of these countries.

We encourage the international community to use this Index which covers 94% of the world population. It has been done not for ranking countries but to help the States to assess the participation of civil society in educational policies from a human rights-based approach.

32ème session (13 Juin/1 Juillet 2016)

General Debate – Civil Society and the realization of the right to education

We really appreciate this report and we think that the obligations of the public authorities towards civil society could not be better defined. OIDEAL is convinced that the realization of each right requires at certain level the participation of civil society. As said in the report progress and civic participation go hand in hand. Moreover, the report quoted that “a confident nation gives citizens a say and a role in the development of their country”.

However we are surprised that this list of good practices does not include the right to education, besides certain mention to Human Rights Education. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognizes the right of the individuals to set up educational institutions. As stated by the Dutch Mission during the negotiation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the prior right for parents to choose the education they consider best for their children is a guarantee that education does not become a State monopoly.¹

Moreover, it is clear that the countries that are friendlier with the provision of education through civil society are also countries that have addressed with excellence the challenge of diversity and the accomplishment of civil rights.

The content of this report was the compilation of practical recommendations for the creation and maintenance of a safe and enabling environment for civil society. Although we think that the overall objective was well accomplished the annual report remains incomplete due to the lack of inclusion of practices concerning the provision of the right to education.

We encourage the UN OHCHR to take into consideration the role of civil society in the provision of education due to the good impact it has in the realization of friendly environment for the right to education.

In this regard, we also want to invite the UN OHCHR to review our last report “Freedom of Education Index 2016”. This report shows how the participation of civil society in the provision of education is a cornerstone of democratic societies and a guarantee for minorities in pluralistic societies.

Among the good practices we have identified we can highlight the important role in deprived areas of charter schools in the United States or the subsidized non-government schools in South Africa. The report also shows that the participation of civil society in education is compatible with quality. Among countries with the highest level of freedom of education we find some of the best PISA results; such as the Republic of Korea, the Netherlands and Belgium.

¹ GLENDON, Mary Ann, 2001 A World made new. Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Random House (p.159 y 190)

Towards a Right to International solidarity

The main representative of APG23 participated actively to two regional consultations, namely the regional consultation with representatives of Western Europe and Other States, and of Eastern Europe States, in Geneva and the one with African States in Addis Ababa, giving inputs on both the content and the format of the draft declaration.

As the Independent Expert points out in the conclusions of the report, recurring issues have emerged from the regional consultations, which have not been resolved, including the qualification of “non-state actors” and the identification of rights holders and duty bearers, and also the definition of the right itself.

Our NGOs would like to reiterate that the right of peoples and individuals to international solidarity draws on articles 1, 28 and 29 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and puts current state’s human rights obligations and ethical responsibilities of non-state actors in a new context.

There is a great need to move from the principle of international solidarity towards the recognition of the right of individuals and peoples to international solidarity. In our globalized and interconnected world several challenges such as, inter alia, climate change, increased inequities between and within countries, the supremacy of finance and economics over politics and the unprecedented migration flux require such a step ahead.

We are convinced that the draft declaration on the right to international solidarity could tackle these challenges efficiently and would reinforce the importance of human rights in these issues.



Furthermore, the recognition of the right to international solidarity would be crucial for the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and of the climate agreement of COP 21 in Paris and for the progress of the human family towards equality and social justice. It is an added value to the panoply of human rights as it enables the fulfilment of all the other human rights.

“We support the idea that “the text should be shortened” and “to use of a more traditional format for declarations”, adopting later a Guidelines to orient the practice of States and non-state actors in implementing the right to international solidarity.

Finally, the co-signing NGOs look forward for the revised text of the declaration and fully support the suggestion made by Ms Dandan to convene an expert meeting to examine the first revision of the draft declaration, with a view to giving specific recommendations for its finalization before submission of the final text by the end of her term in June 2017.

Panel on the 30th Anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development

There are still great obstacles in the realization of the right to development due mainly to the long-standing politicization in the debate on this right. People, especially those in situations of extreme poverty, continue to exceedingly and unnecessarily suffer for the lack of will by States to implement this right.

We hope that this Panel will be a cornerstone to get over this politicization. A clear sign of this politicization is the delay of the work of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Right to Development, which recently announced the continuation of the reading of the criteria and operational sub-criteria for another two years. We can do nothing else than share with you our big disappointment.

We want to encourage the States to end the polarization that has characterized last year negotiations and to work effectively and speedily towards the adoption of meaningful criteria and operational sub-criteria for the implementation of the right to development.

The Declaration on the Right to Development says in the preamble “development is a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population”. In a context of multiple crises, the implementation of the right to development is more needed than ever.

A right to development approach has been used in the elaboration of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. We are happy to see that in this matter there has been a consensus and we hope that this instrument will contribute to the realization of the Right to Development. SDG 17 should be used in order to

unlock the hot points of the controversy, especially concerning finance, technology, trade and multi-stakeholders partnerships.

The promotion of gender equality through equitable access to lifelong learning opportunities

Gender-based discrimination in education is both a cause and a consequence of deep-rooted disparities in society. There are currently 34 million girls out of lower secondary school². Poverty, geographical isolation, ethnic background, disability, and traditionally limiting attitudes towards the status and role of girls and women all undermine their ability to exercise their rights. Barriers to education for secondary school age girls include harmful practices such as early marriage, gender-based violence, and a lack of safe access to schools.

To strengthen gender equality in education combined with the right to education the undersigned make the following recommendations:

Gender-mainstreaming must be integrated in all international mechanisms and national institutions, whether private or public, who have a stake in education. Women must achieve parity in leadership of education institutions so that they become represented in decision-making positions at all levels. Gender parity in teaching staff recruitment, training and deployment in countries and areas where women are inadequately represented in the teaching profession, especially science and technology, must be established. Adequate provision for gender-disaggregated data collection and analysis must be financed as a measure of existing inequality and progress towards gender equality and the education targets of the SDGs.

Integrating gender equality into curricular is critical to strengthen gender equality in education. A gender perspective must be introduced at an early stage, actively promoting the training and career opportunities available to women particularly in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Teacher-training, both pre-and in-service must be context-relevant and gender-conscious so that teachers are equipped with the skills and knowledge to employ appropriate gender-sensitive teaching methods. Gender sensitivity taught in the curriculum should emphasize the positive contribution boys and men can make in addressing discriminatory stereotypes.

