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Council holds high-level panel on the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training

AFTERNOON

GENEVA (14 September 2016) - The Human Rights Council this afternoon held a panel discussion on the occasion of the adoption five years ago of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, with the aim of addressing current issues and identifying good practices and challenges in the implementation of the Declaration.

Kate Gilmore, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, in her opening statement, said that the Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training emphasized States' obligations under international law to provide and facilitate human rights education and training and highlighted the value of multi-stakeholder initiatives and the need for support to national efforts by international human rights mechanisms and the international community in general. Human rights education fostered tolerance and a recognition of a common humanity beyond all the differences.

In a keynote address, Jordan Naidoo, Director of the Division for Education 2030 Support and Coordination, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, said that the international community lived in a world of enormous opportunities, interconnectedness and innovations, but the prevailing mood was one of disenchantment. Many individuals and groups were left behind, human rights were constantly violated, and there were cycles of conflict. More than ever, human rights education was needed. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization promoted human rights education as an element of the human right to education within the conceptual framework of Global Citizenship Education.

The Council then saw a five-minute segment of the documentary *A Path to Dignity: The Power of Human Rights Education*, on human rights education focused on addressing discrimination in South India, and its outcomes.

Cristiana Carletti, Associate Professor of International Law at the University of Roma Tre in Italy and panel moderator, said that the discussion would aim to highlight the role of human rights education in light of current United Nations initiatives, explore the potential of the human rights training and education in the prevention of violent extremism, review the implementation of human rights education and training in the past five years, examine regional and national efforts to encourage human rights education and training, and identify other opportunities to give further impetus to human rights education and training in the coming period.

Sonia Marta Mora Escalante, Minister of Education of Costa Rica, said that significant progress had been made in the country, and that Costa Rica would like to share some strategies it was using in

terms of core curricula, standards and management. Going back to school was the first step and the road to dignity, while the reforms prohibited any discrimination based on sex or gender. The challenges facing global citizens required new efforts and adaptation to promote full understanding in a diverse and interconnected world.

Flavia Piovesan, Secretary for Human Rights at the Ministry of Justice of Brazil, said that in 2003 Brazil had adopted its National Plan for Human Rights Education, which served as a guiding tool in five key thematic areas including basic education, higher education, informal education, education for justice system and law enforcement officials and education for the media. Brazil had instituted two national human rights prizes, awarded to individuals and institutions that stood out in the field of the protection, promotion and fight against human rights violations.

Driss El Yazami, Chair of the National Human Rights Council of Morocco, shared several good practices in Morocco based on a survey to determine the perceptions and representations of human rights in the Moroccan society, to contribute to a better understanding of the culture of human rights by Moroccan citizens, and to initiate accumulation of knowledge about human rights in Morocco. The study would allow the National Human Rights Council of Morocco to analyse the situation of human rights and to identify priorities in order to elaborate a national strategy for the promotion and consolidation of human rights.

Herman Deparice-Okomba, Executive Director at the Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence, Montréal (Québec), Canada, said that the Centre took charge of radicalized people and worked with them and their families. From this work, several key learning points had emerged, such as that the determining factor in choosing violence was a lack of education in the area of human rights. The fight against violent extremism must be based on a multi-disciplinary approach and must be focused on all forms of extremism. The best response to radicalization and violent extremism was education and tolerance.

In the ensuing discussion, speakers shared their national experiences in promoting and implementing human rights education and training and in building a solid human rights culture, and stressed that it was important to include the development of a global culture of tolerance, patience and coexistence in human rights education. They asked how this aim could be achieved while preserving respect for cultural and ethnic diversity, about the role of human rights education in combatting and eradicating all forms of racism and racial discrimination, and the main challenges in the promotion of human rights education in countries affected by violent extremism. States should adopt domestic legislation and develop national policies which integrated systemic and comprehensive programmes on human rights education in all educational sectors, and for the systematic monitoring and review of national policies and practices in that domain.

Speaking were Slovenia, Pakistan on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, European Union, Dominican Republic on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, Morocco on behalf of the Francophone Group, Timor-Leste on behalf of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, Saudi Arabia on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Australia, Switzerland, Greece, Indonesia, Council of Europe, Poland, Qatar, Ecuador, Argentina, Kyrgyzstan, Thailand, Viet Nam, Russia, Botswana, Republic of the Congo, Bolivia, Paraguay and South Africa.

Also taking the floor were the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions and the Danish Institute for Human Rights, as well as the following non-governmental organizations: International Organization for the Right to Education and Freedom of Education (joint statement), Soka Gakkai International, American Association of Jurists (joint statement) and Norwegian Refugee Council.

