

53rd Session of the Human Rights Council

Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the right to education

Joint Statement on children's education

Mr. President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Dominican Republic, Luxembourg, and a group of 64 other countries.

Everyone has the right to education: it is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, of which we commemorate the 75th anniversary, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other core human rights instruments. Regrettably, worldwide, 244 million children and young persons are not getting an education for social, economic and cultural reasons.¹

The cost of education remains a significant barrier, disproportionately affecting children and adolescents from low-income families, girls, children with disabilities and school-age persons in vulnerable situations.

Conflicts and the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated the global education crisis.

Furthermore, 4 out of 10 children and young persons do not complete secondary school and nearly half of all children of the world are not enrolled in pre-primary education.² A vast majority of countries have not achieved gender parity in secondary education.³

Education is a human right and plays a crucial role in the fight against inequality and for the consolidation of sustainable development. Today, we call on all Member States to guarantee access to free, quality, and inclusive education for all children from pre-school through secondary school, and ensure its adequate funding.

We support efforts to strengthen the right to education, including the explicit right to full free secondary and at least one year of free pre-primary education.

Thank you.

¹ UNESCO, "244M children won't start the new school year (UNESCO)," updated April 2023, <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/244m-children-wont-start-new-school-year-unesco>

² UNICEF, "A World Ready to Learn: Global Report on Pre-Primary Education," April 2019, <https://www.unicef.org/reports/a-world-ready-to-learn-2019>

³ UNICEF, "Girls' Education: Gender equality in education benefits every child," <https://www.unicef.org/education/girls-education>

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