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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by the International Organization for the Right to Education and Freedom of Education (OIDEL), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[8 February 2019]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



World Programme for Human Rights Education and Target 4.7 of the SDGs

Implementation and follow-up in the next Plan of Action?

1. In its resolution 36/12, the Human Rights Council requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to seek the views of States, national human rights institutions, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders on the target sectors, focus areas or thematic human rights issues for the fourth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, bearing in mind possible synergies with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other relevant initiatives on human rights education and training.

2. On this occasion, the Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning (NGO WG on HREL) underlined the fundamental role Human Rights Education plays in building inclusive, just and peaceful societies and organized two side-events in 2018, co-sponsored by the States Platform on Human Rights Education and Training comprising 8 States (Brazil, Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, the Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia and Thailand) and the UNESCO Liaison Office in Geneva. The aim was to collect the views of all stakeholders regarding the focus of the upcoming fourth phase (2020-2024) and also to find synergies among existing approaches on the implementation of human rights education, especially in relation to the World Programme in all its consecutive phases.

3. In its resolution A/HRC/RES/39/3 adopted on 27 September 2018, the Human Rights Council decided to make youth the focus group of the fourth phase of the World Programme and to align the fourth phase with the 2030 Agenda and specifically with target 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, as reflected in the OHCHR report (A/HRC/39/35). We welcome the focus of the fourth phase especially since, according to UN data, there are about 1.8 billion young people in the world today, the largest youth population ever, and that over a third of the 169 SDG targets highlight the role of young people and the importance of their empowerment, participation and well-being. Youth are crucial agents of change and a driving force for building just, peaceful and resilient societies.

4. In the same resolution, the HRC also requests the OHCHR to prepare a Plan of Action for the fourth phase, in consultation with all stakeholders, and to submit it for its consideration during forty-second session of the Human Rights Council in September 2019. Regarding the preparation of this plan of action, the NGO WG on HREL would like to underline the following points:

a) The implementation of the three previous phases of the World Programme should be an integral part of the plan of action, as it has not yet been completed. During recent panel discussions, experts from OHCHR, the NGO WG on HREL, and Member States addressed the need for an integrated framework where UN country teams, governments and OHCHR could effectively exchange information and experience on the implementation. In this regard, the capacity of national human rights institutions, which have a mandate to educate about human rights, should be strengthened in the area of human rights education through technical assistance and the establishment of networks allowing the exchange of experiences and academic research. It should not be forgotten that improvement of the human rights situation on the ground will depend on the creation of a human rights culture which will be fed by human rights education of all national actors, from youth, men and women to law enforcement agencies.

b) The quality and extent of the implementation of human rights education should be reported by States and monitored through United Nations human rights mechanisms, such as the treaty bodies and the special procedures of the Human Rights Council. During the Universal Periodic Review, States under Review should also be encouraged to report back against a baseline and based on qualitative targets indicators how rights holders and duty bearers are educated about human rights and the progress made in the different aspects of human rights education. National mechanisms for Reporting and Follow-up should be sensitized on human rights education to monitor

the progress made in the implementation of human rights recommendations and States' commitments. In this regard, we emphasize the importance for States to submit their national progress reports on a regular basis. The development of legally binding instruments in the area of human rights education and training might also be regarded as a way to strengthen existing commitments.

c) It is crucial to further develop human rights education methodologies and specific tools and indicators to measure the impact and progress of human rights education at local and national level, also within the framework of target 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

d) Developing policies, which include adequate resources and programmes to train teachers and educators with necessary skills, knowledge and understanding of human rights education to foster people that through their attitude and behaviour can be a model of human rights for young people.

e) Parliamentarians play a key role in human rights education. They can monitor the implementation of public policies related to human rights education and ensure that adequate budgets are voted to implement the State human rights commitments.

f) Ensuring that young peoples' voices are adequately reflected, taking in consideration the different needs that apply to youth in relation to their countries of origin, sex, ages, abilities and economic status, cultural backgrounds and respecting their freedom of thought, belief and religion, to ensure an inclusive plan of action. In the same vein, access to education of all segments of society and of vulnerable and marginalized groups, including children with disabilities, will ensure that no one is left behind in the development of a country.

g) Gender equality should be an integral part of human rights education to contribute to end women's rights violations and discriminatory practices. The full participation of women and girls in defining laws and policies and their representation at all public and private decision-making levels is key to achieve SDG 5.

h) Non-formal education is essential in order to support and enhance the aim of universal access for all youth to human rights education. As emphasized also by the special rapporteur on the right to education, nonformal education programs provide flexible, learner-centered means that can reach learners in geographically remote areas, as well as students with disabilities, groups in vulnerable situations, and those in extreme poverty. Moreover, nonformal education settings, such as youth organizations, extracurricular school activities, cultural events, film and theatre, are all important contexts where young people can come together and learn about, for and through human rights and ultimately contribute to making a difference in people's values, attitudes and behaviors.

i) The fourth phase should effectively acknowledge and empower civil society entities working to promote the World Programme for Human Rights Education and the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. It would therefore be an opportunity to highlight and disseminate information about local-level decisions that fostered human rights education and local human rights education initiatives, raising their visibility and legitimacy as part of global programmes.

The NGO WG on HREL is fully willing to act as a bridge between the different actors in order to move towards a better implementation of human rights education.