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ISTANBUL
EDUCATION SUMMIT

REPORT
2025

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**HEALING
THE WORLD
THROUGH
EDUCATION**
▣▣



ies^{5th}
ISTANBUL
EDUCATION SUMMIT
R E P O R T
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This report covers summaries and highlights of the opening speeches, high-level ministerial meeting, keynote speaker session, education talks, youth session, and guest of honor speeches of the 5th Istanbul Education Summit. In addition, it presents the exhibition of "Good Practices in Education", the exhibition of the 6th International Maarif Photography Contest, as well as the Maarif Painting Contest 2025 and award ceremonies. The views, themes and discussion points expressed in the 5th Istanbul Education Summit Report are strictly those of the speakers and participants present at the summit, and do not reflect the official view of the Istanbul Education Summit and Turkish Maarif Foundation.

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**MAHMUT M.
ÖZDİL**

President of Turkish Maarif Foundation

From the very beginning, Turkish Maarif Foundation has understood its mission not merely as establishing and operating educational institutions, but as the broader responsibility of exploring the possibilities of a more authentic, inclusive, and profound understanding of education.

Today, through its activities spanning six continents, including its educational network, academic collaborations, curriculum development efforts, and a growing body of research and publications, it has become a living ground where diverse experiences from different parts of the world converge and enrich one another.

Through the Istanbul Education Summit, convened annually since 2021, we seek to keep this ground alive: to sustain its vitality and to ensure that the minds it shapes remain open and alert. Each year, academics, educators, researchers, opinion leaders, and decision-makers from Türkiye and around the world gather in Istanbul, a city that connects not only continents, but also eras, civilisations, and traditions of learning, to rethink education together.

Shaped by a continuity stretching from antiquity to Byzantium, from the Ottoman institutions of knowledge and wisdom to the Darülfünun and on to the present, and long distinguished by its capacity to hold within itself elements that bear little resemblance to one another, Istanbul is a place where diverse experiences and approaches born of different needs come into

contact, and from that encounter, new possibilities of thought emerge, transforming and expanding all who take part.

The world today is marked by profound inequalities, ongoing conflicts, and crises that weigh on our shared human conscience. Millions of children remain without access to education, while existing approaches too often reproduce rather than transform these conditions. In such a context, rethinking education is no longer a matter of choice, it is a shared responsibility.

In the final days of 2025, at the 5th Istanbul Education Summit held under the theme "Healing the World Through Education," we found ourselves, almost from the very first moment, confronted with a series of unsettling questions that challenged our comfort zones: Who is sick? What are we trying to heal? What does it mean to be well?

The discussions throughout the Summit reinforced a conviction: education does not derive its meaning from the universalisation of a single model, but from a plural ground where different experiences are able to hear one another. This is not merely a pedagogical preference, it is a matter of understanding. To approach education not simply as the transmission of knowledge and skills, but as a process that nurtures conscience, compassion, and responsibility, inevitably redirects our thinking.

The discussions converged on a shared foundation: that relationships in education must be understood as processes

**MAHMUT M.
ÖZDİL**

*President of Turkish
Maarif Foundation*

of mutual learning, not one-way transmission; that inequalities must be confronted rather than rendered invisible; and that young people must be engaged not only as the subjects of the future, but as active agents of the present. Education, it became clear, cannot be the presumptuous design of a mind convinced of its own superiority, it must be a search carried out together.

We make no claim to offer final answers, nor do we seek to impose a model that seems convincing to us as universally valid. What matters, rather, is sustaining a space where different voices can come together, where questions can be deepened, and where a shared vision of the future can be pursued collectively.

This publication carries the traces of that search. It does not offer definitive conclusions, it invites us to ask more meaningful questions, and to think together.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mrs. Emine Erdoğan and Mrs. Latifa Al-Droubi, spouses of the Presidents of Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic, for their generous support and for honouring the opening ceremony with their presence.

I am equally thankful to Mr. Mohammed Mahamoud, Minister of National Education and Vocational Training of the Republic of Djibouti; Ms. Khady D. Mbodji, Secretary-General of the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Senegal; and Mr. Boubacar Dembele, Secretary-General of the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Mali, for their participation

and valuable contributions to the Summit. My heartfelt thanks go as well to our distinguished guests, speakers, partners, and participants from around the world, whose presence filled the halls of the Atatürk Cultural Center over two days and brought this gathering to life.

I extend my warm thanks to all institutions and sponsors whose support made the Summit possible; to the Atatürk Cultural Center for hosting this important gathering; and, in particular, to the dedicated members of Turkish Maarif Foundation, whose tireless efforts in planning, organisation, and delivery ensured the success of this event.

I believe that the call rising from Istanbul will contribute not only to a deeper understanding of today's challenges, but to our shared endeavour to build a future that is more just, more meaningful, and more humane.



**ZEYNEP
ARKAN**

*Assoc. Prof. Dr., Head of Istanbul
Education Summit Organizing Committee*

The question of education has never been confined to a purely pedagogical domain. Throughout history, it has served as a primary ground upon which humanity seeks to understand itself, society, and its relationship with existence. In this sense, education exceeds the transmission of knowledge; it is where meaning, direction, and responsibility take shape.

The 5th Istanbul Education Summit, organized by Turkish Maarif Foundation under the theme *"Healing the World Through Education"*, reflects a carefully constructed intellectual effort to revisit this field with depth and clarity.

From the thematic framework to the selection of participants, from the design of sessions to the substance of discussions, the Summit was guided by a coherent academic vision. It brought together knowledge and lived experience from diverse geographies in a way that allowed for serious reflection and meaningful engagement.

The venue of this gathering, Atatürk Cultural Center, offered more than a setting; it carried symbolic weight. Istanbul's long-standing role as a meeting point of civilizations found a contemporary expression here, as different intellectual traditions and perspectives came into a shared space of consideration.

The discussions made it clear that the challenges of our time cannot be approached superficially. Climate instability, forced migration, widening inequalities, and structures that undermine human dignity require a deeper engagement with education.

Within this framework, education was approached as a field that shapes how human beings interpret reality and orient themselves within it.

The Summit took place at a moment when long-standing fractures have become increasingly visible, and when suffering is no longer perceived as distant, but as a shared matter of conscience. Under the shadow of war and profound human loss, this gathering carried a heightened sense of responsibility.

In regions such as Palestine, where the scale and continuity of violence against civilians amount to an ongoing genocide, the limits of existing global responses have become increasingly evident. In the face of such devastation, education can no longer be treated as a distant or deferrable concern. It has been drawn into the urgency of the present, carrying the responsibility to see and the burden to respond.

To see clearly, to refuse indifference, and to sustain a living conscience—these have become essential tasks of education today. In this light, education emerges as a space where awareness deepens, where moral clarity takes shape, and where the courage to act begins. In this sense, the Summit stood as an effort to reclaim meaning in a world where silence often prevails. The conversations moved beyond abstraction.

They touched, at times, upon a mother's quiet anxiety, a child's interrupted dreams, and the deep stillness of displacement. Such moments called for rethinking education as a space of human encounter and ethical awareness.

ZEYNEP ARKAN

*Assoc. Prof. Dr., Head of
Istanbul Education Summit
Organizing Committee*

A central intellectual concern throughout the Summit was the relationship between knowledge and wisdom. The expansion of information has not led to a parallel deepening of justice or compassion. This gap points to the limits of knowledge when detached from values and reflection. Education, therefore, must engage with meaning, cultivate discernment, and sustain a sense of responsibility.

The composition of participants reflected a deliberate intention. Policymakers, academics, educators, and practitioners were invited not simply for representation, but for their capacity to contribute to a meaningful exchange grounded in experience and thought. What emerged was not variety alone, but depth—an environment where perspectives could meet with substance.

Another important dimension concerned the scope of education. Limiting it to formal schooling proves insufficient in addressing the complexity of today's challenges. The roles of family, community, culture, and decision-making structures shape educational outcomes in profound ways. Education was therefore reconsidered as a relational and continuous process shaped by multiple actors.

The contributions of young people brought a distinct clarity to the Summit. They articulated concerns, proposed directions, and demonstrated a willingness to act. Their presence reaffirmed the importance of opening spaces where voices can influence processes and shape outcomes. This text stands as a record of an ongoing intellectual effort—of rigorous inquiry, shared experience, and sustained reflection. The aspiration to heal the world through

education demands more than rhetoric. It requires attentiveness, responsibility, and a sincere engagement with human reality.

The suffering unfolding across the world today is not distant; it presses upon our conscience and demands a response. Education, in such a moment, cannot remain a neutral field. It carries the weight of recognition, the responsibility of understanding, and the courage to respond.

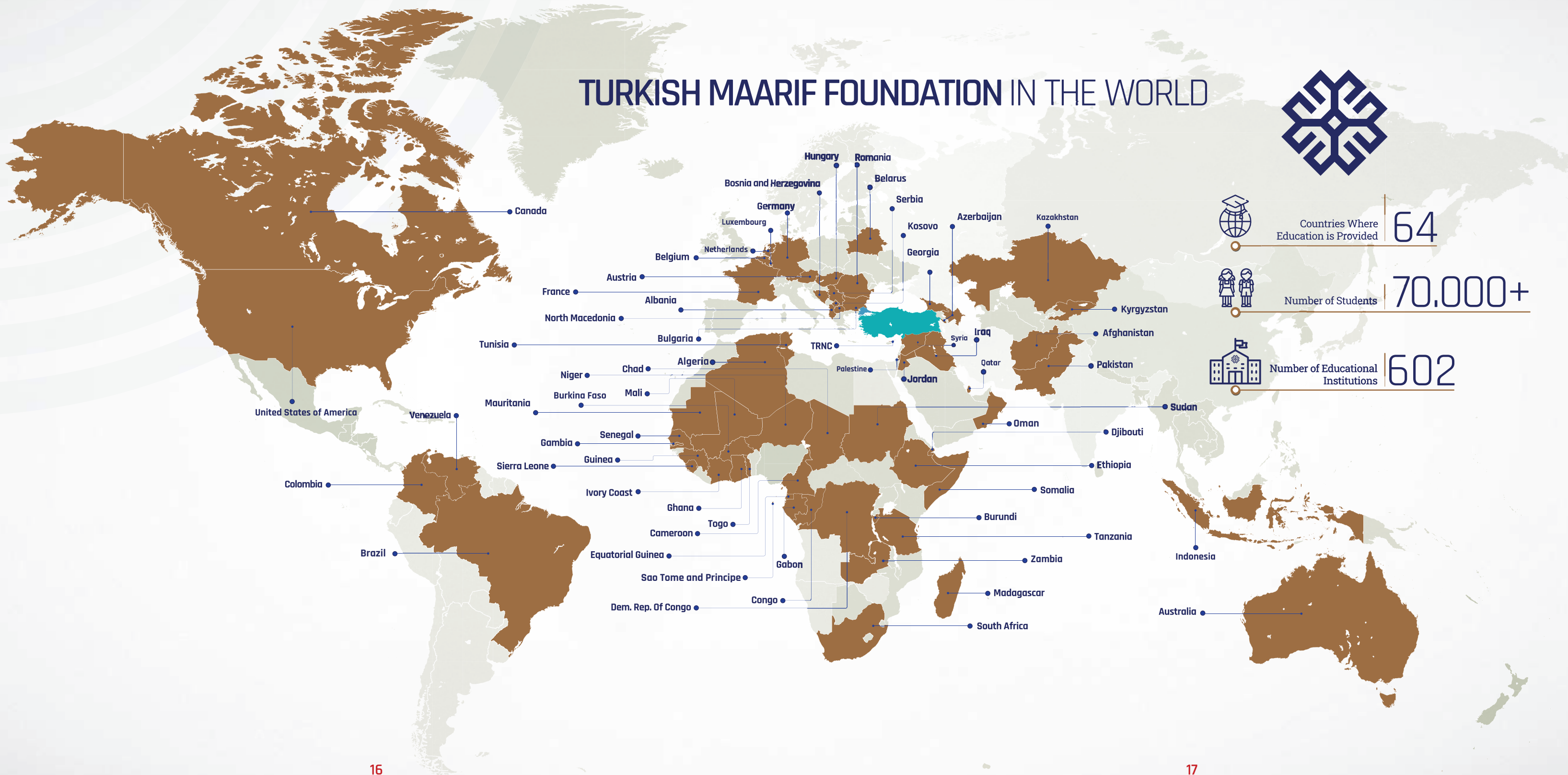
What has been brought together in this Summit is not a collection of discussions, but a serious intellectual and moral effort—one that insists on confronting reality without turning away. The questions raised here, the knowledge produced, and the encounters made are not ends in themselves; they are beginnings.


Education, when grounded in thought, guided by values, and sustained by a sense of responsibility, has the power to reorient human action. It can restore clarity where there is confusion, awaken conscience where there is indifference, and open paths where there appears to be none.


For this reason, what emerges from this Summit should not remain within these pages or these walls. It calls for continuation, for engagement, for action. It calls for each of us to carry this responsibility forward—within our institutions, our work, and our understanding of the world.


Only then can education move beyond discourse and become what it is meant to be: a force that does not turn away from suffering, but works, with clarity and resolve, toward a more just and humane world.

TURKISH MAARIF FOUNDATION IN THE WORLD



 Countries Where Education is Provided **64**

 Number of Students **70.000+**

 Number of Educational Institutions **602**



FIVE YEARS
OF ISTANBUL
EDUCATION SUMMIT

FIVE YEARS
OF ISTANBUL
EDUCATION SUMMIT



*New Trends and
Transformation
in Education*

ISTANBUL EDUCATION SUMMIT

November 25–26, 2021



This summit focused on the global shift in education following the COVID-19 pandemic. It examined how traditional systems could adapt to "New Trends and Transformation," emphasizing that the pandemic acted as a catalyst for long-overdue changes in pedagogical methods and institutional structures.

The discussions centered on the necessity of digital transformation while maintaining human-centric values. Experts emphasized that the future of education lies in hybrid models that combine technological efficiency with the irreplaceable social and emotional benefits of face-to-face interaction while ensuring educational equity across different geographies.

2ND ISTANBUL EDUCATION SUMMIT

November 4–5, 2022



This summit addressed the immediate challenges faced by schools as they transitioned back to physical learning environments. The primary focus was on identifying and addressing the academic and socio-emotional gaps left by the "Pandemic Era," with a particular emphasis on the well-being of the so-called "COVID Generation."

Participants explored the evolving role of the "School" as a concept, moving beyond a mere building for information transfer to a vital hub for socialization and character building. The report highlighted the importance of "Differentiated Education" and individual learning paths as essential tools for recovery and future resilience in global education systems.

*The Future of
School: Post-
Pandemic Needs
of Education*

HEALING
THE WORLD
THROUGH
EDUCATION

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THE WORLD
THROUGH
EDUCATION



FIVE YEARS
OF ISTANBUL
EDUCATION SUMMIT

FIVE YEARS
OF ISTANBUL
EDUCATION SUMMIT



*Leading the
Change in
Education*

3RD ISTANBUL EDUCATION SUMMIT

November 17-18, 2023



This summit focused on the theme of leadership and managing radical shifts within educational paradigms. It emphasized that "Change" should not be a reactive process but a proactive and well-guided initiative that incorporates cultural wisdom, ethical technology use, and future-oriented skills like critical thinking.

The summit discussed the impact of Artificial Intelligence and digital tools on the human mind. It argued for a balanced approach where technological advancements are integrated into curricula without compromising the students' ability to think critically and maintain a strong moral and social foundation.



4TH ISTANBUL EDUCATION SUMMIT

December 6-7, 2024



*Education
for a Fair and
Equitable
Society for a
Sustainable
Future*

This summit revolved around the principles of justice, equity, and sustainability as the core pillars of modern education. It sought to answer how education can serve as a bridge for social mobility and environmental awareness, ensuring that no student is left behind regardless of their socioeconomic status.

