



**NGO WORKING GROUP
ON HUMAN RIGHTS
EDUCATION AND LEARNING**

REPORT

A Series of NGO Panels on Human Rights Education in Practice

Meetings held in parallel with the 19th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (27 February - 23 March 2012)

Facilitated by

The NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning (NGO WG on HREL)

Cosponsored by

The Platform for Human Rights Education and Training in the Human Rights Council

(Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia and Switzerland)

PANELS

- I. International Policies on Human Rights Education**
- II. Human Rights Education in Formal Settings in Practice**
- III. Human Rights Education in Non-Formal Settings in Practice**



The NGO WG on HREL is a working group of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO), Geneva

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### Coordination and Volunteer Participation

17 volunteered representatives of 9 NGOs from the network of the NGO WG on HREL contributed to the preparation and logistics for this meeting, as well as the drafting of the present report: OIDE (Claire de Lavernette and Graciela Abad); International Federation of University Women (Hillevi Perraudin); International Association for Religious Freedom (Morse Flores and John Taylor); Kennedy Center for International Studies (Ellen Holsinger and Don Holsinger); Association for the Promotion of the Human Rights (Badia El Koutit); Association Points-Cœur (Apolline Bergier, Clément Imbert and Damaris Balland); Al-Hakim Foundation (Amir Hashom); International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (Ursula Barter-Hemmerich and Elizabeth Williamson); Soka Gakkai International (Kazunari Fujii, Hayley Ramsay-Jones and Akiko Kotera).

**The NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning**  
of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO), Geneva

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| Panel I                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Panel II                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Panel III                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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| <i>International Policies on Human Rights Education</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <i>Human Rights Education in Formal Settings in Practice</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <i>Human Rights Education in Non-Formal Settings in Practice</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Wednesday, 14 March<br>12:00-14:00 Room XXI                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Thursday, 15 March<br>12:00-14:00 Room XXIV                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Friday, 16 March<br>12:00-14:00 Room XXIII                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <p><i>Panellists</i></p> <p><b>Ms. Eugenia Gutiérrez</b><br/>Representative, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica</p> <p><b>Ms. Elena Ippoliti</b><br/>Human Rights Officer, OHCHR<br/>Methodology, Education and Training Section</p> <p><b>Mr. Petru Dumitriu</b><br/>Permanent Observer<br/>of the Council of Europe in Geneva</p> <p><b>Ms. Kirsten Roberts</b><br/>Director, Irish Human Rights Commission</p> <p><b>Mr. Michele Brunelli</b><br/>UNESCO Chair on Human Rights and Ethics<br/>of International Cooperation,<br/>University of Bergamo, Italy</p> <p><b>Ms. Marianne Haslegrave</b><br/>President, International Federation<br/>of University Women</p> <p><i>Moderator</i></p> <p><b>Mr. Kazunari Fujii</b><br/>Soka Gakkai International (SGI) /<br/>Chair, NGO WG on HREL</p> | <p><i>Panellists</i></p> <p><b>Ms. Urška Čas Svetek</b><br/>Permanent Mission<br/>of the Republic of Slovenia</p> <p><b>Ms. Karen Tse</b><br/>International Bridges for Justice</p> <p><b>Ms. Astrid Stuckelberger</b><br/>International Association<br/>of Gerontology and Geriatrics</p> <p><b>Ms. Laura von Mandach</b><br/>Centre suisse de formation<br/>pour le personnel pénitentiaire</p> <p><b>Mr. Peter Kirchschräger</b><br/>Co-Director, Centre of Human Rights<br/>Education, University of Teacher<br/>Education Central Switzerland Lucerne</p> <p><b>Mr. Jacobus Vorster</b><br/>North-West University, South Africa</p> <p><i>Moderator</i></p> <p><b>Mr. Morse Flores</b><br/>International Association<br/>for Religious Freedom (IARF)</p> | <p><i>Panellists</i></p> <p><b>Ms. Rosslyn Noonan</b><br/>Chair, the International Coordinating<br/>Committee of NHRIs</p> <p><b>Ms. Katrien Beeckman</b><br/>Head, Principles and Values Department,<br/>International Federation<br/>of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies</p> <p><b>Mr. Alfred Fernandez</b><br/>Director, Collège Universitaire<br/>Henry Dunant</p> <p><b>Ms. Asmae Fahoum</b><br/>Association Instant Présent</p> <p><b>Mr. Ahmed Seghaier</b><br/>EURO-MENA<br/>for Human Rights Education &amp; Training</p> <p><b>Mr. André-Marc Huwylar</b><br/>The Nuclei of Youth and Children's<br/>Orchestras of the State of Bahia<br/>(NEOJIBA)</p> <p><i>Moderator</i></p> <p><b>Mr. Clément Imbert</b><br/>Association Points - Cœur</p> |
| <p><i>Organised by</i></p> <p><b>OIDEL and SGI</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <p><i>Organised by</i></p> <p><b>IARF and Kennedy Center for<br/>International Studies</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p><i>Organised by</i></p> <p><b>Association Points-Cœur and Al-Hakim<br/>Foundation</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

## INTRODUCTION

*On 19 December, 2011, the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training was adopted by the General Assembly.<sup>1</sup> The World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing) is now in its second phase (2010-2014).<sup>2</sup> At national and regional levels, a number of initiatives and activities have also been carried out. At the same time, a number of challenges and difficulties are tangible in the implementation of human rights education.*

At the present 19th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC), the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training was welcomed. Several Member States mentioned and referred to the Declaration during the high level segment meetings and the plenary.

The Platform Member States made a joint oral statement delivered by Morocco on their behalf at the plenary on 9 March. Among other things, the Platform commended all stakeholders including governments and a wide range of civil society actors at multiple levels for their efforts and contributions made throughout the process from drafting to the adoption of the Declaration; highlighted that the Declaration was for the HRC the first instrument that the HRC elaborated entirely since its establishment in 2006; stressed that the access to the right to human rights education and training was essential to universally and effectively promote respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all; and called upon all stakeholders for the effective dissemination and implementation of the Declaration.

A joint NGO oral statement, prepared through the network of the NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning (NGO WG on HREL)<sup>3</sup> and delivered in the name of 28 signatory organisations at the plenary on the same day, called upon all Member States: to disseminate the Declaration including its translation into the national language; to create a safe and enabling environment for the engagement of all stakeholders in human rights education and training; to ensure adequate training in human rights of State officials, civil servants, law enforcement personnel; and to develop national policies and action plans to in the framework of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. The NGOs in the statement also pointed out that human rights mechanisms envisaged by Article 13 of the Declaration included those of UPR, treaty bodies and the Special Procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> General Assembly resolution A/RES/66/137 (16 February 2012).