Education opportunity should be made available to all, regardless of age or ability. Where necessary, non-formal education must be put in place to reach out of school, marginalized, over-aged girls and youth and older women previously denied educational opportunities. Inclusive education must be recognized as a core component of first-phase response in emergencies. For all girls and women, a violence- and-harassment-free environment must be attained

² UNESCO- Girls Education- the Facts 2015 <http://en.unesco.org/gem-report/sites/gem-report/files/girls-factsheet-en.pdf>

including unhindered passage to reach schools or other sites of educational programmes.

33ème session (13 Septembre /30 Septembre 2016)

High-level panel discussion on the 5th anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training

Since its creation ten years ago, and with appreciation to the Platform comprising now 9 States³, the NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning has been continuously advocating to give Human Rights Education its full place in the work of the Council.

So, the holding of this panel to mark the 5th anniversary of the UN Declaration is very welcome. Indeed, human rights education plays a key role in building inclusive societies and a sustainable future, especially by strengthening social cohesion and preventing violence in all its forms, even the most extreme.

Human rights education is part of international law. Its concept has been clearly defined by the UN Declaration but the challenges of its implementation and follow-up remain. The adoption a year ago of the Sustainable Development Goals⁴ (SDGs) and of the Education 2030, Framework for Action⁵ opens up new opportunities for implementation at all levels.

We would like to insist, though, on the need for States to include Human Rights Education in all their reports to United Nations human rights treaty bodies and agencies.

We would also recommend the following:

1. Focus on implementation of human rights education within other global education initiatives such as Education First or Global Citizenship Education, among others.

It is essential to clarify the linkages between human rights education and all new initiatives so as to allow better implementation without loss of energy, time or resources.

2. Reinforce an existing entity, in a view to obtain stronger synergy among initiatives of UN agencies, intergovernmental entities and governments.

Complementary and coordinated efforts at all levels are key in this respect.

³ Platform for Human Rights Education and Training comprising 9 States: Brazil, Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, The Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand

⁴Doc. A/RES/70/1

⁵ Doc. ED-2015/Education 2030/1

Lastly, Mr. President, we would encourage those interested to read our joint written statement to this session, which develop this crucial issue of the implementation of human rights education.

General Debate – Right to development and the SDGs

We take note of the two reports on Right to Development delivered at this 33rd session of the Human Rights Council and would like to reiterate the following:

1. The 2030 Agenda has been informed by the Declaration on the Right to Development and provides a new impetus for realizing its vision. For the SDGs to be successfully achieved, States should focus on strengthening the Means of Implementation (SDG17) and creating an enabling and equitable global order.
2. In implementing and monitoring the SDGs, it is necessary to adopt a Right to Development approach that focus not only on the outcomes but also on the processes through which those outcomes must be achieved.
3. The right to development expresses, at the highest level, the values of the United Nations Charter. Its achievement is necessary for the protection, respect and fulfillment of the economic, social and cultural rights as well as civil and political rights.
4. In order to be authentic, Right to Development must promote the good of every person and the whole person, being the catalyst for the realization and implementation of Integral Human Development.
5. In our interdependent world, the Right to Development is relevant for both developed and developing countries and can give a new human face to the phenomenon of globalization by creating opportunities for all and by limiting its negative effects.
6. The set of standards presented by the Chair-Rapporteur of the OEIWG on RTD that are based on consensual and non-controversial understandings among States, should be not the end, but rather the beginning of a journey towards the full implementation of the right to development.
7. The slow pace of the OEIWG and the decision at its 17th session to “continue to consider criteria and operational sub-criteria with a view to finalize the text as expeditiously as possible, preferably no later than its nineteenth session” is simply unfair to the peoples of the world, especially the most vulnerable ones, who have waited for decades to have clear parameters for the implementation of the right to development.
8. Member States should start reporting on right to development during the UPR process even if the Declaration is not a legally binding document.

Finally, we second the proposal made by the International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations (ISMUN), during the panel discussion held in conjunction with the 32nd Session that is, “for the Human Rights Council to propose, and the General Assembly to decide to formally include the Declaration on the Right to Development in the International Bill of Human Rights”. This will

be a tangible sign to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Declaration on Right to Development!

35ème session (06 Juin / 23 Juin 2017)

Interactive Dialogue: Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education

The NGO platform on the Right to Education welcome the new Special Rapporteur Ms Bolly and wish her all the best on her new mandate. We would like to offer her our support and our expertise in order to help her to accomplish the full realization of the right to education.

We also welcome the first report on non-formal education. Actually, non-formal education can be a useful and essential instrument to address the realization of the right to education. We are glad of the way you addressed this difficult issue.

Firstly, we are happy to observe that the report is in line with the Framework for Action Education 2030, including its multiple references. We encourage the Special Rapporteur to continue to take into account this document in the elaboration of her future reports.

Secondly, we welcome the recognition of the importance of civil society, including NGOs. We would like to highlight the important role of civil society in providing non-formal education notably for the protection of local cultures. Together with the Special Rapporteur, we encourage the international community to establish partnerships with civil society - including religious actors - in order to achieve the right to education.

Finally, we encourage the international community to develop policies for the recognition, validation and accreditation of non-formal education.

The NGO platform on the Right to Education have sent to the Special Rapporteur a list of issues that we would like to see considered during her mandate. Among these issues one is of primer importance: the partnerships between States and Civil Society, according to paragraph 80 of the Education 2030 Framework for Action. Also, we encourage the Special Rapporteur to consider the important role of human rights education and Global citizenship for the international community challenges.

Implementation of Human Rights Education and Training through SDG 4.7

We welcome the summary report by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the panel discussion on the implementation of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training.

We wish to underline the relevance of paragraph 32, which highlights the need for human rights education and training programs to be implemented as part of the 2030 Agenda, especially through Target 4.7.

The increasing recognition of the fundamental role of Human Rights education for preventing and addressing current global challenges has led to various initiatives at the international level. It is therefore important to ensure stronger synergies between programs of UN agencies, intergovernmental entities and governments.

In this context, the NGO Working Group organized a seminar two weeks ago, which brought together the States Platform on Human Rights Education and Training and UNESCO who both co-sponsored this event, the Office of the High Commissioner. UNODC and civil society, to address the complementarity and coordination of the various programs.

As stated in article 8.2 of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training as well as in paragraph 80 of Education 2030 Framework for Action, civil society is a key actor that need to be involved at all stages. The NGO Working Group remains committed to working in this direction.



36ème session (11 September / 29 September 2017)

Annual debate on indigenous people

First of all, we would like to congratulate the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights concerning this great report on the situation of the rights of

indigenous peoples. We applaud the efforts of the OHCHR and the multiple countries to guarantee these rights.