The summit stressed the importance of rethinking the relationship between the state and educational institutions. It advocated for a new "Sustainable School Culture" that integrates ecological responsibility with ethical AI implementation, aiming to foster a sense of global citizenship and social responsibility in the next generation.





FIVE YEARS OF ISTANBUL EDUCATION SUMMIT

FIVE YEARS OF ISTANBUL EDUCATION SUMMIT



5TH ISTANBUL EDUCATION SUMMIT

December 5-6, 2025

This summit focused on the "healing" power of education in a world afflicted by humanitarian crises, wars, and social inequalities. The primary theme emphasized that education should not merely be a system for information transfer but a "transformative mirror" that nourishes the soul, conscience, and sense of justice. Discussions highlighted that when knowledge lacks moral values and wisdom, it risks becoming a tool for destruction, particularly in global conflict zones.

Healing the World Through Education

A major focus was placed on the "decolonization of knowledge," challenging the imposition of monocentric, Western-centered epistemologies as the universal standard. Experts advocated for a transition to polycentric systems that grant legitimacy to diverse cultural heritages and local wisdom, fostering a sense of selfhood and identity. The summit also redefined schools as vital "hubs of healing" and social ecosystems that remain resilient in times of crisis and provide socio-emotional support to the most vulnerable.



HEALING THE WORLD THROUGH EDUCATION

HEALING THE WORLD THROUGH EDUCATION

TÜRKİYE
 AFGHANISTAN
 KYRGYZSTAN

The highest levels of online participation were recorded in Türkiye, Kyrgyzstan, and Afghanistan.

29890

TOTAL
 APPLICATIONS

129

APPLICATIONS
 FROM 129
 COUNTRIES

80

IN-PERSON
 PARTICIPATIONS
 FROM 80
 COUNTRIES

102

ONLINE
 PARTICIPANTS
 FROM 102
 COUNTRIES

10870

ONLINE
 PARTICIPANTS

ANKARA
ISTANBUL

Analyses of applications, in-person participation, and online viewership in Türkiye indicate that participation levels were highest in Istanbul and Ankara.

TÜRKİYE
MADAGASCAR
KYRGYZSTAN

Country-based application data reveal that the highest number of applications originated from Türkiye, followed by Madagascar and Kyrgyzstan.

7M+

SOCIAL MEDIA
 ENGAGEMENT

3153

IN-PERSON
 PARTICIPANTS

62

IN-PERSON
 PARTICIPATIONS
 FROM 62 CITIES IN
 TÜRKİYE

81

APPLICATIONS
 FROM 81 CITIES
 IN TÜRKİYE

STUDENTS
ACADEMICS
TEACHERS

Regarding professional background, both participants and viewers primarily consisted of teachers, academics, and students.



From Schools to Society: The Collaboration Ecosystem

A Call from Youth to Tomorrow: From Idea to Action

Healing the World Through Education



Beyond the Curriculum: The Art of Humanity



Revealing the Known in the Mirror of Education





HER EXCELLENCY
EMİNE
ERDOĞAN

First Lady of the Republic of Türkiye



The esteemed First Lady of Syria, my dear sister Latifa Sharaa, distinguished members of the education community, dear ladies and gentlemen. I greet you all with love, respect, and affection.

Today, we have come together on the occasion of the 5th Istanbul Education Summit. It carries special significance to address the issue of education in this ancient city, one of the oldest centers of knowledge and a place where the pulse of the world still beats. This year, our summit will present to the world a proposal to heal it through education. It will speak of the power of education to nourish the soul of humanity, to bind its wounds, and to illuminate the darkness. It will remind us that the most beautiful world is built with the pen, and that the delicate calibration of the scales of justice can only be made by those who aspire to such a world.

This hall today hosts precious educators whose minds are filled with knowledge and whose hearts overflow with love for humanity. Each of you is here with the conviction of Mehmed Akif: *"The only remedy that will save us is education (maarif)."* I, too, am very happy to be with you and would like to say, from the bottom of my heart, welcome to all our guests who have honored us from across Türkiye and from all corners of the world.

Distinguished guests, a caterpillar emerging from its cocoon as a magnificent butterfly with colorful wings is one of the most enchanting wonders of this earth. Education is also a cocoon that patiently refines the potential within a human being and gives them wings. Sometimes, from that cocoon, people emerge who, with their ideas and actions, scatter goodness and beauty upon the soil of the world.

And sometimes, people emerge who have become alienated from their own truth, mechanized and hardened. For the modern world uses rigid moulds as cocoons when raising human beings. It removes the filters of virtue, conscience, and morality from knowledge and reduces it merely to information. It deprives the mind of its capacity to question, to examine, to critique, to seek truth. It imposes a culture of success that applauds test scores, feeds a capitalist appetite, and prefers personal comfort over social peace and collective well-being. Virtues that make us truly human, such as empathy, humility, and compassion, are thrown into the dark well of greed for the sake of these so-called "successes."

This is precisely why there are today more than 120 armed conflicts continuing around the globe. Hate crimes increase day by day. For example, in the United Kingdom alone, Islamophobic crimes broke a record in 2024, rising by 165% compared to 2022. Technologies, instead of serving human dignity, have set fault lines in motion that shake justice at its foundations. Artificial intelligence, which opened a brand-new chapter in humanity's scientific journey, has turned into a tool of war and even into a war criminal. The most advanced weapons can be aimed at babies in Gaza. Those who know nothing of mercy can go so far as to use hunger and thirst as instruments of war. Humanity has once again seen how knowledge, when it has not met with wisdom, can be used for the invention of evil. The fact that the architects of this material and spiritual destruction unfolding before our eyes have graduated with top degrees from the world's best universities tells us something. It tells us that when one wing of education is broken, it can push the world into the grip of chronic diseases such as hatred, racism, discrimination, and colonialism.

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**HER EXCELLENCY
EMİNE
ERDOĞAN**

First Lady of the Republic of Türkiye

That is exactly why we are weaving our cocoon with *irfan*, with wisdom. Because we know that education transformed into *irfan* is the only medicine that can heal the world. And on the leaflet of this medicine it is written: *Irfan* is the inner garden of humankind, its unifying force that does not divide. In this garden, grudges fall silent, walls are torn down, and conflicts come to an end. *Irfan* begins with knowing oneself. To know oneself, one must free oneself from the slavery of prejudice. *Irfan* is the discipline of the self, the doorway to maturity, knowledge crowned with action.

We are here to expand and deepen this garden pointed out by Cemil Meriç—to enrich its soil and to water its trees. In the words of Nurettin Topçu, we want to emphasize the importance of turning schools into centers that discipline hearts, that place mercy into the very composition of the vaccine injected into the heart, that raise pure hearts who love humanity—in short, into workshops that build souls. Because when schools are reduced merely to four walls, when minds become warehouses for piled-up information, and when a human being lacks the skill to transform the knowledge in their hands into a fine work of beauty, what remains of the being we call “human” is nothing more than flesh and bone. And all of this drags our world into darkness, like a solar eclipse that has lasted far too long.

Yet leaving a just world to future generations is a debt of honor on our shoulders. Such a world, however, is impossible without raising just children who feel humanity's troubles right at the center of their hearts. Because, as one philosopher said, the true purpose of education is not knowledge but action. Therefore, we are not raising children who score highly on tests yet fail the examinations of life, but children who, with what they have learned, mend the broken places of life; who, at the table of humanity where they sit, extend their long-handled dervish spoons to the brother or sister across from them; and who, in the words of Necip Fazıl, when the call “Who is there?” is heard respond one by one, without looking to their right or left, “I am here.” This understanding of *maarif*—of education—that Türkiye embraces is recorded in history as one of the greatest acts of kindness it offers to humanity.

For we carry this approach beyond our borders as well. But with one essential difference: not to declare ourselves, like the West, as the sole center of civilization, science, technology, art, and culture; and certainly not to exploit minds in countries that were once exploited, under the name of educational activities, nor to raise people who will serve only our own interests. In this sense, our Turkish Maarif Foundation has taken an exemplary step in educational diplomacy, successfully sustaining for years an education that is respectful of and sensitive to the cultures of the countries in which it operates. How fortunate we are that, in more than 500 educational institutions across 56 countries, we are making a real and tangible contribution to world peace by raising good human beings all around the globe. For every student sitting at a desk in a Maarif school learns to look at the world through the eyes of Yunus Emre, Mevlana, Hacı Bayram Veli, Hacı Bektaş, and all the great figures of Anatolia.

As you know, our Maarif Foundation is also actively involved in the reconstruction of Syria. The First Lady of Syria, my esteemed sister Latifa, is someone who attaches great importance to education and whom I believe will be a pioneering leader in this field. In our one-on-one meetings with her, education has been

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HER EXCELLENCY
**EMİNE
ERDOĞAN**

First Lady of the Republic of Türkiye

one of the topics we have spoken about the most. God willing, through the exemplary work of our Maarif Foundation, we will support the rebuilding of the educational infrastructure in Syria and together erase the painful traces left by weapons with the healing power of the pen.

On this occasion, I would like to thank our Minister of National Education, the President of Turkish Maarif Foundation, and, through them, all members of our ministry and foundation. I especially extend my gratitude to our teachers, who patiently sow the gardens of the minds and hearts of students and bring the seeds within them together with the sun.

Esteemed guests, according to the 2024 Global Education Monitoring Report, 251 million children and young people in the world still do not attend school. In low-income countries, 33% of school-age children and young people are out of school, while in high-income countries this rate is only 3%. Yet education is a fundamental right, and the scales of justice will remain tilted until that 33% can also go to school. Furthermore, education is the precondition for

sustainable development, equality, the fight against climate change, and the construction of a culture of peace that will prevail across all continents of the world.

However, education systems that cannot fulfill this precondition and that see nothing beyond mathematical calculations when they speak of "values" must now give way to the art of raising human beings. Today, international organizations on education are held in many countries. Everyone knows that education is the greatest power that can change the world. Yet they cannot solve the systemic problems that deprive education of this power. At precisely this point, I believe that the 5th Istanbul Education Summit will send very important messages to the world and draw a new roadmap.

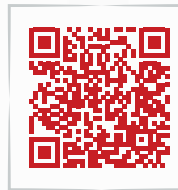
With these thoughts, I would like to conclude my words. I offer my heartfelt thanks to all participants for being here and for presenting their healing ideas in the service of humanity. I extend my gratitude to everyone who has contributed to this program. I greet you all with love and respect. May you remain in health and peace.

**Education
is a cocoon
that patiently
refines the
potential
within a
human being
and gives
them wings.**



HER EXCELLENCY
LATİFA
AL-DROUBİ

First Lady of the Syrian Arab Republic



In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings. Esteemed spouse of the President of the Republic of Türkiye, my dear sister Mrs. Emine Erdoğan; honorable ministers; ladies and gentlemen; precious friends of education; architects of tomorrow; distinguished participants: may the peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you all.

As I stand here among you today, I carry in my heart a country named Syria, whose people have never given up on embracing education, even under the most difficult conditions. Imagine a country where children have run to schools without domes, studied in homes without roofs, and written their homework by candlelight. Yet despite all this, they have not stepped back from learning, not even for a single moment.

This country, from whose bosom forty civilizations have sprung, is determined today to become once again a source of light rising from the heart of darkness. Even the burning of thousands of schools and the fact that one-third of our children have been cut off from education will not prevent it from being a beacon of hope. Undoubtedly, Syrians have contributed to society wherever they have gone and have left a lasting mark in every country they have reached. Today, by rebuilding nearly a thousand schools, they have reconnected more than 125,000 students with education.

As Syrians, we have learned that education is not merely made of buildings; it has a meaning. We have learned that true learning cannot be erased, that ideas cannot be confined, and that the future a child carries in the schoolbag can never be taken away.



Our
experience
has taught
us that a
book can be
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inner tool
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state.

**HER EXCELLENCY
LATİFA
AL-DROUBİ**

First Lady of the Syrian Arab Republic



Yet when we speak of education today, what we seek is not merely funding or institutional support. What we seek is a human-centered partnership that will rebuild learning as a path to stand up again, to remain dynamic, and to save a nation not only from ignorance but also from hopelessness. Syria has gone through a very difficult process that very few countries in the world have experienced. Our experience, this process, has taught us that a book can be a powerful inner tool and that a student can build a state.

Today, on the occasion of this summit focused on the human being and on education, I stand before you to convey the gratitude and appreciation of the Syrian people to brotherly Türkiye and to Mrs. Emine Erdoğan. I wish to express with all my heart that the bond uniting us with Türkiye is too great to fit into any definition. Surely, the Syrian people will never forget the support of the Turkish state and the Turkish nation, who opened their doors to millions of Syrians. Our children have continued their education in

Türkiye, learned its language, collected memories, formed lasting friendships, and woven a strong, inseparable bond.

Therefore, what we can achieve together in the future goes far beyond what we can imagine today. From Türkiye, which carries the magic of the East and stands as a bridge reaching toward the West, I call out to the entire world.

Let us build, together, joint education projects that rebuild schools, restore values, and recognize a child's right to dream even before their right to a seat at a desk. Let these projects raise not only children who memorize answers, but also individuals in Syria, in Türkiye, and across the Arab world who are also able to ask questions. We promise you that you will soon see a Syria that rises to its feet again with all its children, that tells you its story, and that writes a new page of science and life together with you. On this occasion, I thank Istanbul for bringing us all together here. I thank everyone who extends a hand to help build a new generation. May the peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you all.

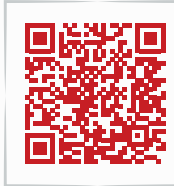


The future
a child
carries in the
schoolbag
can never be
taken away.



**MAHMUT M.
ÖZDİL**

President of Turkish Maarif Foundation



Her Excellency Mrs. Emine Erdoğan,
Spouse of the President of the Republic of Türkiye;
Sa'âdetu's-sayyidati'l-ûlâ li'l-cumhûriyyeti'l-'arabiyyeti's-sûriyye,
es-seyyide Latîfa ed-Durûbî;

Excellences,
Messieurs les Ministres,
Mesdames et Messieurs les Ambassadeurs,
Chers intervenants et invités venus des quatre coins du monde;
Your Excellencies,
distinguished ambassadors,
esteemed speakers and guests joining us from around the world;
Dear guests, dear colleagues;
Ladies and gentlemen;

Ahlan wa sahlan bikum.
Soyez les bienvenus.
Welcome to Istanbul.

Turkish Maarif Foundation set out in 2016 with a singular purpose: to launch a new educational endeavour on a global scale, to share Türkiye's rich educational heritage with friends around the world, to deepen it together, and in doing so, to offer something new to the conversation on education. We are now in our tenth year.

We continue our work with more than 70,000 students across 64 countries.

From the very first day, our concern has never been limited to opening schools. Building a solid intellectual foundation, one that allows us to continuously reflect on the philosophy, aims, and methods of education, and to evaluate our practice against that reflection, has been a founding part of what we do.



Our academic publications, our curriculum development work, our long-term and comprehensive undertakings such as the Turkish Maarif Encyclopedia, and the Istanbul Education Summit, whose fifth edition brings us together today, are the concrete expressions of that search.

Through the Istanbul Education Summit, we engage with leading education thinkers and policymakers from around the world on the questions that matter most, and in doing so, we continually renew and deepen our understanding of education.

I extend my sincere thanks to all colleagues who have worked and contributed to make this Summit possible; to our distinguished guests, speakers, and partners whose ideas we will draw from over the next two days; and to each of you for taking the time to be here.

When we think about education, we must not lose sight of a stark and burning inequality. Today, more than 270 million school-age children around the world are unable to attend school. Across the world, every morning, there are millions of children who wake up, if they were able to sleep at all, not knowing whether the school they attended yesterday will be bombed today, whether they will find a piece of bread to ease their hunger, whether they will survive until evening.

