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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Visit to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Farida Shaheed*, **

Summary

The Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Ms. Farida Shaheed, visited UNESCO from 16 to 20 January 2023. This report reflects the discussions held on present and future challenges for the right to education with many people across the Organization as well as other stakeholders during the visit and subsequently. It contains a summary of the Special Rapporteur's main findings and recommendations, in particular to enhance the cooperation between UNESCO and her mandate.

* The summary of the report is being circulated in all official languages. The report itself, which is annexed to the summary, is being circulated in the language of submission only.

** The present report was submitted after the deadline in order to reflect the most recent information.

Annex

Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education on her visit to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 8/4 and 44/3, the Special Rapporteur on the right to education conducted a visit to the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) from 16 to 29 January 2023, complemented by a series of online meetings thereafter with UNESCO Institutes.
2. The purpose of the visit was to collect information and discuss issues related to the realization of the human right to education as well as on progress made and future challenges in this regard. These discussions have been key for the Special Rapporteur in informing her thematic report also presented at the 53rd session of the Human Rights Council on advances and critical challenges for the right to education (A/HRC/53/27). The visit also provided an opportunity to explore areas for potential synergies and complementarities, and to enhance collaborations between the mandate of the Special Rapporteur and UNESCO, as per Human Rights Council resolution 8/4. The Special Rapporteur is of the view that each incoming mandate-holder for the right to education would greatly benefit from the opportunity to conduct such an initial visit, as well as regular ones thereafter.
3. During the visit, the Special Rapporteur met with representatives of most sections of the Education Sector of UNESCO, as well as representatives of the Culture Sector, the Social and Human Sciences Sector, the Natural Sciences Sector, the Information and Communication Sector, including at the highest level for most of them. She held discussions with other UNESCO services, such as the Section for Donor Outreach and Resource Mobilization and the Unit for Civil Society Partnerships within the Bureau of Strategic Planning, and the Officers in charge of Associated Schools and National UNESCO Commissions. She also discussed issues with the Chairperson of the International Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations and of the NGO-UNESCO liaison Committee, as well as non-governmental organizations.
4. Further, the Special Rapporteur seized the opportunity to meet with most Category I UNESCO Institutes for education, physically or online as most are disseminated across the world, namely the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), the International Bureau of Education (IBE), the Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), the Institute for Statistics (UIS), the International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC), and the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace (MGIEP).
5. The Special Rapporteur warmly thanks UNESCO for its cooperation throughout the visit starting from its inception, as well as its pro-active organization of the visit. She thanks all interlocutors for their hospitality and openness, as well as for the fruitful meetings she had with them. The Special Rapporteur was impressed by the dedication of UNESCO personnel, their in-depth knowledge and vision for the futures of education. They are the ones making it possible for UNESCO to fulfilling its mandate as the key United Nations organization on education matters.

II. The futures of education and the evolving right to education initiative of UNESCO

6. UNESCO has been very active in leading the discussions regarding the futures of the right to education. It responded to the call of the United Nations Secretary General, in Our Common Agenda, to renew a social contract between Governments and their people and within societies, including on education, leading to the Transforming Education Summit in 2022. It started a dialogue around which aspects of the right to education framework may need to be reframed in the light of the 21st century trends, achievements and challenges; and led the critically important work of the International Commission on the Futures of Education (henceforth “UNESCO Commission”). The UNESCO Commission’s landmark 2021 report underscores that a new social contract for education must be firmly grounded in two

foundational principles: an expanded vision of the right to education throughout life; and a commitment to education as a public societal endeavor and a common good.¹

7. The Special Rapporteur appreciates that the UNESCO Commission has sparked a much-needed discussion on paradigm shifts in how education is conceptualized, realized and assessed in a way that simultaneously addresses past failures, new realities and future needs. She also welcomes the Evolving Right to Education Initiative,² launched by the Education Sector of UNESCO, and further developed or implemented by UNESCO Institutes including the International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean – IESALC). The Initiative fully supports a holistic approach to education in a rapidly changing world and helps focus on a rights-based approach to the reflexions surrounding the Futures of education. The Special Rapporteur agrees that education cannot be addressed in isolation from specific political, economic, social and cultural contexts and dynamics in which it is embedded. The right to education must be understood as a right to life-long learning. Beyond issues of availability and accessibility, acceptability and adaptability, as well as accountability, are critical principles. This implies ensuring quality, relevant content, nurturing a sense of global citizenship, as well as respect for diversity, inclusion, and human rights. The Special Rapporteur appreciates too, the valuable contributions made by the UNESCO Institutes on these issues and on how to transform education where needed.