The Human Rights Council will resume its work at 9 a.m. on Thursday, 15 September for a full day of meetings. First, it will conclude the general debate on the oral update by the High Commissioner for Human Rights. It will then hold an interactive dialogue with the Independent Expert on the rights of older persons.

Opening Statement

KATE GILMORE, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, said that every day, the world was confronted with the increasing capacity to hate, while the policy responses to violence and terror led to further violence and terror. Strategies to tackle such issues could not be led by the anger and the will to revenge, nor the short-lived electoral moments. There was a need to better think through the strategies in order to tackle the world's challenges. There would only be progress if the decisions were grounded in the common understanding that all belonged to one human family and that all were equally deserving of dignity, respect and justice. The task of human rights education was to generate and nurture that understanding, and to open a richer menu of public policies.

Ms. Gilmore stated that the panel discussion marked five years since the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, which emphasized States' obligations under international law to provide and facilitate human rights education and training and highlighted the value of multi-stakeholder initiatives and the need for support to national efforts by international human rights mechanisms and the international community in general. Human rights education fostered tolerance and a recognition of a common humanity beyond all the differences. Human rights education could transform tolerance and inclusion for all. Never before in human history had there been so many children and adolescents, and so many individuals under the age of 25, said Ms. Gilmore. That was the Sustainable Development Goal generation and therefore education was the most powerful weapon which could be used to change the world.

Keynote Statement

JORDAN NAIDOO, Director of the Division for Education 2030 Support and Coordination, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Headquarters, Education Sector, said that the fifth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training could not come at a more momentous time. The international community lived in a world of enormous opportunities, interconnectedness and innovations, but the prevailing mood was one of disenchantment. Many individuals and groups were left behind, human rights were constantly violated, and there were cycles of conflict. More than ever, human rights education was needed. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization promoted human rights education as an element of the human right to education within the conceptual framework of Global Citizenship Education. The 1960 Convention Against Discrimination in Education expressed the fundamental principle of equality of opportunities. Over the past years, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization had collected a number of good practices on human rights education and the prevention of violent extremism through education, which had been disseminated.

Statements by the Moderator and the Panellists

CHRISTIANA CARLETTI, Associate Professor of International Law at the University of Roma Tre in Italy and Panel Moderator, stated that the panel discussion aimed to achieve a number of goals: to highlight the role of human rights education in light of current United Nations initiatives; to explore the potential of human rights training and education in the prevention of violent extremism; to review the implementation of human rights education and training in the past five years; to examine regional and national efforts to encourage human rights education and training; to raise awareness about the topic; to encourage States to make adequate contributions; and to identify opportunities to give a further impetus to human rights education and training in the coming period. Ms. Carletti then introduced part of a documentary released in 2012 by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and two civil society organizations, which showed a human rights education programme addressing discrimination in the south of India and its outcomes. Ms. Carletti summarized the main messages of the video, which was that human rights education and training started from the daily life of learners, engaging them in a critical reflection on the human rights challenges they faced. Human rights education and training was an empowering process which provided learners with tools, knowledge and

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 education and training was an empowering process which provided learners with tools, knowledge and skills to address the human rights challenges they faced, and it led to action consistent with human rights principles to further promote and protect human rights.

SONIA MARTA MORA ESCALANTE, Minister of Education of Costa Rica, said that the historic leadership of Costa Rica was cemented in the country's tradition of peace. A visionary national agreement had earmarked funds for education. The image of a homogeneous Costa Rica was a fiction, and civil society organizations had expressed their concern. A specific programme mainstreaming initiatives which were more experiential was important. Costa Rica would like to share some strategies it was using in terms of core curricula, standards and management. A comprehensive approach was part of the 2030 Agenda, and curricula transformation was a substantial change in that regard. Going back to school was the first step and the road to dignity, while the services operated through a human rights approach. Reforms established the prohibition of any discrimination based on sex or gender. Processes for capacity-building were also being created. The challenges facing global citizens required new efforts and adaptation to promote a full understanding in a diverse and interconnected world. Ms. Escalante invited the Human Rights Council to encourage a lively international discussion on most effective strategies on education on human rights, which would have to be a joint endeavour with diverse stakeholders.

CRISTIANA CARLETTI, Associate Professor of International Law at the University of Roma Tre in Italy and Panel Moderator, noted that in December 2003, Brazil had launched the National Plan for Human Rights Education, and asked about the impact it had had nationally, the achievements, and the challenges and lessons to share.

