

## Global Education Ministers Conference on Addressing Hate Speech through Education

26 October 2021

### Conclusions by the Conference Chairs

1. On 26 October 2021, the international community, including Heads of State and Ministers of Education, came together for the virtual *Global Education Ministers Conference on Addressing Hate Speech through Education* organized by UNESCO and the United Nations Office on the Prevention of Genocide. The meeting, that was convened by the Secretary General, welcomed the conclusions of the *Multi-stakeholder Forum on Addressing Hate Speech through Education*, held on 30 September and 1 October 2021.
2. We, the Chairs, remain concerned by the alarming rise in hate speech directed at people and specific target groups across the world, menacing human rights and social stability, exacerbating conflict and tensions, contributing to serious human rights violations, including atrocity crimes, and threatening the achievement of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. We also recognize that, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, hateful content, dis/misinformation and conspiracy theories have swept across the globe, aggravating pre-existing biases, harmful stereotypes, intolerance and discrimination. Addressing and countering hate speech effectively requires a holistic approach which looks at tackling both its root causes and impact.
3. In accordance with the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech, which places specific emphasis on the role of education to address hate speech, the participants acknowledge the transformative power of education as a fundamental tool to address the root causes and drivers of hate speech, and to promote peaceful, inclusive and just societies for all, in line with the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.
4. In accordance with the Conference's deliberations, and taking into account local contexts, capacities and available resources, we, the Chairs, recommend that education authorities prioritize:
  - 4.1 Implementing specific educational interventions aimed at explicitly addressing hate speech at all levels of education, with a lifelong learning perspective.** Embedded in the frameworks of global citizenship and human rights education, these educational responses must promote, protect and uphold international human rights norms and standards and pursue the social, moral and humanistic purposes of education, which are at the core of the Education 2030 Agenda. This includes providing learners with the necessary skills and competencies to think critically, take an intersectional approach to discrimination, and challenge hateful narratives and those who promote them, including through intercultural and interreligious dialogue.

**4.2 Designing and implementing policies that develop digital citizenship skills**, with proper attention to social and emotional learning, which enable learners to find, access, use, create and freely exchange information, while navigating the online environment safely and responsibly. In this respect, it is important to place special emphasis on media and information literacy, with a view to strengthening the resilience of learners and their capacity to recognize and counter disinformation, violent extremist views, and conspiracy theories aiming to install hatred towards specific people and groups.

**4.3 Providing adequate professional development and training** for teachers and school leaders at all levels of education, through an approach that combats discrimination in all its forms and acknowledges and addresses biases and stereotypes. This entails developing capacities to carry out gender and age-responsive interventions for victims of hate speech or for those disseminating and/or are at risk of disseminating hateful and dangerous contents, online and offline.

**4.4 Addressing hate speech through cross-curricula interventions** and through encouraging pedagogies and approaches that foster diversity and multiple perspectives as well as developing extra-curricular activities. This entails addressing the root causes of intolerance and discrimination, increasing the understanding of intersectionality, and underscoring the relations between hate speech, discrimination, violence and atrocity crimes. Furthermore, hateful, discriminatory and exclusionary narratives should be removed from curricula, textbooks and all educational resources.

**4.5 Enhancing multi-sectoral cooperation by building partnerships with all relevant stakeholders through a whole-of-society approach** to addressing and countering hate speech through education. This includes engaging representatives of people and groups targeted by hate speech, but also ministries and relevant public authorities, civil society, including human rights defenders in all their diversity, community-based organizations, mental health and social service providers, academic institutions, new and traditional media and internet companies, judicial stakeholders, sport entities, religious and community leaders and faith-based and cultural organizations, youth, as well as inter-governmental organizations.

5. As a way forward, we, the Chairs, commit to the principles and policy priorities set forth in these conclusions and encourage you, Ministers of Education, to take the lead in taking forward and implementing these recommendations at the national and regional level. This entails the development of contextualized national and regional roadmaps for effective implementation, through an inclusive and participatory consultative process with governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, with particular attention to meaningful participation of people and groups who are marginalized, vulnerable and/or targeted by hate speech, as well as women and youth.



UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON  
GENOCIDE PREVENTION AND THE  
RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT

We are, therefore, inviting

- UNESCO, as the lead United Nations agency for Education, Communication and Information
- the United Nations Office on the Prevention of Genocide, as the lead United Nations entity for the prevention of atrocity crimes and UN system wide focal point on hate speech and the implementation of the UN Strategy and Plan of Action on hate speech as well as
- the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as the lead UN entity on human rights, **and**
- the UN Department of Global Communications, as the lead UN entity on communication

to support and monitor the implementation of these recommendations in cooperation with Member States and all relevant stakeholders.