

## **Declaration of the World Summit of Educators**

**12 & 13 June 2016**

We, the participants at the World Summit of Educators, assembled to commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the speech by Dr. Daisaku Ikeda given at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, entitled “Thoughts on Education for Global Citizenship” affirm wholeheartedly that education is a human right established and recognized by the international community. Education should be accessible to every individual, and is intended to further the cause of human happiness, sustainable peace and environmental preservation.

We resolve that we need to embrace a common vision of the imperatives of sustainable peace, human rights, and the sanctity of all life and the preservation of our planet. Education, free of partisan political influence and any other form of potential exploitation, must at all levels play a vital role in this task. Our exchanges here, inspired by the visionary speech made two decades ago and energized by sharing our grassroots level of experiences and knowledge, have motivated us to challenge ourselves to free education from the restraints of political manipulations, commercialization, and narrow individual self-interests.

Bearing this in mind, we reaffirm our collaborative conviction that the concept of global citizenship as an objective of education, which has been articulated in the speech given on June 13, 1996, has assumed even greater relevance and significance today in view of the continuing and ever-increasing challenges education systems in our countries face.

Global citizenship means seeing ourselves as a part of humanity as a whole and understanding that our actions have an impact on other people and parts of the world. Therefore, active global citizenship means taking proactive steps to build a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world. At the heart of education for global citizenship is open-ended and all-inclusive dialogue, trust, and relationship-building.

Education has the most vital role to play in empowering our societies to embrace the concept of global citizenship as essential to humanity’s quest for peace and progress. For that to occur, a fundamental shift in the philosophy and values that encompass education is needed.

Based on embracing an evolving concept of humanity through imaginative empathy, we choose to transcend roles subsumed by ideology, religion, gender, race, or hierarchy that continue to perpetuate divisions that demote the dignity of life.

Education for global citizenship will be meaningful and possible when there is a conscious and committed effort to rid the world of passive, as well as active, gender violence and likewise ensures gender equality at every level of decision-making.

- Educational curricula and pedagogy must include and represent the diverse knowledge and wisdom of all people, especially indigenous peoples and those most marginalized in every society.
- People of all ages have the right to fulfill their own unique potential in their educational endeavors.
- Educators at all levels would benefit from the exercise of courage, wisdom, and compassion to create safe learning environments, free of any form of prejudice and violence, where learners equally feel valued, honored, trusted, and respected.
- Positive and sustainable social changes throughout the world will occur as educational institutions at every level embrace the essential elements of global citizenship, which incorporate the areas of peace education, human rights education, environmental education, and development education.

We also believe that collaborative initiatives between and among diverse peoples, organizations, institutions, governments, and economies committed to education for global citizenship will enhance the objectives of such education.

We are committed to take concrete steps towards actualizing the goals of education for global citizenship by:

- Taking action within our own communities to support local organizations, such as United Nations Associations, teachers' organizations, and other relevant civil society organizations.
- Taking a stand against militarization and militarism, which are increasingly plaguing our societies.
- Nurturing leaders for symbiotic relationships between human life and the natural environment.
- Promoting systems of education that introduce into the curriculum at all levels the comparative and international dimensions of global citizenship.
- Creating a balanced view of development, not only on economic and material levels, but also based on spiritual values.
- Achieving greater collaborative command over the production and use of technology so that it serves to promote the following human values: wisdom, courage, and compassion.
- Creating an educational environment that restores and revives the dignity of all lives.

We honor our roles as educators inside and outside classrooms. We deeply respect the role of family, community, and the physical environment as elements of education.

We are encouraged by the adoption by world leaders by consensus in September 2015 of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which in the specific goal devoted to education encourages the inclusion of global citizenship, the culture of peace, and nonviolence, among other areas in education. We request UNESCO, as the lead UN agency responsible for education, to create opportunities for educational initiatives for global citizenship.

We express our deep appreciation and felicitation to Soka University of America for convening this visionary gathering, with the objective of charting the future course for advancing education for global citizenship. We take appreciative note of the energizing collaboration between the students and the faculty in organizing this Summit, which could be a model for other educational institutions for their own endeavors. We pay tribute particularly to the graduate students of the Educational Leadership and Societal Change Program, who dared to dream to realize the proposal made 20 years ago by Dr. Ikeda to convene a World Summit of Educators.

We are determined to continue our collaboration, working with our respective communities and places of work to promote the values contained in this declaration. We request that Soka University of America take the lead in facilitating this process.

*Agreed upon by acclamation of participants on 13 June 2016*