



**NGO WORKING GROUP  
ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
EDUCATION AND LEARNING**

# **REPORT**

## **OPEN DISCUSSION**

### **HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION**

#### **MEDIA PROFESSIONALS AND JOURNALISTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

16 September 2014  
Palais des Nations, Geneva

A meeting held in parallel with the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council

Facilitated by

**The NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning (NGO WG on HREL)**

Cosponsored by

**The Platform for Human Rights Education and Training**  
(Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia and Switzerland)



The NGO WG on HREL is a working group of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO), Geneva

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## INTRODUCTION

The open discussion “Human Rights Education - Media Professionals and Journalists Make A Difference!”<sup>1</sup> was held in parallel with the 27<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC), facilitated by the NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning (NGO WG on HREL)<sup>2</sup> and cosponsored by the Platform Member States. The meeting was attended by more than 70 representatives - mainly from civil society/NGOs and a few from Member States and intergovernmental organisations including the Office of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Some of the civil society participants were media professionals, journalists or had a related background.

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Norman Lizano, Minister Counsellor from the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica in Geneva. On behalf of the Platform Member States, he briefed the participants on the current status of the draft resolution on the plan of action for the third phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE).

On 15 September, a joint NGO oral statement on the Third Phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training was delivered in the name of 19 cosignatory organisations at the HRC plenary meeting. The statement is annexed to the present report (Annex 1).

### *The Third Phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education*

During the current (27<sup>th</sup>) session, the HRC adopted the resolution on the World Programme for Human Rights Education: adoption of the plan of action for the third phase (A/HRC/RES/27/12).<sup>3</sup>

The third phase (2015-2019) of the WPHRE has media professionals and journalists as its “focus group”, and has a special emphasis on education and training in equality and non-discrimination, with a view to combating stereotypes and violence, fostering respect for diversity, promoting tolerance, intercultural and interreligious dialogue and social inclusion, and raising awareness of the universality, indivisibility and interrelatedness of all human rights among the general public.

### **OBJECTIVES**

In light of the Plan of Action for the third phase of the WPHRE, the present meeting was aimed at the following three objectives.

- *Raising public awareness of the third phase of the WPHRE;*
- *Exchanging views, suggestions and good practices relevant to the third phase of the WPHRE; and*
- *Prospectively identifying indicators for the effective implementation of the third phase of the WPHRE*

The present report contains the summary of the meeting and “human rights education highlights” from the HRC 27<sup>th</sup> session as well as an annex, the joint NGO oral statement delivered at the HRC plenary.



<sup>1</sup> 12 volunteer representatives of 8 NGOs from the network of the NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning (NGO WG on HREL) contributed to the preparation and logistics for this meeting, as well as the drafting of the present report: OI DEL (Claire de Lavernette, Ignasi Grau and Marco Di Salvatore); International Federation of University Women (Nina Joyce); Soroptimist International (Sabine Kinzer); United Network of Young Peacebuilders (Oliver Rizzi Carlson); International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (Ursula Barter-Hemmerich); Al-Hakim Foundation (Amir Hashom); Association Points-Coeur (Arnaud Yaliki); and Soka Gakkai International (Kazunari Fujii, Hayley Ramsay-Jones and Elisa Gazzotti).

<sup>2</sup> The NGO WG on HREL is part of the NGO Committee on Human Rights, Geneva, of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the UN (CoNGO). Website of CoNGO: [www.ngocongo.org](http://www.ngocongo.org)  
Also, see: [www.ngocongo.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=30&Itemid=333](http://www.ngocongo.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=30&Itemid=333) (An online archive of the NGO WG on HREL for public access to reports, statements and other relevant documents is currently under construction.)

<sup>3</sup> Link: [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/27/12](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/27/12)

## KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

*Ms. Anne Bennett, Executive Director, Hironnelle USA*

In her presentation entitled “The centrality of local journalism to human rights education” Bennett referred to the indivisibility and interrelatedness of all human rights and underlined the mutually reinforcing relationship between the right to information and the enjoyment of human rights, in particular the unique and essential role of independent journalism.

