

Gyeongju Youth Declaration
**66th DPI/NGO Conference “Education for Global Citizenship: Achieving the Sustainable
Development Goals Together”**
Gyeongju, South Korea - 30 May to 1 June 2016

We, the youth participants of the 66th United Nations DPI/NGO Conference, affirm that an ethos of global citizenship provides the bedrock for youth action on the promotion and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 2030.

We affirm that the ultimate objective of Education for Global Citizenship is the promotion of universal participation in the construction of a prosperous world civilization. As such, we call on a re-examination of the efficacy of youth participation at all levels of decision making.

Young people are already impacting their communities every day, in countless ways and to widely varying ends. We need our desire to contribute to constructive change and to offer meaningful service to be strengthened, supported, and expanded, by our international, national and local communities.

Integrating young people into formal structures of power is of course advantageous for a variety of reasons. But simply feeding “young” voices into “old” systems, if unaccompanied by more substantive forms of participation runs the risk of degenerating into mere tokenism. Young people are needed as leaders and decision-makers not only in youth forums and special-purpose councils, but in those spaces where the course and direction of society as a whole are determined. This may well require the development of new systems of decision-making and collaboration – systems characterized by an unbiased search for truth, an attitude of cooperation and reciprocity, and an appreciation for the vital role every individual can play in the betterment of the whole.

To be effective global citizens and to contribute fully to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, young people need better access to quality and affordable education, that spans the range of human faculty development, develops critical thinking and global mindedness, is inclusive of the diversity of youth, and builds moral character. However, while many current education systems are not meeting our evolving needs, we recognize that we are active agents of change and have much to contribute towards strengthening educational processes at all levels.

Thus, we the youth, commit to:

- Wholeheartedly work to implement the SDGs and empower increasing numbers of youth to take real action together.
- Harness our innovation to develop projects aimed at improving quality educational experiences for young people.
- Report regularly on our actions, reflect on the efficacy of programs aimed at youth, and share our honest learning and shortcomings.

- Take up the responsibility to mentor each other through higher educational processes and share learning opportunities.
- Build strong intergenerational partnerships with Civil Society Organisations to work towards achieving the SDGs together, in particular strengthening informal educational initiatives.
- Offer honest, measured and unbiased perspectives to policy and decision making processes, for the betterment of all, not just for young people.
- Strive to leave this planet better than we found it.

We urge Member States to:

- Make strong education systems a top priority. Consider the implementation of a universal, rigorous standard of education, that accommodates tailoring to the needs of the local context, and education for global citizenship.
- Re-think current models and structures of youth participation in decision making processes at international, national and local levels.
- Fill Youth Delegate positions at the United Nations, ensuring they represent diversity and allow for their meaningful participation with the Permanent Missions, UN processes and Civil Society Organisations.
- Commit to providing high speed internet to all countries in the world and support technological literacy of all. Recognise the emergence of e-Learning as a legitimate form of education and a transnational qualification.
- Support an enabling environment for public and private media to provide factual information to educate the population, as youth are the largest consumers of media.
- Assist in the education of parents and families, to raise their consciousness to the needs of their children and youth, to the importance of education for all, as well as human development needs such as nutrition, hygiene and health care.
- Devise and implement effective capacity building training programs for education practitioners.
- Ensure that educational environments are safe zones for all young people, including in their transit to and from educational institutions.
- Encourage stronger communication across the planet, by implementing multilingual schooling.
- Lead the way in exemplifying global citizenship through international policies, and working towards building an interdependent global civilization.