<sup>2</sup> United Nations document A/HRC/15/28 (27 July 2010), plan of action for the second phase (2010-2014) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education.

<sup>3</sup> The NGO WG on HREL is part of the NGO Committee on Human Rights, Geneva, of the Conference of NGOs in consultative relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO). Website of CoNGO: [www.ngocongo.org](http://www.ngocongo.org)



The NGO WG on HREL is a network of NGOs based in Geneva and provides a platform for NGOs with the aim of ensuring NGO participation in global policy-making on human rights education in relation to United Nations institutions, principally the HRC. Currently more than 40 organisations in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council are in the network of the NGO WG on HREL.

The NGO WG on HREL upholds the view that human rights education encompasses all human rights issues and contributes to the prevention of violent conflicts, the promotion of equality and sustainable development and the enhancement of people's participation in decision-making and that it contributes to the promotion of gender equality, the rights of the child, religious tolerance, elimination of racial discrimination and xenophobia, minority rights, and rights of all other vulnerable groups of people.

This series of three NGO panels on human rights education was held in parallel with the 19th session of the HRC, facilitated by the NGO WG on HREL and cosponsored by the Platform for Human Rights Education and Training comprising Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia and Switzerland. Each panel meeting was organised by two member organisations of the NGO WG on HREL respectively.

The aims of these panel meetings were to examine international policies on human rights education, raise awareness about their significance and discuss practices for the effective implementation of human rights education in light of those international policies. These panels also aimed at ensuring the participation of NGOs in the international policy-making process and reflecting in the process the views and suggestions of civil society. Panellists were mainly representatives from civil society.

Three panel meetings of the series were attended by 129 representatives from civil society and intergovernmental organisations - mainly from NGOs - and from the United Nations Member States. 39 of them attended more than once (Panel I = 58; Panel II = 72 and Panel III = 51).

Relevant documents<sup>4</sup> were distributed at these panel meetings, including those provided by the Methodology, Education and Training Section (METS) of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Council of Europe and the NGO WG on HREL.

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*The present report contains three summary reports of the respective panel meetings, focusing on substantial contents in brief. Therefore, not every single element mentioned or referred to during the meetings is covered in this report.*

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<sup>4</sup> Documents of the NGO WG on HREL provided at the meetings included: NGO written statement [A/HRC/16/NGO/116](#) on NGO assessment of the draft United Nations declaration on human rights education and training, jointly submitted by 38 organisations at the 16th session of the HRC; The Summary Report on the Interactive Dialog with the Platform Member States (22 September 2011), downloadable from [http://www.ngocongo.org/congo/files/20110922\\_summary\\_report\\_hret\\_intd\\_with\\_platform.pdf](http://www.ngocongo.org/congo/files/20110922_summary_report_hret_intd_with_platform.pdf); and the Report of the Panel Discussion on the Draft Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, "Toward Proclamation and Implementation" (11 March 2011), downloadable from [http://www.ngocongo.org/congo/files/report\\_panel\\_on\\_dundhret\\_march\\_2011\\_r.pdf](http://www.ngocongo.org/congo/files/report_panel_on_dundhret_march_2011_r.pdf).

## PANEL I: International Policies on Human Rights Education

PANELLISTS: *Ms. Eugenia Gutiérrez*, Representative, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica; *Mr. Petru Dumitriu*, Permanent Observer of the Council of Europe in Geneva; *Ms. Elena Ippoliti*, Human Rights Officer, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Methodology, Education and Training Section (METS); *Ms. Kirsten Roberts*, Director, Irish Human Rights Commission; *Mr. Michele Brunelli*, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Chair on Human Rights and Ethics of International Cooperation, University of Bergamo, Italy; and *Ms. Marianne Haslegrave*, President, International Federation of University Women

MODERATOR: *Mr. Kazunari Fujii*, SGI / Chair, NGO WG on HREL

### **Ms. Eugenia Gutiérrez, Representative, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica**

Gutiérrez, also on behalf of the Platform Member States, reviewed the evolutionary process of policy-making on human rights education in the United Nations system to highlight the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (UNDHRET) as the “icing on the cake” in terms of the political aspiration. Commending the NGO WG on HREL for its efforts and contribution, she highly valued the participation and contribution made by all stakeholders in the process and emphasised the need for their continuation to do so in the implementation of the UNDHRET.

Underlining the commitment of Costa Rica to human rights education and actions taken for setting out international policies, Gutiérrez first pointed to the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (UN Decade, 1995-2004) founded on the outcome agreement and consensus of the 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights. She stated that together with the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE, 2005-open ended) proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on its launching, the political aspiration in these steps was the basis for developing international policies on human rights education. More specifically, she further stated that the WPHRE entailed operative tools from theory into practice in a long-term perspective more than the UN Decade in its structure of consecutive phases - the first phase (2005-2009) focused on primary and secondary school systems and now in the second phase (2010-2014) focusing on human rights education for higher education and on human rights training programmes for teachers and educators, civil servants, law enforcement officials and military personnel at all levels.

In these settings, she emphasised that the essential concepts, objectives and principles were enshrined in the UNDHRET to effectively implement human rights education and training as a life-long process for all, in all countries.

Gutiérrez also emphasised that in the course of development and applying the international policies on human rights education, all stakeholders including OHCHR as an efficient and positive partner, academia, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) and NGOs should effectively be involved as they were critical actors, especially in providing and facilitating activities with regard to human rights education and training.

### **Mr. Petru Dumitriu, Permanent Observer of the Council of Europe in Geneva**

Dumitriu stated that cooperation between the Council of Europe and the United Nations had accelerated in recent years with the WPHRE launched in December, 2004, to which the Council of Europe was currently contributing through its programme “Learning democracy and human rights”.

He shared information on the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education adopted in May, 2010, by the 47 Member States.<sup>5</sup> He commented that the Charter was seen as the European counterpart to the UNDHRET, and that at the operational level, the two drafting processes mutually informed each other. He added in this regard that though the style and format differed considerably, the definition or concept of human rights education was almost identical.

He also shared two examples where the Charter was implemented: In Finland, the National Board of Education changed the national core curriculum for basic education and general upper secondary education, referring explicitly to the Council’s work on Citizenship and Human Rights as the basis for the reforms; and in Norway as another strong supporter of the Charter, a European Resource Centre on Education for Intercultural Understanding, Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship, the “WERGELAND Centre” was launched in cooperation with the Council of Europe.

As for next steps of the Council of Europe at the European level, he mentioned a strategy to develop the implementation of the Charter, explaining that the Council of Europe were planning to prepare a questionnaire for governments and a review report in the 2nd half of 2012 that would contain feedback from NGOs. In this regard, he

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<sup>5</sup> Adopted in the framework of the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2010) 7.

also mentioned that the Council of Europe was now planning its 1st conference on this topic on 28-30 November, where the review report would be used as background for the discussion, the process of which could be repeated every 3-5 years. He stressed the importance of coordinating this work with other international institutions.