As a media professional she works in countries that are faced with the daunting task of building secure and just societies following years of conflict. Reflecting upon her work, she welcomed the Plan of Action for the Third Phase of the WPHRE.

She asserted that the media had a key role to play in promoting a culture of social justice and inclusion - a role that would be strengthened by the human rights training and tools described in the Plan of Action.

Fondation Hironnelle was created 20 years ago in response to the atrocities of Rwanda with their conviction that objective journalism would foster a culture of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. In working in the post-conflict settings, they saw first-hand how dialogue on the airwaves could promote understanding, tolerance and respect for diversity, sometimes bringing together sworn enemies, at other times coaxing a taboo topic out into the open.

Bennett stressed that journalism could compensate for the shortcomings of the State, making human rights relevant to the population, transforming abstract norms into real life situations for the listener or audience. She also stressed that where the rule of law was fragile or non-existent, the media, in particular radio, could serve as a catalyst to propagate basic human rights and to put pressure on governments to respect these rights.

She highlighted two essential elements of sustainable and vital human rights reporting: strengthening the capacity of local journalists; *and* measuring and demonstrating impact.

### *Capacity Building*

Bennett indicated that reporting events as fairly and accurately as possible is the most important thing in journalism and described journalism as a profession of skilled craftsmen and women - operating with tools, guidelines and values, that could be perfected during long apprenticeships and mentoring, as in the fields of medicine or engineering. In this regard, she mentioned an example of education through practical application in Sierra Leone at Fourah Bay College where they tested the “teaching hospital model” of journalism training - a model of learning-by-doing that included college students, professors and professionals working together to share and test topic knowledge and expertise and to pioneering new tools and techniques.

“Journalists are trained and coached by editors and professors in the methods of journalistic inquiry, this approach produces results - in Sierra Leone they have seen how the Cotton Tree News project has not only put out the most trusted source of news in the country but has also created a new generation of young professionals. By demonstrating what is possible, it has the potential to move the University of Sierra Leone towards greater innovation,” she said.

She explained that journalists also looked at ways to build a deeper understanding of specific topics in their newsrooms, mentioning an example in Mali, Guinea and Sierra Leone: they were working to improve reporting on violence against women and girls through training, production and broadcast of radio programming in local languages; one of the topics they covered extensively in the program



was child marriage, affecting as many as 63% of the girls in Guinea, and similarly high rates in Mali and Sierra Leone.

“In many countries where child marriage occurs, laws ban the practice, but the laws are not enforced and are being ignored, and often unknown to the population. Through radio, they have improved community knowledge of the risks associated with early marriage, and have explored the positive impact of extending girls’ education. They have worked closely with religious figures and community leaders, as well as health experts and educators, and ensured that their programmes reach rural populations where non-State law dominates and where rates of early marriage are especially high,” she said.



Photo courtesy of Marc Ellison for Hirondele USA:  
Journalists in Studio Tamani in Mali in a training session.



Photo courtesy of Marc Ellison for Hirondele USA:  
Journalists in Studio Tamani in Mali in a training session.

Bennett reiterated the importance of the capacity building pointing out the “ice breaker” effect that trained journalists could contribute to opening a space for other media in professional and balanced reporting to deal with a sensitive or taboo subject such as female genital mutilation (FGM). Citing an example activity in Mali, she explained that the journalists at Fondation Hirondele’s Studio Tamani demonstrated their capacity to integrate training on journalism and ethics into their reporting, organising and hosting live debate programmes around sensitive topics.

### *Demonstrate impact*

“The process of thinking through evaluation and impact measurement can help to design clear benchmarks, define evidence, and feedback information in order to modify and improve the work,” Bennett argued. Regarding the approach of journalists to this process by articulating a theory of change, she said that the Third Phase of the Programme for Human Rights Education could be stated as follows:

*“Activities in journalism capacity-building and training lead to increased capacity of journalists. This yields more and better broadcasts on human rights reporting and better debate programmes. These outcomes enhance the knowledge of the population and other beneficiaries that access this kind of information and deepen debate at the local level in communities and at the national levels of government decision making. This will finally improve government’s accountability, strengthen respect for human rights and the rule of law, and enhance democratic participation.”*

For the best work on impact, she mentioned that collaboration with academics would also be important.