We welcome all the good practices and references concerning the important role of education in the realization of the indigenous rights. Nevertheless, we think it is the moment that the international community goes one step further, and where education must be placed in action. The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity – which is omitted in the report- in article 5 mentions “all persons are entitled to quality education and training that fully respect their cultural identity”. It is time that this article is taken seriously. On this line, the C169 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention states that «governments shall recognize the right of these peoples to establish their own educational institutions and facilities, provided that such institutions meet minimum standards established by the competent authority in consultation with these peoples. Appropriate resources shall be provided for this purpose» (art 27. al. 3).

Education is a cultural right and must ensure the transmission of the cultural identity beyond the language. This requires the existence of alternative institutions that can guarantee the transmission of this cultural identity with the coordination of the state, communities and families. This possibility is recognized already in the article 26.3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the article 13.3 and 13.4 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. We regret that this good report have not mention this kind of good practices so important for the accomplishment of indigenous peoples’ rights.

We have identified some good practices. We want to share with you the experience of the Escuela Provincial Intercultural Bilingüe San Martín II in Formosa Argentina managed by The Company of Mary, Our Lady. This school ensures bilingual education to guarantee indigenous people can keep their own languages. Moreover, this school contributes in the promotion of the culture and the rights of indigenous people among their students by providing a holistic program. The program also includes integral follow up of the students and cafeteria and canteen service to guarantee their integral personal development. More good examples like this could be observe around the world, and we would like to see them in future reports.

Finally, we encourage the OHCHR to consider the creation and establishment of alternative schools as an essential cornerstone for the full realization of indigenous people rights. Moreover, we encourage the OHCHR to study good practices on this regard involving civil society and public funding in order this schools can exist.

Assessment of the World Programme for Human Rights Education Third Phase

We welcome the midterm progress report on the implementation of the Third Phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, which gives an overview of different initiatives at the national level.

It is key to recall that the implementation of human rights education and training programmes is part of the 2030 Agenda, which specifically includes Human Rights Education under target 4.7⁶

We would like to underline the positive development of cooperation between national actors like governments, national human rights institutions and NGOs. One of the findings of the seminar on Human Rights Education that the NGO Working Group organized in May⁷ is that governments play a crucial role in ensuring that their delegations to different inter-governmental organizations, such as UNESCO or the Council of Europe, are in contact and aware of their respective efforts in the field of Human Rights Education and that synergies are promoted.

Noting significant efforts in some countries, we would like to stress the following:

Human rights training, especially for media professionals and journalists remains a challenge. It is necessary to address evaluation and follow-up of all human rights training processes. The definition of criteria and indicators is essential for the monitoring of human rights education.⁸

Learning from and building upon good practices would be enriched if we could draw upon a greater number of contributions from States and National Human Rights Institutions. We encourage them to share their best practices when they prepare for the final evaluation of the Third Phase by 2020.

Débat sur l'impact de la discrimination raciale sur les droits fondamentaux des femmes et des filles - Les femmes vous adressent un appel : Un message de détresse

Je voudrais vous évoquer la souffrance des femmes arabes, en particulier des Irakiennes et des Syriennes, qui ont souffert du fléau des guerres et des dirigeants injustes pour avoir sollicité la liberté pour elles-mêmes et leurs familles. Les dirigeants les ont attaqués et entravés leur éducation et leur couverture médico-sanitaire par des bouclages à répétition et la fermeture des routes et voies d'accès aux écoles et aux hôpitaux, empêchant l'acheminement

⁶ SDG 4.7 by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

⁷ Co-organized by the States Platform on HRET (Brazil, Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, the Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia and Thailand) and the UNESCO Liaison Office in Geneva.

⁸<https://en.unesco.org/gced/sdg47progress>.

de nourriture et arrêtant leurs maris et leurs fils. Les femmes n'ont pas été épargnées des actes hostiles tant au travers des arrestations, des harcèlements et d'agressions sexuelles dans les points de contrôle de sécurité et les prisons. Comme ailleurs, un bon nombre des réfugiés qui ont été hébergés dans des camps ont rencontrés des problèmes dans l'obtention d'une protection et leurs situations se sont aggravées, car elles ont été victimes des formes d'exploitation les plus abjectes. Ce qui a poussé les femmes syriennes de migrer vers l'Europe. Par ailleurs, dès leur arrivée elles étaient choquées par les procédures et les lois d'asile complexes en Europe ainsi que par l'immigration clandestine. Je cite à titre d'exemple, certaines femmes se trouvant en Grèce avec leurs enfants mineurs, tandis que leurs maris ou l'un de leurs enfants majeurs vit dans un autre pays européen. En raison de ces procédures et de ces lois, les femmes sont incapables de regrouper leurs familles. Dans certains cas, le regroupement familial peut durer plusieurs années, en particulier en Allemagne, en raison du grand nombre de réfugiés et du manque de logements disponibles. Les Nations Unies et les pays européens doivent assurer les exigences des femmes, dont les plus importantes sont :

- 1- Protéger les femmes et leurs familles de l'oppression des dirigeants et des extrémistes.
- 2- Garantir de moyens de subsistance pour la femme avec sa famille dans un endroit sûr jusqu'à la fin de la guerre.
- 3- Faciliter le regroupement familial.
- 4- Garantir la liberté des femmes de choisir leurs vêtements et leurs croyances et de ne pas les restreindre sous le prétexte de la religion et des lois et des coutumes obsolètes.
- 5- Garantir la liberté des femmes de choisir leur partenaire sans restriction ni coercition.
- 6- Veiller à la jouissance égale de tous leurs droits à l'héritage, à l'éducation, à la propriété et à l'engagement politique etc.

Item 3, Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the right to development

We welcome the report of Mr Saad Alfarargi, the Special Rapporteur on the right to development and appreciate very much his efforts to go through the normative framework and all the ministerial declarations approved by consensus at the UN that reaffirm the right to development.

The fundamental principles of the Declaration on the Right to Development have never been more relevant than they are today for both developing and developed countries, especially considering the asymmetric and inequitable impacts of global governance in trade, investment, finance and development. All the consensus UN documents of the past 30 years, including the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, recognize this.

We fully concur with the Special Rapporteur on the fact that “the right to development is not just a declaration or a topic for political debate within the United Nations or political forums” and that “the reality outside is that of billions of people who are in need of improvements in their life and who are entitled to have their human rights, including the right to development, realized”.

Indeed, it is time to pass from words to facts and implement the right to development in all countries for the sake of all persons, especially those in situations of extreme poverty and vulnerability, who cannot wait any longer.



By aiming for the creation of an enabling international and national environment to overcome structural obstacles and challenges, the Declaration on the Right to Development, if fully implemented, has the potential together with the respect of other International human rights law instruments to lead to the achievement of social justice and lasting peace in the world.

