



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Declaration and  
Integrated  
Framework  
of Action on



Education for Peace,  
Human Rights  
and Democracy



1995





**Declaration**  
of the 44th session  
of the International  
Conference on Education  
(Geneva, October 1994)



endorsed  
by the General Conference  
of UNESCO  
at its twenty-eight session  
**Paris, November 1995**



# 1. We, the Ministers of Education meeting at the 44th session of the International Conference on Education,

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**Deeply** concerned by the manifestations of violence, racism, xenophobia, aggressive nationalism and violations of human rights, by religious intolerance, by the upsurge of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and by the growing gap separating wealthy countries from poor countries, phenomena which threaten the consolidation of peace and democracy both nationally and internationally and which are all obstacles to development,

**Mindful** of our responsibility for the education of citizens committed to the promotion of peace, human rights and democracy in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, the Constitution of UNESCO, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the conventions on the rights of women, and in accordance with the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,

**Convinced** that education policies have to contribute to the development of understanding, solidarity and tolerance among individuals and among ethnic, social, cultural and religious groups and sovereign nations,

**Convinced** that education should promote knowledge, values, attitudes and skills conducive to respect for human rights and to an active commitment to the defence of such rights and to the building of a culture of peace and democracy,

## **Equally convinced :**

- of the great responsibility incumbent not only on parents, but on society as a whole, to work together with all those involved in the education system, and with non-governmental organizations, so as to achieve full implementation of the objectives of education for peace, human rights and democracy and to contribute in this way to sustainable development and to a culture of peace;
- of the need to seek synergies between the formal education system and the various sectors of non-formal education, which are helping to make a reality of education that is in conformity with the aims of the World Declaration on Education for All, adopted in Jomtien;
- of the decisive role that also falls to non-formal educational organizations in the process of forming the personalities of young people.

## 2.

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### Strive resolutely :

- 2.1 • to base education on principles and methods that contribute to the development of the personality of pupils, students and adults who are respectful of their fellow human beings and determined to promote peace, human rights and democracy;
- 2.2 • to take suitable steps to establish in educational institutions an atmosphere contributing to the success of education for international understanding, so that they become ideal places for the exercise of tolerance, respect for human rights, the practice of democracy and learning about the diversity and wealth of cultural identities;
- 2.3 • to take action to eliminate all direct and indirect discrimination against girls and women in education systems and to take specific measures to ensure that they achieve their full potential;
- 2.4 • to pay special attention to improving curricula, the content of textbooks, and other educational materials including new technologies, with a view to educating caring and responsible citizens, open to other cultures, able to appreciate the value of freedom, respectful of human dignity and differences, and able to prevent conflicts or resolve them by non-violent means;
- 2.5 • to adopt measures to enhance the role and status of educators in formal and non-formal education and to give priority to pre-service and in-service training as well as the retraining of educational personnel, including planners and managers, oriented notably towards professional ethics, civic and moral education, cultural diversity, national codes and internationally recognized standards of human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- 2.6 • to encourage the development of innovative strategies adapted to the new challenges of educating responsible citizens committed to peace, human rights, democracy and sustainable development, and to apply appropriate measures of evaluation and assessment of these strategies;
- 2.7 • to prepare, as quickly as possible and taking into account the constitutional structures of each State, programmes of action for the implementation of this Declaration.

## 3.

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### We are determined to increase our efforts to :

- 3.1 • give a major priority in education to children and young people, who are particularly vulnerable to incitements to intolerance, racism and xenophobia;
- 3.2 • seek the co-operation of all possible partners who would be able to help teachers to link the education process more closely to real social life and transform it into the practice of tolerance and solidarity, respect for human rights, democracy and peace;

- 3.3 • develop further, at the national and international levels, exchanges of educational experiences and research, direct contacts between students, teachers and researchers, school twinning arrangements and visits, with special attention to experimental schools such as UNESCO Associated Schools, to UNESCO Chairs, educational innovation networks and UNESCO Clubs and Associations;
- 3.4 • implement the Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, June 1993) and the World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy adopted at the International Congress on Education for Human Rights and Democracy (Montreal, March 1993), and make the internationally recognized instruments in the field of human rights available to all educational establishments;
- 3.5 • contribute, through specific activities, to the celebration of the United Nations Year for Tolerance (1995), and particularly to the inauguration, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and UNESCO, of the celebration of the International Day for Tolerance.