In this context, Bennett emphasised the role of media professionals and journalists to play in the promotion of human rights, and citing a 1916 book about the “newspaper trade” she said, “*the reporter’s job is to see for the unseeing and to become a public observer for the benefit of those who cannot observe.*” She continued saying that the role would not stop there. She quoted Eugene Patterson, a legendary journalist of the American Civil Rights era, describing what he called “the other half” of the duty of the media: “to place itself in league with the people’s policy concerns and to transmit to the public mind clear pictures of the reality that can inform their judgments about those concerns.” In concluding remarks, she stated that a free press working as “explainer and illuminator” would enable people to “share ideas, form new thinking, and join together with others to claim their rights,”<sup>4</sup> quoting the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights’ speech at the 27<sup>th</sup> session of the HRC.

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<sup>4</sup> Link: [www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14998&LangID=E](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14998&LangID=E)



## OUTCOME OF THE OPEN DISCUSSION

The outcome of the open discussion contained in this section is in summary. It represents the opinions of the participants, who included representatives from NGOs, Member States, intergovernmental organisations and media professionals and journalists.

The open discussion was conducted with six questions on the following areas:

- ✓ **Good practices of human rights education by media professionals and journalists**
- ✓ **Relevance of human rights education to safety issues of media professionals and journalists**
- ✓ **Engagement of media professionals and journalists in human rights education**
- ✓ **Youth and journalism education**
- ✓ **The role of civil society**
- ✓ **The role of NHRIs and IGOs**



Good practices of human rights education by media professionals and journalist expressed by participants are summarised as follows:

- Youth-focused radio programmes in developing countries engaging young people on a range of topics that affect their lives.
- A radio station financed by Fondation Hironnelle in the Central African Republic that promotes human rights and engages journalists who specialise in human rights issues.
- A documentary report on human rights violations in India - the documentary highlights the challenges faced by human rights defenders as well as the accountability of the Government for human rights violations and the killings of human rights defenders.
- Annual human rights film festivals held in Geneva and other parts of the world.
- BBC programmes in the United Kingdom around 10 December, Human Rights Day, broadcasted annually commemorating the day by focusing on various human rights issues.
- Cartooning for peace<sup>5</sup> as a publicly accessible tool for both peace and human rights education.
- “Institute for Citizenship” that operates in seven different languages - among other things they provide a Catholic radio station in Angola, entitled Radio Ecclesiate. Every Saturday and Sunday they host the “Build Citizenship” programme, which covers a range of topics including human rights that can help the general public become more aware of their human rights.
- A film entitled “A Path to dignity - The power of Human Rights Education”<sup>6</sup> jointly produced by Human Rights Education Associates, Soka Gakkai International and the OHCHR that illustrates the positive impact of human rights education on the following: school children in India; law enforcement agencies in Australia; and women victims of violence in Turkey. The key message is

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<sup>5</sup> Website: [www.cartooningforpeace.org/en/dessins](http://www.cartooningforpeace.org/en/dessins)

<sup>6</sup> Website: [www.path-to-dignity.org](http://www.path-to-dignity.org)

“one person can make a difference” and “human rights education can help to empower individuals and bring about positive change in their respective communities and societies.”

