



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
13 October 2023

Original: English

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## Human Rights Council

### Fifty-fourth session

11 September–13 October 2023

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

## **Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 11 October 2023**

### **54/5. Ensuring quality education for peace and tolerance for every child**

*The Human Rights Council,*

*Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,*

*Recognizing* that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as to the promotion of understanding, peace, gender equality and friendship among all people, ethnic, national, religious and linguistic minorities and Indigenous Peoples, and recalling in that regard the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,

*Recalling* the Convention against Discrimination in Education of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and its Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training and the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,

*Recalling also* the proclamation by the General Assembly in its resolution 59/113 of 10 December 2004 of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, structured in consecutive five-year phases, in order to advance implementation of human rights education programmes in all sectors, including for children,

*Reaffirming* that the human rights principles of non-discrimination and equality are central to the full realization of the right to education as enshrined in the Convention against Discrimination in Education of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and emphasizing that everyone is entitled to the right to education without discrimination of any kind,

*Recognizing* the fundamental contribution of the enjoyment of the right to education to the achievement of peace and security, acknowledging that investment in universal, free, accessible, equitable and inclusive quality education and training is an important investment that States should make to ensure the immediate and long-term development of children, and



reiterating that access to inclusive, equitable and quality formal and non-formal education is a crucial factor in enabling children to acquire relevant skills and to build their capacities,

*Recognizing also* that girls are disproportionately represented among out-of-school children and that women are disproportionately represented among illiterate adults owing to, inter alia, discrimination and violence based on any ground, particularly sexual and gender-based violence, and harassment; lack of a safe learning environment; child, early or forced marriage or unplanned pregnancy; the lack of safe and appropriate water and sanitation facilities that take into account women's and girls' privacy needs, and menstrual health and hygiene supplies; discriminatory laws; gender stereotypes; patriarchal social norms; and lack of empowerment, including on economic grounds, especially when education is not free,

*Underlining* in this regard the importance of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals contained therein, as well as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development for ensuring the realization of all those Goals, and reaffirming in particular Goal 4, on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, its specific and interlinked targets, and other education-related Goals and targets, and recalling the importance of education for reaching all the Sustainable Development Goals,

*Strongly condemning* the recurring attacks on students, teachers, schools and universities and the military use of educational facilities, as such actions expose students and education personnel to harm and deny large numbers of children and students their right to quality education, and so deprive communities of the foundations on which to build their future,

*Recognizing* the need for States to foster an enabling and secure environment, online and offline, to ensure safe access to education, and recalling the international humanitarian law obligations involving the protection of schools and educational facilities in situations of armed conflict,

*Strongly condemning* the recruitment and use of children in hostilities by non-State armed groups, including terrorist groups, and all violations and abuses committed by States and armed groups, including terrorist groups, against children in all circumstances, including those involving killing, maiming, abduction and rape, and all other forms of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, and noting that such violations and abuses may amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity,

*Recalling* that States should take all feasible measures to implement effective measures for the social, physical and psychological recovery of those children who have been so recruited or used by non-State armed groups, including terrorist groups, and for their reintegration into society, in particular through education, taking into account the particular situation of vulnerability and specific protection needs of children, as well as the rights and specific needs of girls, and recognizing that such measures benefit all children by reducing stigma and promoting an environment where they are stakeholders in their own recovery,

*Acknowledging* that sexual violence in these situations disproportionately affects girls, noting with concern that girl victims of child, early and forced marriage or other sexual exploitation or harmful practices, including girls belonging to ethnic or religious minorities, as well as survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, within armed groups, including terrorist groups, may be vulnerable to ostracization or further human rights violations and abuses, including sexual violence and abuse in their communities, and recognizing in that regard the need to ensure that all social, physical and psychological response and recovery programmes adopt a comprehensive approach to address the root causes of gender inequality and deploy an adequate number of women as part of their personnel to ensure that girls feel secure and comfortable in their access to the support available,

*Recognizing* the State's responsibility to ensure children's protection and care as is necessary for their well-being, taking into account the rights of all members of the family and the duties of parents, legal guardians or other persons legally responsible for children, and to this end to take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures to address all forms of violence against children,

*Recognizing also* that the family has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children, in the best interests of the child, and that children, for the full and harmonious development of their personality, should grow up in a family environment and in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding, in which the rights of all members of the family are recognized,

*Acknowledging* that ensuring a respectful, supportive child-rearing environment free from violence supports the realization of children's individual personalities and fosters the development of social, responsible and actively contributing citizens in the local community and larger society, and recognizing that the protection of the child from violence is a key strategy for reducing and preventing all forms of violence in societies and for promoting freedom, justice and peace in the world,

*Recognizing* that promoting peace and tolerance through education, including human rights education and training, is an objective that should be advanced in all States in cooperation with civil society, including non-governmental organizations, and individuals, and that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the mechanisms of the United Nations human rights system have an important role to play in this regard,

*Believing* that human rights education and training is essential to the effective realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms and contributes significantly to promoting tolerance, non-discrimination, equality, preventing conflict and human rights violations and abuses, and enhancing political freedom, participation and democratic processes with a view to developing societies in which all human beings are valued and respected, without discrimination or distinction of any kind,

