



## Human Rights Council 58<sup>th</sup> session, High-Level Segment

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Oral Statement



Honorable Chair, distinguished delegates,

Today, I stand before you to address a matter that is not just close to my heart, but foundational to human dignity—the right to education. This right is not merely an aspiration; it is a fundamental human right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Education is transformative. It empowers individuals, breaks the cycle of poverty, and builds equitable, resilient societies. Yet, today, more than 251 million children and youths are still out of school globally<sup>1</sup>, a figure which hasn't changed much since 2015. This education crisis, worsened by poverty, conflict, and systemic inequalities, denies millions their fundamental right to education.

Without education, children face heightened risks of exploitation, forced labor, and early, child and forced marriage, perpetuating cycles of poverty, violence and inequality. Education is not just about classrooms—it is about ensuring that every child, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, has access to quality and inclusive learning opportunities.

### I urge this Council to:

1. **Prioritize education in global development policies and funding** to strengthen systems in underserved communities, including pre-primary, primary and secondary education.
2. **Support teacher training and curriculum development** to foster inclusivity and critical thinking.
3. **Champion innovative solutions** using technology to bridge education gaps, especially in remote and disaster-prone areas.
4. **Hold governments accountable** to fulfill their commitments to education under international frameworks.

This is a shared responsibility. Governments, civil society, the private sector, and international bodies must work together to make education a universal right.

As Nelson Mandela said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Let us act with urgency and compassion to ensure no child is left behind.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Global education monitoring report 2024/5, UNESCO, p140 – Available on <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000391406>