- Visual materials produced by NGOs working on human rights such as two short films by Amnesty International - a short film highlighting the positive impact of human rights education programmes on village communities in Sierra Leone<sup>7</sup> and an animation to raise awareness of women widowers being branded as witches in villages in Burkina Faso.<sup>8</sup>

The views on guaranteeing the safety of media professionals and journalists and human rights education are summarised as follows:

- The perpetuation of “easy” stereotypes is often seen in the media and can lead to further marginalisation, hate speech and even violence. Spreading the principle of ethical reporting can not only help to reduce societal misconceptions but also protect journalists from being liable.
- Media professionals and journalists are duty bearers with an important role in informing people of human rights and in so doing they are helping to empower and inspire people. But they are also rights holders. It is vital that their rights also be protected, especially their right to freedom of expression. Legislation protecting the freedom of expression needs to be strengthened in all countries as well as internationally, and human rights education for legislators could help in this regard.
- The importance of “truth of information” in social networking services and media is linked with the safety of many civil society actors and human rights defenders. Although they are not “professional” journalists they receive and provide information. However, such social services and media can be susceptible to manipulation, creating an inter-twisted nature of human rights issues that could threaten the safety of the users. Human rights education, for both media professionals and journalists, on the one hand, and those who utilise social networking services and media on the other, can help assure “accuracy” and “truth” and restore responsible reporting.

Ideas and examples were shared on how to make human rights education valuable to media professionals and journalists that are summarised as follows:

- Mutual support among different sectors including media professionals and journalists would be a key factor. It would help ensure journalism respects human rights.
- With the above-mentioned mutual support, creation of associations of media professionals and journalists encouraging human rights based approaches and fostering cooperation and training exchanges among media professionals, would make their capacity to promote human rights education a valuable asset.
- Empowering Trade Unions for media professionals and journalists would also be an important factor as they have a key role in ensuring the engagement of these professionals with human rights education, considering that the employees in the field of journalism may be prone to “business-oriented” orders from their employer discouraging their motivation for the respect of human rights.
- An example from Burkina Faso was shared regarding journalists and the Ministry of Human Rights and Civic Promotion. Initially there was no communication between them, however the Ministry started training sessions aimed at journalists. The success of this programme has led to establishing a “human rights and journalist” club. Journalists who are members of this club make a commitment to human rights training.
- Another example that can help make human rights education valuable for media professionals and journalists is “Association des Femmes Juristes” in Cote d’Ivoire. It is an association of women of legal professions who, inter alia, work with journalists that help them better understand the importance of ‘responsible’ reporting. They provide basic legal training for journalists and focus on issues such as gender-based violence.
- In the case of the European Union, the effectiveness of having incentives for media professionals and journalists was pointed out. For example, in the framework of their programme in Georgia, an award scheme was created to recognise the good work of journalists although the award is limited to

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<sup>7</sup> Link: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=O22dep-ouiU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O22dep-ouiU)

<sup>8</sup> Link: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLcJTpcbBLU&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLcJTpcbBLU&feature=youtu.be)

reports on minorities groups. The award is now in its fourth year and has proven to be very successful. Another example shared by the EU was their training programmes regarding money laundering in the Philippines. Considering money laundering is often directly linked to human rights issues such as human trafficking, the training is technical and participating journalists become equipped with the skills to report more accurately on this practice. In so doing, journalists have been able to help expose some high-profile individuals who are engaged in this criminal activity.

In terms of awareness-enhancement and capacity-building of young journalists to promote human rights through their work, the views expressed are summarised as follows:

- Social networking services and media should be integrated more effectively into human rights training programmes for young journalists, involving a wider range of people of different sectors in society.
- More non-formal training opportunities for young journalists are necessary. Such opportunities can include attending human rights film festivals where young persons can learn the importance of human rights respect more effectively.
- Human rights education or training components for journalists of all levels should be included, regardless of whether they are young or experienced journalists.
- Global citizenship education is also a useful tool for responsible journalism, specifically for young people. Putting an emphasis on our universal connectedness and shared responsibility could help to sensitise youth and to engage in “responsible” reporting, to take a human rights-based approach and to have the courage to point out what is wrong.

Regarding the role of civil society, several of the aforementioned views correspond to this question. Other responses and views are summarised as follows:

- First-hand empowering and protecting “victims” of human rights violations are particularly relevant to human rights NGOs at the local and national level, who need to have their voices heard. In this regard, such NGOs could work more with media professionals, journalists and the UN to create the “space” for the voice of the victims.
- The Plan of Action for the Third Phase of the WPHRE contains “relevant actors”. We all need to keep in mind that each phase of the WPHRE is not only about the “focus group” set on of the phase but all actors are to be involved for the effective implementation of human rights education.