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**Consequently,** we, the Ministers of Education meeting at the 44th session of the International Conference on Education, adopt this Declaration and invite the Director-General to present to the General Conference a Framework of Action that allows Member States and UNESCO to integrate, within a coherent policy, education for peace, human rights and democracy in the perspective of sustainable development.



# Integrated Framework

of Action  
on Education for Peace,  
Human Rights  
and Democracy



approved  
by the General Conference  
of UNESCO  
at its twenty-eight session

**Paris, November 1995**



This Integrated Framework of Action was prepared in accordance with resolution 5.7 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-seventh session, which invites the Director-General 'to finalize the integrated action plan on education for peace, human rights and democracy, taking into account all existing action plans in the field of international education ... and to submit the integrated action plan for consideration by the International Conference on Education in 1994 and for approval by the General Conference at its twenty-eighth session, taking due account of any comments and recommendations made by the 1994 International Conference on Education'. The Framework offers a contemporary view of the problems relating to education for peace, human rights and democracy. It sets out objectives for such education, action strategies and policies and lines of action at the institutional, national and international levels.

# I

## Introduction

- 1 • This Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy is intended to give effect to the Declaration adopted at the 44th session of the International Conference on Education. It suggests basic guidelines which could be translated into strategies, policies and plans of action at the institutional and national levels according to the conditions of different communities.
- 2 • In a period of transition and accelerated change marked by the expression of intolerance, manifestations of racial and ethnic hatred, the upsurge of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, discrimination, war and violence towards those regarded as “other” and the growing disparities between rich and poor, at international and national levels alike, action strategies must aim both at ensuring fundamental freedoms, peace, human rights, and democracy and at promoting sustainable and equitable economic and social development all of which have an essential part to play in building a culture of peace. This calls for a transformation of the traditional styles of educational action.
- 3 • The international community has recently expressed its firm resolve to provide itself with instruments adapted to the current challenges in the world in order to act in a concerted and effective way. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action for Human Rights adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, June 1993), the World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy adopted by the International Congress on Education for Human Rights and Democracy (Montreal, March 1993), and the Associated Schools Project Strategy and Plan of Action 1994-2000 are, in this respect, attempts to respond to the challenge of promoting peace, human rights, democracy and development.
- 4 • Taking inspiration from the Recommendation on Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, this Framework of Action seeks to suggest to Member States and international governmental and non-governmental organizations an up-to-date and integrated view of problems and strategies concerning education for peace, human rights and democracy. It was drawn up at the request of the General Conference at its twenty-seventh session, taking into account existing action plans, and its purpose is to enhance their practical relevance and effectiveness. The idea then is to draw on accumulated experience in order to chart new directions for the education of citizens in every country. The Framework of Action accordingly identifies principles and objectives of action and formulates proposals for the consideration of policy-makers within each State and for co-operation between countries on the basis of the commitments contained in the Declaration, to which it is closely linked. It also attempts to bring together into a coherent whole the

various measures aimed at defining study topics, realigning education at all levels, rethinking methods and reviewing teaching materials in use, stimulating research, developing teacher training and helping to make the education system more open to society by means of active partnership.

- 5 • All human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. The strategies of action for their implementation must take specific historic, religious and cultural considerations into account.

## II.

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### Aims of education for peace, human rights and democracy

- 6 • The ultimate goal of education for peace, human rights and democracy is the development in every individual of a sense of universal values and types of behaviour on which a culture of peace is predicated. It is possible to identify even in different socio-cultural contexts values that are likely to be universally recognized.
- 7 • Education must develop the ability to value freedom and the skills to meet its challenges. This means preparing citizens to cope with difficult and uncertain situations and fitting them for personal autonomy and responsibility. Awareness of personal responsibility must be linked to recognition of the value of civic commitment, of joining together with others to solve problems and to work for a just, peaceful and democratic community.
- 8 • Education must develop the ability to recognize and accept the values which exist in the diversity of individuals, genders, peoples and cultures and develop the ability to communicate, share and co-operate with others. The citizens of a pluralist society and multicultural world should be able to accept that their interpretation of situations and problems is rooted in their personal lives, in the history of their society and in their cultural traditions; that, consequently, no individual or group holds the only answer to problems; and that for each problem there may be more than one solution. Therefore, people should understand and respect each other and negotiate on an equal footing, with a view to seeking common ground. Thus education must reinforce personal identity and should encourage the convergence of ideas and solutions which strengthen peace, friendship and solidarity between individuals and people.
- 9 • Education must develop the ability of non-violent conflict-resolution. It should therefore promote also the development of inner peace in the minds of students so that they can establish more firmly the qualities of tolerance, compassion, sharing and caring.
- 10 • Education must cultivate in citizens the ability to make informed choices, basing their judgements and actions not only on the analysis of present situations but also on the vision of a preferred future.
- 11 • Education must teach citizens to respect the cultural heritage, protect the environment, and adopt methods of production and patterns of consumption which lead to sustainable development. Harmony between individual and collective values and between immediate basic needs and long-term interests is also necessary.
- 12 • Education should cultivate feelings of solidarity and equity at the national and international levels in the perspective of a balanced and long-term development.