We live in a world where a six-year-old girl named Hind Rajab, who, when asked what grade she was in, said she was in the Butterflies Class, whose school was called the Happy Childhood Kindergarten, waited in vain for hours

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inside a car, surrounded by the dead bodies of her relatives, for someone to come and save her. And then, together with the paramedics who had tried to reach her, she was brutally killed.

It was in the midst of exactly this helplessness, in a moment when we felt we were suffocating, that the theme of this year's Istanbul Education Summit took shape in our minds: "Healing the World Through Education."

Yes, "Healing the World Through Education" is an ambitious title, even, I would say, a provocative one. Provocative, because the word "healing" carries within it a series of quietly unsettling questions: Who is sick? What are we trying to heal? What does it mean to be well?

To repeat the question as Sezai Karakoç posed it in *Taha'nın Kitabı / Taha's Book*

Her hastalık bir putun kırılması mı demek
/ *Is every illness the shattering of an idol?*
Putların toptan kırılması mı demek ölmek
/ *Is death the shattering of all idols at once?*

I believe it is impossible to arrive at the right diagnosis without sitting with

these questions, and impossible to speak of genuine healing without the right diagnosis.

The point to which we have been brought by the powerful deciding, from a single centre, who is in need of healing and what is acceptable, deaf to the world's diversity, blind to life's essential colours, insisting that their truth is the only truth, is plain for all to see.

It is for this reason that I want to say clearly: the progressive, Enlightenment, modernist worldview, which we might caricature as taking people, kneading them with your own truths, and cultivating them as you please, as you prune the trees in your garden or water your vegetables, so that these enlightened minds, illuminated by the light of your knowledge, go out and make the world a better place for you, is not the solution to the problem. It is the source of it.

When we speak of "Healing the World Through Education," then, we are not speaking of anyone arriving with syringes to inject their remedies into people they find wanting. We are speaking of a different understanding, one in which the diverse experiences, needs, sorrows, hopes, mistakes, and merits of people from different geographies are not dismissed or ignored. An understanding that has the courage to look at the world's suffering without freezing in the face of it, one that can move from pain to responsibility, and from responsibility to a shared future.

An understanding of education as the building of a solid ground upon which the student's potential can pass from possibility into actuality, upon which they can grow freely, one that aims to nourish the human conscience, reason, compassion, and sense of justice; to open a horizon of responsibility and hope; and that does not fear the shattering of idols.

This is precisely why we see the Istanbul Education Summit not as a place for prescriptions to be imposed, but as a meeting ground where a shared search is widened and deepened.

I believe that the voices raised here, and the connections formed in this room, will not only make today's problems more visible, they will open doors to the possibilities of tomorrow.

Thank you all, once again.

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HIGH-LEVEL MINISTERIAL MEETING

Global humanitarian, environmental, and social crises make it necessary to reconsider the transformative power of education and turn the responsibility of “healing the world” into a shared vision. In the face of increasing vulnerabilities at the global level, it is aimed for education systems to recognize these problems early and build awareness that will contribute to social recovery. It is a critical necessity for peace and humanity at the global level that education should go beyond the transfer of technical knowledge and develop an approach based on moral values and wisdom. The transformative power of education needs to be strengthened through a sustainable ecosystem of cooperation among families, communities, institutions, and other stakeholders. Supporting young people as hope- and action-oriented leaders who develop solutions to global problems through education is seen as the strongest investment in the future.

With this understanding, the outputs of the Summit are expected to inspire concrete policies and collaborations that will strengthen the transformative role of education on a global scale.

Discussion Questions

1. Do current education systems serve as thermometers that measure the “fever” of the world? What does the temperature tell us?
2. In a world where knowledge proliferates but conflicts never end, how can education transform the transmission of knowledge into “wisdom”?
3. Who are the stakeholders of the collaborative ecosystem necessary for genuine and lasting social recovery?
4. How can the voices of young people reach the decision-making table?

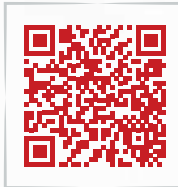
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EDUCATION SUMMIT





**MOUSTAPHA MOHAMED
MAHAMOUD**

Minister of National Education and Vocational Training, Djibouti



Djibouti is a big country. In terms of area, it is a small country, but it is a big country in that around 80% of its national budget is allocated to education and therefore to professional training. Education and training have been the government's priorities for the past 25 years. I have been a minister since 2016, and we, the ministers responsible for education and professional training, have a heavy responsibility. I firmly believe in the power of education to heal many of the world's wounds, but it cannot do so in isolation from the rest of society. In my experience, without quality education for all, a sustainable transformation is not possible. But also, without a broader transformation of our societies, schools alone cannot really do everything. In my country, we have made a clear choice to make education a priority for the state. And based on the reality in Djibouti, I would like to list here the various possibilities, or the many ills of the world, to which education can really provide answers.

Firstly, poverty and social injustice. When schools provide every child, girl or boy, in urban or rural areas, with fundamental learning of digital and life skills, they are already breaking the cycle of poverty and injustice, and schools are seen as a means of social advancement. Another important point is access to employment. To gain access to employment, entrepreneurship, and social mobility, education can also enable students to learn about their rights and defend them, and to participate fully in economic and civic life.

The second problem that education can remedy is the breakdown of trust between citizens and institutions, and violence. Education that develops critical thinking, ethics, a culture of debate and cooperation, listening, a culture of peace, self-confidence, resilience, and empathy, as opposed to hate speech, manipulation, and extremism. School must be a place for learning to live together, to respect differences, but also to resolve conflicts peacefully. And it is all these values that the school must transmit. Another very important issue that affects both Djibouti and the world today is gender inequality. Through education, every girl who completes her education means fewer early marriages, lower maternal mortality, higher family incomes, and more female leadership

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in society. Educating girls is therefore not only a requirement of justice, but also an accelerator of development for the entire country. The fourth point, which is very important and which I believe education can also solve, is youth unemployment and, above all, the feeling of disillusionment. In general, people finish their education and then ask themselves, "What am I going to do now?" So, when general education is better linked to professional training, from an early age, young people learn the profession they will choose later in life. I believe that with good education combining general and vocational training, work-study programs, and active guidance, we can transform young people who are at risk of marginalization into young people who can provide solutions. We also have an ecological and climate crisis in the world and everywhere in our countries. Here too, education in science, the environment, and sustainable behavior can profoundly change our modes of production and consumption. It trains citizens to make informed decisions to protect resources, preserve biodiversity, and adapt to climate change.

And finally, I would particularly like to say that the fracture of exclusion... if we want education to heal the world, no child should be left out of school. I think that is one of the first things. Neither children with disabilities, nor refugee or displaced children, nor children who are out of school or working on the streets. All these people must be taken into account. An education system that leaves out the most vulnerable does not heal the world; it reproduces its wounds. We need inclusive education, in terms of infrastructure and teaching methods, but also in terms of educational resources and systems. This is really the heart of the solution, and therefore of healing.

We have to choose which decisive transformation would really be ideal for amplifying the power of education. I think that if I had to make that choice, I would choose teacher training as the truly decisive transformation. We need to completely overhaul the teaching profession, because teachers are at the heart

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MOUSTAPHA MOHAMED MAHAMOUD

*Minister of National Education
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of education. No matter what we develop, no matter how good the competency framework or curriculum we create, teachers are the heart of the system if the profession is not reviewed, and I think it is a profession that needs to be updated in line with the current environment and changes. It is the teaching profession that must be revisited and rebuilt, starting with recruitment, for example, but also with initial teacher training and the place of teachers in society.

We know that in our societies, Muslim societies, or societies with a long history, teachers really played a central role in society. Today, we have the impression that teachers have lost this status. At the societal level, as parents of students, all those involved in the school must recognize that it is teachers who will shape the citizens of tomorrow. And we all have a duty to encourage, support, and train these individuals who are responsible for educating the citizens of tomorrow, and to provide them with all the resources they need to deliver high-quality education in a comfortable environment. We, as developing countries, face a threefold challenge: to give these children access to school, but also to ensure that we have a suitable curriculum that meets the expectations and aspirations of Djiboutian students, for example. It is also important to work on the quality of education. And when we talk about the quality of education, we also mean the work we need to do with teachers; in fact, teachers themselves must begin to change the way they teach. We can no longer teach today as we did thirty years ago. If teachers are not brought up to date... Today, I remember seeing a short video: the teacher walks into the classroom and talks to his students about the football game he watched last night, or the events he saw on TikTok, or the events he saw on YouTube. In other words, he shows his students that he is connected just like them. A teacher who, for example, knows that children really enjoy watching sports is a teacher who arrives, and automatically the student will appreciate and welcome him more because they say, "Ah, this man is part of our world." So it's also very important that our teachers try to be innovative. And we must train them in this too, particularly through continuing education, because it's not just initial training that's important; continuing education is also very important.

I am convinced that a teacher who is well-trained, supported, motivated, and recognized as a key player in healing will automatically give every child, regardless of their starting point, the opportunity to succeed. Above all, this might be a reality difficult to grasp for the audience, in the depths of our country, we have schools in rural areas, in very arid zones, and sometimes teachers from the city who have never been to the remote regions are assigned there. However, during their initial training, they are also trained to teach in this type of environment. The technical and financial partners who work with us, when they visit these teachers, are impressed by what they are achieving. They give their heart and

soul to make it work. And I myself, during a tour of the remote regions, when I saw young people whose parents are illiterate, who have sometimes never seen the capital, and who are starting... because we have introduced English from the third year of primary school... who speak English, who express themselves well, who write well. And the parents, because they were with us, when they saw their children doing this remarkable work, they themselves were amazed. That is to say, the parents were amazed to learn that their child, their son, could do all this. It's very impressive, and it reduces what we were saying, the wounds, and it brings healing. Because there are internal wounds and wounds that come from outside. But already, solving problems internally reduces this gap and makes education a true education, where all children have access, but also a fair and high-quality education for all.

Really, if we had to work on it, it would be transformational: working on training and making teachers truly innovative. The other very important point is also to increase international cooperation, but on an equal footing. It's not a question of me, exchanging ideas with you and imposing my way of seeing things, values that are not yours. It really is egalitarian international cooperation, and programs must be co-constructed. Because there are a number of skills that are cross-cutting and global, and Djiboutian children are not only destined to be Djiboutian citizens, they are also global citizens and universal citizens. So, the Djiboutian citizen we are educating is a citizen who is fully aware of their origins, who has a deep understanding of their country and the values of their country and society, but who is also a child who is open to the world.

And so, I think and would like to move away from a logic where a country exports models. It is not a question of exporting models, but perhaps of drawing inspiration from models and contextualizing them. We are proud to say that today, from first grade through twelfth grade, the curriculum we teach our children is designed by Djiboutians. It is a program that responds to the economic and social aspirations of our children. The textbooks are also contextualized. Through these textbooks, children can identify with themselves, whether they live in the rural areas of the country or in the capital. We have been supported by experts and inspired by models from other countries, but we have contextualized them and ensured that the program is truly 100% Djiboutian. Finally, education does not change the world in a day, but every day, in every classroom, a teacher can change a child's life. Our political responsibility here is to create the conditions for this silent gesture, repeated millions of times, to subsequently become a lasting transformation. That is the goal we want to achieve. I believe that all of us gathered here today are interested in what we give to our education. And I propose this alliance: let us together make our education systems not a mirror of the world's divisions, but a workshop where its healing can be built.



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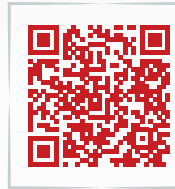


HEALING
THE WORLD
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KHADY DIOP MBODJI

Secretary General, the Ministry of National Education of Senegal



Excellencies, Minister, distinguished guests, this summit allows us to share our experiences and pool our best practices, certainly with a view to finding the remedy we seek to the crisis in education, and I would even say beyond that, to the crisis facing the world. The theme of this meeting is not just an aspiration; it is a global imperative. As Mr. Dembélé pointed out earlier, the humanitarian, environmental, and social crises affecting the planet are forcing us to rethink education, not as a simple system of instruction, but as the world's foremost medicine, capable of healing divisions and restoring ties between peoples, cultures, and generations.

If education is to heal, it must become a global common good, driven by a vision shared among nations, a coalition of humanity conscious of its common destiny. The reference document for this summit reminds us of an essential truth: in a world where knowledge is multiplying, but conflicts remain, education must transform knowledge into wisdom. This sentence resonates deeply in Senegal.

Senegal is a small country when compared to Türkiye, small in terms of population but also small in terms of area. We have about 18 million inhabitants, and of those 18 million, in the education sector that we manage, we have 4 million learners in the formal system. But if we consider the non-formal system with *madrassas* and others, we can say that we far exceed those 4 million. We are currently looking for ways to integrate all these children, who we often consider to be outside the system, but who are still learning, albeit in a different way. We are in the process of modernizing these other forms of education to ensure schooling for all Senegalese children.

This is the whole point of the initiatives taken by the authorities to move towards a complete overhaul of our school system. How can we ensure that schools fulfill their role in transforming the world, as well as contributing to the socialization of conscious individuals and integrating them into social life? Our



aim is to ensure the implementation of these three fundamental pillars that we have identified within the scope of our education reform package, which you just mentioned.

The quality axis is for greater quality. The equity axis, on the other hand, focuses on how to reduce differences and ensure that all these inequalities are truly eliminated and resolved. There is also a governance axis. We are currently rolling out a program in Senegal. It involves reviewing our approach, both at the pedagogical level and at all other levels, to improve quality and make the Senegalese education system much more efficient, both internally and externally.

This is the whole point of this curriculum overhaul, because the overall overhaul of the system also includes curriculum reform aimed at creating a school where students not only learn to know, but also to discern, to judge, to cooperate, and to live in the world with clarity and responsibility. Last year, the Minister of Education launched a new initiative for the humanistic transformation of schools, and that is the whole point of today's summit. I believe we must move towards further humanizing schools and ensuring that our learners are already socialized in this sense. How do we get values education and civic education back on track? The goal is to re-emphasize all these values that should cultivate citizens ready to participate well in life and transform the world. This new initiative for the humanistic transformation of schools will involve teaching wisdom, connecting learning to meaning, anchoring knowledge in ethics and conscience, and transforming the taste for peace and respect for human dignity. This is how education becomes care for the world. The curriculum reform we are leading is based on a strong conviction: school must become a space for

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healing human bonds and is structured around three pillars: the ethical pillar, which I mentioned earlier, and the systemic and interactive pillar, which we are currently working on in Senegal. This is our response to the summit's call to strengthen a sustainable ecosystem of cooperation.

Finally, Senegal, as I said earlier, is facing, like the rest of the world, unprecedented technological change. We are facing a situation where schools can quickly become outdated. That is why new guidelines have been defined in the program that aims to transform the country by 2050. But in this national program, which is built around three pillars, those of us in education are particularly concerned with the human capital pillar. How can we build strong, powerful, and competent human capital to meet the challenges? We all agree that artificial intelligence is transforming the way we learn, produce, and communicate. But if artificial intelligence is not guided by strong ethics, it can further weaken ties. Senegal has made a clear choice: to anticipate but also to integrate this culture of artificial intelligence into its programs and pedagogy, but a humanistic artificial intelligence at the service of discernment, creativity, and personalized education. This artificial intelligence is there to improve approaches but also pedagogical practices, teaching, and learning strategies for greater quality and efficiency.

This choice is reflected in several measures taken or actions: The first option is to train all teachers in Senegal in this new approach. All teachers in Senegal have a national program to train them. This has never been done before. The aim is to enable them to develop their practices and improve their teaching methods. The second one is introducing students to a critical culture of technology. Students should not only be recipients of knowledge, but this critical culture of technology must be firmly established among them. Thirdly, the integration of AI is there to better support students, but not to replace teachers. Teachers will remain. Their training is important, but teachers are there as regulators and guides. Their role will always be predominant, but new technologies will be used to strengthen it and enhance their capabilities.