In terms of the role of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) and international intergovernmental organisations (IGO), bridging the gap between NHRIs, IGOs and media professionals and journalists would be necessary and would entail the following:

- NHRIs and IGOs working more to establish better protection nationally, regionally and internationally for journalists, ensuring in particular their right to freedom of expression.
- Training opportunities for media professionals and journalists in human rights should be more effectively provided with international coordination and support involving the UN, regional IGOs and NHRIs.
- NHRIs and IGOs could help strengthen the existing associations of journalists and create such associations with respect for human rights mainstreamed in their activities.
- The UN, regional IGOs and NHRIs can contribute to creating databases of “good” practices and responsible news stories that promote human rights, from which media professionals and journalists can learn from each other’s work.

(End of the meeting report)



## **HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL 27<sup>th</sup> SESSION**

*The following highlights of human rights education include analytical comments. These are in summary as supplements and follow-up to the content reported above. For more about the Human Rights Council 27<sup>th</sup> session, see its website.*

*([www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session27/Pages/27RegularSession.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session27/Pages/27RegularSession.aspx))*

### **Human Rights Council Resolution on the World Programme for Human Rights Education – Adoption of the Plan of Action for the Third Phase**

The resolution ([A/HRC/RES/27/12](#))<sup>1</sup> was adopted by consensus, without vote and cosponsored by 113 Member States. By this resolution, the Human Rights Council (HRC) adopted the Plan of Action for the third phase<sup>2</sup> that had been prepared and submitted before the HRC by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

In introducing the draft resolution to the HRC plenary on 25 September, Costa Rica, on behalf of the Platform for Human Rights Education and Training comprising Costa Rica, Morocco, Italy, Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia and Switzerland, briefed the HRC on the preparation process of the Plan of Action carried out by the OHCHR in consultation with Member States and other stakeholders including civil society actors, and stressed the following: (i) While “*media professionals and journalists*” are a “focus group” of the third phase, the plan of action for the third phase seeks to continue implementing the objectives of the first and second phases; (ii) Freedom of expression is possible through major achievements in raising awareness of and training in human rights for this focus group; and (iii) By adopting this resolution, the HRC has the opportunity to recognise the valuable importance of education and training in human rights, promoting and protecting and effectively exercising all human rights.

Before the adoption of the resolution without vote, the United States took the floor to express its views on the importance of human rights education and the WPHRE, joining the consensus to adopt the resolution. It also stated that “*(...) the United States strongly values human rights education and training that can be an invaluable tool for the advancement of human rights. However, we also underscore that the United States joins consensus on this resolution mindful of and consistent with its limited authority at the federal level with respect to education which primarily is responsibility for State and local governments. (...)*”

With regard to the content of the resolution, paragraph 4 of the resolution stipulates that the HRC requests the OHCHR, in close cooperation with the UNESCO, to provide technical assistance upon request and coordinate related international efforts, as appropriate. In paragraphs 5 and 6, the HRC refers to the important role of UN agencies, other international and regional organisations and NGOs as well as National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) in the implementation of the third phase, in addition to paragraph 3, in which the HRC encourages all Member States to implement the third phase. In paragraph 8, the HRC reminds all Member States to prepare and submit their national evaluation reports on the second phase to the OHCHR by April 2015, based on which the HRC requests the OHCHR to submit an evaluation report of the implementation of the second phase to the HRC at its thirtieth session (in September 2015).

In paragraph 10, the HRC decides to follow up on the implementation of the WPHRE in 2017, requesting the OHCHR to submit a midterm progress report on the implementation of the third phase to the HRC at its thirty-sixth session (in September 2017). Keeping in mind that Member States are expected to prepare these national reports on the second and third phases, all relevant actors, especially civil society actors, should be aware of their respectively important roles to ensure the eventual achievements of human rights education at the national level that should have a greater impact than the shortcomings. To do so, the UN human rights mechanisms, such as the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and the Special Procedures on Human Rights of the HRC and Treaty Bodies monitoring systems, should fully be utilised with the participation of civil society actors.

