

EDUCATION AS A HUMAN RIGHT AGAINST HATE SPEECH AND INTOLERANCE

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On January 24, 2019, the International Day of Education was celebrated for the first time. One of the celebrations was a speech by the Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), in which Mr. António Guterres highlighted the role of education in combating hate speech, intolerance in various aspects and also in xenophobia.

In the words of the Secretary-General of the UN: "Such a situation constitutes a violation of his fundamental right to education. The world cannot afford to deprive a generation of children and young people of the knowledge they will need to have a place in the economy of the 21st century. "

In 2019, there are still 262 million children and young people who do not have access to school, and most of these children and young people are girls who are in a situation of exclusion. In 2015 between September 25 and 27, Heads of State and Government and senior representatives from various countries met at United Nations Headquarters in New York when they celebrated the 70th anniversary of the United Nations and decided on the new objectives' development, setting the 2030 Agenda.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and 169 goals were announced to demonstrate the scale and ambition of this new Universal Agenda. The Sustainable Development Goals seek to realize the human rights of all and achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. They are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

We emphasize education, considering its potential to reduce inequalities and improve people's health, achieve equality between men and women and end child marriage, protect the planet's resources and also combat hate speech, xenophobia and intolerance, in addition to cultivating a world citizenship.

Malala Yousafzai, a UN peace activist and messenger, made a statement that had a world-class phrase when she said that "a child, a teacher, a book and a pencil can change the world." According to the UN, 420 million people could be lifted out of poverty if all girls and boys completed secondary school, breaking with cycles of intergenerational poverty.

UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay said, "Without inclusive and equitable quality education and opportunities for all throughout life, countries will not be able to break the cycle of poverty that is leaving millions of children, young people and adults back". A recent UNESCO report reveals that 617 million of children and adolescents cannot read or solve basic math equations; in this group two-thirds are young people who attend school but are not learning.

The Sustainable Development Goal - SDG 4 provides for the universalization of education to occur by 2030, considering pre-school education and primary and secondary education. In addition, it determines that, over the next 12 years, nations will have to achieve equal access for all men and women to affordable, quality technical, vocational and higher education.

According to UNESCO, the world is not on track to reach this agenda by 2030. In addition to the numbers of out-of-school children or girls who are not learning, fewer than 40 percent of girls in sub-Saharan Africa complete high school, and about 4 million refugee children and youths are out of school, their lives interrupted by conflict and loss.

International relations, especially among the great power states, are not avoiding political tensions, destabilization and civil war, and between states in the world. Since 2011, many things have changed in the world in this period, but little has been solved, since the protests in Syria began that culminated in a civil war. A very relevant example of this is the impact of an estimated 5.6 million refugees and 6.5 million internally displaced persons over eight years of conflict, with no prospects for resolution.

Most of the current tensions are concentrated in the continents of Africa and Asia, with a focus on the Middle East, a region known for its ancient and seemingly unsolved conflicts. In addition to the states of violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic and Mexico; political instability in Lebanon and Egypt; and territorial disputes in the Kashmir region between India and Pakistan and the South China Sea with Vietnam and the Philippines. It is not by chance that the greatest flow of refugees comes from these regions.

The Rohingya Muslim group faces persecution and discrimination in their own country, whose members, who account for more than one million people, are not even considered citizens by the Myanmar government. The situation has been blamed by the UN as "ethnic cleansing" and the humanitarian crisis has grown to alarming numbers, with Bangladesh now housing the largest refugee camp with about one million Rohingya. Unfortunately, this is just an example, because there are much more situations like this.

We agree with the director of UNESCO when she emphasizes that "Our challenge is to make education work for all, promoting inclusiveness and equity in all areas, so as not to leave anyone behind. This requires special attention for girls, migrants, displaced persons and refugees, (in addition to) supporting teachers and making education and training more sensitive to gender issues".

However, considering the scale of the problem, we emphasize the urgency of States' efforts in international aid, since the cost of not investing in education in these conflict regions will result in divisions, inequalities and exclusions in societies, further aggravating problems, with the massive displacements of these populations. A fully committed political commitment to universal education is needed so that states and their institutions prioritize education by ensuring that all girls and boys complete free, fair and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant learning outcomes and effectiveness. It also means that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, early childhood care and education, so that they are ready for primary education.

Significantly reducing all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere, ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children.

A fair, egalitarian society only occurs with the elimination of gender disparities in education and ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the most vulnerable, including people with disabilities, indigenous people and children in situations of vulnerability.

It is not enough that children have access to school, but education must be of a quality so that all students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to promote sustainable development and a culture of peace, valuing cultural diversity.

Do we need to wait until 2030 to achieve sustainable development goals with a focus on SDG 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all we have more of the conflicts and tensions that generate violence, exclusion, and migratory flows?

References

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