8. The principles underpinning the UNESCO Commission's recommendations, as well as the vision developed by UNESCO about the right to education, concur in many aspects with the vision developed by successive Special Rapporteurs on the right to education since the mandate was established. In many discussions, the Special Rapporteur felt that her positions and those of UNESCO personnel were aligned, for example on understanding education as life-long learning, that learning spaces are not limited to schools, the need for a rights-based inclusive and intercultural education, the need to value and develop creative expression within education, and to better align curricula, pedagogy and assessment. She was interested in ideas and reflections put up for consideration and further reflection, such as reassessing the notion of “merit” for implementing the right to higher education,³ the idea of creating validation centres to validate educational attainments achieved outside the formal school system, and interesting initiatives such as UNESCO's ‘qualification passport’ and the online course of the Institute for Lifelong learning – UIL – on the recognition of prior learning for refugees and vulnerable migrants.

9. The UNESCO Education Sector includes an Education Policy Section, with at its core a dedicated team working on the right to education. The Education Policy Section has adopted a holistic approach to education, encompassing individual and collective well-being in and through education. In particular, its Right to Education Team works with all other thematic sections of the Education Sector as well as teams beyond the Education Sector, to ensure all activities are rights-based. This is bound to make a difference in how the right to education is mainstreamed across the Education Sector, as well as in other Sectors, institutions and initiatives of the Organization despite inevitable challenges.

10. UNESCO is fully cognizant of the challenges presented by the rapidly changing and developing contexts of the 21st century. The Organization has launched ongoing efforts to review standard-setting instruments in the light of today's complexities and new challenges, to identify which aspects of the right to education may be revisited and which new aspects of learning could be incorporated more explicitly into the legal framework. The Special Rapporteur notes the numerous UNESCO conferences held in 2022, which together helped reinforce the approach to education as a right to life-long learning. These include the World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education, Uzbekistan, the Seventh International Conference on Adult Education, CONFINTEA VII, in Morocco, and the World Higher Education Conference in Spain. Other key instruments have been developed or are soon to be adopted, such as the revised 1974 Recommendation concerning education for

¹ International Commission on the Futures of Education, *Reimagining our futures together, A new social contract for education*, UNESCO, 2001, p 11 and 146.

² How rights adapt as education evolves | UNESCO.

³ UNESCO IESALC (2022) *The right to higher education: A social justice perspective*. UNESCO IESALC. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381750>.

international understanding, co-operation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms.

11. Other UNESCO Sectors have also supported the development or revision of key standard-setting instruments, in particular, the 2017 revised Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers, the 2019 Recommendation on Open Educational Resources, and the 2021 Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, which contains a section on education and research. More widely, all UNESCO sectors have education or learning components, calling for synergies and therefore more comprehensive reinforcement of the right to education from different perspectives.

12. UNESCO is fully aware that an intersectoral approach between education, science, culture as well as information and communication, is a key added value of the Organization. Consequently, since 2019, UNESCO has stepped up efforts to harness synergies between education and culture, leveraging the expertise and resources of both fields of activity through several key intersectoral initiatives. It has also jointly developed a future UNESCO Framework on Culture and Arts Education, which encompasses a broad understanding of culture in responding to the changing needs of learners today. This echoes the UN Secretary-General's Vision Statement on Transforming Education to fundamentally rethink education so as to ensure equity, inclusion, quality and relevance, underpinned by a holistic and lifelong learning approach.

13. The Special Rapporteur encourages UNESCO to continue and enhance its efforts to ensure that many intersectoral challenges related to the right to education are addressed away from silo or sectoral approaches, such as the respect due to scientific and academic freedoms, access to information, artistic and scientific education, co-creation of knowledge, the use of technologies in education, cultural heritage education as well as the relationships between education and culture including local knowledge systems and approaches.