### III.

#### Strategies

- 13 • In order to achieve these aims, the strategies and forms of action of education systems will clearly need to be modified, as necessary, in respect both of teaching and of administration. Furthermore, providing basic education for all, and promoting the rights of women as an integral and indivisible part of universal human rights, are fundamental in education for peace, human rights and democracy.
- 14 • Strategies relating to education for peace, human rights and democracy must:
  - a - be comprehensive and holistic, which means addressing a very broad range of factors some of which are described in more detail below;
  - b - be applicable to all types, levels and forms of education;
  - c - involve all educational partners and various agents of socialization, including NGOs and community organizations;
  - d - be implemented locally, nationally, regionally and worldwide;
  - e - entail modes of management and administration, co-ordination and assessment that give greater autonomy to educational establishments so that they can work out specific forms of action and linkage with the local community, encourage the development of innovations and foster active and democratic participation by all those concerned in the life of the establishment;
  - f - be suited to the age and psychology of the target group and taken account of the evolution of the learning capacity of each individual;
  - g - be applied on a continuous and consistent basis. Results and obstacles have to be assessed, in order to ensure that strategies can be continuously adapted to changing circumstances;
  - h - include proper resources for the above aims, for education as a whole and especially for marginalized and disadvantaged groups.
- 15 • The degree of change required, priorities for action and the sequence of actions should be determined at all decision-making levels taking into account different historical backgrounds, cultural traditions and development levels of regions and countries, and even within countries.

### IV.

#### Policies and lines of action

- 16 • The incorporation into curricula at all levels of education, formal and non-formal, of lessons on peace, human rights and democracy is of crucial importance.

##### Content of education

- 17 • To strengthen the formation of values and abilities such as solidarity, creativity, civic responsibility, the ability to resolve conflicts by non-violent means, and critical acumen, it is necessary to introduce into curricula, at all levels, true education for citizenship which includes an international dimension. Teaching should particularly concern the conditions for the construction of peace; the various forms of conflict, their causes and effects; the ethical, religious and philosophical bases of human rights, their historical sources, the way they have developed and how they have been translated into national and international standards, such as in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of

All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the bases of democracy and its various institutional models; the problem of racism and the history of the fight against sexism and all the other forms of discrimination and exclusion. Particular attention should be devoted to culture, the problem of development and the history of every people, as well as to the role of the United Nations and international institutions. There must be education for peace, human rights and democracy. It cannot, however, be restricted to specialized subjects and knowledge. The whole of education must transmit this message and the atmosphere of the institution must be in harmony with the application of democratic standards. Likewise, curriculum reform should emphasize knowledge, understanding and respect for the culture of others at the national and global level and should link the global interdependence of problems to local action. In view of religious and cultural differences, every country may decide which approach to ethical education best suits its cultural context.

#### **Teaching materials and resources**

- 18** • All people engaged in educational action must have adequate teaching materials and resources at their disposal. In this connection, it is necessary to make the necessary revisions to textbooks to get rid of negative stereotypes and distorted views of “the other”. International co-operation in producing textbooks could be encouraged. Whenever new teaching materials, textbooks and the like are to be produced, they should be designed with due consideration of new situations. The textbooks should offer different perspectives on a given subject and make transparent the national or cultural background against which they are written. Their content should be based on scientific findings. It would be desirable for the documents of UNESCO and other United Nations institutions to be widely distributed and used in educational establishments, especially in countries where the production of teaching materials is proving slow owing to economic difficulties. Distance education technologies and all modern communication tools must be placed at the service of education for peace, human rights and democracy.