As another part of the strategy, he shared information on an International Contact Group<sup>6</sup> of the Council of Europe on citizenship and human rights education initiated in 2011, to exchange views and follow agreed-upon objectives. He added that its first meeting would be held in Strasbourg on 30 March and that the report on this Series of NGO Panels on Human Rights Education in Practice would be a useful information resource for the meeting.

Pointing out the major challenge to the effective promotion of human rights education, he expressed his concern over a certain tendency to view human rights education as optional, somehow underestimating the power of human rights education. In this regard, he stated that this lack of vision could result in setting out policies that were not supported by practical measures, and therefore awareness-raising should be an important future priority including at the school level, as legislation alone was not enough. In his concluding remarks, he stated that the adoptions of the UNDHRET and the Council of Europe Charter were proof of a growing commitment to advancing the course of human rights education.

**Ms. Elena Ippolitti, Human Rights Officer, OHCHR METS**

Ippolitti presented an overview of the WPHRE and the UNDHRET, describing the WPHRE as an operational framework to advance national implementation and foster international cooperation and the UNDHRET as a policy statement expressing the commitment of Member States to advance human rights education.

As for the WPHRE, she provided a number of facts including the following essential points.

- The first phase (2005-2009) had aimed to help facilitate States in making human rights education part of national curricula in primary and secondary school education and most importantly to help facilitate the understanding that human rights education included the promotion of human rights in daily school life, not just in the classroom.
- For the Final Evaluation Report (August 2010) on the first phase<sup>7</sup>, 76 Member States had provided information.
- The second phase (2010-ongoing) was now focusing on higher education and human rights training for teachers and educators, civil servants, law enforcement officials and military personnel. In higher education, it included vocational training; based on principles and frameworks contained in many instruments of UNESCO.
- The Plan of Action of each phase provided strategies in detail for each sector, actors to be involved, and guidance on the national implementation process and coordination, which is the responsibility of governments.
- The High Commissioner's progress report on the second phase would be submitted to the HRC 21st session (September 2012). Member States and NHRIs were invited to provide information and for now 12 responses were received.

Based on these facts and the steps taken, Ippolitti mentioned her observation on several challenges including: (i) the focus of the second phase of the WPHRE was rather too broad for the focused implementation; (ii) there needed to be greater awareness of the second phase; and, therefore, (iii) more work by stakeholders would contribute to advancing the implementation.

In her concluding remarks, Ippolitti shared some ideas of how NHRIs and civil society could cooperate with OHCHR, such as: monitoring government actions in their respective countries; informing OHCHR of relevant action; implementing some of OHCHR's suggested actions; and disseminating OHCHR's resources. She also encouraged participants to directly contact the OHCHR METS as needed, as well as to refer to the webpage dedicated to human rights education within the OHCHR website.<sup>8</sup>

**Ms. Kirsten Roberts, Director, Irish Human Rights Commission**

Roberts first provided an overview of the Irish Human Rights Commission (IHRC).

- IHRC established in 2000, functioning since 2003, is the only independent statutory body in Ireland tasked with promoting and protecting all human rights.
- Its functions include monitoring legislation, reporting to international treaty bodies, taking cases, acting as amicus

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<sup>6</sup> OHCHR, UNESCO, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR), the European Commission, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), the Organization of American States and the Council of Europe.

<sup>7</sup> United Nations General Assembly document A/65/322 on Final evaluation of the implementation of the first phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (24 August 2010) - Report of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education in the School System.

<sup>8</sup> OHCHR METS email on the WPHRE: [wphre@ohchr.org](mailto:wphre@ohchr.org); and OHCHR webpage on human rights education and training: [www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/index.htm](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/index.htm)

curiae and raising awareness of human rights education.

She continued by illustrating the work of IHRC on human rights education in Ireland in the past five years carried out primarily in two “streams” - firstly, mapping human rights education and commenting on policies and practices in the formal, non-formal and continuing professional development sectors; and secondly, providing tailored human rights training for the Civil and Public Service.

Roberts mentioned a baseline study<sup>9</sup> published by IHRC in 2010 which provided an overview of human rights education across a diverse range of sectors, and incorporated the importance of the UN Decade and the WPHRE as well as the five recommended components of the WPHRE for a successful national programme in operationalizing the delivery of human rights education. In line with the mapping study and policy work on human rights education, she stressed that through policy submissions to the National Council of Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), IHRC successfully influenced a stronger emphasis on human rights education in the final syllabus regarding the introduction of a new subject, *Politics and Society*. She added that IHRC had also made a submission to NCCA on strengthening the civic, social and political education second-level subject from a human rights perspective to be expanded in the revised Junior Cycle curriculum. She noted that in order to deal with having little or no initiatives of human rights education or training in the civil and public service, the IHRC’s Human Rights Education and Training Project (HRETP) had been set up in March 2010, receiving positive feedback and working closely within the aims and objectives identified in the WPHRE.

As additional methodologies, Roberts further explained that IHRC had created a website with uploaded video clips, quizzes and links to further training resources<sup>10</sup> and a tailored publication<sup>11</sup> of which more than 7000 copies had been distributed. On these activities, she positively remarked that over 300 civil and public servants had participated in the training and additional “training for trainers” sessions, bringing human rights education and training to wider audiences.

Roberts concluded with examples of the engagement in the promotion of human rights education at the United Nations level of IHRC as the Chair of the European group of NHRIs from 2006-2011 and a member of the International Co-ordinating Committee (ICC) of NHRIs that included making an extensive submission to OHCHR on the WPHRE second phase, statements to the HRC on behalf of the European Group of NHRIs and contribution of input to the drafting process of the UDHRET through the ICC as well as reports to treaty bodies and Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

**Mr. Michele Brunelli, UNESCO Chair on Human Rights and Ethics of International Cooperation, University of Bergamo**

Brunelli first presented an overview of UNESCO Chairs and their function, and then focused on the UNESCO Chair on Human Rights and Ethics of International Cooperation that he represented (Bergamo Chair)<sup>12</sup>.

- Currently there were 715 different UNESCO Chairs in the world<sup>13</sup> in 69 UNITWIN Networks (University Twinning and Networking), involving over 830 institutions in 131 countries.
- UNESCO Chairs' programme, created by UNESCO in 1992, aimed to promote training and research, encouraging cooperation between universities, and circulation and integration of knowledge among countries.
- The Bergamo Chair had been established in September 2004 as a learning, training and research facility to articulate the effectiveness of human rights with international cooperation and related activities within the UNITWIN framework.

