



Achieving the Sustainable
Development Goals Together

GYEONGJU, REPUBLIC OF KOREA
30 MAY-01 JUNE 2016



— THE 66TH —
UN DPI / NGO
CONFERENCE

Concept Note

Education for Global Citizenship: *Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals Together*

Overview: The 66th United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI)/Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Conference will be held in the City of Gyeongju, Republic of Korea from 30 May to 1 June 2016. The Conference title is “Education for Global Citizenship: Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals Together.” The Conference will take place in the first year of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by United Nations (UN) Member States in September 2015 to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure human rights and prosperous and fulfilling lives for all, as part of a new sustainable development agenda to be achieved by 2030. This year, 2016, is a globally unprecedented opportunity to spark these transformational changes, following also on the successful conclusion of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 21st Conference of Parties (COP) agreement in Paris in December 2015.

Co-sponsored by the NGO/DPI Executive Committee, the Conference is an important opportunity to mobilise global civil society around the Sustainable Development Goals. Conference participants will strive to define culturally appropriate international and regional messaging, learning and advocacy strategies, partnerships and governmental accountability frameworks including financing for development. By focusing on education for global citizenship, the 66th UN DPI/NGO Conference aims to build on the centrality of education and global citizenship as the bedrock of sustainable development and climate action. The 66th UN DPI/NGO Conference is the first in the Conference's history to be held in Asia. The first 60 conferences were held in New York at United Nations Headquarters, as was the 65th conference. In between, the conference was held in Paris, Mexico City, Melbourne and Bonn.

Purpose: Global citizenship is no longer an ideal, but rather a requirement for creating a peaceful, just, and environmentally sustainable world of interconnected societies. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), global citizenship education “aims to empower learners to assume active roles to face and resolve global challenges and to become proactive contributors to a more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure world.” Education for global citizenship should support innovative pedagogies aligned with these ideals and the Sustainable Development Goals. The purpose of this Conference, rooted in Sustainable Development Goal number 4, is to harness strategies, expertise and resources across the widest spectrum of civil society to unleash a range of education initiatives that ensure inclusive, safe and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Three pillars of i) formal education, ii) informal education and training, and iii) advocacy and public information will be examined as means to correct gender, ability, social, economic and other inequalities that create or perpetuate marginalization and disenfranchisement, and thus, hinder achievement of Goal 4, and each of the additional sixteen Sustainable Development Goals. The expertise and reach of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNICEF, United Nations Academic Impact Initiative (UNAI) and other

partners within and beyond the United Nations system will help bridge inclusive discussions across the spectrum of education communities.

Conference Outcome: Attendees at the Conference will finalize an education action agenda to mobilize civil society – its local and international NGOs, networks and activists, as well as academics, educators, policy makers, businesses and youth, reflecting the aspirations and ambitions of all global citizens, in the spirit of leaving no one behind. This agenda will be drafted through a global multi-stakeholder consultation process, leading up to and during the Conference. The agenda will be offered for adoption at the final plenary session of the Conference, and will be shared widely with civil society as well as UN Member States, UN Organizations and the UN Secretary-General.

Hosts: The Hosts are the Republic of Korea, the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI), the NGO/DPI Executive Committee, which represents the NGOs associated with DPI, and the National Organizing Committee of Korea. The Conference Planning Committee shall make every effort to ensure that perspectives from diverse teaching communities; north/south; gender; youth; older persons; indigenous peoples; faith-based organizations; persons with disabilities; LGBTQI persons; global geographic areas; thematic/expert constituencies; and international networks (including the sustainable development and climate change constituencies) are represented.

Venue: The Conference will be held in the City of Gyeongju, located on the South-Eastern part of the Korean peninsula. Gyeongju is the capital city of the Silla dynasty (57BC-935AD), which achieved unification of the Korean Peninsula for the first time in history, and is a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site. The Conference will be held at Hwabaek International Convention Center (HICO), which offers state-of-the-art facilities for meetings and exhibits.

Programme and Format: The Conference Planning Committee will be responsible for developing all elements of the programme, which shall include opening and closing plenary sessions, interactive roundtables, workshops organized by conference participants, exhibits and side events to engage attendees, as well as a Conference reception. NGOs at large will be invited to offer their support in organizing the Conference, and to propose workshops, exhibits, off-site and side events inspired by the spirit of this concept note, to enrich the Conference programme and inform the action agenda.

Participants: The 65th UN DPI/NGO Conference at United Nations Headquarters in New York City was attended by an estimated 2,200 NGO representatives from some 700 NGOs hailing from an estimated 100 countries. In this 66th UN DPI/NGO Conference, NGOs are encouraged to support participation by their own representatives, including youth representatives, and also to support the participation of NGO representatives and voices from vulnerable communities most affected by poverty, inequality, injustice and climate change to contribute to and benefit from the gathering. NGOs that are associated with DPI or in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), in addition to universities members of UNAI will automatically be able to register. Other organizations and institutions are encouraged to register and must demonstrate active support for UN values and ideals through their activities and mission statements.

Conclusion: The SDGs and Paris Agreement provide a comprehensive global action agenda for the years 2016 to 2030. These intensely negotiated agreements offer the international community a bold, people-centered and planet-sensitive development framework that requires transformational changes in governance and institutional performance. This Conference will provide an inclusive space focused on education for global citizenship as the key to advancing the SDGs.

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