



**31st Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF31)
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**RESOLUTION ON REGIONAL COOPERATION
THROUGH EDUCATION AND CULTURE**

*Sponsored by Canada, Russian Federation, Australia, Philippines
Co-sponsored by Cambodia*

We, the parliamentarians of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF), gathering in Manila, Republic of the Philippines for the 31st Annual Meeting of the APPF under the theme "Resilient Partnerships for Peace, Prosperity, and Sustainability":

Reaffirming the fundamental right to education enshrined in Articles 28 and 29 of the "United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child" and its crucial role in human capital development, economic and social progress, peacekeeping, and nation-building;¹

Acknowledging that education and culture are fundamentally important for sustainable development, human welfare, mutual understanding, peace, economic and social development, innovative growth, and are enshrined as fundamental human rights in international conventions;

Recognizing the Asia-Pacific region's diverse education systems and cultural expressions, while acknowledging the disparities in education accessibility, level, and infrastructure, with 27 million children and adolescents remaining illiterate and significant disparity in education accessibility, level, and infrastructure;

Emphasizing the capacity of culture and education to help establish and expand bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, promote multilingualism, foster dialogue, and join efforts within and between the countries, including through cultural diplomacy, as evidenced by the growing cultural engagement within the United Nations system, also at the country level;

Recognizing the pressing need to address the lingering barriers to equitable and inclusive access to education and culture for all, particularly in light of the unprecedented disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a particularly notable effect on children's education;

Affirming that international cooperation in education and culture fosters innovative growth, strengthens regional ties, expands specialist exchanges, accelerates economic development by sharing knowledge and skills, preparing students for the 21st-century globalized and knowledge-based society, and ensures the development of solutions to the challenges posed by climate change;

¹ Malaysia expressed its partial reservation on this paragraph

Emphasizing the urgency of implementing effective and responsive learning recovery measures, providing tools for adjusting, creating, and adapting to new learning platforms and instruments, and building resilient education systems and culture in light of climate change and other disruptive events;

Aspiring for inclusive educational systems that uphold the right to quality education of all students, especially those with special needs and learning disabilities, and students from diverse cultures and backgrounds;

Recognizing the crucial role of technology in education delivery to expand access to learning opportunities, accelerate learners' acquisition and development of 21st-century skills, and provide long-term solutions to various challenges facing the educational system;

Reimagining the future of education with the use of artificial intelligence and other related technologies while understanding and mitigating their potentially disruptive consequences;

Acknowledging the possible detrimental effects of the excessive use of the internet and social media on the mental and physical well-being, communication skills, academic performance, and cultural rootedness of children;

Promoting access to reliable information platforms that provide opportunities for self-expression, communication, and cross-cultural discourse;

Noting the APPF Vancouver Declaration that encourages mutual understanding, friendship, and confidence-building among countries;

Encouraging partnership and collaboration in the sharing of best practices, policy research and development, and the formulation of legislative interventions that promote education and culture in the region;

Recognizing that culture is an essential component of human development as it represents a source of identity, innovation, and creativity for the individual and an important factor in social inclusion;

Reaffirming the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage on the international commitment to the protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage;

Recognizing the importance of respect and understanding for cultural diversity throughout the world and of working together and not against each other and of fostering intercultural understanding and dialogue, mutual listening and learning, and an ethic of global citizenship and solidarity;

Acknowledging the importance of the promotion of national cultures, artistic creation in all its forms, and international and regional cultural cooperation, as defined by the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity adopted in 2001;

Recalling the APPF's previous resolutions on education and culture, such as:

- Resolution Promoting Cooperation in Education, Culture, Science and Technology in the Asia-Pacific Region (APPF22/Res. 20);

- Resolution on Strengthening Regional Cooperation on Youth Skills Development and Employment in the Asia-Pacific (APPF25/Res. 28);
- Resolution on Promoting Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the Asia-Pacific (APPF29/Res. 14); and
- Resolution on Promoting Disability-Inclusive Education and Training in the Asia-Pacific (APPF29/Res. 13);

Reaffirming resolutions at previous meetings of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum, including on improved access for women to education, including but not limited to technical training, information technology, culture, science and technology, such as: APPF 27 Resolution No. 2; APPF 29 Resolution No. 13; and APPF 30 Resolution No. 8;

Acknowledging the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Education Strategy 2016-2030, which covers three major objectives: enhancing and aligning competencies to the needs of individuals, societies, and industries; accelerating innovation; and increasing employability;

Taking into consideration the adoption of other resolutions in the region emphasizing the importance of education, such as the ASEAN Declaration on Inclusive Education adopted by the ASEAN Ministers Education Meeting (ASEM) in 2015, the Declaration on the Digital Transformation of Education Systems in ASEAN, and the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Education for Out-of-School Children and Youth (OOSCY), and other international agreements and conventions related to children's rights, welfare, protection, education, and culture to which APPF Member Parliaments are signatories;

Reaffirming the commitment to the goals of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all";

Acknowledging the findings of UNESCO and UNICEF's 2021 5-Year Progress Review of SDG 4 – Education 2030 in Asia-Pacific, which indicated that despite overall progress, most countries surveyed were not on track to achieve SDG 4;

Bearing in mind the relevant international frameworks and conventions, including:

- The Incheon Declaration and the Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4, which provide concrete guidance on ways to achieve this goal through concrete actions;
- The Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which reaffirms the right of States to adopt policies and programs that support the creation and distribution of cultural goods and services;
- The World Heritage Convention, which enshrines the principles of cultural and natural heritage protection and preservation;