Brunelli pointed out that UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks should be considered as not only ‘think tanks’ but also ‘bridge-builders’ or links between academia and civil society and that training and research activities of UNESCO Chairs should promote knowledge within communities, working with them and enabling them to influence political decisions. In the context of the work of the Bergamo Chair, he remarked that the aim, which was also a challenge, was to relate and connect different branches, several organisations, institutions, social and political actors, to establish international cooperation on human rights, starting from the acknowledgement of cultural diversities.

Referring to the right to education in the context of human rights education, Brunelli stated that the effectiveness of the right to education was challenged by discrimination that persisted in many countries, particularly in the context of crisis and conflict. In this regard, he presented a summary of proposals made by UNESCO Chairs:

- Create a working group on human rights education, to develop content and method, examine existing teaching

<sup>9</sup> Irish Human Rights Commission, *Human Rights Education in Ireland - An Overview* (Dublin: Irish Human Rights Commission, 2011)

<sup>10</sup> Human Rights Education & Training Project of Irish Human Rights Commission website: [www.ihrc.ie/training](http://www.ihrc.ie/training)

<sup>11</sup> Irish Human Rights Commission, *Human Rights Guide for the Civil & Public Service* (Dublin: Irish Human Rights Commission, 2010)

<sup>12</sup> The UNESCO Chair of Bergamo website: [www.unibg.it/struttura/en\\_struttura.asp?cerca=en\\_cattedra-unesco\\_intro](http://www.unibg.it/struttura/en_struttura.asp?cerca=en_cattedra-unesco_intro)

<sup>13</sup> Information on UNESCO CHAIRS as at 31/05/2011 is available online.

See: [www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/UNITWIN/pdf/Doc\\_annexes/TB%20Chaires%2031052011.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/UNITWIN/pdf/Doc_annexes/TB%20Chaires%2031052011.pdf)



materials and develop further tools.

- Orient their work toward possible collaboration with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education on justiciability of the right to education and other concerns of the Special Rapporteur.
- Contribute to the WPHRE second phase, in particular, within higher education and human rights training for professional groups.

In his concluding remarks, Brunelli stated that UNESCO Chairs strived to develop specific teaching on the Human Rights Based Approach including: teaching in an interdisciplinary and intercultural manner; and teaching the relations between ethics, the rights of each individual and the links to their environment.

***Ms. Marianne Haslegrave, President, International Federation of University Women (IFUW)***

Haslegrave emphasised some of the challenges facing human rights education: firstly, inaccessible language and the use of acronyms in international policy documents and discussions. She stressed that human rights language should not be designed for experts only alienating those who were trying to teach or train people, particularly children or young people. Secondly, she pointed out that teachers themselves were not always familiar with the subject matter, which could lead to mis-informing, mis-guiding and deterring people away from human rights education.

For human rights education to be truly effective, Haslegrave recommended that it should be taught in universities and higher education institutions, and that courses in human rights should be provided for teachers who were already teaching. In addition, she stated that training should be made available for those who were working with out-of-school youths, and that NGOs could play a vital role in delivering human rights education and training courses in the local community.

Regarding the dissemination aspect, she placed an emphasis on the usefulness of social media for delivering human rights education and training in a wider range of outreach.

With regard to the UNDHRET, Haslegrave commented that education and training must be appropriate for the environment of the persons concerned, for example, health care professionals should receive training in human rights because they were faced with issues pertaining to human rights on a daily basis without sufficient knowledge or experience.

In her concluding remarks, Haslegrave stressed that commitment on all levels was going to be the key factor, in order to narrow the gap between international policies and practical application and that political will or academic commitment did not happen automatically. In this regard, she underlined the critical importance of civil society including NGOs to ensure that governments demonstrated in action their commitment to human rights education enshrined in the human rights instruments that they had ratified.

**DISCUSSION**

Following the presentations, a number of questions were raised from the floor including monitoring of human rights education implementation, the role of NGOs and accessibility.

Regarding the question on monitoring by the Platform Member States of the implementation of the UNDHRET, Gutiérrez made a comment in this regard that the HRC was a political body and therefore Costa Rica would continue to work in the Platform and raise the issue of human rights education implementation. She added that the UNDHRET and the WPHRE were practical tools complementing each other which required NGOs to cooperate with governments to implement the political aspiration enshrined in these instruments. In response to this question, Ipolitti made a remark on the UNDHRET that although no monitoring mechanism was incorporated in it, the United Nations had other monitoring mechanisms in which human rights education could be dealt with, such as Special Procedures, the UPR and treaty bodies.

On the question of how cooperation and networking could increase, Dumitriu commented that the Council of Europe was exploring this aspect and was receiving input from governments and NGOs and that the youth department in Strasbourg also fed into this process. Ipolitti responded that the WPHRE was a joint platform, a tool for everybody and that OHCHR had field presences in 55 countries and gave assistance for networking, facilitated sharing experiences and programmes, and also provided free OHCHR publications.

Regarding the question of limited accessibility to human rights education for people with disabilities, nomadic populations, populations 'on the move' or those who could not read, Ipolitti responded that there was a department within OHCHR working specifically on accessibility issues, and that materials for human rights education was now available in different formats such as video and braille.

## PANEL II: Human Rights Education in Formal Settings in Practice

PANELISTS: *Ms. Urška Čas Svetek*, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Slovenia; *Ms. Karen Tse*, International Bridges for Justice; *Ms. Astrid Stuckelberger*, International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics; *Mr. Peter Kirchschräger*, Co-Director, Centre of Human Rights Education, University of Teacher Education Central Switzerland Lucerne; *Mr. Jacobus Vorster*, North-West University, South Africa; *Ms. Laura Von Mandach*, Centre Suisse de formation pour le personnel pénitentiaire  
MODERATOR: *Mr. Morse Flores*, International Association for Religious Freedom

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### **Ms. Urška Čas Svetek, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Slovenia**

Čas Svetek first introduced in brief the Platform, comprised by 7 Member States (Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia, and Switzerland) that advocated for human rights education, supported the WPHRE and were “the driving force” behind the UNDHRET, adopted 19 December, 2012 by the General Assembly. She indicated the UNDHRET as the first international document that comprehensively addressed human rights education and training and provided guidance to both State and non-State actors, referring in particular Articles 1, 2, 3 and 7 of the UNDHRET.

Drawing attention to the distinction between policy and practice in light of the UNDHRET and the WPHRE first and second phases, Čas Svetek presented several actions and challenges in practice in Slovenia.