We have also considered Senegal, where the authorities are keen to introduce national languages. Our countries, all of us here on this panel, have our own national languages, but we learn from a foreign language. This can be a bias that prevents us from achieving all of our goals. We have French as our official language, which is a second language, but we also have our L1s (first languages), which are our national languages that we have gradually introduced into the system, and we are aiming for widespread use by 2029 to ensure that, as in

Türkiye, Senegalese students can also learn from their mother tongue, the language that conveys their culture. This is also a very important factor in transforming the quality of our education systems.

We are also involved in the field of science, because you cannot talk about development without talking about science, given the very important and predominant role that science must play in the service of development. To this end, we are facing a critical situation where the majority of our students are in science streams. Strong measures are being taken to promote science and technology in order to improve our indicators and ensure that our system can adapt and align itself with global standards. I will not dwell too much on English. We promote national languages but also languages of openness, such as English, as is the case here and elsewhere.

To reiterate, healing the world also means humanizing technology; this summit reminds us of all this. Senegal fully shares the conviction that our young people are not simply beneficiaries of the education system; they are its co-establishers. We encourage their creativity, innovation, and civic leadership through student activities, club participation, environmental initiatives, and school governments. In all schools in Senegal, we have school governments that promote student participation, so that solutions truly become decision-making forces.

Healing the world through education means putting young people at the center of the humanity project. In closing, I would like to say that education can measure the fever of the world. It can reveal its wounds, but above all, it can respond to them. It can heal visible and invisible fractures. As a Senegalese proverb says, "*Man is the remedy for man*," reminding us that every human being carries within them the resources necessary to heal the ills of humanity.

This wisdom invites us to make education the path through which these inner resources are revealed, developed, and put at the service of the world. It can transform fear into discernment, loneliness into solidarity, and fragmentation into connection. We are called to make education a global good, a place of healing, a space for rebirth. Cooperation in the field of education is so important that, in this context of globalization, it will enable us to share the various remedies and solutions that have been found. May this summit mark the advent of a global coalition for an education of connection, wisdom, and peace.



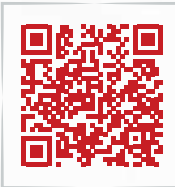
School must become a space for healing human bonds and is structured around three pillars: the ethical, the systemic, and the interactive.





**BOUBACAR
DEMBELE**

Secretary General, the Ministry of National Education of Mali



What power do we believe in to heal the world? Today, the theme “Healing the World Through Education” is one that fits perfectly with the international context. And as has been said, it is not a question of performing miracles, but rather of us, as humanity, knowing what we can do to effectively heal the ills afflicting the world. Education paves the way for us to meet any challenge, whether it be disasters, wars, or calamities. Education is the surest way for us to provide the necessary remedies, solutions, and cures for the ills afflicting the world today.

The second aspect is: what are the fundamental problems that education can really solve? Today, humanity is indeed facing serious difficulties. At present, the world is suffering from many problems, including physical violence, verbal violence, psychological abuse, harassment, especially sexual harassment, social discrimination, inter-community conflicts, armed conflicts, environmental problems with catastrophic consequences, environmental pollution, deforestation, and so on. Droughts, desertification, and famine are indeed evils that the world is currently suffering from. Education can provide solutions to each of these problems. Because we are human beings endowed with intelligence and reason, we have no other solution than to use the soft power of education to provide the necessary remedies. There are many social and global conditions that are necessary for genuine transformation to take place.

In Mali, for example, we have decided that schools must no longer be content with imparting theoretical knowledge; otherwise, learners do not even know how to implement or apply what they have learned during their training. Therefore, we must use the necessary



strategies and methods to ensure that, ultimately, our learners, upon completing their training and their school curriculum, can effectively apply everything they have learned during their training. That is why, in Mali, in addition to proposing other innovative strategies, we have used themes. We have themes such as education for a culture of peace, education for the prevention of violent extremism, education for the prevention of violence, education and promotion of living together and reconciliation, education for resilience, education for interculturality, especially religious tolerance. We are a cosmopolitan country. Therefore, our education system must respect all these aspects. Our diversity in Mali should not be an obstacle but rather an asset for the creation of a nation-state.

Furthermore, education must encourage critical thinking, diversity, creativity, and problem-solving, which are essential behaviors for adapting to change and responding to crises. Today, Mali is experiencing a security crisis. Our education system must not only transmit concepts, but we must also raise awareness and emphasize behavioral change so that students, from an early age and throughout their middle school education, can effectively grow up with concepts of resilience and religious tolerance. This is because children are generally susceptible and easy prey for violent extremism. So, if they are taught these kinds of concepts from an

Listening to young people today and trusting them to change their behavior is an investment in the future.

**BOUBACAR
DEMBELE**

*Secretary General, the Ministry
of National Education of Mali*

early age, and if we allow them to think about responsible solutions and wise and responsible decision-making, they will be able to avoid being recruited and used by people with bad intentions. That is what we can say about transformative education.

The most critical transformation to be achieved in my country, Mali, is a transformation of mentality, a change in behavior. That is why Malian citizens must be builders, patriots, rooted in their culture, of course, but also open to the universal. To this end, Mali, through the Ministry of National Education and other relevant ministries, has developed a Values Education Program. In the very near future, this program will be integrated into the training curricula at different levels and types of education. Once this integration is complete, accompanying documents will also be developed. This will be a training module for teachers to give them all the necessary knowledge related to these different programs. A user guide will accompany this module. This guide will enable teachers to develop activities in their classrooms and integrate them into their teaching practices and teaching-learning activities. These activities will be linked to the program, which values and promotes Malian culture and typical Malian values.

In addition, schools and families must work to build trust between decision-makers and citizens. Efforts must also be pooled to ensure mutual respect on both sides, so that everyone respects each other, listens to each other, reassures each other, and values each other. Educational institutions will also need to raise awareness among communities of the importance of putting the common good before individual interests, which is currently a scourge in our societies and developing countries. We will also need to incorporate respect for public property into the curriculum and teach learners from an early age that respect for public property is a duty for every citizen. That is why the new type of Malian citizen must be a builder, a patriot.

How can we strengthen the impact of this transformation through cooperation between our countries based on equal partnership and mutual learning? For us, this means that the various stakeholders must respect the sovereignty of each state within the framework

of a win-win partnership. This essential collaboration will be the crowning achievement of our efforts. It will also require the various actors in each country, public institutions, the state, local authorities, civil society, businesses, and the economic sector, to join forces so that a win-win partnership worthy of the name, respecting the interests of all stakeholders, can be achieved.

In the research and education sector, particular emphasis must be placed on entrepreneurship, for example, with local businesses and even at the international level, in order to forge a partnership worthy of the name. Trade unions and professional associations must also be involved in these partnerships. This is of paramount importance to us. It is also a question of giving particular importance to the media: raising awareness, training, and making wise and responsible decisions.

These partnerships, built on trust and mutual respect, will enable the various allied countries to help each other through the exchange of experiences, helping young people to gain confidence in their role in the development of our countries. This partnership also gives young people real opportunities to engage with their environment and participate in decision-making. If there are win-win partnerships between different states, this will be an opportunity for young people in these different countries to have a fruitful exchange. To exchange best practices and draw inspiration from them to improve academic performance. This involves youth councils, parliaments, regular consultations, and training in public speaking. We need to train our young people in leadership, in speaking up to assert themselves, giving their point of view, defending their point of view while respecting the point of view of others. This is necessary and of paramount importance. We must also teach them to debate current issues. Listening to young people today and trusting them to change their behavior is a political choice and an investment in the future. The partnership must be a fruitful partnership, a lasting partnership, a win-win partnership, where responsibilities are clearly defined, strategies and policies are well defined, and the sovereignty of each state is effectively respected.



**Education is
the surest
way for us to
provide the
necessary
remedies,
solutions, and
cures for the
ills afflicting
the world
today.**





From Schools to Society: The Collaboration Ecosystem

A Call from Youth to Tomorrow: From Idea to Action

Revealing the Known in the Mirror of Education



Healing the World Through Education



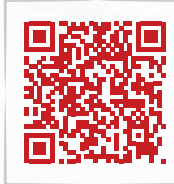
Beyond the Curriculum: The Art of Humanity





MEHMET GÜLLÜOĞLU

Dr., Ambassador



I am a medical doctor. In the field of civil society, I worked as a physician in emergency rooms, in ambulances, in nursing homes, and in hospitals. I love civil society, and I believe it is very important for the world. I have also worked in the public sector; I served as the Director General of the Turkish Red Crescent and as the President of AFAD. I then spent what I consider to be a magnificent four years in Tanzania, where I served as ambassador. I returned a year ago. Currently, I am serving at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the Coordinator for Humanitarian Aid to Palestine and, again in civil society, I am active in the Green Crescent.

This is the world map we usually see on the United Nations website. However, I prefer another one: the Peters Projection, which reflects the real proportions of the world more accurately. On standard maps, Europe appears larger and Africa smaller, but in reality, Africa is far larger. So, the first thing we must do is understand which world we are talking about.

On one side of this world, there are luxury yachts. On the other, there is a small boat traveling for weeks along the Congo River, as shown in documentaries such as *Journeys on the Congo River*. The same contrast appears in education. Both images you see are from Africa. One is a luxury school in Nigeria; the other is a classroom in Tanzania. When we look at education in Gaza today, even that modest classroom represents, at the very least, a relatively safe environment. During my four years in Tanzania, especially in rural areas, I saw classrooms with 100, 150, even 200 students. And yet, we speak of healing the world through education.

The same contrast exists in health systems. In Türkiye, private hospitals have reached very high standards. Meanwhile, public hospitals in Tanzania struggle with limited resources. So again, we must ask: what kind of world are we trying to heal?

Medical Doctor, Public Health Specialist. Graduate of Marmara University. Worked in the fields of Disaster Management and Humanitarian Aid. Served as Türkiye's Ambassador to Tanzania. Currently works as the Coordinator for Palestinian Humanitarian Aid on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, Vice President of the Green Crescent, Secretary General of the International Federation of Green Crescents, Civil Society Volunteer, and Academician. Married and father of 4 children. Speaks English, some Arabic and Swahili.

Healing implies deep problems. The climate crisis is one of them. When we think of Africa, we imagine drought, yet this photo shows flooding in Kenya. There are also global health threats. During the COVID period, for example, Tanzania experienced almost no recorded cases. Why? Because there were other, more immediate problems. COVID remained, to a large extent, a disease of the Global North—a disease of the Northwest, of Europe, and of America.

Poverty is another reality. While one part of the world struggles with obesity, another struggles with survival on less than one dollar a day. And still, we say we will heal the world through education.

Wars and conflicts surround us. This photo is from Gaza. Gaza is not naturally a place of hunger, but when access to food becomes a weapon, even a place in the Mediterranean can face food insecurity.

I want to speak briefly about a disease. It causes fever, fatigue, vomiting, seizures, coma, and death. Symptoms begin about ten days after infection. It is transmitted by the *Anopheles* mosquito and caused by the *Plasmodium* parasite. In 2023, there were about 260 million cases and 600,000 deaths. Every minute, one child under five dies from this disease. It is malaria.

Why malaria? Because it is deeply linked to poverty. Where malaria persists, societies remain trapped in a vicious cycle. Although eliminated elsewhere, it still dominates Africa. A single mosquito remains the deadliest animal on earth in terms of human lives lost. Can we break this cycle? Yes, through education. Research clearly shows a direct relationship between education and health. Higher education levels reduce mortality, improve health outcomes, and lower rates of chronic disease. Education increases health literacy, preventive care, and awareness of healthy behaviors. At the same time, it strengthens economies by increasing productivity, innovation, and human capital.

I observed the work of Turkish Maarif Foundation closely in Tanzania. Education builds human capital, and human capital builds prosperity. This is a long-term process. That is why I often say I wish Turkish Maarif Foundation had been established earlier. When I speak to young people, I tell them this: grow a plant, even a small one. You realize that nothing grows without care.



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Dr., Ambassador

In a child's life, after parents, teachers remain one of the most important authority figures. Respect for that role still matters, and education plays a central role in sustaining it. Education also increases optimism, happiness, self-confidence, and social trust. In several African countries, I observed that as education levels rise, respect for law and institutions also improves. Rwanda, despite the genocide of 1994, has transformed itself in just two decades. Education can change destiny.

Yet we must ask: what kind of education? How do highly educated societies produce such violence, as we see in Palestine? Studies conducted by Israeli academics reveal a striking reality: in a country where twenty percent of the population is of Palestinian origin, two different curricula exist. In the curriculum designed for Jewish students, Palestinians are often depicted as primitive, lower-class, savage, and untrustworthy. By presenting them as "less than human," education is used to fuel systemic prejudice. Furthermore, the term "*Nakba*" is strictly forbidden from appearing in any educational materials.

Knowledge without moral values is dangerous. Technology without conscience becomes destructive. Think of the atomic bomb or Chernobyl; they have no conscience. Therefore, we need an education that preserves moral values. One of the names of our Prophet is *al-Muallim*, the Teacher. He taught with patience and compassion. Jesus, peace be upon him, also taught through stories and wisdom.

To illustrate this, look at Registan Square in Samarkand. On the gate of the madrasa, there is a famous image: a tiger chasing a gazelle. It is said that the gazelle represents knowledge and the tiger represents the student. A student must pursue knowledge with the same tireless energy and focus that a tiger uses to chase its prey. This is the essence of our educational heritage. If moral values are missing, then, unfortunately, we see things like children in Israel being encouraged to write messages on the bombs that will be dropped.

I would like to conclude with three statements—my three mottos:

First: If there are no values, education becomes dangerous. In the period we are living through, if the "values" dimension is missing, then that bird of education, instead of flying, becomes a creature full of knowledge but with no idea where it is going.



Second: One of the most important points we must pay attention to—within Turkish Maarif Foundation, in our personal lives, and as parents—is the sense of belonging. Today, not only young people but people in general are moving away from belonging: belonging to family, to community, to institutions, to culture. As this feeling decreases, life itself begins to lose its meaning. The things that make me who I am are all the pieces I belong to. If we cannot nurture a sense of belonging in our education system, I believe we face a serious issue regarding future generations.

Third: We must protect our youth from addiction. The history of the Green Crescent offers a profound lesson in this regard. Founded in 1920 during the occupation of Istanbul, it emerged as a response to the distribution of free alcohol by occupying forces to the youth in Karaköy. Mazhar Osman, the founder of Turkish psychiatry, recognized this not just as a health issue, but as an attempt to "occupy the youth" when the city itself was under siege. Inspired by the Red Crescent, the Green Crescent was established to protect the mental and physical integrity of future generations. Today, whether it is drugs, gambling, or technology, we must remain alert to these threats that target our sense of purpose.

I want to conclude with this final image. In Gaza, when schools were destroyed, a teacher turned her own home into a classroom. This is what education means: hope. I extend my respect to all teachers, to Turkish Maarif Foundation, and to educators everywhere.

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PANEL 1

Global issues in need of healing are addressed within the framework of both the unique conditions of the past and those of the present. In the emergence of these issues, human factors are as influential as economic and political structures. Individuals' prejudices, limitless desires, and power and interest-oriented tendencies, combined with societal perception patterns and structural dynamics, generate new forms of fragility. The interrelations among phenomena such as climate change, migration, war, genocide, and poverty further deepen these vulnerabilities.

This panel explores dimensions in which our world requires healing and examines the causes, interconnections, and impacts of these global challenges through the lens of education.