FLAVIA PIOVESAN, Secretary for Human Rights at the Ministry of Justice of Brazil, said that human rights education policies in Brazil had emerged in the 1980s, and in 2003 Brazil had adopted its National Plan for Human Rights Education, which served as a guiding tool in five key thematic areas, including basic education, higher education, informal education, education for justice system and law enforcement officials and education for the media. In 2009, Brazil had adopted the second National Plan, which contained objectives in six key thematic areas, and in 2012 it had adopted National Guidelines for Human Rights Education to regulate the use of knowledge concerning human rights education in basic and higher education curricula. It was based on the principles of human dignity, equality of rights, recognition and appreciation of diversity, secularity of the State, democracy and education, and social and environmental sustainability. Brazil had instituted in 2008 a human rights education national prize awarded to individuals and institutions for educational experiences which promoted the culture of human rights, while the Human Rights Prize, instituted in 1995, was the highest award granted by the Government to people and institutions that stood out in the field of protection, promotion and fight against human rights violations.

CRISTIANA CARLETTI, Associate Professor of International Law at the University of Roma Tre in Italy and Panel Moderator, noted that national human rights institutions could play an important role in mobilizing relevant public and private actors for human rights education and coordination. How could national human rights institutions further ensure the implementation of human rights education nationally?

DRISS EL YAZAMI, Chair of the National Human Rights Council of Morocco, shared several good practices in Morocco based on a survey to determine the perceptions and representations of human rights in the Moroccan society, to contribute to better understanding of the culture of human rights by Moroccan citizens, and to initiate accumulation of knowledge about human rights in Morocco. The study would allow the National Human Rights Council of Morocco to analyse the situation of human rights and to identify priorities in order to elaborate a national strategy for the promotion and consolidation of human rights. The results of the study should inform public policies, notably in the field of education and training. In 2015, the National Human Rights Council of Morocco had instituted the National Institute for Human Rights Education with a goal to develop education in different human rights areas, to ensure education for trainers, to initiate and contribute to the evaluation of the existing education at the national level, to implement modules of education which would continue to

benefit various institutional and private actors, and to support expertise in the relevant field. Thanks to a joint initiative of UNESCO and the National Human Rights Council of Morocco a guidebook for the education of youth had been elaborated, with a focus on citizenship and human rights. Despite those efforts, challenges still persisted, notably there was a need to adapt to the needs of a changing society, make human rights education accessible to different segments of the Moroccan society, and to institutionalize human rights education.

CRISTIANA CARLETTI, Associate Professor of International Law at the University of Roma Tre in Italy and Panel Moderator, asked about the experience in using human rights education to fight violent extremism and about the approaches, methodologies, and content to use.

HERMAN DEPARICE-OKOMBA, Executive Director at the Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence, Montréal (Québec), Canada, said that the Centre took charge of radicalized people and worked with them and their families. From this work, several key learning points had emerged, including that the determining factor in choosing violence was a lack of education in the area of human rights. The fight against violent extremism must be based on a multi-disciplinary approach and must be focused on all forms of extremism, otherwise, some groups or communities would be stigmatised. Above all, there was a need to work with communities and civil society which had a remarkable level of expertise, and to ensure that the fight against violent extremism was well thought out and well justified. The Centre developed training and awareness programmes on tolerance, and on encouraging people to recognize and report discriminatory behaviour. It was not in favour of de-radicalization as an approach, but was rather using the approach of integration, and developing critical thinking in individuals. Security approaches were not very successful in addressing violent extremism, and there was a need to strengthen preventive approaches and address deep rooted causes of violence. The best response to radicalization and violent extremism was education and tolerance.

Discussion

Slovenia said that it had launched a human rights educational programme which had been translated into 23 languages, adding that refugee and migrant children should not be forgotten. Pakistan, speaking on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, said that it was important to include the development of a global culture of tolerance, patience and coexistence in human rights education, asking the speakers to illuminate how to achieve this while preserving respect for cultural and ethnic diversity. European Union asked the panellists what their vision would be for concrete measures to enhance the implementation of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. Dominican Republic, speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, said that the international community had underscored the need to develop a culture of human rights so all individuals were aware of their rights, asking the panellists to share good practices and challenges.

Morocco, speaking on behalf of the Groupe Francophone, said French-speaking countries had a constant commitment to supporting education in human rights, noting declarations on that topic which had been adopted in recent years. Timor-Leste, speaking on behalf of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, asked the panellists for their considerations regarding the promotion of human rights education and training through technical cooperation at the regional and international levels, and for their views on how human rights education could combat and eradicate all forms of racism and racial discrimination. Saudi Arabia, speaking on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council, affirmed that human rights education was highly important for the promotion and protection of human rights, adding that Gulf Cooperation Council countries had played an international leadership role when it came to human rights education in several areas. Australia said that its own national human rights institution, the Australian Human Rights Commission, promoted and provided education and training that sought to build a human rights culture.