Recognizing that human resources are the most valuable asset for societal and economic growth, necessitating investment in education, skills development, and overall well-being; and acknowledging the critical role of education in preparing future employees, including healthcare professionals, to address the needs of the general population;

Recognizing the experience and negative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic for education, including on in-person classes, students and academic exchanges, and for cultural performances and public access to cultural spaces;

Accepting the diversity in education systems, practice, and culture in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as the socio-economic disparities on learning and the accessibility of education among girls, women, children with disabilities, and all stateless people and displaced persons;

Reaffirming the importance of decreasing hindrances to skills development and technical and vocational education and training, as well as increasing lifelong learning opportunities for the youth and adults, which would contribute in addressing education-job mismatch and job-skills mismatch;

Realizing that global cooperation is a crucial component of workforce development and for ensuring that programs are responsive to the ever-changing needs of the labor market;

Recognizing that building trust and peacefully resolving disagreements within and between societies with different cultures, ethnic groups, and religions is a crucial condition for achieving progress, prosperity, and a better quality of life;

Noting scientific collaboration within and across countries as an avenue for fostering innovation, improving competitiveness, and ensuring economic growth, as well as its importance in developing solutions to the challenges posed by climate change and the need to accelerate progress toward a net-zero society;

Understanding that national collaborations in discovery research conducted at postsecondary educational institutions is necessary for global wellbeing;

Aware that measures to further improve the standards and quality of education for better employment must include increased and equal accessibility to education, trainings, and learning for all;

Emphasizing the responsibility of Member States to protect, preserve, and responsibly use the exceptional and diverse cultural heritage of the Asia-Pacific region, including prohibiting and preventing the illegal import, export, and transfer of valuable cultural objects, and to collaborate when necessary to save it for future generations;

Underscoring the crucial role of parliamentarians in developing policies and legislation to promote and protect UNESCO cultural principles, establishing mechanisms for managing cultural heritage sites, determining their cultural significance, maintaining their authenticity, and preserving their value;

Advocating for universal access to culture, free from discrimination, conditions, or inequality based on any personal characteristic or status; and

Promoting stronger ties and cooperation across the Asia-Pacific region, enabling each nation to fully develop its cultural potential;

RESOLVE TO:

1. **Affirm** the right to education, recognizing its role in human development;
2. **Acknowledge** the importance of education and culture for sustainable development and peaceful coexistence;
3. **Address** disparities in education in the Asia-Pacific region, prioritizing the education of illiterate children and adolescents;
4. **Use** culture and education to foster regional cooperation and dialogue;
5. **Eliminate** barriers to equitable access to education, especially considering the impact of COVID-19 on children's education;
6. **Promote** international cooperation in education to foster innovation and economic development;
7. **Establish** new learning platforms and instruments to address challenges in education and culture;
8. **Implement** learning recovery measures and build resilient education systems;
9. **Pursue** inclusive educational systems that uphold the right to quality education for all students;
10. **Embrace** technology in education to expand access to learning;
11. **Reimagine** the future of education with artificial intelligence, while mitigating potential negative impacts;
12. **Address** the possible detrimental effects of excessive internet use on children's well-being and academic performance;
13. **Promote** access to reliable information platforms for self-expression and cross-cultural discourse;
14. **Implement** the APPF Vancouver Declaration to promote mutual understanding among countries;
15. **Encourage** partnerships for sharing best practices and formulating legislative interventions in education, including providing more scholarship grants to students in developing countries;
16. **Build** upon previous APPF resolutions on education and culture to strengthen regional cooperation;
17. **Incorporate** relevant international agreements into regional education initiatives;
18. **Reaffirm** our commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 4, aligning regional initiatives with the Incheon Declaration and addressing the identified gaps highlighted

in UNESCO and UNICEF's review, while upholding the principles of cultural diversity and heritage preservation as enshrined in international conventions;

19. **Invest** in education and skills development, empowering individuals to drive innovation and prosperity;
20. **Eliminate** education disparities, ensuring equal opportunities for all;
21. **Embrace** lifelong learning, bridging the gap between education and employment;
22. **Strengthen** regional cooperation in workforce development, aligning programs with labor market needs;
23. **Harness** parliamentary diplomacy to foster trust, resolve disputes, and promote peaceful coexistence;
24. **Nurture** scientific collaboration, addressing climate change and enhancing competitiveness;
25. **Foster** national synergies in research, advancing global well-being and scientific progress;
26. **Elevate** education standards and accessibility, ensuring opportunity for all;
27. **Safeguard** and responsibly utilize cultural heritage, preserving our shared legacy and promoting intercultural understanding;
28. **Empower** parliamentarians to protect, preserve, and promote cultural heritage;
29. **Advocate** for universal access to culture, dismantling barriers and fostering a vibrant cultural landscape;
30. **Raise** public awareness of the importance of cultural diversity for sustainable development, promoting its positive value through education and media tools;
31. **Promote** effective integration and mainstreaming of culture into economic, social, and environmental development policies and strategies at all levels; and
32. **Advocate** to promote capacity-building, for the development of dynamic cultural and creative sectors by encouraging creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship, supporting the development of cultural institutions and cultural and creative sectors, providing technical and vocational training for culture professionals, and increasing employment opportunities in the cultural and creative sectors for sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and development.