We agree on the challenges to the realization of the right to development indicated by the Special Rapporteur in his first report, namely politicization, lack of engagement and adverse global trends and appreciate very much how Mr Alfarargi has spelt out the focus areas of his mandate.

We humbly suggest the Special Rapporteur to consider in his first thematic report to address the issue of migrants and refugees with the lens of the right to development. In fact, large number of migrants and refugees escaping from poverty, persecution, natural and man-made disasters, conflicts etc. are people that, having their right to development far too long denied in their countries of origin because of national and international obstacles to development, are forced to seek elsewhere for safety, the fulfilment of their basic needs and a life that can be lived with dignity.

We hope that the expertise of Mr Saad Alfarargi will greatly contribute to overcoming the political and ideological obstacles that still impede the

implementation of the right to development. We wish Mr Alfarargi all the best for his work and reiterate our support to his mandate.

Déclarations écrites

31ème session (29 février/24 mars 2016)

Human Rights Education in the context of the 2030 Agenda: A new opportunity

The adoption a few months ago of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the General Assembly and of the Education 2030, Framework for action by UNESCO opens up new opportunities for the implementation of Human Rights Education at all levels. We find it significant that Human Rights Education is part of this common Agenda and brought to the highest level of policy making. We want to reaffirm that Human Rights Education is important for the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights. It also plays a key role in building inclusive societies and a sustainable future.

Goal 4 of the SDGs, dedicated to Education, calls on States to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Its target 7 is particularly relevant to Human Rights Education as it states: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Likewise, the Incheon Declaration par.9 stresses the importance of Human Rights Education and Training in order to achieve the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, notably through the implementation of the dedicated UNESCO Programmes "Education for Sustainable development" (ESD) and "Global Citizenship Education" (GCED).



Human Rights Education is important for all human rights, including the right to development. We insist on the need to incorporate Human Rights Education in all sustainable development goals and not only in goal 4.7

I. The challenge of implementation

The right to an education that promotes human rights, fundamental freedoms and respect for the content of specific treaties can be found in numerous international instruments and the concept and importance of Human Rights Education are now firmly established. We want to reaffirm that Human Rights Education is a human right in itself. The web resource entitled “The right to human rights education” launched by OHCHR in September 2014 represents a useful tool in this regard.

The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training adopted in December 2011 and the World Programme for Human Rights Education adopted in 2004 and its accompanying Plans of Action are guiding documents that set out standards for Human Rights Education to encompass principles of peace, non-discrimination, equality, justice and respect for human dignity.

Review and monitoring at the national level will in many cases be the most important way to ensure that a State is meeting its obligations. We welcome the last report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the evaluation of the implementation of the second Phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education and its positive impact on national initiatives. We encourage States that have not yet done so to implement action plans and to send their national reports to the OHCHR since only 30 states submitted their reports last year.

We would also stress the relevance of a specific UNESCO mechanism that monitors implementation of the 1974 UNESCO Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and

Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. States are encouraged to submit to the UNESCO Recommendation by providing quality reports and consider international cooperation a responsibility in developing international education.

Concerning the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, and with appreciation for the States Platform for Human Rights Education and Training, our NGO Working Group would welcome a follow-up resolution at the 33rd session of the Human Rights Council in order to give human rights education the place it should have in the work of the Council.

In the context of the 2030 Agenda, heads of State and governments are committed to engage in systematic follow-up and review of the implementation of this Agenda. With that in mind, there is a need for increased monitoring of legislation, policies and practices, also through the Treaty Bodies, the UPR and the work of Special Procedures mandate holders. A review of Human Rights Education should be included in all these reports.

Efficient monitoring would be better achieved by using quantitative and qualitative indicators. In this respect we would like to recall the resource launched in September 2015 by HRE2020, a global Coalition for Human Rights Education, which suggests a framework of indicators or measurements to examine the presence and quality of Human Rights Education policies and practices.

II The role of civil society

The process of arriving at the post-2015 development agenda was Member State led with broad participation from civil society stakeholders. Participation was also a key word in the Education 2030 Framework for Action which refers to an inclusive process. Civil society is mentioned as one of the groups who adopted the document. Civil society plays an important role in the implementation of the right to education, especially the right to peace and the integration of ESD and GCED.

The Plans of Action for the different Phases of the World Programme recognize and encourage civil society, including international, regional, national and local non-governmental organizations, to collaborate closely with UN and non - UN institutions and other civil society actors, in order to maximize resources, avoid duplication and ensure coherence for the implementation of the Plan of Action.

Finally, the UN Declaration on HRET in its Article 8 al.2 states that the conception, implementation and evaluation of and follow-up to such strategies, action plans, policies and programmes should involve all relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society and national human rights institutions, by promoting, where appropriate, multi-stakeholder initiatives.

Indeed, NGOs, in close collaboration with other actors, can support governments

in the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of the national strategy. Our NGO Working Group remains committed to working in this direction and also to facilitate information sharing at all levels by identifying, collecting and disseminating information on good practices.

“Mainstreaming Human Rights and the Right to Development in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted at the UN summit in New York in September 2015, is truly of unprecedented scope and significance. Its 17 Sustainable Development Goals comprise an ambitious blueprint for a world that leaves no one behind.

In contrast with the MDGs that were mainly considered targets for developing countries, with funding provided by developed countries, the 2030 Agenda is founded on universal implementation, recognizing that poverty and inequalities today hit every country.

The new agenda moves from a model of charity to one of justice, based on the inherent dignity of people as human rights-holders, domestic governments as primary duty-bearers, and all development actors sharing common but differentiated responsibilities taking into account variations in national situations.

From a human rights perspective, the goals and targets for the most part stop short of using explicit human rights language. On the other hand, the preamble of the document says clearly that the agenda “is guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including full respect for international law and is grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights treaties, the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document. It is also informed by other instruments such as the Declaration on the Right to Development”.

Indeed, the Agenda for Sustainable Development has incorporated the transformative vision of the Declaration on Right to Development since it aims at realizing a comprehensive, people-centered development based on the respect of human rights, a fairness in the distribution of wealth and benefits through a renewed global partnership, and the creation of an international and national enabling environment for sustainable development, social justice and lasting peace that address the root causes of inequities and existing structural obstacles.

According to the new agenda, all the above mentioned aims should follow the principles of participation, nondiscrimination, indivisibility of human rights, accountability, and equality of opportunities between men and women as well as the respect for the sovereignty of peoples over all natural wealth and resources and the right to self-determination of peoples. These principles are all well

elaborated in the Declaration on Right to Development.

