



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA TO THE UNITED
NATIONS OFFICE AND OTHER
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN
GENEVA**

Statement by
H.E. Ambassador Jonas Rudalevičius, Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Lithuania
on behalf of the Convening Group of the Community of Democracies at
the High-level Discussion on the
draft UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training

2 March 2010

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of Cape Verde, Chile, the Czech Republic, El Salvador, India, Italy, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, the Republic of Korea, the United States, and my own country Lithuania, which form the Convening Group of the Community of Democracies¹.

The Community of Democracies from its inception in the year 2000 has underlined the importance of education in general, as well as of education on democracy and human rights. Education at all levels is a fundamental component for ensuring that citizens are aware of their rights and civic duties as members of a democratic society, equipped with the basic skills for effective participation in public affairs.

Furthermore, we recognize that human rights education and learning, in particular, is a fundamental tool for the participation in the democratic process and governance.

¹ Community of Democracies (CoD) is a global intergovernmental coalition of democratic countries, with the goal of promoting democratic rules and strengthening democratic norms and institutions around the world. Community of Democracies was founded in 2000 during the Ministerial Conference in Warsaw. At the last CoD Ministerial Conference, which took place in Lisbon in 2009, 126 States took part as Participants and 25 States as Observers. Lithuania holds the Presidency of CoD for a period of 2009-2011.

It is the primary responsibility of Governments to promote human rights education and civic education. Education should be based on the principle of equality, be considered as a life-long process, concern all levels and all forms of education and training, be adaptable to different situations, maintain respect to cultural diversity and become a lever for development.

Indeed, we see usefulness of integrating civic education in educational curricula and developing appropriate programmes and activities, as well as ensuring systematic and comprehensive civic education in order to encourage full participation of social groups with special needs in democracy and development processes.

Besides national activities of States ensuring human rights education we consider that the UN and other international and regional organizations should devote appropriate expertise and resources, including technical cooperation, in assisting States developing relevant capacities and educational materials, when requested. International and regional organizations should also promote human rights education, including civic education, of their civilian and military staff.

Establishment of networks of specialized institutes and research centres could contribute to the advancement of human rights education by developing common understanding, and sharing best practices and teaching methods, including through intercultural dialogue.

Mr. President,

We would like to express our appreciation for activities of the Platform for Human Rights Education in promoting human rights education and for the input of the Council's Advisory Committee. We believe that activities in this area should be strengthened and we look forward engaging constructively in future discussions on the subject. The UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training should define the various principles and responsibilities related to human rights education and send clear and consensual message, affirming the importance of human rights education.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to indicate that education on democracy and human rights will be one of the main topics on the High-Level Meeting to be held in July this year in Cracow on occasion of the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the CoD.

I thank you, Mr. President.