### **Other relevant resolution**

Among the resolutions adopted by the HRC at the 27<sup>th</sup> session, the following would be noteworthy in the context of human rights education and the WPHRE. They were adopted by consensus and without vote.

Resolution on national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (A/HRC/RES/27/18): In paragraph 7 of this resolution about NHRI, the HRC encourages NHRIs to engage in their mandated activities, including “conducting practical and relevant human rights training and

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<sup>1</sup> Link: [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/27/12](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/27/12)

<sup>2</sup> A/HRC/27/28 (4 August 2014), “Plan of Action for the third phase (2015–2019) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education”.

education, and raising public awareness and advocacy about the promotion and protection of human rights”.

Resolution on local government and human rights (A/HRC/RES/27/4):<sup>3</sup> This resolution does not directly refer to “human rights education”. However, the intention of the sponsor of the resolution, the Republic of Korea, to clarify the accountability of the local government for the promotion and protection of all human rights, is clearly in common with the objective of human rights education and training. The HRC, in this resolution, is requesting its Advisory Committee to prepare and submit to the HRC a “research-based report” on the subject. The final report of the Advisory Committee is due to the HRC at its 30<sup>th</sup> session (in September 2015).

Resolution on the safety of journalists (A/HRC/RES/27/5): In light of the “focus group” of the third phase, the significance of this resolution is evident. While human rights education for and by media professionals and journalists is expected, it is imperative that the safety of journalists be ensured. This resolution should also be closely followed up by stakeholders of human rights education who plan to take concrete action for the effective implementation of the third phase of the WPHRE.

### **Human rights education in the General Debate and the Panel on the Role of Prevention in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights**

During the General Debate under Agenda Items 2 and 3 at the HRC plenary, and during the plenary Panel on the Role of Prevention in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, a few Member States referred to human rights education.

During the General Debate on Item 2 and 3, on 12 September, on behalf of the European Union, Italy stated, in line with a range of specific human rights issues, that “(...) *The European Union welcomes the Plan of Action for the third phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. Targeted education and training is indeed a fundamental enabler to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to build democratic societies based upon tolerance, non-discrimination and the rule of law.*” On 15 September, in its statement Costa Rica also stressed that the third phase of the WPHRE must follow the measures taken in the first and the second phases for providing human rights education within the primary and secondary education systems and in higher education, as well as human rights training for teachers and educators, public officials as well as members of the law enforcement and the military. On the same day, a joint NGO oral statement by 19 organisations, prepared through the network of the NGO WG on HREL, was also delivered under Items 2 & 3 General Debate (annexed to the present report).

During the plenary Panel discussion on the role of prevention, on 18 September, the Republic of Korea said, among other things, “*prevention of human rights violations can be best achieved under a culture where everyone respects each other’s human rights and dignity*”, “*a human rights-friendly culture needs: institutional framework; and education as a supporting environment*,” “*a human rights-friendly culture is a long-standing product and accumulation of human rights education. Human rights education is not limited to the formal school curriculum, but encompasses lifelong education programs, public awareness-raising activities, including through all forms of media.*”

Slovenia, in its statement, said that it “*recognises the importance of preventive measures as part of the overall policies aimed at human rights protection. This includes tackling risk factors, such as, inequality and poverty as well as providing good governance, a democratic system, the rule of law, accountability as well as an adequate civil society space. It is a clear responsibility of every State to ensure a supportive and enabling environment to prevent human rights violations and to respond promptly where these violations occur. Education, and specifically human rights education designed to properly address all these issues, is an indispensable element in combating all forms of racism, intolerance and discrimination (...).*”

