Session 1: Youth consultation on the evolving right to education

Information Note

Organizers

Parallel Session 1 is organized by UNESCO.

Background

UNESCO’s Initiative on the Evolving Right to Education aims to reflect on the international legal framework that enshrines the right to education and consider which aspects might require expansion or strengthening to respond to the emerging challenges of the 21st century. The major human rights treaties that cover education were drafted over half a century ago and lack guidance in novel areas, such as digital education, climate change and education in contexts of crisis, or mass migration or displacement. In many areas, States are now surpassing their legal obligations, offering enhanced rights to learning outside of the years of formal schooling, for example, suggesting a natural progression in the international community’s expectations and standards. There is also increasing consensus that inclusive education should be a considered a right for all, not only persons with disabilities, and that targeted actions that propel equality between genders, races and peoples are increasingly vital.

The Initiative is a consultative process that was launched in 2020-2021 with an online survey and questionnaire requesting inputs on priority areas to be included in a review of the right to education. An International Seminar was convened on the occasion of Human Rights Day 2021, last December, to hear from experts and stakeholders in the field of education. Based on the response to these consultations, a research paper was produced that summarized the key findings and suggested areas for action.

This Initiative takes the opportunity to convene a session during the event “Transforming Education through Human Rights” to share the findings of the research and consultations to date and to gain the views of young people as to the aspects of the right to education that they would like to see updated in international treaty law.
Questions

Overarching question: For education to become truly transformative, which dimensions of education should be prioritized in any future potential revision of the right to education global normative framework?

Some guiding questions:

1) How should the threat of climate change be reflected in the right to education?
2) Does the right to education need to be extended? Should there be stronger rights in early childhood education and care, higher education, and non-formal education?
3) How should education be transformed to help tackle issues in society such as conflict, threats to democracy and inequality?

Objectives

Parallel Session 1 aims to:

- **Hear the voice of young people.** Consultations have already been conducted with experts, civil society, academia and other international organizations. It is absolutely crucial that the voice of the youth is now taken into account. Any revision of the international legal framework must continue to be relevant for decades to come, and it is young people that hold the key to understanding how the right to education should evolve in relation to radical changes happening in the sector today and in the future.

- **Disseminate the findings of the research and consultations on the Initiative.** While much work has been undertaken within UNESCO, further communication is needed to ensure that a wider audience understands the implications of updating the international legal framework, and the great benefits this could bring in terms of securing equitable rights for everyone to quality, lifelong education in the future.

- **Strengthen linkages between the update of the 1974 Recommendation and the Initiative on the Evolving Right to Education.** These two advancements must be aligned and next steps must be taken in synergy to ensure an international normative framework that is mutually reinforcing in all areas.
### Provisional Program

**8 December 2022**

**Rapporteur:** Peg Magnusson, Trainee at the Permanent Delegation of Sweden to UNESCO

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<th>Paris local time (CET)</th>
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| 13:42 – 13:44          | Welcome and objectives  
| (2 mins)                |  
|                         | - Facilitator: Katie Nguyen, UNESCO  
| 13:44 – 13:54          | Keynote speech  
| (10 mins)               |  
|                         | - Delphine Dorsi, Right to Education Initiative  
| 13:54 – 13:59          | Overview of the Initiative on the Evolving Right to Education  
| (5 mins)                |  
|                         | - Rolla Moumné, UNESCO  
| 13:59 – 14:04          | Youth intervention  
| (5 mins)                |  
|                         | - Dylan Yap, Philippines  
| 14:04 – 14:38          | Q&A (open floor for participants)  
| (34 mins)               |  
| 14:38 – 14:42          | Concluding remarks  
| (4 mins)                |  
|                         | - Farida Shaheed, UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education  