



General Assembly

Distr.: General
17 January 2014

Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 27 (d)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 18 December 2013

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/68/448)]

68/132. Literacy for life: shaping future agendas

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution [56/116](#) of 19 December 2001, by which it proclaimed the 10-year period beginning on 1 January 2003 the United Nations Literacy Decade, its resolution [57/166](#) of 18 December 2002, in which it welcomed the International Plan of Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade,¹ and its resolutions [59/149](#) of 20 December 2004, [61/140](#) of 19 December 2006, [63/154](#) of 18 December 2008 and [65/183](#) of 21 December 2010,

Recalling also the United Nations Millennium Declaration,² in which Member States resolved to ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling and that girls and boys will have equal access to all levels of education, which requires a renewed commitment to promote literacy for all,

Reaffirming the Education for All goals, in particular goal 3, on ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes, and goal 4, on achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults,

Convinced that literacy is crucial to the acquisition by every child, young person and adult of the essential life skills that will enable them to address the challenges that they may face in life and represents an essential condition of lifelong learning, which is an indispensable means for effective participation in the knowledge societies and economies of the twenty-first century,

Reaffirming the right of indigenous peoples to have non-discriminatory access to all levels and forms of education provided by States, and recognizing the importance of effective measures to promote access for indigenous individuals, in

¹ See [A/57/218](#) and Corr.1.

² Resolution 55/2.



particular children, to education in their own language, when possible, as addressed in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,³

Noting with deep concern that, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 774 million adults do not have basic literacy skills and 57 million children of primary school age remain out of school, that millions more young people leave school without a level of literacy adequate for productive and active participation in their societies, that the issue of literacy may not be sufficiently high on national agendas to generate the kind of political and economic support required to address global literacy challenges and that the world is unlikely to meet those challenges if present trends continue,

Affirming that the realization of the right to education, especially for girls, contributes to the promotion of human rights, gender equality and the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing the importance of continuing to implement national programmes and measures to eliminate illiteracy worldwide as reflected in the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All, adopted on 28 April 2000 at the World Education Forum,⁴ and in the Millennium Development Goals, and in this regard also recognizing the important contribution of South-South and triangular cooperation through, inter alia, innovative pedagogical methods in literacy,

Deeply concerned about the persistence of the gender gap in education, which is reflected by the fact that, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, nearly two thirds of the world's non-literate adults are women,

Concerned that, according to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization estimates, one third of the children not attending school are children with disabilities and that the literacy rate among adults with disabilities is as low as 3 per cent in some countries,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on the final evaluation of the implementation of the International Plan of Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade;⁵

2. *Commends* the efforts made by Member States, their development partners, the international donor community, the private sector, civil society and the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, including the lead organization for the Decade, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in making progress on the goals of the Decade;

3. *Recognizes* the importance of continuing to implement national programmes and measures to eliminate illiteracy worldwide, enhancing further political and financial commitments, in particular for youth and adult literacy and non-formal education, intensifying collective efforts through enhanced education systems and interventions, and building a robust knowledge and technical base through improved literacy monitoring, assessment and research;

³ Resolution 61/295, annex.

⁴ See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Final Report of the World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal, 26–28 April 2000* (Paris, 2000).

⁵ See A/68/201.

4. *Calls upon* all Governments to develop reliable measures of literacy and generate data that are comparable across time and disaggregated by age, sex, disability, socioeconomic status and other relevant factors;
5. *Encourages* Member States, their development partners and the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, as appropriate, to sustain and expand the gains achieved during the Decade through additional technical and financial support and to promote literacy and literate environments through multi-pronged approaches, with a focus on marginalized groups or those in vulnerable situations, in particular girls and women, people living in rural areas and persons with disabilities, including by utilizing innovative information and communications technology solutions, bearing in mind that the target date of 2015 for the achievement of the Education for All goals and the Millennium Development Goals is approaching;
6. *Requests* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to reinforce its coordinating and catalysing role in the fight against illiteracy, and encourages its Director-General to continue the process of elaborating a literacy vision and agenda for the period subsequent to the United Nations Literacy Decade, in consultation with Member States and development partners, in order to ensure a successful global multi-stakeholder partnership;
7. *Recognizes* the need to give appropriate consideration to the issue of literacy in the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda;
8. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution;
9. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-ninth session, under the item entitled “Social development”, a sub-item entitled “Literacy for life: shaping future agendas”.

*70th plenary meeting
18 December 2013*