Switzerland asked the panellists about key actors outside schools who could ensure that all school children acquired competences in order to promote sustainable development, and about the main challenges in the promotion of human rights education in countries affected by violent extremism.

Greece urged all States to take full advantage of the World Programme for Human Rights Education

Council holds high-level panel on the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. Greece urged all States to take full advantage of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, noting that it was extremely important to integrate human rights in the public sector. Indonesia asked the panellists about the best ways to increase the impact of education and training on the better promotion and protection of human rights on the ground. Council of Europe stated that it had adopted instruments on education for democratic citizenship, and expressed hope that it would continue to exchange information with the Human Rights Council.

Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions encouraged States to invite national human rights institutions to support the advancement of the implementation of human rights education in the formal education sector, and have them act as independent advisers to parliaments.

International Organization for the Right to Education and Freedom of Education (OIDEL), on behalf of several NGOs¹, noted that human rights education was part of international law and stressed that States should include human rights education in all their reports to the United Nations human rights treaty bodies and agencies. Soka Gakkai International called on States to adopt domestic legislation and develop national policies which integrated systemic and comprehensive programmes on human rights education in all educational sectors, and for the systematic monitoring and review of national policies and practices in that domain.

Responses from the Moderator and Panellists

CRISTIANA CARLETTI, Associate Professor of International Law at the University of Roma Tre in Italy and Panel Moderator, asked the panellists to enumerate challenges to be surmounted in the years to come, with reference to the framework of the World Programme for human rights education.

SONIA MARTA MORA ESCALANTE, Minister of Education of Costa Rica, said her country had been a pioneering country, and that one of the most important challenges was to overcome fragmentation. Regarding the media, Costa Rica had made use of virtual space when it launched a campaign against bullying.

FLAVIA PIOVESAN, Secretary for Human Rights at the Ministry of Justice of Brazil, said that an open, participatory and transparent process was crucial. The process of creating a national plan could have a catalytic effect in intensifying a public debate on the key challenges. As a number of interventions had mentioned, accountability and monitoring were key concepts.

DRISS EL YAZAMI, Chair of the National Human Rights Council of Morocco, said that the position of national human rights institutions needed to be strengthened in each country and in international networks as well. All States should support this. One important issue in the future was the human rights education and training relative to human rights of refugees and migrants, including new forms of migrants, such as climate migrants and refugees. Further, more coherence would be needed, not only in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals but also in the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement, which would be relevant for environmental education.

HERMAN DEPARICE-OKOMBA, Executive Director at the Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence, Montréal (Québec), Canada, said that promoting human rights education should go beyond schools. There was a need to ensure that people on the frontline and in the street had the tools and knowledge to talk about human rights in a proper manner and to correct wrong concepts among people. Young people tended to simplify highly complicated international and political issues and the media had an extremely important role to play in promoting human rights. The process of violent radicalization required face-to-face meetings where simplistic questions were provided to highly complex questions; the youth would then turn to the Internet for further search. Studies showed that radicalization could not occur solely through the Internet.

Discussion

Poland believed that education was an indispensable element for the implementation of all Sustainable

Council holds high-level panel on the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training Development Goals. In 2015, Poland had finalized a civil library project, which was hoped to be of use to educators, students and others, especially in emerging democracies. Qatar highlighted the importance that the leaders of Qatar were giving to human rights. The human rights culture was disseminated through educational initiatives and internships. The Ministry for the Interior provided training for law enforcement officials. Ecuador was pleased to say that human rights education played an important role in the country. Ecuador had invested significant resources to teaching human rights. Hundreds of justice practitioners had been trained in human rights, and human rights had been included in curricula at all levels.

Argentina said it helped develop public policies to provide free training tools, including child-friendly materials for children and adolescents so that they could learn about their rights. Argentina believed that education and training in human rights contributed to the promotion of tolerant and inclusive societies. Kyrgyzstan stated that human rights were a fundamental principle in Kyrgyzstan. Comprehensive education in human rights provided skills necessary for their promotion and protection in everyday life. An introduction to human rights was mandatory in the field of higher professional education. Thailand said that its experience in implementing a human rights education programme offered valuable lessons. Universities now offered more courses on human rights, and human rights training for civil servants and journalists had also been prioritized. Partnerships among all stakeholders ought to be strengthened.