- National policies and legislation for a rights-based approach to education had been put in place in the framework of the WPHRE first phase and topics had linked to human rights were included in the obligatory school curriculum at elementary and secondary level; and the activities regarding the WPHRE second phase had started.
- The “Our rights” project had been launched, designed to teach children about their rights and incorporate teaching materials adapted to different age groups which had now been translated into 17 languages and used in 16 countries; and this project had included as one of the best practices in the publication “Human Rights Education in the School Systems of Europe, Central Asia and North America: A Compendium of Good Practice”.<sup>1</sup>
- Teachers were trained in human rights before obtaining their licence and candidates for the position of school principal must attend such courses; additional training was offered to teachers on a voluntary basis - the practice indicated the need for more participation of teachers.
- At higher education level, while universities were autonomous and curriculum was not entirely subject to government influence, it had been found that a lot was yet to be done in terms of providing human rights education and training courses.
- For military personnel, who were taking part in international operations and missions, and police officers, human rights education and training was systematically provided; and as for police officers, a special emphasis was placed on training in how to manage stereotyping and prejudice and prevent discrimination.
- There were yet other public officials and sectors where human rights education and training needed to be provided, and Slovenia was exploring ways to realise this.

In her concluding remarks, Čas Svetek stated that civil society played a vital role in the promotion and delivery of human rights education and training, encouraging civil society actors to contact the Slovenian department of Human Rights with their ideas and suggestions.

### **Ms. Karen Tse, International Bridges for Justice**

Turning to civil society practices and viewpoints of this Panel, first, Tse introduced her organisation and its activities - founded 12 years ago, International Bridges for Justice (IBJ) had been working to guarantee people the right to competent legal representation, protection from torture and cruel punishment, as well as the right to a fair trial.

Referring to her human rights education work she started in Cambodia with legal training, Tse noted that very few lawyers she had worked with had been aware of human rights or known how to use human rights effectively in court. She noted that obtaining evidence or “confessions” under torture had commonly been taking place and frequently overlooked despite the illegality of such a practice.

As it related to the legal process, Tse placed an emphasis on the need for a great number of trained lawyers with good knowledge and skills for dealing with the question of torture, and she added that they should be able to transmit such knowledge and skills in training for others.

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<sup>1</sup> OSCE/ODIHR, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe and UNESCO, *Human Rights Education in the School Systems of Europe, Central Asia and North America: A Compendium of Good Practice* (Warsaw: OSCE/ODIHR, 2009).

Based on these facts that she had witnessed in the past, Tse presented practical activities conducted by IBJ via an array of global programming which was designed to reach as many human rights and criminal justice defenders as possible. She described the global programme which was facilitated through online networking such as:

- A wide range of training manuals;
- Country assessment tools including statistical data and scorecards; and
- “Defense Wiki”, which was based on Wikipedia, as an open forum to gather and provide access to case law, codes, treaties, and other resources for lawyers in developing countries throughout the world.

Lastly, Tse encouraged all to visit the IBJ website<sup>2</sup> where a variety of e-learning resources and their annual reports were accessible.

### **Ms. Astrid Stuckelberger, International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics**

In her presentation, Stuckelberger focused on an evidence-based need for human rights training for staff in the formal public health sector at national level, recognising the reality of human rights violations in this sector.

Firstly, with regard to national level, Stuckelberger indicated national public health institutions and other relevant formal settings such as universities, public health schools, medical faculties, nursing schools and education via online courses. Secondly, regarding the international level, she indicated the World Health Organisation (WHO) and its Human Rights and Ethics unit, pointing to the WHO International Health Regulation (IHR) as relevant to human rights education and training in this sector. She also added other United Nations agencies related to health issues and human rights education and training, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

Stuckelberger presented a number of indicators of human rights education, including statistical data, at Geneva University Medical School and Public Health School. According to a study she presented, in this formal setting of higher education, human rights education was mainstreamed at undergraduate and postgraduate levels as well as vocational training.

Stuckelberger referred to a study conducted in 2006<sup>3</sup>, which surveyed 219 medical schools in 15 European countries, many which had integrated, for example, ethics and human rights education into the curricula. She cited another example that the International Federation of Medical Students Association representatives from 46 countries found it important to have courses on human rights.<sup>4</sup>

In her concluding remarks, Stuckelberger introduced publications<sup>5</sup> through which more details and relevant information on the content of her presentation could be found. She posed the question “what enforces human rights and what limits them?” She pointed out that the challenge was “human rights illiteracy” and stated that every medical student should learn about the UNDHRET, highlighting that emerging challenges to the health care sector and “human” rights included increasing longevity, use of robots in daily life, brain and stem cell research.

### **Mr. Peter Kirchschräger, Co-director, Centre of Human Rights Education, University of Teacher Education Central Switzerland and Lucerne**

Based on his professional experience and expertise in higher education, Kirchschräger focused his presentation on human rights education and higher education for educators with an introduction to three dimensions - conceptual, methodological and institutional - of human rights education and higher education and research. He mentioned that within the conceptual dimension lay the importance of including a clear and broad definition of human rights education and that learning about human rights must be a process of learning “through” and “for” human rights.

In regard to the methodological dimension, Kirchschräger commented that the choice of methods including instruments and materials to be utilised by educators must be made in consideration of the other two remaining dimensions of

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<sup>2</sup> Website of IBJ: [www.ibj.org](http://www.ibj.org)

<sup>3</sup> Claudot, F; Van Baaren-Baudin, A J; Chastonay, P., *Santé publique* (Vandoeuvre-lès-Nancy, France) Vol.18 (1): 85-90; 2006.

<sup>4</sup> E Kabengele S Maier V Zesiger P Chastonay *Revue Med Suisse*, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Sous la direction de Yaël Reinharz Hazan et Philippe Chastonay, *Santé et droits de l'homme, Vol.1 - Les Malades De L'Indifférenc* (Geneve: Collection Médecine Société, 2004); Véronique Zesiger and Philippe Chastonay, *Santé et droits humains : Situations concrètes et outils de protection d'apprentissage* (Geneva: Collection Médecine Société, 2007); and Véronique Zesiger, Emmanuel Kabengele Mpinga, Axel Max Klohn and Philippe Chastonay, *Santé et droits humains, Volume II - Apprendre par l'exemple: Des études de cas comme outils d'apprentissage* (Geneva: Collection Médecine Société, 2008).

human rights education. In this sense he pointed to the importance of authenticity in the learning and research context of human rights and the consequential necessity for educators of human rights to acquire specific and additional competences in human rights education. Referring to the institutional dimension of human rights education, he remarked that facilities, centres, graduate and postgraduate programmes needed to be established and that grants to support them also would be needed for the purpose of human rights education.

Kirchschläger underlined the interdisciplinary approach within the institutional dimension and further commented that success depended on the establishment of a human rights education institution at the higher education institution. He also expressed that public dialogue for creating awareness of human rights and the role of higher education and research was required for the furthering of human rights.