The question is: will the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development lag behind as is the case with the Right to Development? We hope not. If adequately implemented, the Agenda, and especially goal 17, will provide a new impetus for realizing the right to development and will have a significant impact on the enjoyment of human rights by everyone, everywhere.

Getting consensus on such a broad development agenda was an achievement in itself, but the real work starts now for it remains a responsibility of Member States and all the other development actors to mainstream human rights, including right to development, in the means of implementation as well as in the choice of adequate indicators for monitoring the implementation of goals and targets.

The long process of developing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been very participatory and inclusive, with satisfactory results and compromises. Similarly, the monitoring for the implementation of the new agenda has to be participatory and inclusive, carried out at national, regional and international level, and focusing on both the policy and budgetary efforts of governments alongside development outcomes. Integration of meaningful institutions and systems to ensure human rights accountability of all development actors is crucial. Civil society will have a great role to play in the monitoring process.

While states remain the primary duty-holder in development, all development actors, including third-party states, the private sector and international financial institutions have to be made responsive and accountable for achieving and not undermining global goals.

APG23 and the co-signing NGOs welcome the explicit reference to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in the Agenda.

In fact, Governments have a duty to protect human rights through the proper oversight and regulation of private actors, especially of business and private financial actors, to guarantee in practice that they respect human rights and the environment, including in their cross-border activities. No government should allow its territory to be used for illegal or criminal activities elsewhere, such as tax evasion, depositing assets obtained through corruption, environmental crimes or involvement in human rights violations, no matter the perpetrator.

An effective accountability architecture will be critical for the full implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As proposed in the UN Secretary General's Synthesis Report¹, there should be a universal review process built on "national ownership, broad participation and full transparency." The universal review process should function in close relationship with national and regional review processes.

The global High Level Political Forum (HLPF) has already been mandated by Member States to build on existing reviews and existing reporting mechanisms, and this should include systematically integrating existing reports and recommendations generated by international human rights mechanisms that are relevant to the SDGs. Incorporating reports and recommendations from the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the human rights treaty bodies, and Special Procedures will be essential. Moreover, the general principles guiding the follow-up and review processes at global, regional and national levels should be based on the human rights principles of universality, participation, accountability, non-discrimination and equality.

The human rights relevance of the 2030 Agenda will also depend on the choice of concrete indicators that should refer to and require disaggregated data to be meaningful for monitoring its implementation.

The report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators² that will be presented at the 47th session of the Statistical Commission in March 2016 contains global indicators that are also useful for gauging the realization of human rights, including the right to development. For example, disaggregated data on the percentage of population covered by social protection floors can be found among the indicators for eliminating poverty. The indicator "Number of ILO conventions ratified, by type of convention" is explicitly measuring progress on labor rights and decent work.

Other indicators are very interesting when compared to the criteria and operational sub-criteria for the implementation of the right to development under discussion at the Open Ended Intergovernmental Group on Right to Development of the Human Rights Council. In this regard, the OEIWG on RTD should speed up the finalization of the criteria and operational sub-criteria and can play a great role on how the RTD framework could facilitate effective implementation of future Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Mainstreaming human rights in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development means also that Governments should oblige, with the pre-existing human rights legal norms, standards and political commitments to which they have already voluntarily agreed.

In relation to Official Development Assistance (ODA), developed countries must fulfil the commitment to reach the target of 0.7% of GNP as well as the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of gross national product for ODA to the least developed countries.

Governments such as environment, trade, investment, aid, tax, migration, intellectual property, debt, weapons trade and military cooperation, monetary policies and financial regulation.

Finally, we would like to raise a serious concern in regard to the first negative signals given by some States at the dawn of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A clear example is the issue of migration.

The 2030 Agenda recognises the positive contribution of migrants for inclusive growth and sustainable development. It calls on full respect for the human rights and humane treatment of migrants, refugees and displaced persons while highlighting the necessity to meet the special needs of people living in areas affected by complex humanitarian emergencies.

With the Sustainable Goal 10, the international community committed to ensuring equal opportunities through the elimination of discriminatory laws, policies and practices, while facilitating orderly and safe human migration and mobility.

In this unprecedented era, where conflicts and persecutions around the world have forced more than 60 million people to flee their homes, where an unprecedented number of refugees and migrants has clearly demonstrated to be ready to set out on a dangerous and uncertain journey in order to seek asylum in Europe, the whole international community has been shamefully missing the opportunity and the duty to respond to those globally agreed commitments.

Europe and the rest of the world, which do have the instruments to respond to this crisis, have let the feeling of compassion and solidarity be replaced so far by internal political interests and deceptive fear.

It is now time to show that the ambitious plan of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of creating a more equal and inclusive world for all, corresponds to a real and authentic will.



32ème session (13 Juin/1 Juillet 2016)

Interactive Dialogue: Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education

The NGO Platform on the Right to Education welcomes the new report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education. We consider this report extremely important as it identifies clearly the main challenges of the International community regarding this digital and technical revolution. We consider this document as a step forward to address the digital revolution from a human rights perspective.

We agree with the Special Rapporteur that this digital tsunami is changing the educational landscape at a dazzling rate. Facing this revolution, the states have the obligation to ensure the protection and safeguarding of the right to education. We consider that this protection must lead towards a right-based approach to digital technologies and the achievement of quality education. In line with what the Special Rapporteur have said we understand this media revolution as a huge democratization of educational means. There are many good examples of it, such as the Open European Library. However, we cannot forget that technology is not a finality, but a means. Indeed the simple investment of technology does not ensures quality, the investment in new technologies have to go hand-in-hand with well-planned pedagogy and teacher's training.

One of the main challenges of this technologic revolution is how to make the link between technology and humanities. Unlike technology, humanities are not objective-oriented; humanities are about creativity, critical thinking, empathy,

dialogue. This humanistic approach is not only necessary for esthetic but also ethical considerations. Technology without humanities is doomed to failure. The Special Rapporteur states the importance of the establishment of partnerships and the participation of civil society to address this digital revolution. The UNESCO document “Rethinking Education: towards a common good?” warns about this new landscape and its dangers and points out the importance to change the educational paradigm of education.⁹ We encourage the states to adopt a common good approach when addressing educational issues and to collaborate closely with civil society.

Also, it is the first time that a Special Rapporteur addresses the issue of Higher Education extensively. Higher education needs to regain prominence in the next years. We welcome the opening of such an important debate in order to address the realization of the right to education from a holistic perspective.

Finally, as it is the last report of Kishore Singh to the Human Rights Council we want to acknowledge his work and want to recognize his efforts for the realization of the Right to Education.