#### **Programmes for reading, expression and the promotion of foreign languages**

- 19** • It is essential for the development of education for peace, human rights and democracy that reading, and verbal and written expression programmes, should be considerably strengthened. A comprehensive grasp of reading, writing and the spoken word enables citizens to gain access to information, to understand clearly the situation in which they are living, to express their needs, and to take part in activities in the social environment. In the same way, learning foreign languages offers a means of gaining a deeper understanding of other cultures, which can serve as a basis for building better understanding between communities and between nations. UNESCO’s LINGUAPAX project could serve as an example in that respect.

#### **Educational establishments**

- 20** • Proposals for educational change find their natural place in schools and classrooms. Teaching and learning methods, forms of action and institutional policy lines have to make peace, human rights and democracy both a matter of daily practice and something that is learned. With regard to methods, the use of active methods, group work, the discussion of moral issues and personalized teaching should be encouraged. As for institutional policy lines, efficient forms of management and participation must promote the implementation of democratic school management, involving teachers, pupils, parents and the local community as a whole.
- 21** • Direct contacts and regular exchanges should be promoted between pupils, students, teachers and other educators in different countries or cultural

environments, and visits should be organized to establishments where successful experiments and innovations have been carried out, particularly between neighbouring countries. Joint projects should be implemented between establishments and institutions from different countries, with a view to solving common problems. International networks of pupils, students and researchers working towards the same objectives should also be set up. Such networks should, as a matter of priority, ensure that schools in particularly difficult situations due to extreme poverty or insecurity should take part in them. With this in mind, it is essential to strengthen and develop the UNESCO Associated Schools System. All these activities, within the limits of available resources, should be introduced as an integral component of teaching programmes.

- 22** • The reduction of failure must be a priority. Therefore, education should be adapted to the individual student's potential. The development of self-esteem, as well as strengthening the will to succeed in learning, are also basic necessities for achieving a higher degree of social integration. Greater autonomy for schools implies greater responsibility on the part of teachers and the community for the results of education. However, the different development levels of education systems should determine the degree of autonomy in order to avoid a possible weakening of educational content.

#### **Teacher training**

- 23** • The training of personnel at all levels of the education system - teachers, planners, managers, teacher educators - has to include education for peace, human rights and democracy. This pre-service and in-service training and retraining should introduce and apply in situ methodologies, observing experiments and evaluating their results. In order to perform their tasks successfully, schools, institutions of teacher education and those in charge of non-formal education programmes should seek the assistance of people with experience in the fields of peace, human rights and democracy (politicians, jurists, sociologists and psychologists) and of the NGOs specialized in human rights. Similarly, pedagogy and the actual practice of exchanges should form part of the training courses of all educators.
- 24** • Teacher education activities must fit into an overall policy to upgrade the teaching profession. International experts, professional bodies and teachers' unions should be associated with the preparation and implementation of action strategies because they have an important role to play in the promotion of a culture of peace among teachers themselves.

#### **Action on behalf of vulnerable groups**

- 25** • Specific strategies for the education of vulnerable groups and those recently exposed to conflict or in a situation of open conflict are required as a matter of urgency, giving particular attention to children at risk and to girls and women subjected to sexual abuse and other forms of violence. Possible practical measures could include, for example, the organization outside the conflict zone of specialized forums and workshops for educators, family members and mass media professionals belonging to the conflicting groups and an intensive training activity for educators in post-conflict situations. Such measures should be undertaken in co-operation with governments whenever possible.
- 26** • The organization of education programmes for abandoned children, street children, refugee and displaced children and economically and sexually exploited children are a matter of urgency.
- 27** • It is equally urgent to organize special youth programmes, laying emphasis on participation by children and young people in solidarity actions and environmental protection.

- 28 • In addition, efforts should be made to address the special needs of people with learning difficulties by providing them with relevant education in a non-exclusionary and integrated educational setting.
- 29 • Furthermore, in order to create understanding between different groups in society, there must be respect for the educational rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, as well as indigenous people, and this must also have implications in the curricula and methods as well as in the way education is organized.

#### **Research and development**

- 30 • New problems require new solutions. It is essential to work out strategies for making better use of research findings, to develop new teaching methods and approaches and to improve co-ordination in choosing research themes between research institutes in the social sciences and education in order to address in a more relevant and effective way the complex nature of education for peace, human rights and democracy. The effectiveness of educational management should be enhanced by research on decision-making by all those involved in the educational process (government, teachers, parents, etc.). Research should also be focused on finding new ways of changing public attitudes towards human rights, in particular towards women, and environmental issues. The impact of educational programmes may be better assessed by developing a system of indicators of results, setting up data banks on innovative experiments, and strengthening systems for disseminating and sharing information and research findings, nationally and internationally.