In terms of the practice of human rights education for educators, Kirchschläger referred to teacher training of the Centre of Human Rights Education (ZMRB) of the University of Teacher Education Lucerne<sup>6</sup>. More specifically, he referred to the ZMRB basic training that delivered human rights education both as a subject-matter and as a cross-curricular topic. Another example of practice he referred to was their in-service training, namely the International Study Programme: Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS HRE)<sup>7</sup> for an internationally recognised diploma.

**Mr. Jacobus Vorster, North-West University, South Africa**

To begin his presentation, Vorster stated that “human rights violations of today were the wars of tomorrow”. He recalled the severe oppression of black people in South African society that took place under the colonial rule system. As a result of this ‘first hand’ experience he believed that the people’s attention was now focused on the recognition and protection of human rights. He commented that in this regard the Constitutional Court had made several rulings about human rights issues and that the press now used its new-found freedom to act as a watchdog, frequently indicating early warning signs of potential human rights violations.

Vorster highlighted some lessons learnt: firstly, the importance of human rights living in the hearts of people before it could live in the law. In this regard he stipulated that rights meant nothing without morals, thus bills of rights were founded in certain moral values, but that they also created moral value systems in societies. Furthermore he emphasised that these concepts must be defined in a juristic way and formulated to become applicable in jurisprudence.

Secondly, due to some religious ideas and practices infringing on the rights of people, Vorster mentioned that there was a need in South Africa for a clearer definition of human rights to be established. He remarked that some theological discourses were challenged to address these issues, especially pertaining to theological ethics and the meaning and implications of an ethos of human rights, all of which became popular themes for rigorous debates - these themes included justification for the continued segregation of races based on religious grounds, gender rights and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

In his concluding remarks, Vorster pointed out that teachers were trained to explain the constitution of the country and for this reason, inter alia, the constitution was translated into 11 languages and that copies were made available for teachers to use in their curricula. He also mentioned that the demand for human rights education and training resulted in many postgraduate students choosing human rights for in-depth research, which he considered would prove extremely useful in building the ethos of human rights as the pillar of the future society.

**Ms. Laura von Mandach, Centre Suisse de formation pour le personnel pénitentiaire**

Von Mandach focused her presentation on the context of human rights education for prison guards and personnel and their environment. She referred to the activities of the Centre she represented that offered basic and vocational training as well as leadership courses for Swiss prison staff. She commented that the training materials used had been developed and trialled for use with a wide range of prison staff and were now grouped together into modules. Regarding the breadth of training, she highlighted that it covered a variety of topics such as: foreigners, women in prison, psychology, conflict management and health issues, reflecting the intention of the Centre to integrate a human rights approach throughout.

When looking at the challenges faced within the classroom, von Mandach explained the following:

- Participants’ lack of knowledge and understanding as well as their prejudices about human rights education, which

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<sup>6</sup> [www.humanrightseducation.ch](http://www.humanrightseducation.ch)

<sup>7</sup> [www.wbza.luzern.phz.ch/zusatzausbildungen/cas-human-rights-education](http://www.wbza.luzern.phz.ch/zusatzausbildungen/cas-human-rights-education)

had manifested in several ways including some prison staff who viewed human rights training as a form of punishment;

- Their presumption that human rights educators were excessively preoccupied with “theoretical concepts” without understanding the “real” issues on the ground; and
- The apprehension and insecurity of prison staff in returning to education as for many prison personnel it had been several years since they were in a classroom.

Von Mandach pointed out some of the methods that the Centre had used to overcome these challenges, namely: role playing awareness-raising exercises; placing an emphasis on the need for professionalism; ensuring that the learning was focused in a Swiss legal basis; ensuring that the content could be translated into daily life examples; adopting a human rights based approach; enhancing self-esteem by referring to the learners’ own expertise; incorporating many self-reflection elements; and ensuring that there was space to verbalise resistance.

In her concluding remarks, Von Mandach mentioned that because people were not always convinced of the concept or value of human rights education, it was imperative to find creative approaches when delivering courses. She further remarked that research analysing arguments of resistance to human rights should be undertaken and used to formulate adequate and convincing responses.

## DISCUSSION

The presentations were followed by a lively discussion that included the following comment and questions:

- (1) Lawyers could become targets when viewed as a human rights defender.
- (2) What was the impact of human rights education in schools?
- (3) How could we make human rights education more attractive to professionals?
- (4) How would “peer education” be an effective methodological learning approach of human rights education and training, if it would?
- (5) In the context of freedom of religion and expression, how could human rights education be effectively taught in Muslim countries and integrated into Sharia law?

Tse responded in agreement with comment (1) on lawyers that IBJ’s lawyer training approach was to encourage lawyers to work with governments in their respective countries, not against them. She gave the example of Cambodia, where it was illegal to obtain confessions through the use of torture. She further mentioned that whilst many countries provided State funded human rights education programmes, IBJ trained lawyers in how to use these existing laws, policies and information to protect both their clients and themselves.

Regarding (2) the impact of human rights education in schools, Čas Svetek responded by recalling the basic aims of human rights education and training - to make everyone aware of their own rights and the rights of others and in so doing, combating ignorance and discrimination. In response to question (3) on making human rights education more attractive to professionals, she placed an emphasis on the need for effectively raising awareness of the goals and merits of human rights education by all relevant actors.

On question (4), a representative from OHCHR commented from the floor that “peer education” was a useful methodology for helping establish a sense of equality and authenticity in learning. Agreeing with this, von Mandach commented that although the Centre Suisse de formation pour le personnel pénitentiaire was currently conducting human rights education in the traditional classroom setting and as of yet did not incorporate “peer education”, the Centre was also in the process of reviewing vocational training and different learning methodologies such as role play. Stuckelberger commented that in her experience using professionally relevant case studies had been most effective.

As for question (5), Čas Svetek expressed the difficulty to agree to the view that human rights education was incompatible with the Muslim world and remarked that this was a matter of interpretation. She added that all States needed to be encouraged to be more proactive about the promotion and implementation of human rights education.

Referring to all religions on question (5), Stuckelberger pointed out that one of the important aspects of religion and human rights education was the need for religious organisations to examine where the teachings and practices strengthened women’s rights. Kirchschräger added that education could change the mind-sets of people and religious traditions could also change, however he asserted that these changes were always better to come from within the religions or their communities themselves for which human rights education could play an important role.

