

Honorable Chair!
Distinguished Members, Colleagues!

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights establishes that “Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace”.

Thus, education is strongly linked not only to human rights per se, but also to security and peace. In many international obligations that are part of the legislation of our countries we have approached education and human rights through our joint commitments on tolerance, mutual respect, understanding and reconciliation.

But are we successful in this matter? Have we as parliamentarians done enough to make sure that education is promoting peace and mutual respect in the world, or that our dialog here in the IPU leads to peace and security all over the world?

Our role, as Parliamentarians should be crucial to ensure that United Nations human rights mechanisms’ recommendations are implemented, particularly as implementation often requires legislative changes and that the countries who cynically continue to violate international law with military and informational aggressions against other countries - are stopped and brought to responsibility.

In my county Ukraine children continue to suffer from Russian aggression, remaining among the most affected by the armed conflict in the world. During the past 5 years at least 97 boys and 49 girls in the conflict zone on the east of Ukraine have lost their lives since the beginning of the Russian aggression against my county.

Ongoing fighting poses physical danger and risks to children living along the line of contact in Donbas to be wounded or killed by direct or nearby shelling and mines.

On top of that, children living in proximity of the line of contact keep suffering from symptoms consistent with the post-traumatic stress disorder.

Furthermore, from among more than 1.3 million of IDPs in our country, who were forced to leave their homes from war affected regions, 230.000 are children. **More than 2 million IDP’s are not able to come back to their homes.**

Constitution of Ukraine guarantees the right to education to everyone. Therefore, every child irrespective of its IDP status has the right to education in the territory of Ukraine, including to higher education. In October 2014, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted the Law "On ensuring the rights and freedoms of internally displaced persons". Its purpose is to

ensure for IDPs - citizens of Ukraine the implementation of their rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution of Ukraine. In particular, the Law provides for the continuation of education for IDPs.

Russian aggression has changed all spheres of everyday life of people living in the war affected areas. Local institutions of higher education could no longer function in a "business as usual" scenario. They were forced to be transferred to other parts of Ukraine. In order to facilitate their functioning under new circumstances in January 2018 an interim consultative and advisory body - the Council of Rectors of Higher Education Institutions transferred from the conflict affected regions was established. It comprises heads of 17 higher education institutions. In general, 18 universities have moved beyond occupied territories to other big Ukrainian cities, with three and a half thousand scientific and pedagogical workers and almost forty thousand students.

Knowing is not enough. we must apply. Being willing is not Enough. We must do - those are the works of Leonardo da Vinci and they are indeed true. We must not just talk of stopping aggressors and violence, but act in it - and education can be a powerful tool To Provenca a safer world, a better world for our children.

We believe that education can and should be an efficient defense against the rise of violence, racism, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination, violations of international law and intolerance in the world. For better future for all.

Thank you for your attention!