



PANEL DISCUSSION

co-organized by the Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Latvia and UNESCO
Division of Education for Teaching, Learning and Content, Education Sector

on

How can education effectively promote respect for diversity and tolerance?

I- Context and justification

From 28 to 30 January 2015 (Paris), UNESCO organised the Second Forum on Global Citizenship Education. During the Forum, 250 participants representing 61 countries gathered to discuss the obstacles to peace and possible opportunities of building peaceful and sustainable societies through global citizenship education (GCED). Through the discussions, the participants underlined the importance of educating for respect for diversity and inter-religious dialogue in today's world, and tackling discrimination and violence in and through education - building on the lessons learned from peace and human rights education, amongst others.

The Forum furthermore provided the opportunity to make known the many countries and educational stakeholders that have already carried out actions and implemented policies and programmes which are supporting global citizenship and instilling respect for diversity.

Despite these commendable efforts, the recent surge in terrorist attacks, racism, antisemitism, islamophobia and other forms of intolerance and the persistent conflicts along ethnic and religious lines have claimed the lives of an increasing number of citizens around the world, infringed upon human rights and fundamental freedoms and widened social divide, thereby undermining international and national efforts to build sustainable peace.

The imperative of 'building peace in the minds of men and women', as enshrined in the UNESCO constitution and the importance of teaching respect and tolerance among citizens irrespective of their origins, background or religion, have only become more pressing in current times.

Recent developments present not only challenges but also windows of opportunity to rethink and strengthen education sector policies and programmes to develop, from a young age, mutual understanding and respect among citizens.



Quality education is the best weapon to combat ignorance, intolerance, prejudice and hatred which are at the root of discriminatory attitudes and practices. This can only be achieved if citizens of the world in particular young men and women, boys and girls, are equipped with the skills to behave and act as responsible and respectful citizens.

In follow-up to the Forum and given recent developments, the Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Latvia and UNESCO will organize a panel discussion to exchange and debate how education can effectively promote respect for diversity and religious tolerance. The proposed panel discussion will build on current approaches in the education sector, present actions taken by several key actors at the international and regional levels, and in different settings at country level to promote diversity and tolerance, notably religious tolerance. Drawing on these, interactive discussions will provide participants with the possibility to question current trends and discuss steps needed for strengthening the effectiveness of education policies and programmes.

II- Objectives

The main objective of the event is to inform education stakeholders - notably representatives of ministries of education, Permanent Delegations to UNESCO, international organizations, educators, academics, research institutes, youth representatives, NGOs, and faith-based associations - of current trends and practices that have been developed for the promotion of diversity and tolerance and discuss how education policies and programmes can more effectively be designed and implemented to fight all forms of intolerance and discriminatory attitudes and practices.

The discussions will take place in two parts:

- **The first panel** will seek to enhance participants' understanding of global challenges and responses relating to the promotion of diversity and tolerance, as well as inform on UNESCO's action and approach to the fight against intolerance and discriminatory attitudes and practices.
- The **second panel** will seek to examine the challenges of translating policy into practice, notably as concerns working with young people, educating against antisemitism, religious intolerance.

III- Target audience

Speakers and participants will be Ministers of Education and/or representatives of ministries of education, Permanent Delegations to UNESCO, policy-makers, educators, academics, research institutes, youth representatives, NGOs, and faith-based associations.



Date: 18 March 2015
Time: 14:30 to 17:30 (180 min)
Room: II
Format: Combination of presentations and interactive dialogue

Interpretation will be provided in English, French and Spanish.

Programme

14:00-14:30	Registration
14:30-14:55	Opening Statement by Māriņe Seile, Minister of Education and Sciences of the Republic of Latvia (15 min) Statement by Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO (10 min)
14:55-15:10	Keynote address by Florence Robine, Director of school education, Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research of the Republic of France (15 min) Panels will be moderated by Madeleine Mukamabano, journalist, Radio France International (RFI)
15:10-16:10	Part 1: Global challenges and responses relating to the promotion of respect for diversity and tolerance <u>Global issues and challenges relating to the promotion of diversity and tolerance, including interreligious dialogue</u> by Patrice Brodeur, Director of Research, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) (10 min) <u>UNESCO's leadership on Global Citizenship Education</u> by Chris Castle, Chief, Section of Health and Global Citizenship Education, Division for Teaching, Learning and Content (10 min) <u>Educating to build a culture of human rights and foster democratic practices</u> by Gabriel Brener, Undersecretary of State for Equality and Quality in Education, Argentina (10 min)
15:40-16:10	Moderated discussion (30 min)

16:10-16:30 Coffee break (20 min)

16:30-17:30 Part 2 : From policy to practice: learning from specific educational responses to intolerance and discrimination

Educating against antisemitism - Bridging the past to the present by Günther Jikeli, Associate researcher, Moses Mendelssohn Centre for European Jewish studies, University of Potsdam and Groupe Sociétés, Religions, Laïcités / French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), Paris (10 min)

Working with young people to put an end to discrimination and intolerance in schools by Mariam Touré, President of Liberté d'Agir Scolaire (10 min)

Rethinking educational responses through a human-centered approach to teaching by Scherto Gill, Secretary General at the Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace; Associate Lecturer at the University of Sussex, Department of Education (10 min)

17:00-17:30 Moderated discussion (30 min)

17:30 **Closing remarks** by Qian Tang, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO (5 min)