Discussion Questions

1. How can we interpret the small signals observed in classrooms as reflections of broader social fragilities?
2. In what ways can curricula, teacher evaluations, and classroom experiences function as an "early warning system" for identifying social vulnerabilities?
3. From an interdisciplinary perspective (education, psychology, sociology, environmental studies), what social and global wounds become visible to us?
4. What insights into the depth of global challenges can we gain from the stories of students experiencing migration, war, or poverty?
5. Through what indicators can cultural conflict and hate speech be recognized within the classroom setting?
6. Among the educational concepts of equality, sustainability, citizenship, and rights, which are being neglected, and how does this neglect exacerbate existing problems?
7. What global issues are reflected in students' learning difficulties, and which methods are most effective in identifying these needs?
8. Do current education systems function as a thermometer that measures the world's "fever"? If so, what does the temperature tell us?

MEHMET NACI
İNCİ

*Prof. Dr., Rector of
Boğaziçi University*

Prof. Dr. Naci İnci is a distinguished physicist and academic leader currently serving as the Rector of Boğaziçi University. His academic journey began at Marmara University (BSc, 1987) and continued in the United Kingdom, where he earned his PhD in Physics from Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, in 1993. He subsequently worked as a postdoctoral research fellow on advanced fiber optic communication systems at the Electrical Engineering Department of Stanford University (1993-1994). He has held pivotal roles in shaping the academic landscape in Türkiye. At Sabancı University (1999-2005), he took an active role in establishing the curriculum for the Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences and was a strong advocate for university-industry collaboration. He rejoined Boğaziçi University as a Professor of Physics in 2005 and served as the Head of the Physics Department for five years from 2013 to 2021. His research and teaching experience is truly global, having held appointments at the 4th Physikalisches Institut at Stuttgart University, the Electronic Engineering Department at Gunma University, the Applied Optics Department at the Norwegian Technical University, and Heriot-Watt University. He is currently a Board Member of TÜBİTAK, a Board Member of Turkcell, and a Council Member of the Turkish-Japanese Science and Technology University. He also served on the Board of Directors of the Interuniversity Board (ÜAK) from 2022 to 2024.

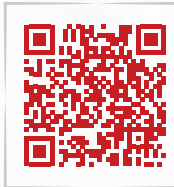
IES⁵
ISTANBUL
EDUCATION SUMMIT





**ESRA
ALBAYRAK**

*PhD, Chairman of the Board of Directors,
NUN Education and Culture Foundation*



When I first saw the panel's theme, Chekhov's words came to my mind: "Man becomes better when you show him what he is like." I truly cannot think of a better mirror than education to reveal who a person is and help them discover their inner essence. This is why I am here today: to share my thoughts on how healing might be achieved via the decolonization of education. At the center of my presentation lies this question: Does the decolonization of knowledge heal education and the human being? To answer this, I would like to reconsider the meanings of knowledge, education, and decolonization, while emphasizing the importance of the geopolitics of knowledge.

As is well known, decolonization traditionally refers to ending territorial, political, or economic dependency. Yet in the context of knowledge, it refers to a much deeper process. It points to liberation from colonial patterns that persist quietly on epistemic, ontological, and methodological levels, even after political independence. I am speaking of processes such as continuing education in the colonizer's language or using their educational materials even in the post-colonial period.

Consider psychological research based on data from a marginal subset of the world's population, the Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic communities, yet treated as universal human behavior. Therefore, epistemic decolonization seeks answers not only to who will govern a country, but also: Who will know? Which knowledge will be deemed valid? Whose ways of thinking will be accepted as the norm? How will knowledge be transmitted and used? We question why our children accept

Born in Istanbul in 1983, Albayrak completed her secondary education at Kadıköy Imam Hatip High School in 2000 and her undergraduate studies in sociology and history at Indiana University, Bloomington in 2003. She received her doctorate in sociology from the University of California, Berkeley, in 2013. Her primary academic interests include different models of religion-state relations, dependencies, and decolonization in education. Albayrak, who has actively participated in numerous socially impactful projects in numerous national and international civil society organizations, is married and a mother of four.



Greenwich as the world's zero point, or whether Christopher Columbus might be understood not as an explorer, but as an invading merchant. We consider the possibility that geometry or philosophy may have existed in China, Babylon, Mesopotamia, or the Arabian Peninsula long before Ancient Greece.

Decolonizing knowledge, therefore, means challenging the imposition of Western-centered epistemology as a universal standard, granting legitimacy to other systems. Decolonizing education is the effort to transform the system shaped by this epistemic monopoly. This must encompass teacher training, curriculum development, assessment models, content, and methodology.

To understand why this matters, we must recognize that knowledge is not neutral; throughout history, it has been shaped by dominant power relations. Today, the criteria of scientific knowledge are largely determined by Western universities, journals, and funding



Against the meritocratic principle that "man is a wolf to man," I wonder whether the teaching that "man is a homeland to man" might open a window for us today.



ESRA ALBAYRAK

PhD, Chairman of the Board of Directors, NUN Education and Culture Foundation



bodies. Through these structures, alternative knowledge systems and modes of thinking are pushed out of circulation. Only work aligned with the dominant paradigm is rewarded. As a result, monocentric knowledge systems are treated as universal, creating serious psychosocial consequences.

The gravest effect is that while resisting colonial domination politically, we may unwittingly consent to it epistemically. When a society's cultural heritage, worldview, language, and concepts are devalued, individuals are driven into epistemic passivity. Over time, this produces loss of self-confidence, identity confusion, and cultural alienation.

On a micro scale, this is visible when students feel discomfort about being part of a large family, inadequacy in speaking their mother tongue, or shame regarding their accent in a foreign language. They may mock their own traditions or hesitate to continue those of previous generations. On a macro scale, we often regard Western-centered models of education, psychosocial development, and economic progress as the only possible way forward, leading to intellectual numbness.

Polycentric knowledge systems, by contrast, provide societies with a sense of selfhood. What I propose is a transition from monocentric to polycentric systems through decolonization. This transition fosters the ability to say, "My problems differ from

yours, and I have ideas that may contribute to solving them." This is profoundly healing.

For this reason, I view the decolonization of knowledge not merely as an academic subject but as a means of healing our world and identities. This is not a revanchist or anti-Western approach. What we seek is a space for expression and dialogue. A transition to polycentric systems will enable societies to engage with one another on equal footing. Monocentric systems produce an unjust superiority complex in dominant groups versus a sense of inadequacy in minority or migrant groups. In this sense, a monocentric system harms the colonizers as much as the colonized.

Finally, the decolonization of knowledge requires assessment on three levels. Ontologically, Western-centered knowledge sharply separates binaries such as human-nature and mind-body, whereas many other civilizations view existence as relational and holistic. In Islamic thought, the idea that all created beings continually glorify the Creator transforms the relationship between humans, animals, and plants from one of ownership into one of community. Similarly, in the Sufi tradition, the human being is seen as possessing an inner essence, and education aims to uncover it.

Epistemologically, Western thought prioritizes objectivity, often excluding emotions, intuitions, and lived experience. Yet humans consist of mind, body, and soul; knowing occurs through all three. Methodologically, modern scientific methods have enabled great progress, but, under the claim of universal validity, they have excluded other pathways to knowledge, such as storytelling, conversation, ritual, intuition, and retreat.

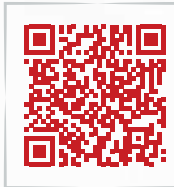
Against the meritocratic principle that "man is a wolf to man," I wonder whether the teaching that "man is a homeland to man" might open a window for us today. Likewise, I wonder whether concepts such as *mūcavere* (proximity, relationality), proposed by Dr. Munir Fasheh, or the paradigm of human interdependence articulated by Yong Zhao, might offer new possibilities for societies in the age of artificial intelligence.

When a society's cultural heritage, worldview, language, and concepts are devalued, individuals are driven into epistemic passivity.



MARTÍN ANÍBAL LÓPEZ ARMENGOL

*Prof., Rector of National
University of La Plata*



He is currently President of the National University of La Plata. He holds a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in Business Administration from the Faculty of Economic Sciences at the National University of La Plata, and a Specialist degree in Marketing from the Argentine University of Enterprise. He is a Full Professor of "Administration I" at the Faculty of Economic Sciences UNLP and a Master's Professor at the National Universities of La Plata, Mar del Plata, the Northeast and the Northwest of the Province of Buenos Aires. With extensive experience in university management, he has served as Academic Secretary, Vice Dean and Dean of the Faculty of Economic Sciences UNLP, and Vice President of the National University of La Plata. He is Vice President of the Association of Universities of the Montevideo Group. He has contributed to national and international research on Educational Quality and Organizational Social Responsibility, and regularly speaks at academic events on administration, governance, quality, social responsibility and leadership.

come from the National University of La Plata in Argentina, the country's second most important public university, with more than 150,000 students enrolled. In addition to higher education, we also run kindergarten, primary, and secondary schools, accompanying students from the age of 3 to 25, through the completion of their university studies. There is a question that we teachers ask ourselves very often. Do we have to be busy teaching and also detecting our students' personal problems? Some years ago, this question might have generated doubts or even contradictions. Today, it does not. The answer is very clear. We have to be attentive to what happens in our classrooms, to the responses of our students, to their behavior, and also to what they do not say.

To understand what happens in our classrooms, it is necessary to look at the context in Latin America and, in particular, in Argentina. One of the main problems we are facing is educational inequality. This inequality can be seen clearly in socioeconomic conditions. Today, 31% of Argentina's population lives below the structural poverty line, which includes limited access to essential services such as education. If we focus on young people between 14 and 29 years old, those who should be starting university, 37% are poor. Almost four out of every ten young people live in poverty, and this creates very unfavorable conditions for education.

Studying at university today in Argentina involves a very high opportunity cost. Many 18-year-olds are of working age and need to contribute to the family economy. At the same time, a public university is seen by many as a path for social transformation. As a result, students often study under very difficult circumstances while trying to balance work, family responsibilities, and their academic life.



Another important aspect of inequality is the transition from secondary education to higher education. This gap is becoming wider. Those of us who work with first-year students see this clearly. I teach management courses in the first year, and part of our work is to understand how students adapt to a completely different educational system. For many of them, university represents a new world, with new rules, new expectations, and new demands.

The digital divide is another key issue. During the pandemic, this became very evident. While some students were able to maintain communication and continue studying, many others could not. This divide is not only about access to devices or connectivity, but also about digital skills, which are increasingly necessary for learning, studying, and participating fully in university life.

We also observe strong psychomotor tensions in the classroom. Stress, depression, and lack of concentration affect students' health and their academic performance. These situations are present in our

University classrooms have a responsibility that goes beyond professional training. They must also educate in citizenship, human rights, and sustainability. Knowledge alone is not enough.

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*Prof., Rector of National
University of La Plata*



classrooms and have a direct impact on how students learn, participate, and progress in their studies. At the same time, university classrooms have a responsibility that goes beyond professional training. They must also educate in citizenship, human rights, and sustainability. Knowledge alone is not enough. A university classroom is also a space where values are transmitted and where students learn how to live and work with others. All these elements require the institution, the teacher, and the students themselves to be attentive to early warning signs. These signs often determine whether a student continues studying at the university or abandons their studies.

In terms of curriculum, we include leveling subjects in our study plans. We review mathematics, reading comprehension, and adaptability. Adaptability refers to understanding the change from secondary education to university. For many students, this transition coincides with important moments in their lives: becoming adults, gaining autonomy, making decisions for themselves, and taking responsibility for the consequences of those decisions.

In our classrooms, we also pay close attention to situations of discrimination, violence, and bullying. A university classroom must promote respect for human rights and diversity. Diversity is not a problem; it is a source of strength for the group that forms part of the classroom. We also have welfare policies that connect secondary school and university before students formally enter higher education. These shared experiences aim to make the transition smoother and reduce the risks associated with changing from one educational system to another.

Finally, there is a concept we emphasize strongly in our management classes. A classroom is a group of people, guided by a teacher whose authority comes from knowledge. Managing that group means empowering it, paying attention to individual and collective performance, and helping the group achieve better results. Evaluation, data analysis, and leadership allow us to detect early warning signs and improve. Ultimately, responsibility lies with the institution, the teacher, and the group itself, working together to achieve better outcomes.



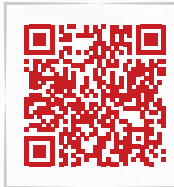
**A university
classroom
must promote
respect for
human rights
and diversity.**





**AKODAH
AYESHOUADAN**

*Lecturer and Researcher,
Faculty of Law, Lomé University*



He is a tenured Full Professor of Law, specialized in Private Law and Criminal Sciences, and a member of the agrégation of law faculties, holding a prominent position in the Togolese academic and Francophone scholarly community. He earned his Doctorate in Private Law and Criminal Sciences in 2010 with highest honors, focusing on the renewal of contract law in the digital age, and holds the Certificate of Aptitude for the Legal Profession (CAPA) and a university certificate in management. Since 2013, he has served as a lecturer-researcher at the University of Lomé, teaching several courses in law, and holding roles as Head of the Department of Private Law, Director of the Master's Program in Private Law, and Director of the Institute of Maritime Professions. He has international experience as a visiting professor, Associate Professor at Laval University, visiting scholar at Paris 1 Sorbonne, and as an arbitrator and mediator, and served as Minister of Communication and Media and Government Spokesperson of Togo From 2020 to 2023.

come from the University of Lomé in Togo, a very small country nestled specifically between Benin and Ghana. For us, whenever we speak of education as a means of healing society, the first sentiment that invariably comes to mind is the thought of the Senegalese thinker, Souleymane Bachir Diagne. He speaks of "lateral universality," or the lateral universal, meaning the universal in its truest, most authentic sense. Consequently, for us, education must serve as that very lever; a lever that allows everyone not only to change their daily lives but also to transform what they live every day and reach out to others. We say this because we have clearly seen what our society was, and we have seen what it has become.

That is precisely why being here today is so particularly meaningful for us. Looking back at the history of this summit, we realize that as early as 2021, there were already discussions about transforming society through education. By 2022, the United Nations had taken up this same theme. This continuity demonstrates a form of leadership being set in motion here, and we find this leadership to be truly relevant. As I mentioned, we have observed our society's past and its present, and we are now asking ourselves what can be done to change it. What has been simply does not suit us anymore; it only half satisfies us. It is now up to us to build what will come next. Therefore, education remains the key to building a society that will finally correspond to our aspirations.

My fellow panelist spoke earlier about the decolonization of knowledge, and I firmly believe this is one of the significant avenues we must continue to explore. While this work has



already begun, it is clear that it is not yet enough. We must go further by relying on our collective intelligence to develop solutions. Several levers were mentioned, particularly regarding equality and sustainability. In our societies, at least within my own ecosystem, one of the main difficulties we observe is equal access to education, a challenge that manifests itself in many different forms.

To be clear, equal access to education does not affect everyone in the same way. For instance, if we consider young girls and young boys, access is simply not the same. When we place this same group in a rural environment versus an urban one, access becomes even more unequal. Geography adds yet another layer to this situation; whether in the south or in the north, in regions exposed to climatic or security-related crises, access to education becomes even more limited. Thus, we can see very clearly that the issue of equality begins fundamentally with equal access.



Education must serve as that very lever; a lever that allows everyone not only to change their daily lives but also to transform what they live every day and reach out to others.

**AKODAH
AYEWOJADAN**

*Lecturer and Researcher,
Faculty of Law, Lomé University*



Furthermore, technology was mentioned earlier, and here again, stark inequalities appear. There is a clear digital divide between certain regions. It is a simple fact: without electricity, there is no access to education and no access to knowledge. This is a real difficulty. Although work is being done to address this issue, it is not always visible or openly discussed. When we look more closely, the classrooms themselves reflect these inequalities. Students arrive with very different backgrounds, and the learning conditions once again reveal the unequal nature of access.