Measuring civil society participation in education

The international community is convinced that the realization of the economic, social and cultural rights depends on the means to measure their progress. The last report of the UN Secretary General to the Human Rights Council is entirely dedicated to this issue of indicators, which are particularly important in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2016).

It is in that context that we have developed a Freedom of Education Index (FEI) with the view to measuring a dimension of the right to education which has been little studied so far: the freedom of education, although this freedom is part of the core obligations of the State (ESCR, General Comment 13, 1999, par. 45). Our research builds on article 13 of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) which states:

“(3) The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents (...) to choose for their children schools, other than those established by the public authorities, (...).

(4) No part of this article shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions (...).”

According to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, freedom of education contains three and well-defined elements. One of which is that States parties undertake to respect the liberty of parents and guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions (ESCR, 1999, par. 28). Secondly, the liberty of parents as the

⁹ UNESCO (2015) Rethinking Education

capacity to choose for their children schools other than those established by the public authorities (ESCRC, 1999, par. 29). And the third element is about the liberty to establish and direct educational institutions (ESCRC, 1999, par. 30).

This research was done with a human rights approach. OIDEI made previously research on the participation of parents in compulsory education adopting this approach. Our research emphasizes the importance of national legislation about funding. It is clear that without public funding – independently of the chosen formula - it is impossible to guarantee the possibility of school choice based on learners' needs and interests.

Methodology of Research

With the purpose of identifying closely freedom of education, we developed an Index of a composite type, built on four different indicators based on available information. The FEI covers an important number of countries, 136 in total, from all geographic regions, and representing 94% of the global population.

1. Is there a legal possibility to create and manage non-governmental schools (NGS)?

The marking scheme ranges from 0 to 100 points.

2. Does public funding for nongovernmental schools (NGS) exist? If yes, what costs are subsidized by the State?

This indicator aims to assess the public funding for NGS. We have established five categories to assess the degree to which public authorities participate in the funding of NGS.

3. Net Enrolment Rate (Primary education) (%)

To correctly appreciate the extent of Freedom of Education, it is therefore important to consider whether States are fulfilling their obligation to provide basic education to all children. The marking scheme ranges from 0 to 100 points.

4. Enrolment Rate in NGS as percentage of total (primary education) (%)

This indicator aims to assess the relative weight of NGS in each country. It is based on the enrolment rate in NGS at primary level. The marking scheme ranges from 0 to 1 point.

The formula used to obtain this Index, which ranks the States on a 0-100 scheme follows the rationale described below. The formula is based on a two-step process. Firstly, the overall "Points" mark is calculated on the basis of all four indicators. All indicators are added up with the exception of Indicator 4. Indeed, Indicator 4 is used as a multiplicative factor of Indicator 2. This was done with a double objective in mind. On the one hand, States with a high Indicator 2 should be advantaged proportionately to the value of Indicator 4 as they finance a proportionately large NGS sector. On the other hand, States with a high Indicator 4 but low Indicator 2 should not be disproportionately advantaged by the fact that they have a large NGS sector, for which they only provide low or no funding.

Secondly, the overall "Points" mark is then converted to the Index mark by equating the "points" mark of the fictive ideal State to the index value of 100. The fictive ideal State's "Points" mark is calculated as follows: Indicators 1, 2 and 3 are awarded 100 points, whereas Indicator 4 is awarded the same number of points as the existing country with the highest number of points for Indicator 4.

Each country profile includes other information that is not taken into account in the calculation of the Freedom of Education Index. The information concerns its commitment to international instruments concerning the right to education (ratifications of ICESCR, OP-ICESCR and CADE).

Conclusions

Legally, freedom of education is universally recognized. Among the 136 countries studied, only three prohibit the creation of NGS: Cuba, Gambia and Libya; 84 recognize them constitutionally, granting them the highest protection. Concerning the funding of NGS, the panorama is more contrasted. If 73% of the countries grant aid, for 43% of them it is an aid that we have qualified of "weak" or "not well-defined". Countries that fund consistently represent 30% of the 136 studied countries. This clearly shows that the countries are aware of the necessity to fund liberty to make it effective.

In Europe, notably in Southern countries (Italy, France, Spain and Portugal), there is still a political debate on the funding of NGS due to the amalgam done between NGS and catholic schools. Most of the countries that present a high level of freedom are in Europe-North America. The first ones are Ireland, the Netherlands and Belgium with a substantial difference of 7 points on a scale of 100 compared to countries which follow. In the 15 first, however, we find countries from other regions such as Chile (76,9), South Korea (70.8), Israel (69.1) and Peru (68.2). Regarding the regions, Europe-North America has the highest score, followed by Asia-Pacific and Latin America-Caribbean; and finally Arab countries and Africa.

Among the European countries, all the Northern countries are in a good position, just as the Anglo-Saxon countries. Most of the Southern countries - notably Balkan countries and Greece - figure below the average of 55.1 points. Countries of Central Europe and Oriental - such as Slovakia, Poland and Hungary - are also in a good position, probably in reaction to their communist past. Russia is well above average and ranks 31st.

The Asia-Pacific score is quite high, thanks notably to the South Korean, Australia, New Zealand, Timor-Leste (66) and Singapore (64.1). China (50.3) is under the average whereas Japan and India are way above the World average.

Regarding Latin America, apart from Chile and Peru already mentioned, the best scores go to Argentina (64.4), Equator (59.5) and Uruguay (59.5). Those countries are ranked in the first Third. Brazil is just above average with 55.4.

In Arabic countries, that globally obtain lower scores than the previous regions, only Lebanon, Jordan and Qatar are situated above average.

Concerning the innovative policies, it is worth mentioning the “free schools” and the “academies” in England, the provision of public land for the construction of schools in Spain and the flexibility of the curriculum for the NGS in Portugal. The growth of Charter Schools in the USA, particularly in Florida and California, goes in the same direction. A successful experience is also the “*fiscomisionales*” schools in Ecuador; as well as the help to NGS in disadvantaged areas of Guatemala that finances the teachers’ salaries and the running costs. In Africa, some governments such as Nigeria and Ivory Coast start funding schools issued from civil society to counter the phenomenon of privatization.

33ème session (13 Septembre/30 Septembre 2016)

5th Anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training

This statement, jointly submitted by 23 organizations, reflects discussions facilitated by the NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning (NGO WG on HREL) of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the UN (CoNGO).

The NGO WG on HREL welcomes the high-level panel discussion to be held on 14 September to mark the fifth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (UN Declaration on HRET), on the theme “The implementation of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training: good practices and challenges”, following resolution HRC/31/L.12.