#### **Higher education**

- 31 • Higher education institutions can contribute in many ways to education for peace, human rights and democracy. In this connection, the introduction into the curricula of knowledge, values and skills relating to peace, human rights, justice, the practice of democracy, professional ethics, civic commitment and social responsibility should be envisaged. Educational institutions at this level should also ensure that students appreciate the interdependence of States in an increasingly global society.

#### **Co-ordination between the education sector and other agents of socialization**

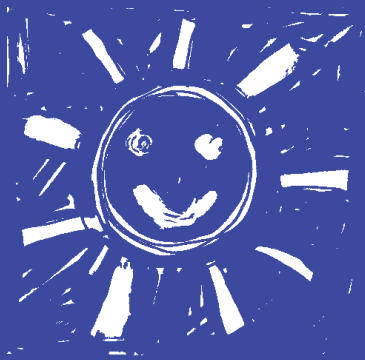
- 32 • The education of citizens cannot be the exclusive responsibility of the education sector. If it is to be able to do its job effectively in this field, the education sector should closely cooperate, in particular, with the family, the media, including traditional channels of communication, the world of work and NGOs.
- 33 • Concerning co-ordination between school and family, measures should be taken to encourage the participation of parents in school activities. Furthermore, education programmes for adults and the community in general in order to strengthen the school's work are essential.
- 34 • The influence of the media in the socialization of children and young people is increasingly being acknowledged. It is, therefore, essential to train teachers and prepare students for the critical analysis and use of the media, and to develop their competence to profit from the media by a selective choice of programmes. On the other hand, the media should be urged to promote the values of peace, respect for human rights, democracy and tolerance, in particular by avoiding programmes and other products that incite hatred, violence, cruelty and disrespect for human dignity.

### **Non-formal education of young people and adults**

- 35** • Young people who spend a lot of time outside school and who often do not have access to the formal education system, or to vocational training or a job, as well as young people doing their military service, are a very important target group of education programmes for peace, human rights and democracy. While seeking improved access to formal education and vocational training it is therefore essential for them to be able to receive non-formal education adapted to their needs, which would prepare them to assume their role as citizens in a responsible and effective way. In addition, education for peace, human rights and respect for the law has to be provided for young people in prisons, reformatories or treatment centres.
- 36** • Adult education programmes - in which NGOs have an important role to play - should make everyone aware of the link between local living conditions and world problems. Basic education programmes should attach particular importance to subject-matter relating to peace, human rights and democracy. All culturally suitable media such as folklore, popular theatre, community discussion groups and radio should be used in mass education.

### **Regional and international co-operation**

- 37** • The promotion of peace and democracy will require regional co-operation, international solidarity and the strengthening of co-operation between international and governmental bodies, non-governmental organizations, the scientific community, business circles, industry and the media. This solidarity and co-operation must help the developing countries to cater for their needs for promoting education for peace, human rights and democracy.
- 38** • UNESCO should place its institutional capability, and in particular its regional and international innovation networks, at the service of the efforts to give effect to this Framework of Action. The Associated Schools Project, the UNESCO Clubs and Associations, the UNESCO Chairs, the major education projects for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Arab States and Europe, the follow-up bodies of the Jomtien World Conference, and in particular the regional and international conferences of ministers of education should make specific contributions. In these efforts, especially at national level, the active participation of National Commissions for UNESCO should be a strategic asset in enhancing the effectiveness of the actions proposed.
- 39** • UNESCO should introduce questions relating to the application of this Framework of Action at meetings to be held at the highest level regionally and internationally, develop programmes for the training of educational personnel, strengthen or develop networks of institutions, and carry out comparative research on teaching programmes, methods and materials. In accordance with the commitments set forth in the Declaration on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, the programmes should be evaluated on a regular basis.
- 40** • In this context, UNESCO, in line with the United Nations actions such as “Agenda for Peace”, “Agenda for Development”, “Agenda 21”, “Social Summit” and “the Fourth World Conference on Women”, should launch initiatives to implement this operation with other institutions in the United Nations system and other regional and international organizations, so as to establish a global plan of activities and set priorities for joint, co-ordinated action. This could include a UNESCO-managed fund for international co-operation in education for peace, human rights and democracy.
- 41** • National and international non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to participate actively in the implementation of this Framework of Action.



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