This is why one of the major issues today remains equality, both equal access and equality within education itself. National

budgets also reflect this reality; when we compare funds allocated to education with other societal choices, the inequality is palpable. Sustainability, on the other hand, raises another set of questions. It leads us to question ourselves and our society more broadly. The relationship we currently have with our environment is primarily one of domination, and consciously or unconsciously, this relationship is transferred into our teaching practices.

We clearly recognize this domination over our environment. At the same time, it forces us to reflect on what we actually mean by “environment.” Is it only the natural ecosystem surrounding us, or does it also include individuals, families, and society as a whole? We need to understand the environment we want to teach about and take into consideration, so that students and children can truly integrate it. When the environment is considered in this broad sense, a lack of consideration becomes visible. Often, reading the curricula is enough to see this gap.

Moreover, students’ behavior toward their environment illustrates this situation well. Waste management and the way materials are used on a daily basis are small but telling examples. Today, when we talk about the environment, climate crises and disasters often come to mind first. However, what is often forgotten is that the environment also includes the most basic form of hygiene. Our primary environment is basic hygiene, simply keeping living spaces clean, something that is, unfortunately, taught less and less in schools.

In the past, these practices were an integral part of everyday school life; we washed our hands the moment we arrived at school. These measures briefly reappeared during COVID and then disappeared again. This may seem trivial, but an elitist understanding of the environment does not help us. A basic understanding, like that of our grandparents, matters deeply. Our environment is our cradle; it is the trees that welcome us. Teaching children about this environment in the simplest possible way allows them to continue learning, to build their lives, and to leave something behind for those who come after them. Ultimately, respect must remain the guiding rule in our relationship with it.

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P A N E L 2

Although technological advancements and the accumulation of knowledge throughout history have reached a remarkable level today, this accumulation remains insufficient in preventing conflicts at both the societal and individual levels. Knowledge must transcend mere technical and intellectual accumulation and be transformed within the framework of moral values to reach wisdom, one of the most essential steps toward healing the world.

Education, when not confined solely to the curriculum, can become the key to envisioning a hopeful future by answering the question "why"; and it can build the path to that future by responding to the question "how."

Discussion Questions

1. How can we strengthen peace education, social-emotional learning, and critical thinking through pedagogies that go beyond the limits of the formal curriculum?
2. How can we harmonize the unique values of different cultures with universal ethical principles?
3. How can the vision of a "virtuous world" be made tangible in students' imagination through education?
4. In today's classrooms, how can we plant the seeds of hope for tomorrow's world?
5. How does the question "Why do we learn?" help students construct a vision for the future?
6. In a world where knowledge expands but conflicts persist, how can education transform the transmission of information into wisdom?
7. What roles can teachers and role models play in strengthening education's function as a "cultivator of hope"?
8. Within an exam-oriented system, what pedagogical opportunities can be created to truly "touch the heart" of the child?

AYHAN
ÖZTÜRK

PhD, Head of the R&D, Project, and Monitoring Department of the Strategy Development Directorate at the Turkish Ministry of National Education

Dr. Ayhan Öztürk graduated from Gazi University's Department of Classroom Teaching in 2008. He completed his master's degree in Classroom Teaching at Gazi University in 2013. As an official scholar of the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE), he completed his PhD in Educational Leadership, Administration, and Supervision at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in 2020. He served as a classroom teacher and school administrator from 2008 to 2016. In 2020, he was appointed as a National Education Specialist to the Board of Education at the MoNE. Between 2020 and 2023, he served as the coordinator of the Turkish and Language Education Research and Development Center, the Development of Foreign Language Education Project, and the President's Private Office. In July 2023, he was appointed the Head of the Research, Development, Project, and Monitoring Department of the Strategy Development Directorate. He has chaired organizing committees, led educational initiatives, and managed numerous national and international conferences and workshops within the MoNE.

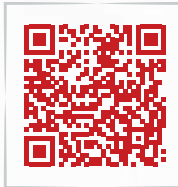
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**MAIDA
PASIC**

*PhD, Regional Education Adviser for
UNICEF Europe and Central Asia Office*



Maida Pasic is the Regional Education Adviser for UNICEF Europe and Central Asia Office (ECARO), based in Geneva, leading the implementation of regional education strategies to build resilient systems ensuring inclusive and quality learning for all children across 22 countries and territories. Prior to joining ECARO, she was Regional Education Specialist for UNICEF East Asia and Pacific in Bangkok, providing technical guidance on adolescent education and skills, gender in education, and education in emergencies. She also served as UNICEF's Chief of Education in Palestine, leading education and adolescent participation programmes and coordinating emergency response. She began her career at UNICEF New York, working with the Office of the Executive Director and later the Global Education Team, contributing to the child-friendly schools approach. She holds a Doctor of Education from the University of Sussex, a Master of Education from Columbia University, Teachers College, and a Master of Arts from New York University. Her research focuses on education in peacebuilding, social cohesion, and global education policy.

Today, children are bearing the heaviest burden of multiple crises around the world. Education has the potential not only to help them develop skills to cope with these crises, but also to empower them to become active agents in shaping the future and, perhaps, in changing the course of some of these unfortunate events.

For UNICEF, our goal in education is clear: every child should have access to education, complete their education, and achieve meaningful learning outcomes. When we work with governments toward this goal, we focus on all children, but we pay particular attention to those who are most vulnerable. These include children excluded on the basis of gender, children with disabilities, migrant children, and children living in rural areas. This focus means that inclusion and equity are at the heart of our work. In this context, when I think about the theme of this conference, healing the world through education, I would say that the starting point for healing is inclusion. Bringing every child into education and giving them the opportunity to learn is the first and most essential step.

Once children are in the classroom, the question becomes not only whether they are learning, but what they are learning and how they are learning. Foundational literacy and numeracy are, of course, essential building blocks. At the same time, UNICEF has long recognized the importance of social and emotional learning. These skills are not only linked to academic success; they are crucial for developing empathy, collaboration, positive communication, and healthy relationships. In this sense, healing through education also requires integrating social and emotional learning into education systems and curricula. I was reminded yesterday of the words of



Her Excellency, the First Lady, Mrs. Erdoğan, who asked whether we can move beyond knowledge to focus on the skills that bring humanity into children. Social and emotional learning is, in our view, one of the most concrete ways to do this.

UNICEF works in 190 countries around the world, and through this experience, we have learned valuable lessons about how these skills can be nurtured, even within education systems that rely on rigid curricula. One important insight concerns teaching methodologies. When curricula are inflexible, teachers often feel constrained by time and content. Yet there is still room to adopt participatory and inclusive approaches, such as role-playing and storytelling. These methods encourage collaboration, strengthen empathy, and help children appreciate diversity. They also contribute to



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creating classroom environments that naturally support social and emotional learning. To make this possible, sustained investment in both pre-service and in-service teacher training is essential.

A concrete example of this comes from UNICEF's recent work in Poland. There, we supported the government in integrating Ukrainian refugee children into classrooms and creating more inclusive learning environments. As part of this effort, we developed training tools for teachers, including one called Quiet Mind. This tool supports teachers in working with traumatized children and in fostering cross-cultural communication and collaboration. We are proud that around 9,000 teachers in Poland have already been trained using these resources.

Another key element in fostering social and emotional learning is role modeling. Teachers and parents play a central role in shaping children's behavior by demonstrating compassion, fairness, and respect. When adults model these values consistently, children are more likely to feel safe, recognized, and valued. Our experience in North Macedonia illustrates this well. There, we worked with the government to train preschool teachers, while also recognizing an often-overlooked reality: teachers themselves need support. Social and emotional learning is not only for children; teachers also need opportunities for self-reflection, self-regulation, and emotional well-being. In North Macedonia, approximately 70 percent of

the preschool teaching workforce has been trained with this understanding in mind.

Beyond individual classrooms, the broader school environment also matters. Inclusion and diversity cannot be sustained by teachers alone; they require a whole-school approach. This involves principals, pedagogues, and other school staff working together to create supportive environments. In Serbia, for example, UNICEF partnered with the government to establish school inclusion teams. These teams, composed of teachers and senior staff, identify the needs of the most vulnerable children, often those sitting quietly at the back of the classroom, and design targeted support strategies. By connecting schools more closely with families and communities, inclusion becomes a shared responsibility rather than an individual burden.

In today's rapidly changing world, another essential dimension of healing through education is the development of critical thinking and media literacy. Children need opportunities to question, analyze, and make ethical decisions. These skills should not be confined to a single subject but integrated across the curriculum. Teachers, across all disciplines, can help foster curiosity, creativity, and responsible engagement with information.

Finally, I would like to emphasize the importance of working with adolescents. Young people want to be recognized not only as learners, but as contributors and agents of change. When adolescents are given opportunities to co-create solutions to the challenges they see in their communities, and when their ideas are respected, they develop stronger social and emotional skills and a deeper sense of belonging.

To conclude, even within rigid curricula, it is possible to promote healing through education. This can be done by focusing on inclusive access, integrating social and emotional learning, supporting teachers, strengthening whole-school approaches, developing critical thinking and media literacy, and empowering children and young people as agents of change. Through these efforts, education can truly contribute to healing individuals, communities, and societies.

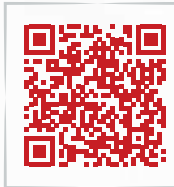
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**ZIÉ
BALLO**

*Professor of Economics & President,
University of Félix Houphouët-Boigny*



Professor Ballo Zié, born on January 1, 1967, is a distinguished Ivorian economist specializing in development economics. He holds two postgraduate DEA degrees: one in Industrial Economics from the University of Cocody-Abidjan, and the other in Mathematical Economics and Econometrics from the University of Toulouse I in France. His teaching areas include microeconomics, industrial economics, and game theory, while his research focuses on the economics of conflict, decentralization, transportation, and development. In administrative roles, he served as the Dean of the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (UFR) at UFHB from 2016 to 2021. Since January 20, 2021, he has been the President of Félix Houphouët-Boigny University of Cocody, one of the most prestigious academic institutions in Côte d'Ivoire. He also serves on several national bodies, including the Competition Commission and the National Credit Council, where he contributes his expertise to the country's economic development.

First of all, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Turkish Maarif Foundation for this invitation and for organizing this summit. The summit focuses on an important theme: healing the world through education. This stems from the widely accepted idea that education is one of the most powerful tools for transforming the world. Indeed, the crises we are currently experiencing show us that the transformative power of education is nevertheless limited, and that, through this panel, we must question what kind of knowledge education should impart so that the accumulation of knowledge can truly guarantee social harmony. In doing so, I will try to respond to the issues raised by drawing both on policy documents used by our states and on my personal experience. I do not know whether I will be able to answer everything at once, but if necessary, I will do so.

The first question I was asked concerns how to strengthen peace, social-emotional learning, and critical thinking through methods that go beyond the limits of official school curricula. In many of our countries, which are often classified as developing countries, national development plans now provide a clear vision for development. These visions are usually translated into sectoral education plans. In Côte d'Ivoire, for example, the education plan aims to produce high-quality and productive human resources through equitable, inclusive, and high-quality education, in order to meet the needs of the economy. This vision guides reforms across the education system, with the goal of training students who possess the skills needed to flourish, participate in society, and integrate fully into social life.

Within this framework, the Ministry of National Education has developed a common core of skills and culture that all students



in compulsory education are expected to acquire. Today, education in values, such as citizenship, moral values, and civic responsibility, occupies an increasingly important place within this core. These values are not taught only in theory; they are accompanied by activities that allow students to put them into practice. Through this approach, we believe it is possible to strengthen peace, social-emotional learning, and critical thinking.

All of this is implemented within what is known as the competency-based approach, which places the student at the center of the learning process. At the national level, a common core of competencies integrates citizenship values and principles that contribute to peacebuilding. In terms of participatory methods, peace messenger clubs have been established under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education. At the higher education level, where I work, our university hosts a UNESCO Chair for the Culture of Peace. This Chair was established in 1997 and began its activities



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in 2000. It organizes numerous initiatives aimed not only at raising awareness among students, but also at encouraging them to put what they learn into practice.

Within the university, several peace-oriented student clubs have been created, including the UNESCO Peace Club and the Early Warning Club. In addition, listening units and complaint management mechanisms have been established to address tensions and concerns. Each year, the UNESCO Chair carries out activities that promote good practices and values conducive to peace at the Félix-Houphouët-Boigny University. Beyond the university level, the Ministry of Higher Education has also created a permanent dialogue framework that brings together all relevant stakeholders. Within the university itself, a crisis prevention and management committee has been set up. All of these mechanisms, which complement classroom teaching, contribute to strengthening peace and social cohesion. Through the competency-based approach, they also support the development of social-emotional skills and critical thinking.

The second question I was asked concerns how to harmonize universal values, local values, and universal ethical principles. This is not an easy task. Harmonizing ethical values, local cultural traditions, and universal principles presents real challenges. However, universal values, particularly those related to fundamental human rights, must remain central. Our approach is therefore to identify local values that do not conflict with universal principles



and to integrate them into education. The objective is to ensure that students are rooted in their local traditions while also respecting fundamental rights and being able to interact with other cultures.

It is important to emphasize that harmonization does not mean unification. Successful harmonization is based on the conviction that, despite cultural differences, we share a common humanity and common rights. The challenge lies in managing tensions between specific traditions and universal imperatives with wisdom, sensitivity, and a strong commitment to human dignity. In this context, schools play a mediating role. They connect identity and openness, value diversity while building shared reference points, and help students understand that the universal does not erase the local, but rather extends it. In this way, learners remain grounded in their roots while remaining open to the world.

Another question raised is how to sow hope for tomorrow's world in today's classrooms. To cultivate hope, classrooms must encourage mutual respect through active listening, develop future-oriented skills through practical projects, and promote a growth mindset by valuing effort and perseverance. Teachers and role models play a central role in this process. By creating positive learning environments, teaching empathy and problem-solving, and fostering critical thinking, teachers can show how lifelong learning contributes to a better future. Hope is also nurtured when teachers go beyond transmitting knowledge and serve as guides and examples for their students.

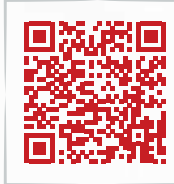
Finally, the question "why do we learn?" plays an important role in helping students build a vision of the future. As educators, we constantly seek to give meaning to what we teach. Explaining the purpose of each lesson helps students understand the skills they are developing and how these skills will be useful in the future. When students understand why they are learning something, their motivation increases. This is why teachers should clearly explain the objectives of each lesson. Doing so encourages students to engage more deeply, to excel, and to see learning as a pathway that opens doors for their future.

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RUŞEN AHMET ALBAYRAK

PhD, Board Member, Hamilik Okulu Foundation



Dr. Ruşen Ahmet Albayrak, born in Istanbul in 1966, graduated from the Department of Industrial Engineering at Istanbul Technical University in 1988. He received his Master's degree in Organizational Leadership and Business from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke (1993) and his Doctorate in Technology Management from Istanbul Technical University (2007). He entered the Participation Banking sector 36 years ago and has served as Executive Vice President at Kuveyt Türk since 2005. Until 2012, he managed Banking Services (IT, Operations, Human Resources, Strategy), later overseeing Treasury, Investment and International Banking, and since January 2025, Corporate and Commercial Banking. He is also a Board Member of KT Bank AG (Germany) and Kuveyt Türk Yatırım A.Ş. He represented the Hamilik School Foundation at the Ahilik Council (Ankara, December 2-4, 2022) and authored "Dirlik Institutions." He is a founding board member of the Hamilik School Foundation, has taught Participation Banking, published academically, served on AAQIF's Governance and Ethics Board, and speaks English, with basic Arabic.

I am speaking here on behalf of the Hamilik School. Although I am a banker, I would like to share my views on education from a practitioner's perspective. I graduated from Istanbul Technical University in 1988, and I have been in professional life for about 38 years. I am currently a senior executive at a participation bank. Over these years, I have hired thousands of people, worked closely with them, and observed their professional journeys. What I will share today, therefore, comes from long-term, practical experience rather than theory.