14. Cultural diversity in particular is a powerful transformative force in all these areas, requiring increased civic participation not restricted to representative democracy based on majoritarian rule: many educational, cultural and scientific communities, *inter alia*, are eager to participate in discussions to identify the best ways to ensure relevant quality education for all in various contexts and for renewing social contracts on education. UNESCO is the natural organization to pursue the work of the UNESCO Commission on transforming education for the future. UNESCO National Commissions, UNESCO Chairs and Associated schools should also participate. As the mandate of UNESCO demonstrates, there is a strong link between education, science and culture, which should be understood as public common goods.

III. UNESCO as the lead United Nations agency on education and the guardian of the right to education

A. A development and a human rights agenda

15. UNESCO is the lead United Nations agency on education, operating on two interrelated tracks: a development agenda and the human rights agenda.

16. UNESCO leads action on Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4, "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all"), coordinating work to reach SDG 4 targets, and co-chairing with Sierra Leone the High-Level Steering Committee on SDG 4. It is also the leading agency for Education for Sustainable Development and coordinates the implementation of the Education for Sustainable Development for 2030 Framework and Roadmap for the period 2020-2030.

17. Simultaneously, UNESCO takes its role for the promotion of the right to education in all its complexities, very seriously. The Special Rapporteur was pleased to hear from senior officials as well as more junior staff that UNESCO considers itself as a human rights organization, although she heard a few dissonant voices, which she believes are not representative of the general positioning of UNESCO. It is important to understand, as

UNESCO does, that the right to education is the legal binding force which helps make a stronger argument focusing on the responsibility of States to ensure inclusive quality education for all, while commitments under the Sustainable Development Agenda, in particular, provide more incentives as well as guidelines to help States to fulfil the right to education.

18. The Special Rapporteur stresses that the right to education must be at the center rather than at the margin of governance, at both the national and international levels. UNESCO has a specific role to play in this regard, as an organization which considers itself as the guardian of the right to education, and which has developed an expansive and thorough institutional knowledge. This is probably one of the key comparative advantages of UNESCO within the complex ecosystem of global and regional actors involved in educational norm setting, financing and knowledge mobilization. UNESCO also demonstrated its capacity to be on the front line to address the massive disruption of education during COVID-19, setting up the Global Education Coalition to monitor the situation worldwide and to propose solutions for the right to education.

19. The striking under-funding of UNESCO, its entire budget being smaller than that of many European universities,⁴ is therefore more than problematic. For the years 2022-2023, the funding gap for UNESCO amounted to 541 million USD.⁵ UNESCO needs strong and effective support from its Member States, in particular through core-funding, the only way to guarantee its full independence. The Special Rapporteur stresses in this regard that UNESCO's efforts to look for larger donors instead of smaller ones may increase its dependence vis-à-vis specific donors. Member States should also be cautious about the consequences of their funding independent parallel groups over United Nations agencies such as UNESCO, which may weaken the position of the Organization. UNESCO must be able to effectively deliver its mandate of strengthening national education systems in the long-run, including through initiating dialogues between stakeholders at the national level, beyond short-term programmes and funding directed by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and bilateral donors. Agreements should be respectful of all aspects of the right to education, including this being the primary responsibility of the State.

B. Partnering with private actors and ensuring the right to education

20. Under-funding also opens the door to more partnerships with private actors, UNESCO having a strong brand to attract private sector and develop partnerships, as can be seen from the UNESCO Resource Mobilization Strategy for 2022-2023. For the 2020-2021 biennium, Governments remained the largest source of funding representing 56% of the total resources mobilized followed by multilateral institutions (24%), United Nations (10%) and private sector (10%). The education sector received 44% of mobilized resources.⁶

21. According to UNESCO, new challenges require unprecedented and innovative forms of cooperation more relevant to the diversity of actors and stakeholders involved, and the challenges of the 21st century. This necessitates coalitions that bring together governments, businesses, finance, and citizens to realize this goal. The recent global coalitions established by UNESCO – Global Education Coalition, Open Education Resources Dynamic Coalition – are now decisively paving the way for such reinforced international cooperation among all relevant public and private sector stakeholders.⁷

22. The Special Rapporteur understands the importance of having discussions on education for all with the private sector, which is an increasing player in the field of education, following different models. She also notes that this may open avenues for fruitful collaborations around the development and use of technologies, for requesting evolving business practices in line with human rights standards, and for having all stakeholders around the table rather than each of them acting in isolation from each other.

