



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

140th IPU Assembly

Doha (Qatar), 6 – 10 April 2019



Doha Declaration

Parliaments as platforms to enhance education for peace, security and the rule of law

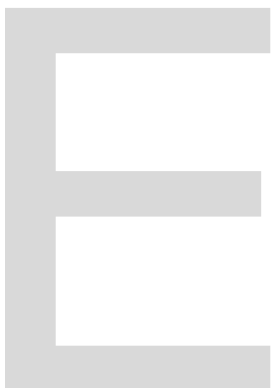
*Endorsed by the 140th IPU Assembly
(Doha, 10 April 2019)*

We, Members of Parliament from 160 countries and over two dozen regional parliamentary organizations, meeting in Doha, Qatar, at the 140th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, recognize the importance of education as a platform for enhancing peace, security and the rule of law.

Peace, security and the rule of law are enduring objectives of the international community. They are the preconditions for people to pursue happy and meaningful lives and maximize their socioeconomic potential as individuals, as family and community members, and as engaged citizens. Despite persistent efforts to develop robust national and international institutions and mechanisms that enable the non-violent settlement of disputes and disagreements, many forms of conflict continue to plague almost all our societies. Unilateral measures taken by States against other States without authorization of the international community can also have a negative impact on security, stability and people's livelihoods. We appreciate that sustaining peace, providing security and ensuring the rule of law remain goals that require our undivided attention.

Different forms of violence characterize the 21st century. Military interventions, terrorism, transnational organized crime, cyberattacks, civil wars, armed insurgencies and gang violence all seem to indicate a world of ever-greater danger and insecurity. Contrary to popular belief, however, most lethal violence does not occur in conflict zones. According to the Small Arms Survey's *Global Violent Deaths 2017*, at least 560,000 people died violently in 2016, but only about 99,000 (18%) were killed in war zones. Such statistics highlight that we need to rethink the way we conceive of peace, security and the rule of law internationally.

Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development reminds us of the link between **education** and **peace**. Moreover, education is recognized as a fundamental human right. It reinforces the idea that education is about more than turning individuals into active agents of the productive system: it also creates a sense of citizenship and community belonging. Education is about helping people to understand the world, participate in public life, and ultimately guarantee social cohesion based on common values. Education is also the common denominator that helps level the field for women and men, rural and urban dwellers, and that ensures equal opportunities for all in society.



#IPU140

As Parliamentarians, we are committed to supporting mechanisms and financing measures that work towards promoting education as a platform for enhancing peace, security and the rule of law, in line with the SDGs, and in particular SDG 4. This support includes:

Enabling equitable access to education for all. We recognize that access to education is limited by significant social barriers and are therefore committed to:

- Adopting national legislation that guarantees education as a universal right delivered through accessible and inclusive public and private services, in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other relevant international instruments;
- Encouraging the adoption of legislative measures to achieve the full realization of the right to education, individually and through international assistance and cooperation;
- Ensuring that by 2030, all children and adolescents complete a full cycle of early childhood development, primary and secondary education, in line with [SDG 4, target 4.1](#);
- Putting in place educational facilities, with adequate funding at all levels (pre-primary, primary, secondary and post-secondary) to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged children, young people, adults, migrants, refugees and internally displaced communities;
- Making vocational and higher education more accessible, including by expanding the number of scholarships and affordable loans available to individuals, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- Building and upgrading education facilities that are child-, disability- and gender-responsive, and that provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all;
- Eliminating gender disparities in education and ensuring equal access to all levels of education for women, girls, men, boys and vulnerable sectors of the population, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, internally displaced persons, refugees, economic migrants and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, including by addressing the root causes of their underrepresentation in education, such as stigma, discrimination, violence and lack of resources or adequate infrastructure;
- Ensuring that education is also made available to prisoners to facilitate their reintegration into society.

Facilitating access and providing quality education. As lawmakers, we have the means to create a legal framework and a regulatory environment that not only guarantees equitable access to education, but also ensures quality education for all. Everyone residing on a particular State's territory must be provided with quality education. This is essential for fostering greater respect for democratic values,¹ for sustaining democracy,² and for ensuring the equal participation of women and men in political life and their well-being.³ Therefore, we are committed to:

- Promoting, in line with [SDG 4, target 1](#), governmental policies and regulations guaranteeing free, equitable and quality education for all (women and girls, men and boys);
- Ensuring that education is integrated into a comprehensive national development plan;
- Expanding adult learning and education opportunities as part of an approach to lifelong learning, especially among those who have been denied access to education in the past;
- Increasing the availability of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation, especially among vulnerable or disadvantaged communities;
- Promoting the development of teaching curricula that foster social inclusion, tolerance, gender equality and a culture of peace and mutual understanding;

¹ Resolution on *The implementation of educational and cultural policies designed to foster greater respect for democratic values*, 89th Inter-Parliamentary Conference, New Delhi, 17 April 1993, <http://archive.ipu.org/conf-e/89-2.htm>.