Together with my friends, we began foundation work in 1996, and in 2006, this effort evolved into the Hamilik School Foundation nearly 20 years ago. At the Hamilik School Foundation, we provide complementary education to students who are continuing their undergraduate studies. This education takes place one day a week throughout the year, within a 26- to 28-week curriculum. Each year follows a different program, and students complete four years of this education before graduating. The aim is not to replace university education, but to accompany it.

At this point, I would like to clarify the concept of *Hamilik*, because it is sometimes misunderstood. In short, *Hamilik* means taking responsibility for another person. It means helping someone who is distinct from yourself, accompanying them in life, and walking alongside them. It means standing by them on their journey. In this sense, *Hamilik* is one step beyond mentorship, because it involves long-term moral and human responsibility.

When I listened to Dr. Maida earlier speaking about the social and emotional dimensions of education, I felt this strongly resonated



with our experience. If we need to emphasize these dimensions so strongly, it is likely because they are lacking. Today, education systems focus heavily on technical competence, while socialization and the emotional – in other words, the human side – remain weak.

This gap is exactly where *Hamilik* begins. For each student who joins us, we assign a *hami*, a guardian-mentor, based on the student's character and career orientation. For four years, students can consult their *hami* not only on academic or professional matters, but also on questions related to their personal lives and families. This sustained relationship allows students to be seen not only as future professionals but as whole human beings.

In addition to this one-to-one relationship, we also run social responsibility projects called Arenas of Valor (Yiğitlik Meydanları). One of these projects is *Sofrada Ekmek* (Bread at the Table). In collaboration with the Red Crescent, we distribute bread to selected families in three or four provinces in Southeastern Anatolia, including provinces affected by the earthquake, and we also address their social difficulties. Our students participate in these efforts together with our graduates, allowing learning to extend beyond the classroom into real life.

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PhD, Board Member,
Hamilik Okulu Foundation



The philosophy behind this work is simple. University education, and the primary and secondary education that precede it, prepare students to a certain extent with technical knowledge and skills. However, as members of a civilization that has endured for centuries, we know that understanding life is inseparable from understanding oneself. When people do not know their own abilities, talents, or ways of learning, they eventually lose their sense of meaning. The work of the Hamilik School, regardless of profession, is therefore about helping individuals find meaning and become fully human.

This understanding is not new to our civilization. Alija Izetbegović, in his book *Islam Between East and West*, reminds us that the human being is both corporeal and finite. We will die; this is our material reality. But to be human, and to remain human, requires cultivating certain virtues. Being human, whatever profession one practices, requires being social, thinking of the other, emotionally understanding the other, and sharing life with them.

This perspective explains why the Hamilik School places such importance on mirrors. The *hamis* we assign help students see

themselves more clearly. Our civilization grew through the *Ahi* order and the tradition of *futuwwa*, a form of moral chivalry. We built a civilization on master-apprentice relationships. We try to continue this tradition in a way that prepares individuals for life, prioritizes the human being, and turns people away from lower impulses toward virtues such as generosity, courage, and goodness. Practicing a profession meaningfully is possible only when a person assigns meaning to their existence.

Whatever meaning a person gives to life and profession shapes their entire outlook. When this outlook changes, it becomes possible to contribute value not only to the workplace but also to society. For this reason, education must be grounded in meaning and carried out in a way that embraces social and emotional wholeness throughout life.

At the Hamilik School Foundation, our responsibility does not end when students graduate. This continuity is what defines a true teacher. When a student seeks guidance from you, you must be ready to give. Teachers must become *hamis*, and schools must become Hamilik Schools. Only then, I believe, can we regain meaning, human flourishing, and a sense of social peace.

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PANEL 3

An individual who is aware of being part of both society and the world is expected to take an active role in an ecosystem of collaboration at cognitive, emotional and behavioral levels. This becomes possible when the individual preserves their identity, strengthens their sense of belonging to their own culture, and integrates the “we” through shared values without losing the uniqueness of the “I.” Ultimately, there is a need for a collaborative ecosystem that emphasizes the essence of being human by saying “all of us” and promotes coexistence.

The responsibility of healing the world should not rest solely on the shoulders of schools. This responsibility gains true meaning when it is shared collectively by families, communities, institutions, and diverse social actors. This session seeks to explore answers to the question: “How can we work together?”

Discussion Questions

1. Who are the key stakeholders of the collaborative ecosystem required for genuine and lasting social healing?
2. In times of disaster, how can schools, families, and communities act as one body?
3. How can sustainable collaboration be established among educational institutions, families, local authorities, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)?
4. How can the responsibility of healing the world be shared among multiple actors, rather than being placed solely in schools?
5. How can education help build a culture of coexistence that strengthens the sense of “all of us”?
6. What strategies can be developed to sustain social solidarity during times of crisis?
7. What best practices can serve as references for materializing a functioning ecosystem of collaboration?
8. Can the educational ecosystem become a kind of “family table”? If so, what roles would each participant play at this table?

MODERATOR

GÜNHAN
BÖREKÇİ

*Assoc. Prof., Chair of the
Department of History,
Ibn Haldun University*

Günhan Börekçi is a historian, specialized on Ottoman history. After completing his B.A. and M.A. studies at Boğaziçi University (1991-1999), he received his Ph.D. degree in history from the Ohio State University in 2010. His main areas of research and teaching include early modern Ottoman political, social, and military history, historical network research (HNR), manuscript studies, and comparative history. He previously worked at İstanbul Şehir University (2010-2017) as a full-time faculty, and as a visiting professor at Central European University in Budapest and Vienna (2017-2024). In August 2024, he joined Ibn Haldun University where currently serves as the chair of the Department of History.

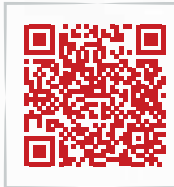
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**PAOLO
MARCHI**

UNICEF Representative to Türkiye



Mr. Marchi was appointed UNICEF Türkiye Country Office Representative in October 2023. He brings to the role a wealth of experience leading teams and managing programmes and partnerships in different humanitarian and development contexts. Prior to this role, he served as Deputy Representative in various duty stations – in Türkiye since March 2022, preceded by Central African Republic (September 2018/February 2022), and Guyana and Suriname (October 2015/August 2018). He previously led the child protection team in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He began his career with UNICEF in the UNICEF HQ Gender and Rights Unit. Prior to his work with UNICEF, he held different positions with other organizations in Morocco, Sierra Leone, Italy, and Switzerland. Mr. Marchi holds a LLM in International Human Rights Law from the University of Essex (United Kingdom), and a LLB from the University of Torino (Italy). Mr Marchi is an Italian citizen.

Thank you to Turkish Maarif Foundation for organizing this event, which is incredibly interesting. The different types of authorities and individuals and civil society people who have talked in the past couple of days really highlight something that Marie Garnier just said: Education is like a drop in the water, which has a catalytic effect, but also a ripple effect on an entire society. From my understanding, from what I get to know, what is the soul of Turkish Maarif Foundation, but also how the Ministry of National Education in Türkiye acts, is really from that point of view. Education is a center of the society, and what happens in the school and educational environment has effects, and we need to leverage and make a positive effect through the educational system throughout the whole society.

In times of disaster, it is very important that we look at schools as a part of an ecosystem. In order to make sure that we can make the most out of preparedness in schools, we need to act together. As UNICEF, we always try to do with government authorities and the country where we work is integrated emergency preparedness plans. These preparedness plans clearly need to define the roles and responsibilities of each of the different constituencies. Quick communication channels should be established for rapid information sharing. And then joint drills need to be set up. I believe that Türkiye has set example of how to do drills and preparedness plans in schools which is child-friendly appropriate because also we want to make sure that there are drills and that there is preparedness, but we also do not want to create a panic.

Unfortunately, we are in a world in which because of natural disaster, of conflict, or earthquakes, can be devastating, and every moment and



every penny spent in preparing can save lives. I am very happy that we have also the deputy minister of education today because Türkiye set a clear example on how to really invest of preparedness for any kind of risk and emergencies. The AFAD, the civil protection agency, has been playing a key role and often has been at the forefront globally of how to do preparedness in a proper manner.

Preparedness sometimes is never enough, and so we also need a concrete and very strong response. Coming to the example which is fresher in my mind because I happen to unfortunately be already here when the 2023 earthquakes struck. Nobody would have ever expected a magnitude, geographic and number of people affected and of disaster and destruction as big. Türkiye quickly responded with its own means, but then connected with international organizations and other actors to support them in the efforts they were leading to the response. But there was also since the beginning a very quick learning on how to prepare for a potential future disaster. Under the leadership of the Minister of National Education and with the board of education as UNICEF, we have contributed a training search and rescue team to be able to look at the response and the rescue effort through a child lens. Making sure that there are safeguarding and protection measures in all actions since the beginning.

I think, it is very important that good will and good intention are praised, but they need to act upon under the leadership of the competent authority, just because otherwise the risk at times is there



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**PAOLO
MARCHI**

UNICEF Representative to Türkiye



are overlapping efforts which might create complication and create inefficiency in a moment in which any complication inefficiency can really affect the life of human being and children.

What is very important when we work with civil society, organization in preparedness effort, communities, young people, and volunteers is that we establish a shared vision and goals. In the case of education, according to me and also what the minister of national education in Türkiye also has been trying to do and is doing in the earthquake in 2023, but throughout the whole experiences in preparedness and response, is aligning stakeholders around what are the main objectives. The main objectives need to be child safety, education continuity, and well-being. So that there is a better understanding of who does what and the accountability and responsibilities.

Resource is not only money but it is capacity knowledge and then also funding again because to avoid duplication. As UNICEF globally

in humanitarian responses we play the role of the coordination body on education. We always do it in partnership with the Ministry of National Education to make sure that all actors come together. Going back to the earthquake in 2023, it was very interesting to see how it worked since the beginning again under the leadership of the Ministry of National Education. But we really benefit in this coordination mechanism for the information coming from civil society organization based at the local level, because at times they have information quicker than anybody else because they are embedded in communities, identify certain gaps.

Systems play an important role because people come and go, systems tend to stay. Systematize whatever cooperation works in the context. But at the end, at the same times system alone they cannot be imposed on people if people do not believe in the system. I try to go from the high level to upstream to the mainstream because it is so important to really thinking that what we do at the policy and the upstream level has consequences and can have a real impact at the individual and the life of people.

Türkiye has been one of probably the most generous and welcoming country in the last 20 years because it has welcomed an unprecedented number of friends and families from people from Syria during the Syrian crisis. The Turkish government, since the first moment looked at social cohesion at bringing people together among human values rather than the differences. The Ministry of National Education played the key role in making sure that in education in schools, children from the host community and children coming from outside were coming together.

In order to make sure that schools and the educational system play a healing role, first, we need to make sure that we do not look at it as an isolated actor, but again as part of an overall ecosystem.

And another example that I am very proud of, we work together with the Ministry of National Education in Türkiye, is an inclusive program, inclusiveness in vocational training programs. You can see how this young person with a disability, having the capacity to learn skills which allow them to be employed, has a ripple effect in their families.

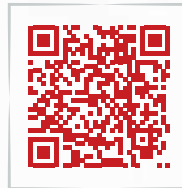


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**MARIE
GARNIER**

Diagaloun Island School Coordinator, Teacher



Trained in anthropology, Marie Garnier developed an early passion for education and understanding young children, which led her to teaching. She began her career in preschool, gaining expertise in classroom management, structured learning, and individualized instruction, believing each child progresses at their own pace. She later worked for five years as a preschool coordinator, overseeing pedagogy, supporting teachers, and ensuring consistency in educational practices. She then taught at the French School of Bamako and later at the American School, where she taught French from preschool to grade 12 and prepared students for exams. Alongside teaching, she became a project coordinator in 2017. Noticing that Bozo children, a Malian fishing community, were excluded from schooling, she founded an association to build a public school for riverside communities. The project combines official curricula with activities rooted in local culture. She also develops educational games about rivers to strengthen children's understanding of their environment and cultural identity.

Today, I am going to talk to you about a very concrete case, an example of a school that was built in collaboration with the communities and society. I am in Bamako, Mali. While walking along the banks, I noticed that there were many fishing camps, whose children were not attending school. So when I asked the parents why their children were not going to school, they said that they did not trust the roads, that they were always on the river, and that they did not have a culture of schooling.

So we started with the idea of setting up a small learning center. We had to find a place to bring these children together in Bamako. We thought, why not in the middle of the river on an island? We started with about 40 children, and in fact, in the first year, the parents realized the importance of school. The children came home and started helping their parents with little everyday things. Very quickly, we saw a lot of requests from parents to enroll their children. One day on the island, a little girl named Mariam Koumaré, who was seven years old, came up to me and said, "Auntie, do you think I could become a doctor one day?" I said, "Yes." So we started working with the authorities to get a school recognized by the state. And today, we actually educate about 300 students from the banks and islands of the Niger River.

The idea behind building this school is also to create a school that makes sense for the communities. In Mali, we have very large class sizes. So initially, we developed three areas of focus. The first area was to work on active teaching methods. We divided the classrooms into small groups where we organize multidisciplinary rotating workshops, where the children move around. So we have developed learning spaces inside and outside the classroom.



The second focus that quickly emerged was that we are on an island in the middle of a river, and this river is in danger. In relation to the school environment, we developed activities to raise awareness of environmental protection and the protection of the Niger River. We ran campaigns where we collected plastic bags from the river and hung them on our canoe, and the children gave speeches on the riverbanks to raise awareness.

Another very important focus at our school is the transmission of local knowledge. The idea was to promote local knowledge. So, in terms of learning at school, the official curriculum is taught through skills. The children learn basket weaving, pottery, dance, traditional storytelling, and medicinal plants. We have several members of the community who come to the school to teach these skills to the children. So it is actually about valuing existing knowledge and, at the same time, applying it to the official curriculum.



When the whole community mobilizes for the development of a child, it produces beautiful results.



**MARIE
GARNIER**

*Dialogoun Island School
Coordinator, Teacher*

The idea behind this school is to put the community at the center of all decisions. We have a school management committee made up of parents, and over time, parents have become involved in the school.

In Mali, the situation is quite changeable and also brings difficulties. So the idea is to adapt with the parents and with the institutions to always maintain a high-quality school. Last year, for example, we had severe flooding that was unprecedented. 80% of our school was destroyed. A week before the start of the school year, we had about 200 people come to the island: parents, children, people from the surrounding area, to rebuild the school. In a week, we were able to reopen.

Following all these events that brought us together, the school also moved into the camps, and the teachers began teaching literacy to the parents. We currently have more than 200 people attending literacy classes each week. We also have parents, especially mothers, who have come together to see what we could do together to improve living conditions a little. So we have groups of people that have formed a network called a tontine. Everyone collects a little money each week and divides it up, either by buying things collectively or by helping people who have particular difficulties.

What is beautiful in Mali is that a child belongs to an entire community, and when the whole community mobilizes for the development of a child, it produces beautiful results. Currently, in our school, 100% of the students who leave primary school are re-enrolled by their parents in secondary school.

In terms of collaboration between the various stakeholders in schools, communities, and institutions, I think the most important thing is communication between them and everyone's commitment to common goals. I have a small example of this. I will go back to the case of the Niger River. It is a river in danger and a little-known river where people did not know its importance. And the idea actually came from creating an educational game to understand the importance of the river from its source to its delta. We observed that fishermen were very familiar with the section



of the river where they lived, but had no idea what this immense African river, which originates in Guinea and flows into Nigeria, crossing four countries, actually represented. So, together with the institutions and ministries, we decided to create an educational game for the children of the river so that they could understand the different elements of a river, its characteristics, its importance for everyone's life, and also the dangers posed by human activities on the river. By sharing our experiences and skills, we succeeded in creating this game to raise awareness among children. Adults are also very fond of it and learn things from it. Learning through play is something that works quite well.