⁴ UNESCO Commission, p. 142.

⁵ UNESCO Resource Mobilization Strategy for 2022-2023, 214 EX/5.II.B, para. 12.

⁶ UNESCO Resource Mobilization Strategy for 2022-2023, para. 8.

⁷ UNESCO Resource Mobilization Strategy for 2022-2023, § 3.

23. She recalls that previous Special Rapporteurs dedicated four reports to the issue,⁸ warning about the danger of privatization “supplanting public education instead of supplementing it”.⁹ During her visit, the Special Rapporteur engaged with various parts of the Organization about these issues. Not all UNESCO personnel seem to share the same position. The Special Rapporteur heard many expressing concerns about the commercialization of education, while many also see value in public-private partnerships. Most interlocutors insisted on the importance of regulation. Some others did not see a problem, finding it quite normal that the private sector gets a return on investment for its contribution. In this regard, the Special Rapporteur stresses the diversity of private actors and the importance of bearing in mind the risk of intensifying exclusions and inequalities by large-scale profit-motivated educational enterprises that undermine or displace the public sector education system.

24. The right to education is to be understood as a right to public free education which must be a starting point in all discussions, together with an understanding of education as a public and a common good. The Special Rapporteur has concerns that without adequate safeguards, partnerships with the private sector carry a risk of undue influence on the education agenda, both at the international and national levels, that sometimes is not immediately obvious.

25. The Special Rapporteur notes the efforts undertaken by UNESCO through its Transparency Portal, which displays information on Member States and other donors committing funds to the Organization.¹⁰ She also appreciates efforts to develop tools based on the UNSDG Common Approach to Prospect Research and Due Diligence for Business Sector Partnerships.¹¹ She notes that consequently, a risks' mitigation and management framework seems to have been put in place, at least for pilot projects at UNESCO, which is to be welcomed, although that framework remains general and does not specifically concern the right to education.¹² She appreciates that UNESCO is very much aware of the need to assess the long-term strategies of partners, and what their assumptions are in terms of “return on investment”. This is particularly important as private companies move from free to premium online access to educational platforms, and as crucial discussions are still taking place on the protection of data and privacy of learners, teachers, and families.

26. It is also important to distinguish between the private sector exercising its corporate social responsibility versus investing for future feedbacks as education has become a new market. In this regard, UNESCO efforts to shift from understanding private sector companies as donors to considering them as partners that can participate in co-creative processes, particularly to develop digital curricula, entails many risks.

27. The Special Rapporteur encourages UNESCO to further enhance its transparency about these matters, including on the terms of engagements with private actors, and to fully play its role as a guardian of the right to education. Established safeguards should address the specificities of the right to education, understood as a right to public free education. Following the COVID pandemic, it is important to ensure that the cost of the digitalization of education is not borne by children and other learners through data-mining and hidden expenses. There is a need to address the concern of civil society organizations and experts about a disproportionate voice of the private sector in matters relating to education, including at UNESCO. Long term partnerships with the private sector must be accompanied by long term partnerships with civil society on the same footing. Civil society should also be systematically included in research projects, for example, regarding the role of private actors in education and how to regulate them.

28. The Special Rapporteur notes UNESCO's Due Diligence process established in accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) Common Approach to Prospect Research and Due Diligence for Business Sector Partnerships. This process includes

⁸ A/HRC/41/37, A/70/242, A/HRC/29/30, and A/69/402. See also The privatisation and commodification of education | OHCHR.

⁹ A/69/402, para. 38.

¹⁰ Welcome to UNESCO Core Data Portal | Core Data Portal.

¹¹ 210 EX/5.III.A, Annex I.

¹² 211 EX/5.II.A, para. 23.

the Due Diligence Form for Potential Private and Business Sector Entities– Companies, Foundations, Associations and NGOs, to be signed by private actors entering partnerships with UNESCO. The form, which is a self-declaration tool, focuses on identifying whether entities have been involved in past human rights violations, including the right to privacy and data protection. The Special Rapporteur is of the view that more investigative or participatory research tools might be useful, in particular for assessing possible violations of the right to privacy by digital companies, or violations of teachers' rights by school chains. The Special Rapporteur takes note of information provided by UNESCO, that the process includes consultations with the UNESCO Member States, through the UNESCO National Commissions of the country where the private entity is registered; checks against UN and World Bank sanction lists; searches in specialized Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) databases; and detailed searches online which allows UNESCO to gather publicly available information about the entity.

