

Address by
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for Human Rights



to the
Seminar on a United Nations Declaration on
Human Rights Education and Training,
Marrakech, 16-17 July

I thank the Kingdom of Morocco for this opportunity to address your expert seminar on a future United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training.

Human Rights Education is essential for the prevention of human rights abuses, the promotion of non-discrimination, equality and sustainable development, and the enhancement of peoples' participation in democratic decision making processes.

OHCHR has focused much of its efforts to advancing human rights education globally. We do so through our methodological and training support and technical assistance, as well as through our extensive publications.

The central framework for these activities presently is the World Programme for Human Rights Education, which was proclaimed by the General Assembly on 10 December 2004. The

Programme's Plan of Action for its first phase, which wraps up this year, focused on integrating human rights education in primary and secondary school systems. Thanks to its emphasis on national implementation, many countries have adopted national plans for human rights education and have developed a number of initiatives. These developments are welcome, but they are still uneven in practical results and application.

The Human Rights Council in its resolution 6/10 requested its Advisory Committee to prepare a draft Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. Your seminar will assist the relevant drafting Group of the Advisory Committee in this task. I commend the cross-regional Platform for Human Rights Education and Training for supporting this important endeavour.

A United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training would reinforce the message that human rights education is a crucial tool to prevent human rights violations.

To this effect, a future Declaration should offer a comprehensive, clear definition of human rights education. It should spell out educational activities encompassing fundamental human rights principles, such as equality and non-discrimination, while affirming the interdependence, indivisibility and universality of all human rights.

As already indicated by the Advisory Committee, the Declaration could contain a series of action-oriented guiding principles, such as the integration of human rights education into school curricula. Education and training for law enforcement officials, and civil servants must also be envisaged.

A variety of relevant stakeholders, including individuals, non-governmental organizations, national institutions, service providers, professional associations, educational agencies and the

media have crucial roles to play in promoting knowledge of human rights.

Human rights monitoring by civil society and by United Nations mechanisms, such as the Treaty Bodies, the Special Procedures and the Human Rights Council, is of crucial relevance in this endeavour.

Undoubtedly, your discussions will provide inspiring elements to the Advisory Committee which would strengthen the agenda of human rights education and quicken its pace.

I look forward to the results of your expert work and, of course, to the first draft of the Declaration.

Thank you.