Viet Nam integrated human rights education and training in schools, particularly at the tertiary levels, and also in the media and community channels, and was working on strengthening the integration of human rights education as a regular component of academic curricula at various levels. Outreach on human rights was one of the most important elements in developing civil society in Russia; there were various programmes tailored to younger and older generations, which addressed concepts of rights, freedoms and obligations. Botswana asked how the financial constraints of States in the provision of training could be overcome in the implementation of the next phase of the World Programme on Human Rights.

Republic of the Congo said it was implementing capacity-building programmes for uniformed agents of the State, as well as in primary schools, and thanked all its partners for their support in those endeavours. Bolivia said it valued human rights education and training in the complementarity of civilizations and cultures and felt the need to promote teaching and local initiatives that were well adapted to local conditions. Education was considered a fundamental right in Paraguay, which deemed that access to education must go hand in hand with policies and initiatives to ensure quality in education. South Africa, speaking on behalf of the African Group, acknowledged that human rights education provided people with adequate tools to develop a sense of responsibility to defend their own rights and those of others. The African Group also recognized the role of human rights education in the promotion of dignity.

Danish Institute for Human Rights shared good practices and current opportunities on national implementation. It acted as a key advisor to the Ministry of Education on education reform, curricula development and human rights education. All States were called on to invite their national human rights institutions on board.

American Association of Jurists, speaking on behalf of eight organizations, emphasized the contrast between the lowering of education budgets and the continuous augmentation of military spending. Even the United Nations dedicated only two per cent of its budget to education. Norwegian Refugee Council drew attention to the right to education of the Palestinians, which suffered because of the Israeli occupation. Negative effects included the destruction of schools and restriction of movement, including that of children, who could not go to school.

Concluding Remarks

CRISTIANA CARLETTI, Associate Professor of International Law at the University of Roma Tre in Italy and Panel Moderator, asked the panellists about efforts that were needed to mainstream human rights

SONIA MARTA MORA ESCALANTE, Minister of Education of Costa Rica, said that the 2030 Agenda was a renewed opportunity to achieve sustainable development and it was very important that the issue of funding was raised in the discussion today. The international community should deploy maximum efforts to fully finance action in the human rights arena, in a manner commensurate with the dimension of challenges societies faced today. Today, more than ever, there was a need for innovative processes to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to find methods to support critical learning and critical thinking by students, and educating planetary citizens, for which rallying of a multiplicity of stakeholders was needed.

FLAVIA PIOVESAN, Secretary for Human Rights at the Ministry of Justice of Brazil, stressed that human rights education played a central role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, especially as it pledged not to leave anyone behind, and to promote inclusive and just societies. Human rights education was a cross-cutting right, especially in the Sustainable Development Goal 7 on education and life-long learning. Human rights education was a key component in achieving sustainable development. International cooperation was a key element in fostering dialogue between global, regional and local levels. A culture of rights was essential to democracy, rule of law and development, and human rights education was crucial to a culture of rights.

DRISS EL YAZAMI, Chair of the National Human Rights Council of Morocco, stated that three manuals had been developed in Morocco, and other panellists had mentioned the existence of a wide variety of other tools. The Internet was not enough to radicalize people, but could be used in the battle to promote certain values. Pluralism was a peaceful process, stressed Mr. El Yazami.

HERMAN DEPARICE-OKOMBA, Executive Director at the Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence, Montréal (Québec), Canada, said that young people who were radicalized were those who dreamt of equality. Those young people needed to be given hope and an opportunity to succeed. For that to happen, work had to be done in an integrated manner, with the inclusion of the private sector.

CRISTIANA CARLETTI, Associate Professor of International Law at the University of Roma Tre in Italy and Panel Moderator, said that there had been an extraordinary advancement since the adoption of the Declaration. Education's catalytic role was recognized. As expressly recalled in the Declaration, human rights education was integrated in the Sustainable Development Agenda. It was clear that there was broad commitment to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goal 4 and its target 7.

1. Joint statement: International Organization for the Right to Education and Freedom of Education (OIDEI); Associazione Comunita Papa Giovanni XXIII; Company of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul; Foundation for GAIA; Global Eco-Village Network, The; Instituto de Desenvolvimento e Direitos Humanos – IDDH; International Catholic Child Bureau; International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR); International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; Lazarus Union; Make Mothers Matter – MMM; ONG Hope International; Planetary Association for Clean Energy, Inc., The; Soroptimist International; Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem (OSMTH); Teresian Association; and International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

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