Created in 2006 for ensuring NGO participation in the process of global policy making on human rights education, the NGO Working Group, with appreciation to the States Platform on Human Rights Education, has been continuously advocating to give this issue its full place in the work of the Council and participated actively in the negotiation process of the UN Declaration on HRET. We wish the discussions during the high-level panel to be fruitful and look forward to the largest participation of States.

The right to an education that promotes human rights, fundamental freedoms and respect for the content of specific treaties can be found in numerous international instruments and the concept and importance of Human Rights Education are firmly established. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its link with Article 13,1 of the International Covenant on

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) clearly state that there is a right to human rights education. The web resource entitled “The right to human rights education”¹⁰ launched by OHCHR in September 2014 represents a useful tool in this regard.

The link between the right to education and human rights education has been reaffirmed by last resolution on the right to education, HRC/32/L.33, which in its preamble paragraph 3 recalls *the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training and the World Programme for Human Rights Education, and in its Op 12 Encourages States to promote human rights education in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training and the World Programme for Human Rights Education as a means of contributing to the prevention of human rights violations and conflict;*

Indeed, it is our position, and one that is recognized by the wider international community, that human rights education plays a key role in building inclusive societies and a sustainable future, strengthening social cohesion, especially in situations where the physical and psychological uprooting, casualization of families and disorientation occur in an extensive and stronger way such as today. Investing in human rights education serves as a sustainable strategy for a people-centered human, social and economic development.

The UN Declaration on HRET, at the initiative of Switzerland and Morocco, was adopted by the General Assembly in December 2011, *motivated by the desire to send a strong signal to the international community to strengthen all efforts in human rights education and training through a collective commitment by all stakeholders.*

If the UN General Assembly had already recognized the significance of HRE as a growing discipline when it proclaimed the period 1995-2004 the Decade for Human Rights Education, followed by Resolution 59/113 which established in 2005 the “World Program for Human Rights Education” in its consecutive, on-going phases, the UN Declaration on HRET was very welcome although the challenges of its implementation and monitoring still remain.

Before then, UNESCO made a remarkable work, especially by clarifying extensively the concept of human rights education. The *UNESCO Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms* adopted in 1974 is a useful tool and we encourage States to submit to the UNESCO mechanism by sending quality reports.

¹⁰

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Compilation/Pages/Listofcontents.aspx>

We also wish to mention the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, adopted in 2010 by the Organisation's 47 member States in the framework of Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7. The publication of Guidelines aimed at supporting States efforts in this domain is also remarkable. We would recommend the last updated one, containing the *Committee of Ministers' guidelines to member States on the protection and promotion of human rights in culturally diverse societies* (13 June 2016).

Since then, many other initiatives were born. The adoption a year ago of the Sustainable Development Goals¹¹ (SDGs) by the General Assembly and of the Education 2030, Framework for Action¹² by UNESCO opens up new opportunities for the implementation of Human Rights Education at all levels as it has brought Human Rights Education to the highest level of policy making.

Goal 4 in its target 7 is particularly relevant to Human Rights Education as it states: *By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.*

Likewise, the Incheon Declaration para.9 stresses the importance of Human Rights Education and Training in order to achieve the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, notably through the implementation of the dedicated UNESCO Programmes "Education for Sustainable development" (ESD)¹³ and "Global Citizenship Education" (GCED)¹⁴.

Recommendations

1. Focus on implementation of human rights education within other global education initiatives such as Education First or GCED.

All these programs and initiatives are excellent tools but they also bring challenges, including clarification of each vis-à-vis the other and the necessary coordination between them. It is essential to clarify the linkages between human rights education and these initiatives so as to both avoid misunderstandings and allow better implementation without loss of energy, time and resources. Human rights education is part of international law, the UN Declaration of HRET has already defined it clearly. It is different though from civic education, from moral education or from citizenship education, among others.

¹¹Doc. A/RES/70/1

¹² Doc. ED-2015/Education 2030/1

¹³ <http://www.desd.org/>

¹⁴ <http://en.unesco.org/gced>

2. Create an international entity or reinforce an existing structure, dedicated to stronger synergy among initiatives of UN agencies, intergovernmental entities and governments.

Article 12.1 and article 12.2 of the UN Declaration on HRET stress the importance of international cooperation and complementary and coordinated efforts at all levels in order to contribute to more effective implementation of human rights education. The proliferation of initiatives and programs require coordination, especially at international level.

3. Include human rights education in all States reports to United Nations human rights treaty bodies and the United Nations agencies.

As stated in article 13.1 of the UN Declaration on HRET, international and regional human rights mechanisms should, within their respective mandates, take into account human rights education and training in their work. Review and monitoring at the national level will in many cases be the most important way to ensure that a State is meeting its obligations. We hope that the high-level panel discussion will be an opportunity to remind heads of State and governments of their commitments to engage in systematic implementation and review of human rights education.

4. Budget and allocate resources

The UN Declaration in its article 14 stresses the importance for States to make the necessary resources available as part of the appropriate measures to ensure the effective implementation of and follow-up to the Declaration.

It is time to budget specific resources for implementing human rights education and we would like to see a transparent process in which a percentage of the GDP is specifically devoted to Human Rights Education and Training, including financing civil society research work on good practices, initiatives and programs.

5. Recognize and support the role of civil society

The UN Declaration on HRET in its Article 8.2 states that the conception, implementation and evaluation of and follow-up to such strategies, action plans, policies and programs should involve all relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society and national human rights institutions, by promoting, where appropriate, multi-stakeholder initiatives.

Indeed, NGOs, in close collaboration with other actors, can support governments not only in promoting and providing human rights education as stated in resolution HRC/31/L.12 but also at all other stages, including the elaboration and monitoring of the national strategy. Our NGO Working Group remains committed to working in this direction and also to facilitate information sharing at all levels by identifying, collecting and disseminating information on good practices.

Item 3 – Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on Human Rights and International Solidarity

We welcome the report of the Independent Expert on Human Rights and International Solidarity, Ms Virginia Dandan, submitted at this 35th regular session of the Human Rights Council.

We wish to thank most profoundly Ms Dandan for her excellent work as an Independent Expert, and for having kept her promise to provide the draft declaration on the right to international solidarity at the end of her second mandate.

Indeed, the draft declaration is the result of in-depth research and intensive consultations with all relevant stakeholders.

The Independent Expert, in fact, conducted formal and informal consultations with State delegations, United Nations officials, bodies and specialized agencies, independent experts, national human rights institutions, NGOs, academics and local communities, listening to as many people as possible, including those who did not share her views regarding human rights and international solidarity.