### PANEL III: Human Rights Education in Non-Formal Settings in Practice

PANELISTS: *Ms. Rosslyn Noonan*, Chair, the International Coordinating Committee of NHRIs; *Dr. Katrien Beeckman*, Head, Principles and Values Department, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; *Mr. Alfred Fernandez*, Director, Collège Universitaire Henry Dunant; *Ms. Asmae Fahoum*, Association Instant Présent; *Mr. Ahmed Seghaier*, EURO-MENA for Human Rights Education & Training; *Mr. André-Marc Huwyler*, The Nuclei of Youth and Children's Orchestras of the State of Bahia  
MODERATOR: *Mr. Clément Imbert*, Association Points- Cœur

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#### **Ms. Rosslyn Noonan, Chair, the International Coordinating Committee of NHRIs**

Noonan first underlined the responsibilities of NHRIs, referring to United Nations General Assembly resolution 48/134 "To publicize human rights and raise awareness through information and education".<sup>1</sup> In light of this responsibility, she briefly introduced the "Human Rights Community Development (HRCD)" approach that aimed to build self-reliance and respectful communities, where individuals and groups identified, examined, addressed and monitored the local situation of human rights, and advocated for the realisation of their community's human rights priorities. She emphasised the importance of HRCD because, she asserted, States would respect human rights to the extent insisted by their citizens that they should do so.

Noonan gave the example of the HRCD approach applied in two countries. For her first example, she indicated the practice that had been carried out in New Zealand<sup>2</sup> in which specific participants from five local communities covering three geographical and two sectorial areas had undergone training for trainers' courses for at least three years in non-formal settings. In terms of ensuring the quality of training and targeting the communities most affected by human rights violations, she further explained that the capacity-building had been carried out from within the communities namely: Māori; persons with disabilities; lesbian gay bisexual transgender and intersex persons; those who had experienced mental health issues; women and girls; youths and the aged; and ethnic and religious minorities. She added that the training had helped participants develop skills in dialogue, negotiation, education, advocacy, lobbying, relationship-building and monitoring.

Noonan also illustrated the practice that had been carried out in the Philippines<sup>3</sup> with three indigenous communities, two of which were based in conflict areas. She highlighted that the training aimed at increasing participants' self-confidence and at strengthening their ability to identify and deal with human rights abuses. She underlined the following features of the training: (i) working together with police and other agencies; (ii) prioritising the training needs in the communities by the communities themselves; and (iii) integrating a three-year monitoring and evaluation plan in the training.

In her concluding remarks, Noonan emphasised the importance of participation, non-discrimination, equality, empowerment, accountability and the cultivation of authentic relationships within non-formal human rights education training.

#### **Ms. Katrien Beeckman, Head, Principles and Values Department, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

Beeckman first mentioned the importance of reflecting on the reason for engaging with human rights education. She highlighted that the objective of human rights education was to obtain respect for human rights while nurturing values such as mutual understanding and responsibility for oneself and others, helping build capacity of ethical leadership and choices.

She mentioned that although the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) was best known for its humanitarian and disaster relief work, one of its three strategic aims for this decade was to promote a culture of nonviolence and peace. In this regard, she remarked that IFRC had developed a flagship initiative entitled "Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change" (YABC) as an ethical leadership initiative inspired by Gandhi's quote "(...) be the change you want to see (...)."

Beeckman pointed to the fact that IFRC currently had 2300 youth initiatives at international and regional levels, in 130 countries, involving 350 peer educators from 90 different countries, most of which were engaged in non-formal

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<sup>1</sup> General Assembly resolution 48/134, 1993, (A) 3 (g).

<sup>2</sup> [www.hrc.co.nz](http://www.hrc.co.nz)

<sup>3</sup> [www.hrc.co.nz/international-human-rights/philippines-human-rights-community-development-project](http://www.hrc.co.nz/international-human-rights/philippines-human-rights-community-development-project)

settings. She named a few of these for instance - youth camps, workshops, leadership trainings, community clubs (leisure & sports) and other activities which were outside the school curriculum.

She described the projects as successful particularly because their process was ensured to be as important as their content through advocating equality among participants, who had ownership of learning. In this regard, she highlighted methodologies such as peer education and non-cognitive learning such as games, role plays and other creative forms. In addition, she placed an emphasis on freedom of choice, stating that one should not “impose” human rights education onto others.

In her concluding remarks, Beeckman stressed that respect for human rights began from within one’s own life by each of us, for instance, by asking oneself how one could work in human rights education if one’s attitude was aggressive. She invited everyone to visit the IFRC website, where useful information and materials were available, including tool kits, information on education based on skills and values as well as the IFRC Resolution.<sup>4</sup>

**Mr. Alfred Fernandez, Director, Collège Universitaire Henry Dunant**

Fernandez first briefly introduced the objectives of the Collège Universitaire Henry Dunant, in particular, to provide participants with tools to enable them to build a culture of human rights in a global society. Referring to the practice based on this objective, he pointed to 1400 participants from 94 countries who had benefited from the training of the Collège since 1995 through a long history of working in close collaboration with OHCHR, the UNESCO International Bureau of Education and NGOs<sup>5</sup>.

Fernandez further described the working method of the Collège that participants were helped to be familiar with the United Nations system, particularly its human rights components, through training in analysis of the international and country situations, observation of mechanisms and interdisciplinary knowledge that also helped enable participants to make better use of the relevant human rights systems.

In reflection on human rights through his engagement with these activities, Fernandez commented that in recognising the need for protecting rights it was imperative to ensure the recognition of legal obligations on the side of the duty-bearer through the universality and indivisibility of human rights. In this regard, he indicated the need for further improvement in the work of the United Nations to balance the equal efforts for both the set of economic, social and cultural rights and the set of civil and political rights, as had been recognised at the 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights.

Fernandez also remarked that the world had changed in the last 17 years since the Collège had started its training programmes, constantly necessitating for the Collège to adapt to the context of a continuously changing environment. Taking up for instance, the birth of the internet around 1995, he commented that while this “revolutionary” accessibility and speed for information was now available, the challenge for the Collège was in turn to keep up with perpetual changes and developments to meet the needs and demands of participants in human rights training.

Recalling his own observation of the participants who had taken part in the Summer University course conducted by the Collège and their strengthened commitment to the defence of human rights, he expressed in his concluding remarks that human rights should be taught more consistently throughout law schools.

**Ms. Asmae Fahoum, Association Instant Présent**

Fahoum spoke on behalf of Gérard Gallego, artistic director of the Association Instant Présent. She outlined the aims and objectives of the Association:

- To build relationships;
- To educate people in how to live together “better”; and
- To democratise access to culture using theatre as a tool for social integration of vulnerable people including persons with mental disabilities, prisoners and migrants.

Fahoum stressed that the association’s main focus was to highlight the human dignity of all persons, and in doing so, to illustrate rights, responsibilities and capabilities of people through promoting and facilitating the process for people to demonstrate their varying abilities and strength in human relationships, unity and solidarity.