IV. Monitoring the implementation of the right to education

29. Monitoring implementation does not mean the same thing at UNESCO in Paris and amongst human rights circles in Geneva. Human rights bodies in Geneva assess the extent to which individual States implement their obligations under international human rights law, and recommend specific steps to enhance the realization of human rights, following discussions and exchanges involving civil society organizations and, in some cases, alleged victims of violations. These mechanisms are often experts-based. UNESCO monitoring, for its part, is mainly geared towards assessing how UNESCO conventions and recommendations are implemented, without adopting a country-based approach, with minimal or even no input from civil society. These mechanisms are mostly State driven and focus on advocacy and technical assistance, rather than accountability.

30. The monitoring process of the UNESCO Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, for example, is led by the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations (CR), which is part of UNESCO's Executive Board. A regular reporting procedure is launched through questionnaires, leading to analytical summaries on trends, particularly at the regional level. The CR examines the outcome of the consultations launched by UNESCO and follow-up is given to decisions accordingly adopted by UNESCO's Governing Bodies – the Executive Board and the General Conference. Results of the 10th consultation on the implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, covering the period 2017-2020, were published in 2021.¹³ Such processes are important as the findings feed other thematic reports of the Organization. Information gathered, together with other sources of information, helps to guide action for technical assistance at the local level, for example.

31. Other tools have been developed, gathering helpful data for stakeholders to use in assessing the level of implementation of the right to education. For example, UNESCO's interactive tool, HerAtlas, focuses on the educational rights of girls and women around the world. With a color-coded scoring system that tracks legal indicators such as constitutions and legislation, the maps make it possible to visually monitor the legal progress toward securing the right to education for women in specific countries.¹⁴

32. The Observatory on the right to education is also worth mentioning.¹⁵ It provides documentation and information concerning the implementation of the right to education at every level of education, under constitutional, legislative and policy frameworks, covering various areas relating to this right in a country. It also references country-specific observations from the United Nations human rights bodies, making it possible for users to have a wider vision of the state of protection of the right to education in specific countries.

¹³ From rights to country-level action: results of the tenth consultation of Member States on the 1960 Convention and Recommendation - UNESCO Digital Library.

¹⁴ HerAtlas (unesco.org).

¹⁵ Observatory on the right to education (unesco.org).

33. The Special Rapporteur, throughout her visit, had discussions on how to strengthen UNESCO monitoring mechanisms. She sees an increasing discrepancy between the very active standard-setting exercise led by the Organization on the one hand, and the weak status and efficiency of its monitoring machinery. Standards cannot be efficient without strong monitoring mechanisms. It would be important to allow plural independent voices to be heard officially and accounted for during the monitoring, to ensure a more accurate understanding of the reality and needs on the ground, as well as respect for the principles of non-discrimination and inclusivity, and to foster national discussions and accountability. The Special Rapporteur understands that Member States are expected to include civil society inputs in their reports; in practice however, this is minimal. The absence of independent voices at UNESCO may undermine the Organization and its reputation, as well as its efficiency. The voices of civil society, academics and other stakeholders in assessments and review processes should therefore be reinforced, given that the multi-stage procedure before the CR allows the collection of information from the various partners of UNESCO such as non-governmental organizations.¹⁶

34. In addition, the reluctance to undertake monitoring processes that are country based and to resort to independent experts is difficult to understand, when these are practiced on a daily basis by human rights mechanisms in Geneva. Virtually all States are the same in Paris and in Geneva. The Special Rapporteur also notes that the current structure and functioning of the Executive Board are the fruit of what is commonly called the “Japanese amendment”, which dates back to 1993. She encourages Member States to reassess this situation, and consider reintroducing an experts-based mechanism.

