

WFWPI - 66th UN DPI/NGO Conference - Education for Global Citizenship

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The 66th United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Conference was held for the very first time in the region of Asia, within the historical and refreshing city of Gyeongju, Republic of Korea. DPI organizes annual conferences as an opportunity for NGOs to engage civil society, UN bodies, youth, academic and economic institutions to discuss about key issues and solutions. From the DPI conferences, participants are encouraged to become advocates for sustainable peace and the betterment of the human family. This year, the 66th UN DPI/NGO Conference proceeded with the theme of, “Education for Global Citizenship: Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals Together,” which gathered over 700 NGOs from more than 104 countries. Workshops, roundtables, youth caucuses and an exhibition hall of NGOs were available to participants to gain insights on global challenges and to have the opportunity to form partnerships for the realization of the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Ban Ki Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, gave an address at the opening ceremony and stated that the NGOs should work together as “networks of global opportunity” in fulfillment of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. SG Ban instructed the participants to be loud and clear, and to listen sincerely what the challenges of society are, and to join forces with other NGOs in order to foster Global Citizenship that empowers the people to contribute to sustainable peace, despite the fact that this era is full of terror and challenge. SG Ban made it known that all youth want to strive for goodness in the world, but is in need of quality education and materials. SG Ban also encouraged the participants, especially the youth to pursue their dreams and passion, for all to have compassion, in respect to becoming global citizens.

The conference addressed a series of issues and had discussions on accessible and inclusive learning spaces, expanding opportunities of the sciences, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) for youth as an essential component for the development of all nations, ensuring quality education for children and youth in armed conflict and post-conflict situations as well as education for sustainable stewardship of the environment in response to climate change.

At the conclusion of the conference, gratitude was expressed to the participating NGOs and representatives for supporting the theme of global citizenship. Great hope was placed on the NGOs and youth, who then confirmed to be workers of peace through partnerships in fulfilling the sustainable development goals. Mr. Ahmad Alhendawi, Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth, United Nations Department of Public Information, stated that, “no one can do everything, but everyone can do something.” The Gyeongju Action Plan was then presented to the NGOs and participants, stating that through education and the spirit of global citizenship Agenda 2030 and essentially peace and sustainable development will be achieved. The Gyeongju Action Plan can be viewed on UN DPI/NGO Conference website.