In light of UNDHRET, paragraph 2 of Article 6, Fahoum commented that the vast potential of non-formal education to

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<sup>4</sup> [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

<sup>5</sup> [www.cuhd.org](http://www.cuhd.org)

promote human rights education was very important to be fully recognised and applied in practice, particularly through various forms of the arts. She further explained that the theatre, for example, was accessible for a vast majority of people whose backgrounds could differ from each other, and thus could be useful through performances pertained to human rights.

Reflecting on the experience of the Association, she stressed that utilising the theatre to promote human rights allowed the general public to become informed about human rights issues in an accessible manner, enabling people to share space, words and emotions for human rights.

Fahoum also shared her own experience as both a performer and an audience member - theatre had the potential to raise awareness of human rights education to whoever came into contact with it whether they were the performer or a viewer among the public. In her concluding remarks, she encouraged everyone to visit the website of Association Instant Présent<sup>6</sup> and to consider using theatre as a tool to promote human rights in their own initiatives and activities in non-formal settings in practice.

### **Mr. Ahmed Seghair, EURO-MENA for Human Rights Education & Training**

Seghair first questioned the level of importance of the role played by social media in the popular mobilisation and communication in the desire for emancipation in the Arab countries. He recalled paragraph 1 of Article 1 of the UNDHRET, "Everyone has the right to know, seek and receive information about all human rights and fundamental freedoms and should have access to human rights education and training." He stated that "everyone" included individuals, groups of individuals and civil society being entitled to receive information on all human rights and fundamental freedoms. In connection to this article of the UNDHRET and today's available communication technologies such as the internet, he stressed that social media remained crucial for democratic participation.

Seghair defined social media as "the means of communication offered by the internet to initiate a dialogue, exchange, share, listen, interact, work, create, act, etc.", specifying the most prominent of these - blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Dailymotion and Flickr, to name a few. He remarked that the internet offered the opportunity to dialogue and exchange information with a view to taking concrete action, thus providing many possibilities as it was largely free and fast.

Regarding the positive merits of using social media for human rights education, Seghair explained that its use promoted equality through easy access to information and teaching materials including international human rights instruments. In this regard, he highlighted that social media played a huge role in promoting democratic citizenship during the Arab Spring by not only organising individuals into a grassroots movement, but also through linking the movement to the outside world. He commented that it connected those who had been exiled and those who had remained at home, offering to them the exercise of democratic rights of association and freedom of expression.

Seghair asserted his belief that the following key factors led to the success of the Arab Spring:

- Social media allowed for free movement and free and timely access to information.
- Activists were mostly younger, highly educated and unemployed people, who at the same time had access to social media and were deprived of the enjoyment of the majority of their human rights.
- Social ties in Arab societies were very strong and people knew each other well. Social media thus offered the Arab youth the opportunity to come together, engage in discussion and organise themselves.
- Many unemployed young people had the time and the tools including social media to educate themselves in human rights and the economic, political and social development of their countries.

### **Mr. André-Marc Huwylar, The Nuclei of Youth and Children's Orchestras of the State of Bahia**

Huwylar first explained that his organisation (in the original language, "Núdeos Estaduais de Orquestras Juvenis e Infantis da Bahia" or NEOJIBA) was a non-profit organisation in Brazil created in 2007 and received financial support from the government of Bahia and the United Nations Development Programme.

He mentioned three main objectives of the organisation that were relevant to human rights education:

- To achieve social integration and reconciliation of all social classes through working together for a common goal;
- To overcome media stereotypes through teaching classical music to young people; and
- To help people gain self-respect, respect for others and acceptance and celebration of difference through personalised

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<sup>6</sup> [theatreinstantpresent.org](http://theatreinstantpresent.org)



training, new skill development and forging excellence.

Referring to more concrete activities of NEOJIBA, Huwlyer further explained that although the organisation was still growing, it currently consisted of 30 staff and 730 participants and NEOJIBA offered master-class workshops on: theatre management; making string instruments; and library archiving. He also highlighted that NEOJIBA had achieved a great deal of success in Brazil and that it had also carried out a tour in Europe.

Briefly reporting on the numerous orchestras set up in several Latin American countries, Huwlyer remarked that in the case of NEOJIBA, it is youths who engaged in orchestra activities and their age ranged as young as 5-11 and then 11-18 with the aim of preparing young people to perform in the main orchestra. As the organisation aimed to alleviate social profiling involving discrimination, Huwlyer underlined that when recruiting new members, the entry process for NEOJIBA was via audition only and open to all children without any discrimination based on their background.

In his concluding remarks, Huwlyer emphasised that the organisation's key function was to help build bridges, and create social integration, within fractured societies in Brazil, where there was a strong need for reconciliation. He asserted that those who engaged in their projects developed not only musical talent, but also the ability to persevere, set personal goals and demonstrate their potential. He added that in this process, those participants learnt their own value and responsibility through the contribution they made to the whole orchestra in which they interacted with others.

## DISCUSSION

One of the comments from the floor drew the attention of the Panel to the fact that representatives of Member States had gained a better perception and understanding of human rights education and training thanks to the drafting process of the UNDHRET, and therefore the question was asked whether this had applied to NHRIs.

Noonan in her response agreed to the comment and confirmed that the process had contributed to enabling NHRIs, too, to recognise the value of human rights education and led a number of NHRIs to start or continue working on human rights education and incorporating it into their mandates. She further commented that the NHRI of Morocco was a good example of this and was now one of the leading NHRIs for human rights education.

A number of general questions on human rights education in non-formal settings were raised including some on the value of human rights education itself. A response to this question expressed from the floor indicated the need to see human rights education from the overview perspective of the value of the United Nations, based on efforts and dialogue to realise peace and human rights, and thus education approaches and dissemination of information were crucial, constituting a substantial part of efforts to achieve peace and human rights.

Fernandez made a general comment that often States did not have the will to implement human rights education and that more was yet to be done to encourage them to do so. He remarked that regardless of the available resources, sufficient or not, there would still be room for us to make further efforts in human rights education and that this ought to be the choice to make.

A question on negative contributions by the media to the violation of women's rights was also raised from the floor. Seghair acknowledged the media in general as a very powerful tool that could commit violations of human rights. He however also pointed out that social media could not be blamed for violations of human rights and instead he placed a strong emphasis on the need for human rights education and training for those who used these forms of communication technologies, in responsible and respectful manners in light of human rights standards.

There was also a question from the floor about the difference between peace education and human rights education. Beeckman noted that human rights and peace education must not be trapped in semantics, leaving aside the importance of their effect to improve societies. She also commented that for both peace education and human rights education, similar methodologies, concepts and content could be used, just labelling them differently, and therefore she believed that when action needed to be taken and the corresponding effect was expected, it would be better not to remain confused by their labels, whether peace or human rights, in terms of semantics.

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The NGO WG on HREL hopes that the present report provides all relevant actors with useful information and insights for better strategy-building.

***The NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning***  
of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO), Geneva

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