35. The Special Rapporteur notes the existence of other specific mechanisms, such as the “104 procedure” (adopted by decision 104 EX Dec 3.3), allowing the CR to examine alleged violations of human rights falling within UNESCO’s competence, including the right to education. Although, according to the summary of the results of the application of the procedure laid down by 104 EX/Decision 3.3,¹⁷ this procedure has proven useful, it is difficult to qualify it as a monitoring procedure *per se*. Its purpose is to seek a friendly solution, by establishing a dialogue with governments concerned. As this procedure is confidential, communications are not made public for 20 years after their resolution.

36. The ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART), composed of independent experts on education, teaching and labour from around the world, is a specific mechanism at UNESCO. It meets every three years to promote and monitor the implementation of the two UNESCO/ILO international normative instruments concerning teachers. It therefore addresses issues relating to the right to education from a very specific angle. The CEART also examines allegations made by teachers’ organizations concerning the non-respect of the principles of the Recommendations in Member States; it issues findings and makes recommendations for the resolution of such cases.

37. The Special Rapporteur also stresses that UNESCO’s contributions to the United Nations systems on monitoring the right to education are much appreciated and constitute valuable sources of information. The Organization collaborates on a regular basis with the Universal Periodic Review, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the status of implementation of the right to education in countries under review. The Special Rapporteur believes that cooperation between UNESCO and her mandate could be strengthened within the framework of the mandate’s visit and communication procedures. As the joint CESCR-UNESCO working group has ceased to operate, she suggests that a discussion be undertaken between all relevant mechanisms to revive systematic exchange and collaboration on the right to education.

¹⁶ Committee on Conventions and Recommendations, 2022 Edition, paragraph 10, Stage 3 (b); unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381093/PDF/381093eng.pdf.multi.

¹⁷ Committee on Conventions and Recommendations, 2022 Edition, paragraph 59.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

38. The Special Rapporteur considers that her visit to UNESCO was very fruitful, stimulating a boost to the cooperation already in place between her mandate and UNESCO in a more systemic manner, and identifying new synergies for action. She appreciates the alignment of thinking between her mandate and UNESCO on the content, approach to, and concerns regarding the right to education as a right to life-long learning.

39. The Special Rapporteur recommends that each incoming mandate-holder for the right to education have the opportunity to conduct such useful visit, as well as regular ones thereafter. This would imply specific resources devoted to the mandate by the Human Rights Council to carry out such visits.

40. The Special Rapporteur stresses the crucial role of UNESCO as the lead United Nations agency on education and the guardian of the right to education, within the wider complex ecosystem of global and regional actors involved in education. She recommends that UNESCO Member States demonstrate their strong and effective support to the Organization, in particular through core-funding, the only way to guarantee its full independence. Member States should assess the consequences of their funding independent parallel groups over United Nations agencies such as UNESCO, which may weaken the position of the Organization.

41. The Special Rapporteur encourages UNESCO to ensure transparency about its partnerships with private actors, including on the terms of engagement, and to fully play its role as a guardian of the right to education in this respect. The right to education, understood as a right to public free education, as well as an understanding of education as a public and a common good, must be a starting point in all discussions with the private sector. Established safeguards and risk mitigating frameworks should address the specificities of the right to education. There is a need to address the concern of civil society organizations and experts about a disproportionate voice of the private sector in matters relating to education. Long term partnerships with the private sector must be accompanied by long term partnership with civil society on the same footing. Civil society should also be systematically included in research projects, for example regarding the role of private actors in education and how to regulate them.

42. The Special Rapporteur recommends that UNESCO and its Member States consider opening discussions on the best ways forward to reinforce the UNESCO monitoring machinery with a view to strengthen its independence, ensure the participation of civil society organizations and education experts in processes, and to move from general to country-based analysis.

43. The Special Rapporteur encourages the Organization to continue and enhance its efforts to address challenges related to the right to education away from silo or sectoral approaches, such as the respect due to scientific and academic freedoms, access to information, artistic and scientific education, co-creation of knowledge, the use of technologies in education, cultural heritage education as well as the relationships between education and culture including local knowledge.

44. The Special Rapporteur recommends that cooperation between UNESCO and her mandate be strengthened within the framework of the mandate's visit and communication procedures. She also suggests that a discussion be undertaken between all relevant mechanisms to revive systematic exchange and collaboration on the right to education.