### **New web resource of OHCHR: The Right to Human Rights Education**

On 10 September, the OHCHR organised a public meeting in parallel with the HRC session to launch the new web resource of the OHCHR, “The Right to Human Rights Education”.<sup>4</sup> Five key networks promoting human rights education made their respective presentations and shared their comments on the web resource. They included the NGO WG on HREL and an international coalition of civil society organisations, HRE 2020.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Link: [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/27/4](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/27/4)

<sup>4</sup> The web resource link: [www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Compilation/Pages/Listofcontents.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Compilation/Pages/Listofcontents.aspx)

<sup>5</sup> The coalition was created in December 2013. Website: [www.hre2020.org](http://www.hre2020.org)

## Joint NGO Oral Statement

### *The Third Phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training*

Delivered at

The UN Human Rights Council 27<sup>th</sup> session (8 - 26 September, 2014)

Under Agenda Item 3: Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

General Debate

#### Cosignatory organisations

SOKA GAKKAI INTERNATIONAL (SGI)

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND FREEDOM OF EDUCATION (OIDEL)

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION ASSOCIATES (HREA)

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN (IFUW)

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

AL-HAKIM FOUNDATION

UNITED NETWORK OF YOUNG PEACEBUILDERS (UNOY PEACEBUILDERS)

INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT AGAINST ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM (IMADR)

INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC CHILD BUREAU (ICCB)

EQUITAS - INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

ASIA-PACIFIC HUMAN RIGHTS INFORMATION CENTER (HURIGHTS OSAKA)

INSTITUTE FOR PLANETARY SYNTHESIS (IPS)

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM (IARF)

CIVICUS - WORLD ALLIANCE FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (EAFORD)

SERVAS INTERNATIONAL

SOVEREIGN MILITARY ORDER OF THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM (OSMTH)

PLANETARY ASSOCIATION FOR CLEAN ENERGY (PACE)

FOUNDATION FOR GAIA (GAIA)

Thank you, Mr. President,

I speak on behalf of 19 organisations.<sup>1</sup>

We welcome the plan of action for the third phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2015-2019)<sup>2</sup> prepared by the OHCHR.

We also welcome the new web resource “the Right to Human Rights Education”,<sup>3</sup> launched by the OHCHR on 10 September, last week.

Together with the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, these tools must be fully utilised and implemented.

The third phase of the World Programme aims at: promoting social inclusion of marginalised groups; fostering interreligious and intercultural dialogue; and combating stereotypes and violence.

We urge all Member States to implement the third phase of the World Programme, keeping in mind the following:

Firstly, the focus group of the third phase of the World Programme, “media professionals and journalists”, need to be enabled, not disabled, to fully exercise their right to freedom of expression in order to participate in the promotion of human rights education with their public responsibilities.

Secondly, human rights education requires the involvement of all relevant actors and the mutual collaboration between civil society and the government in all countries, for its very aim of realising all human rights of all persons, women and men, young and older people.

Thirdly, the Council should consider a follow up resolution in the 28<sup>th</sup> session next year on the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, in order to reaffirm the political commitment enshrined in the Declaration.

Mr. President,

With appreciation to the seven Member States of the Platform for Human Rights Education and Training,<sup>4</sup> civil society actors including the NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning at the UN and an international coalition of NGOs, HRE 2020,<sup>5</sup> will continue to mainstream human rights education in the work of the Council and other human rights mechanisms.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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<sup>1</sup> This statement reflects the views of NGOs expressed in the discussions of the NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the UN (CoNGO) and Human Rights Education Associates (HREA).

<sup>2</sup> A/HRC/27/28 (4 August 2014), “Plan of Action for the third phase (2015–2019) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education”.

<sup>3</sup> Link: [www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Compilation/Pages/Listofcontents.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Compilation/Pages/Listofcontents.aspx)

<sup>4</sup> Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia and Switzerland.

<sup>5</sup> The coalition was created in December 2013. Website: [www.hre2020.org](http://www.hre2020.org)

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The NGO WG on HREL hopes that the present report provide all relevant actors with useful information and insights for better strategy-building.

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