*Noting* the global rise in disinformation, misinformation, hate speech and online harassment, which threatens the realization of the right to education, democracy and peace, and recognizing that it is necessary to strengthen efforts to enhance media and information literacy globally,

*Recognizing* the importance of quality education and the roles that parents, legal guardians, schools, civil society, sports associations, youth, women, peacebuilders and, where relevant, the private sector, academia, think tanks, the media, including Internet-based platforms such as social media, and cultural and religious leaders play in promoting tolerance and peaceful coexistence to support peacebuilding efforts and sustaining peace,

*Underlining* the potential contributions of persons belonging to ethnic, religious and confessional communities and religious leaders to conflict prevention, resolution, reconciliation, reconstruction and peacebuilding and to addressing the root causes of conflict, stressing the positive contribution of initiatives promoting tolerance and peaceful coexistence, including through education, and welcoming efforts by religious leaders to promote interreligious dialogue and understanding,

*Believing* that quality education for peace and tolerance for every child should promote peace, justice and human development, ethnic, national and religious tolerance and respect for all religions, religious values, beliefs and cultures, and effectively address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism and that make individuals and groups, in particular children, more vulnerable to the effects of terrorism and to recruitment by terrorists,

1. *Affirms* that human rights and fundamental freedoms must be protected, including the rights of the child;

2. *Urges* States to place greater emphasis on and expand their activities promoting peace and tolerance through quality education for every child, consistent with international human rights law and applicable standards, and to ensure that peace and tolerance are fostered at all levels;

3. *Recognizes* the respective human rights obligations of States, and urges them to ensure that equal rights and appropriate standards of protection are provided to every child, so that every child, regardless of status and without discrimination of any kind, can enjoy a safe and supportive environment, consistent with international law;

4. *Urges* States to support quality education for peace, including by designing and implementing policies whereby education systems promote sustainable development and gender equality, help to prevent all forms of violence and instil the principles of tolerance and respect for others and cultural diversity, non-discrimination, and the freedom of religion or belief;

5. *Calls upon* all States:

(a) To continue to take all appropriate measures to prevent and protect children, including in and out of school, both in person and in digital contexts, from all forms of violence;

(b) To support quality education for peace and to instil the principles of tolerance and respect for others, including by implementing the World Programme for Human Rights Education and by designing and implementing policies whereby education systems promote inter alia human rights, sustainable development and gender equality, help to prevent all forms of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, and instil the principles of tolerance and respect for others and for cultural diversity, and the freedom of religion or belief;

(c) To ensure that children affected by armed conflict and children associated, or allegedly associated, with armed groups or terrorist groups are treated primarily as victims and not perpetrators and have equal access to inclusive and equitable quality education, with the best interests of the child as a primary consideration, and to take measures that are focused on recovery and reintegration, in an environment that fosters the physical and mental health, self-respect and dignity of the child, in accordance with relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, as applicable, in particular the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol thereto on the involvement of children in armed conflict;

(d) To create quality and meaningful child-friendly spaces with a particular emphasis on integrating a gender perspective in order to provide nurturing environments where children have access to mental health and psychosocial support and learning activities, with inclusive safe spaces and learning environments serving as a referral mechanism to other services as appropriate, and to help to restore a sense of normality and continuity;

6. *Urges* States and the international community, and encourages civil society and other relevant stakeholders, to take measures, as appropriate, including through education, such as human rights education and training, awareness-raising initiatives and the media, to promote peace, justice and human development, ethnic, national and religious tolerance and respect for all religions, religious values, beliefs and cultures and to effectively address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism and that make children more vulnerable to the effects of terrorism and to recruitment by terrorists;

7. *Invites* States to take into account relevant recommendations made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and other human rights bodies and mechanisms, on ensuring accessible, inclusive, equitable and quality education for every child, including children affected by armed conflict or associated with armed groups or terrorist groups;

8. *Decides* to convene a panel discussion on accessible, inclusive, equitable and quality education for peace and tolerance for every child, especially children in the most vulnerable situations, at its fifty-seventh session, and requests the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to organize the panel discussion, inviting States, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, the private sector, academia and other relevant stakeholders to address the implementation of the obligations of States under relevant provisions of international human rights law and international humanitarian law and to discuss challenges and best practices in this regard, and to make the panel discussion fully accessible;

9. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to prepare a comprehensive report, in an accessible format, with specific recommendations on how to develop accessible, inclusive, equitable and quality education for peace and tolerance for every child, especially children in the most vulnerable situations, in line with the provisions of the present resolution, and how to incorporate it into educational programmes, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, other relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, relevant special procedures of the Human Rights Council, regional organizations and human rights bodies and civil society, and to present the report to the Council at its fifty-ninth session;

10. *Also requests* the Office of the High Commissioner, when preparing the above-mentioned comprehensive report, to consider the outcome of the panel discussion and to closely cooperate with all relevant stakeholders, including States, international and regional organizations, relevant special procedures of the Human Rights Council, the treaty bodies, other relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes within their respective mandates, national human rights institutions, civil society, the private sector and academia, and to make the comprehensive report available in an accessible and child-friendly format;

11. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*46th meeting  
11 October 2023*

[Adopted without a vote.]

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