² *Universal Declaration on Democracy*, 98th Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Cairo, 16 September 1997, <http://archive.ipu.org/cnl-e/161-dem.htm>.

³ Resolution on *Education and culture as essential factors in promoting the participation of men and women in political life and as prerequisites for the development of peoples*, 105th Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Havana, 6 April 2001, <http://archive.ipu.org/conf-e/105-2.html>.

- Promoting governmental policies and regulations which ensure that people on the move are included in national education systems, including systems for recognition of prior learning achievements and qualifications.

Promoting productive civic engagement through global citizenship education (GCED). This creates a sense of belonging to the global community, with its members experiencing solidarity and collective identity at the local, national and global levels. In this regard, we are committed to:

- Ensuring, in line with [SDG 4, target 7](#), that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development and productive civic engagement;
- Offering extracurricular activities that provide opportunities for young people to get involved in politics through their schools and communities, and at the national level, including by encouraging those below the voting age to participate in student governments and youth parliaments;
- Designing and implementing programmes that provide children, youth, adults and those from marginalized and disadvantaged groups with the opportunity to obtain instruction—in the classroom and through community service—on civic engagement, human rights, gender equality, government, history, law and economics in ways that promote critical thinking and social responsibility, and inhibit the teaching of hate or discrimination of any kind;
- Supporting education that promotes the goals of transitional justice in post-conflict societies and is sensitive to the legacies of the past in a way that prevents atrocities from happening again;
- Encouraging national consultations and awareness-raising campaigns with our constituencies to promote global citizenship, and intercultural and interfaith dialogue and respect;
- Promoting inter-parliamentary cooperation that supports global citizenship education programmes, including through student and youth union exchange and cooperation initiatives.

Supporting non-formal education (NFE). This provides an alternative avenue for lifelong learning and skills development by offering educational opportunities to all. Our commitments include:

- Ensuring, in line with [SDG 4, target 3](#), equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including at university level;
- Expanding the number of scholarships available to individuals, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, for enrolment in vocational training, and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes;
- Eliminating gender disparities and facilitating equal access to vocational training for women, girls, men, boys and vulnerable sectors of the population;
- Building and upgrading non-formal education facilities that are child-, disability- and gender-responsive, and that provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments;
- Increasing the supply of qualified vocational training professionals, including through international cooperation, especially in vulnerable or disadvantaged communities;
- Establishing, in consultation with civil society stakeholders, a coherent system of accreditation and quality monitoring for non-formal education.

Protecting education systems in situations of conflict or insecurity. According to the 2018 report *Education under Attack* by the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, there were more than 12,700 attacks on schools between 2013 and 2017, harming more than 21,000 students and educators in at least 70 countries. Acknowledging the importance and urgency of this situation, we are committed to:

- Urging governments to endorse the *Safe Schools Declaration* which gives States the opportunity to express broad political support for the protection and continuation of education in armed conflict;
- Ensuring that national legal frameworks for the protection of education facilities (schools, universities, institutes, etc.) in situations of conflict or insecurity address education-related violations;
- Providing sustainable funding for international programmes, led by organizations such as UNRWA, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNESCO, that ensure that refugee children have access to quality education;

- Raising awareness of education-related violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) by including IHL principles and the *Safe Schools Declaration* in the education of children and adults, and by emphasizing the protection of education in the training of national armed forces and associated state and non-state actors;
- Developing a comprehensive policy for protecting schools in situations of conflict or insecurity, and engaging all concerned governmental institutions, state security providers, educational and civil society organizations, at all levels, to develop and implement this policy;
- Ensuring that state security forces and non-traditional armed actors do not place checkpoints and military facilities close to schools and educational facilities;
- Engaging in dialogue with state security forces and other armed actors so that they do not use schools and educational facilities for military purposes, including the storage, possession and use of weapons in those facilities;
- Developing and implementing measures to ensure safe transportation and passage of students and educational personnel on routes leading to and from formal and non-formal educational facilities, and to ensure the physical protection of the educational premises themselves, including by using technology that could include early warning systems;
- During times of armed conflict or insecurity and where access to education facilities is limited, planning for and providing adequate resources to ensure the alternative delivery of education where appropriate and available (for example, community-based schools or distance-learning); this would help ensure continuity of and access to education during times of armed conflict or insecurity;
- Encouraging collaboration with and support from community organizations and local committees to develop school-based protection measures, including through educational protection committees.

In adopting this Declaration, we acknowledge that, to varying degrees, all of our societies are having to tackle manifestations of intolerance, marginalization and exclusion. As noted by the United Nations Secretary-General, in order to achieve peace "*we must teach our children love before others teach them hate*". As lawmakers, we recognize that the provision of accessible and quality education for all is a crucial component in this regard. Not only does education provide individuals with tangible skills that enable productive employment, but it also develops life skills that foster civic engagement and reduce the probability that people will resort to violence to resolve conflict. In a constantly changing world, we need to exercise our legislative, oversight and budgetary prerogatives to make sure that education is adaptive and well placed to meet the challenges that our societies face.