

Concept Note

Side Event

**The Role of Transformative Education in Dealing with
the Challenges of Our Times**

16 July 2019, 1:15-2:45 pm, ROK Mission

Background

After the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in 2015, the world continues to face a countless number of complex global challenges such as extreme poverty, rising inequalities, climate change, conflict, xenophobia, violent extremism, atrocities, and many more. In these times of persistent tensions, both within and across national borders, we need now more than ever education that can cultivate compassion, empathy, mutual respect and understanding among peoples across all regions. This is especially true given that much of the tension and challenges we collectively face today stem from the lack of understanding among peoples of different cultures and religions.

While traditional education, focused on improving literacy and facilitating the transmission of knowledge and skills from one generation to the next, remains vital, there is a growing need for transformative education such as Global Citizenship Education (GCED), which nurtures shared values and respect for diversity. Traditional and transformative education reinforces and complements each other. Indeed, the Global Education First Initiative launched by former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in 2012, notes, “It is not enough for education to produce individuals who can read, write and count. Education must fully assume its central role in helping people to forge more just, peaceful, tolerant and inclusive societies.” This thinking is aptly captured in the African philosophy of *Ubuntu*, which emphasizes the common humanity and interconnectedness of mankind. The spirit of *Ubuntu* will help people to build more just, peaceful, tolerant and inclusive societies, where the rights of everyone are respected without discrimination.

Furthermore, it is crucial that we fully leverage the increasingly wide range of ICT and other technologies that are relevant to assist today’s youth to access education. The connection-facilitating impacts of these technologies can and must be harnessed into the way we deliver education, which can help develop more inclusive and empathetic learning through various medium and tools—both inside and outside of the traditional classroom. This will not only enhance the spirit of *Ubuntu* but also reduce inequalities caused by the unequal distribution of benefits of technological advancement.

This side event will highlight key dimensions of transformative education, as well as explore opportunities for such education at both the country and schools levels to enhance and advance progress on sustainable development and sustaining peace. The event will serve as a timely opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of transformative education within the UN, and these efforts will continue throughout next year, fully utilizing the 75th anniversary of the United Nations as a benchmark of momentum to garner support for transformative education from all regions.

Guiding Questions

- What is transformative education? What does it look like and how does it happen? How is it different from traditional education, and what are the outcomes of such education?
- How can transformative education best complement traditional education in the transmission of competences such as knowledge, skills and beliefs?
- What specific role can transformative modalities of education, such as GCED, play in dealing with various global challenges, such as climate change, inequalities, violence, xenophobia, and combating violent extremism?
- How can we better engage youth in tackling diverse global challenges through transformative education?
- What are some examples of transformative education on the ground that promote and facilitate mutual understanding and respect among different peoples and cultures, and contribute to the realization of the 2030 Agenda?
- How can transformative education best incorporate new technologies, including social media both inside and outside of the classroom?

Co-organizers

- Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations
- Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to the United Nations
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect (OSAPG)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)
- Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU)

Programme

Time	Programme Details
13:15-13:25	Opening Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ H.E. Mr. Cho Tae-yul, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations▪ H.E. Ms. Alya Ahmed S. Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the United Nations
13:25-14:05	Panel Discussion : Moderator : Ms. Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO Panelists <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mr. Achim Steiner, Administrator, UNDP (TBC)- Mr. Adama Dieng, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide- Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, High Representative for the UNAOC (TBC) Discussants <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mr. Lim Hyun Mook, Director of APCEIU- Ms. Lea Lastrilla Espallardo, Educator, Philippine Educational Theater Association- Mr. Mourad Yazli, Alumni of UNAOC "Young Peacebuilders" Programme (Algerian Youth Voices)
14:05-14:35	Q&A
14:35-14:45	Closing Remarks