The drafting of the declaration has been a long process that included the preliminary text of the draft declaration, circulated in 2013, the proposed draft declaration presented at the 26th regular session of the Human Rights Council to which the expert workshop held in 2012 and the Advisory Committee paper greatly contributed, and finally the refining of the declaration after the five regional consultations and the legal review by experts.

Our NGOs, present at grass roots level especially with the most vulnerable persons and advocating at national and international level for a better society based on fraternity, reciprocity, social justice, equity and sustainable person/people centred development, participated actively to the consultations that took place throughout the process of the drafting of the declaration.

From seven years, we have actively supported the mandate of the Independent Expert on Human Rights and International Solidarity since we are convinced that the recognition of international solidarity as a human right not only is an ideal goal to be achieved for ethical reasons that are rooted in the notion of being a human family and seeking the common good, but also because such a recognition is an essential necessity for the survival of the world, for the promotion and protection of the common good, a necessary instrument to promote a more equitable and just world and a crucial move for living in peace and harmony.



We fully concur with the observation made in the expert group meeting that a draft declaration on the right to international solidarity is significantly relevant at a time of rising nationalism and fragmentation around the world and that a human rights-based vision of international solidarity could create an alternative narrative to that of the actual globalization by countering its negative effects and promoting the global sustainable development for all and at all levels.

The necessity of a right to international solidarity rises mainly from globalization; this right finds its roots in the need to keep the system of human rights as a complex, coherent, interconnected and universal system. It represents a new instrument to face the complexity of global problems, to preserve the universality of the human rights as well as the unity of the system, and to improve the implementation of all the other human rights. Several challenges such as, inter alia, climate change, increased inequities between and within countries, the supremacy of finance and economics over politics and the unprecedented migration flux require the recognition of the right to international solidarity as a step ahead for the promotion, protection and fulfilment of all human rights.

In fact, the problems confronted by any contemporary society can no longer be met by even the most resolute action of any single state. As a consequence, individual states acting alone can no longer satisfy the obligations imposed by even the first and second generations of human rights.

We are convinced that the recognition of the right of peoples and individuals to international solidarity as well as the implementation of the recently declared right to peace, and the implementation of the already declared right to

development (the so-called solidarity rights), are very crucial steps for the progress of the human family towards equality and social justice.

The recognition of the right to International Solidarity will change the rules from the zero-sum game- "In order to win, someone else must lose"-to the new perspective "No one wins unless everyone wins". Such recognition will serve as the litmus test of fraternity and solidarity among the family of nations over and above any political divisions or geographical borders.

The translation of the universal principle of solidarity into the legal category of a human right is the subject of an intense debate. States voting against the resolution on international solidarity insist on the vagueness of the juridical contents of a right to international solidarity, a flaw that according to this criticism makes the process of the recognition of this right a rhetoric move. Solidarity is considered an ethical/moral concept associated to a voluntary choice, and those who oppose the idea of a right think that the concept is hardly declinable in the right/liability mechanism. The argument is that turning solidarity into a right would frustrate the spirit of it.

Such an argument when genuine and not an excuse to maintain the status quo may be valid if we intend solidarity in terms of love, charity and generosity, all values that cannot be imposed but only proposed and chosen. In reality, the right to international solidarity derives from the principle of human fraternity recognized with the foundation of the United Nations and its legal aspect is dictated and imposed both by our common origin and by the equality in rational nature of all men and women, whatever nation they belong to. Its recognition stems from the need to restore justice and equality.

As stated by Ms Dandan in her report, the right to international solidarity draws on the human rights norms that are already codified in international legal documents. In particular, the right of individuals and peoples to international solidarity has its legal basis, inter alia, in the preamble and articles 1.3, 55, 56 of the United Nations Charter and in the preamble as well as articles 1, 28 and 29 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We are convinced that developing the principle of solidarity into the right to solidarity is the only way to make the principle effective and operational, especially for the benefit of the most vulnerable.

As Ms Dandan rightly points out "principles derived from reason and values may, in due course, turn into standard operating procedures through States practice and, ultimately, into norms of international law" and "human rights are always a work in progress that can only come into full existence as enforceable claims through continuous work and effort by legal and political institutions, human rights mechanisms and, most importantly, the experience and practice of States themselves." The right will become stronger once operated by different actors in the field.

In this regard, we appreciate the fact that Ms Dandan has taken into account in the new draft declaration some criticism to the preliminary text expressed in the

regional consultations and expert workshop, by better and clearly defining in article 5 and 6 the rights holders and duty bearers of the right as well as the non-States actors.

The draft declaration has been shortened, better organized and structured by adding some sub-titles. The preamble has been expanded and reflects the full range of international law that is based on international solidarity, including international humanitarian law and other global consensual declarations as well as regional law.

In article 4, the definition of the right to international solidarity has been strengthened by using the word “entitled” and referring directly to the contents of article 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in which the right to international solidarity has its foundation.

We also appreciate the fact that the concept of “preventive solidarity” that has the potential to address the core need for justice and equity at the national and international level, has been retained in the draft declaration and made clearer by introducing the concept of “reactive solidarity” echoing the resolution A/HRC/RES/15/13 that states: “ideally, solidarity should be preventive rather than simply reactive to massive irreversible damage already caused, and must address both natural and man-made disasters”. Preventive solidarity means that interventions are not limited to and implemented when calamities, crises, natural disasters occur, but rather steps are taken by Member States, at national and international level, to address and remove the structural obstacles to the enjoyment of human rights and a fair distribution of benefits in our globalized world. Preventive solidarity aims to remove the root causes of asymmetries and imbalances within and between countries. An example of preventive solidarity would be the full implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

We regret instead that the reference to the intra and inter-generational solidarity as well as the negative obligations of States disappeared from the new text of the declaration.

Our NGOs wish to reiterate their support to the draft declaration on the right to international solidarity submitted by Ms Virginia Dandan to the 35th Human Rights Council. We appeal to all the Member States, especially to those that are traditionally supporting the mandate of the Independent Expert on Human Rights and International Solidarity, to vote in favor of this declaration.

Finally, we would like to conclude with a quote of Pope Francis that says: “there is need “to rethink solidarity” no longer as simply assistance for the poorest, but as a global rethinking of the whole system, as a quest for ways to reform it and correct it in a way consistent with the fundamental human rights of all human beings. It is essential to restore to this word “solidarity”, viewed askance by the world of economics — as if it were a bad word — the social citizenship that it deserves. Solidarity is not an additional attitude, it is not a form of social alms-giving but, rather, a social value; and it asks us for its citizenship.”