In terms of collaboration between the various stakeholders in schools, communities, and institutions, the most important thing is communication between them and everyone's commitment to common goals.



**Healing
the World
Through
Education**



**A Call from Youth to Tomorrow:
From Idea to Action**

**From
Schools to
Society: The
Collaboration
Ecosystem**

**Beyond the Curriculum:
The Art of Humanity**



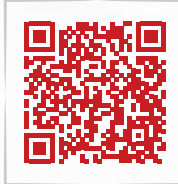
**Revealing
the Known in
the Mirror of
Education**





NUMAN ARUÇ

Prof. Dr., Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts (MANU), Skopje



I come from Skopje, one of the important centers of Turkish-Islamic civilization. I bring warm greetings from Skopje to Istanbul. I speak five languages. Yet here, in the capital of the sultans, the great empire of Turkish-Islamic civilization, the capital of the Ottomans, the home of the Turkish emperors, I cannot speak anything other than Turkish.

My field is philosophy. Before entering the theme and the subject, I would like to highlight one or two points. I want to express my gratitude to the organizing team, especially the president of Turkish Maarif Foundation, and to the silent heroes, the key figures behind this magnificent organization, who brought us here with such care and enabled us to experience these beautiful moments.

As a philosophy professor, I liked this title very much. If we were to delve into it, we would not be able to leave until the next morning. Today, this is the title the world needs most, and it is the title that most clearly diagnoses the state of the world.

Leaving this title aside, regarding my main theme, the philosophy of education in Turkish-Islamic civilization, educational thought in Turkish-Islamic tradition, and the question of what the main goal of education should be, which is one of the most important domains of Turkish-Islamic civilization... Dear brothers, ladies and gentlemen, esteemed masters, I wish to present this to you. The philosophy of education in Turkish-Islamic thought rests on three main pillars.

The first is innateness, naturalness, normality. Our philosophy of education must be formed based on human nature. The most essential feature of Turkish-Islamic educational thought is human naturalness,



innateness, and normality. It is a sensitive matter, like the work of a physician. Physicians examine human beings in their innate state. Every human's innate structure is the same and equal whether in the West or the East, in Anatolia, the Balkans, Africa, or America. There is universality in an educational system grounded in innateness. We must protect this innateness, this naturalness, and this normality. All educators of the world must unite around this universality. All educators must reach a consensus on the innateness of education.

The second pillar of our philosophy of education is divinity, *ilahilik*, *rabbaniilik*. There is a power that created this nature, this normality, this natural world. Since that power exists, He knows it best. Our educational system, our educational thought, and our educational philosophy cannot conflict with God. Because if it does, it conflicts with his normality and nature. We cannot detach education from

We are
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obliged to
heal the world
with this
mission.

NUMAN ARUÇ

Prof. Dr., Macedonian
Academy of Sciences and
Arts (MANU), Skopje



naturalness or from divinity. The most essential element in the educational system of Turkish-Islamic thought is that it does not conflict with the divine. Especially considering the last century, when godlessness and communist philosophy dominated. As someone who lived through Tito's communism in Yugoslavia, I can say: the greatest problem was the conflict with God. Our educational system must not conflict with the divine.

The third pillar is crucial: we need a wise educational system, educational thought, and educational philosophy. Wisdom (*hikmet*) is the highest level of knowledge and science. It is the highest point philosophers aspire to reach. And what is wisdom built upon? Upon innateness, divinity, and scientific data. The most essential aspect of Turkish-Islamic educational philosophy is its universality. It cannot be separated from scientific inquiry or science. We will base our educational system on scientific research and data. Who can oppose this? Whether one is from Africa, the West, the East, Central Asia, or America, it makes no difference. Data, truth, and knowledge are universal.

You may say, "Professor, you presented these three principles, but is this an enigma, a dream?" No, dear brothers. We are speaking right now in Istanbul, the capital of a magnificent civilization shaped by these three elements. History is the greatest proof of this. The Ottoman Empire applied these principles. The *madrasah* in Skopje, the university in Sarajevo, the university in Cairo, the university in Damascus, the university in Istanbul... all applied them. These *madrasahs* and universities served humanity with an educational system built on these three principles, without discriminating by religion, language, or race. Without saying Turk, Albanian, Arab, African, Black, or White, they educated everyone and created the longest era of peace in history. With what? With this educational system. We have a magnificent historical legacy. History is the clearest example and reality of this, and that is the Ottoman Empire. It is a Turkish-Islamic empire; it is Turkish-Islamic thought and philosophy.

Humanity today is drifting. Who is not drifting? Black, White, East, West, Arab, Turkish, Muslim, Christian... everyone is drifting. Why? Because we are not natural. Because we are in conflict with God. And because we do not act upon scientific data. There can be no ideology in education. There can be no politics in education. There can be no factionalism in education. Education must be one. The Ottomans achieved this beautifully.

My final words are these: Turkish Maarif Foundation, Maarif intellect and Maarif strategy, will reset and restart what our ancestors provided in the past, and will elevate it once again in the age of modern civilizations. We will declare, "We exist." Turkish-Islamic philosophy will be presented to the whole world through the work of Maarif. The core of this philosophy rests on the three fundamental principles I have outlined. The world must once again be offered a magnificent educational civilization. We are obliged to serve humanity, without discriminating by race, religion, or language, whether Turkish, Arab, Albanian, Serbian, Black, or White, and we are obliged to heal the world with this mission.

I conclude with this prayer: the world is truly in need of healing. And its remedy lies in the hands of Turkish Maarif Foundation. Thank you for listening to me with such patience.

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IES^{5TH}
ISTANBUL
EDUCATION SUMMIT



YOUTH SESSION

One of the fundamental aims of education is to transform individuals from passive observers of global problems into active contributors who take responsibility and work toward healing the world. Young people who are intelligent, conscientious, active, and strong-willed can become the voice of their societies, not only articulating existing challenges but also shaping a shared vision for the future and leading transformative change.

This session provides an initial platform for young participants to express their solution-oriented perspectives on global challenges and to discuss how they can contribute to a common voice for improving the world.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the main obstacles that young people face, and how can these challenges be overcome?
2. How can the voices of youth reach decision-making table?
3. Which actors should collaborate with young people to turn their proposed solutions into action?
4. What effective and creative methods can help youth cultivate a shared language and vision for addressing global issues?
5. How can technology and digital networks strengthen youth solidarity and collective action?
6. If you could choose one core value to make a hopeful future possible, what would it be?
7. Following the inspiration from this summit, what could be our first step tomorrow morning?
8. As we leave this summit, if we were to turn our brightest idea into a promise of action, what would that promise be?

MODERATOR



**JENNY
MOLENDYK
DİVLELİ**

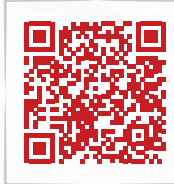
*Author & Founder of INK
Publishing*

Jenny Molendyk Divleli is the owner of INK Yayınları, and an internationally published and award-winning author. She holds a BA in Linguistics and Deaf Studies and is formally trained as both an interpreter and teacher. Jenny has completed executive training in leadership and international media, strengthening her strategic vision in the global publishing community. She currently serves on the Board of Çocuk İçin İçerik Derneği (ÇİÇEK), contributing to efforts that evaluate and guide meaningful content for children in Türkiye and beyond. Alongside her publishing work, Jenny is passionate about mentorship and youth development. She actively mentors young people, helping them cultivate confidence, leadership, and purpose in their academic, creative, and personal growth. Through her programs and workshops, she creates spaces where youth can explore their potential and build meaningful connections grounded in values and vision. Jenny is married and the proud mother of five children, and lives in Istanbul.



MEHMET HASAN YACI

Türkiye's Head Delegate to the Y20 2025



Mehmet Hasan Yaci is a Turkish lawyer serving as Türkiye's Head Delegate to the Y20 2025 Summit in South Africa and as an Associate at Kabine Law Office in Istanbul, focusing on international law, human rights, and arbitration. He graduated as valedictorian from Galatasaray University Faculty of Law in 2024 and received the Turkish Presidential Scholarship of Success and the Köksal Bayraktar Scholarship. He represented Türkiye at the MIKTA Youth Summit (Jakarta, 2023) and competed in international moot courts. His team won the 16th Frankfurt Investment Arbitration Moot Court and received the Best Memorial Award at the Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court. He is the co-founder of the Galatasaray Students' Journal of International Law. He gained experience at the Constitutional Court of Türkiye and attended the Human Rights Summer School at the University of Coimbra (2022). He was Türkiye's National Debate Champion (2017) and later served as a judge in international tournaments. He is fluent in English, French, and Arabic.

I love playing "villagers and vampires". It is a game that you play with your friends. There are vampires, villagers, and the third role, the healers. At night, vampires try to kill the villagers. During the day, villagers try to find out who the vampire is. At the same time, the healer tries to protect the villager from the vampire.

I believe this game is very similar to real life. The society, the village, is facing some vampires. The problems, you name it: poverty, racism, Islamophobia. Here generally, society regards the youth as the healer. It attributes the role of healer to the youth.

I accept this perception, but at the same time, I believe that this acceptance lacks a crucial point. If we are playing this game, we are not playing it by ourselves. We need the villagers' help. The youth need wisdom and the knowledge of the previous generations. At this point, I think education steps in. Education, in my opinion, is the art of transforming a person into a healer.

I would like to make a distinction between education and training because I think most people confuse the two. Training provides us with the necessary skill set to do something. It teaches us how to do something. But education is more than that. Education tells us why to use that tool that we learned from the training. Education tells us for what we should use that training and with which principles we should use that training.

Today's theme is "from idea to action," and when I see this theme, I see a broad map here. The first step is the idea, and the last step is the action. But I believe there are two steps on this way: one is faith, and the second one is execution.



Faith is knowing your voice matters. I would like to thank Turkish Maarif Foundation for making us know that our voice matters here by inviting us as the youth. Also, faith is knowing that change is possible. But at the same time, even faith requires education because it connects the youth to a history, to a community, and to a purpose larger than themselves. In other words, education connects us to our roots. It is always important to know what the others that came before you experienced. It is only through having a strong connection with our roots that we can face the hardships because the roots provide us with the moral direction.

Nowadays, I see that some people from the previous generations think that letting youth alone will bring about change. I completely disagree with this idea. Youth do not want that as well. We do not want to discover America once again. It has already been discovered. We need the guidance of the older generations. It is very important to listen to their experience in this regard.

It is no coincidence that the colonizers are trying to change their narrative. But it is too late. The real owners of the lands have their

Training provides us with the necessary skill set to do something, but education tells us why to use that tool.

MEHMET HASAN YACI

*Türkiye's Head Delegate
to the Y20 2025*



roots there. So the first step in this journey was faith. As for the next step, I believe the next step is execution. Execution is what gives faith the concrete form itself. Faith becomes concrete through execution.

At this point, youth need experience by themselves. We need to be able to try and fail and learn. This is why we need the experience to execute the ideas. I believe voluntary work can help the youth learn how to execute a plan that they have. It will help us shape the values that we gather from the past. It will give our own tune to the melody of today's song.

Execution requires discipline as well. Real execution happens during ordinary days. When enthusiasm is low, and the real responsibility remains, we need to go on even though we do not see the visible outcomes of our performances.

I would like to give an example of what we have been through this year's Y20 summit. Y20 is the official engagement group of the G20 summit. This year, Y20 was held in South Africa. Basically, what the youth do at the Y20 summit is go there representing their countries

and write together a final paper that would be delivered to the presidents.

I went there with the Turkish delegation. During the negotiations, everything was fine. But at the end of the day, everyone has their own priorities. At one point, although it was a youth summit, geostrategic and geopolitical issues were involved. This caused a difference between the delegations. Some delegations withdrew from the negotiations, and some stopped talking to others.

What to do right now? At this point, I have seen that people are coming to Türkiye and asking to be the mediator. I found myself being engaged in discussions between other delegations, three in the morning, trying to mediate between them. After all, I realized that this confidence, this belief in us, was also something that we inherited from the Turkish institution, like Turkish Maarif Foundation. We have the confidence, and we have the motivation to serve the humanity. After all what happened, the case was resolved with our mediation. In this regard, I believe the youth are ready. The youth are ready to stand up and fight for what they believe is true. All we need is time, and it will come.



Education
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transforming
a person into
a healer.





SÜMEYYE SENA POLAT

Journalist; Human and Women's Rights Activist



Heidegger once said in an interview with *Der Spiegel* that when human being first went to the moon and saw the Earth from space, he was shocked and also terrified. He felt that humanity had become "deterrestrialized." His impression of technological progress was this: "We are everywhere and can see everything, yet we are also nowhere, because we are no longer grounded where we stand."

But what if Heidegger were a young person in 2025, experiencing social media, artificial intelligence, and algorithmic manipulation?

I take my phone, open Instagram or TikTok. Physically, I am in Istanbul, but mentally I am in Bali drinking a smoothie made of exotic fruits. Or I am dreaming of a honeymoon in Paris, a selfie in New York, make-up hacks from an influencer in Dubai. I want everything I see, videos and photos that disconnect me from my own reality. We start desiring things that do not belong to us. We begin to feel that our identity belongs elsewhere. Until recently, young people mostly saw the "fancy" side of globalization. They were almost hypnotized, believing the world was only what they saw on their screens.

This changed when the brave journalists and cameramen of Gaza risked their lives and showed us the non-fancy side of globalization: shattered bodies, starving babies. With Gaza, the world entered a process of decolonization. For more than two years, every single day, we witnessed innocent civilians being killed. We saw how international institutions remained silent.

There are nearly 200 countries in the world, yet five permanent members of the UN Security Council, America, China, Russia, the UK,



and France, hold the world hostage. For example, the United States has vetoed more than 45 resolutions against Israel. The Zionist regime, which is violent, criminal, and illegitimate, has always been protected by other imperial powers.

This means that even if 193 UN member states agree on something, a single "no" from one of these five powers can block all action and prevent any global response to Israel. We learned that imperial interests, hidden behind diplomatic language, shape real lives. Young people saw all of this with their own eyes. And after October 7, one slogan rose from their voices: "The world is bigger than five." The awakening triggered by Gaza also made the injustices in Sudan, Congo, East Turkistan, and other oppressed regions more visible. Because of the conscious and active use of social media by the youth, the world began to see the non-fancy global reality more clearly. We entered a new era where both civic action and intellectual movements are rising again.

Because of the conscious and active use of social media by the youth, the world began to see the non-fancy global reality more clearly.

SÜMEYYE SENA POLAT

*Journalist; Human and Women's
Rights Activist*



Let us first talk about the youth in the West. Ordinarily, many people in the U.S. could not even locate Israel or Palestine on a map. Yet suddenly, students from leading universities began protesting against Zionism and white supremacy.

Since the legacy of colonialism shaped both Western and non-Western societies, decolonization must involve everyone. Another example is the Christmas dinner culture in Western families. Often, older generations speak freely and openly with racist language. Before attending these gatherings, many young people now read articles from anti-racist pedagogy just to manage the racist behavior they will face at home. Their goal is to decolonize the psyche.

I am a member of the Sumud Flotilla. Around 60% of Sumud participants are from the Global South, Middle East, Turkey, North Africa, and South Asia.

Young people in the Global South are victims of both the capitalist world and traditional social structures. Since capitalism did not originate in our lands, it appeared to us as something to admire.

This created obsession, brand addiction, consumerism. Our youth is being numbed. Moreover, traditional family structures often prevent them from developing self-confidence the way Western youth can. In many Global South families, respect is demanded from children but rarely given to them. We must let go of the mindset of "my child is mine."

Global South youth show great promise. But unfortunately, our education systems are not preparing young people for the struggles ahead. We must equip them with knowledge that goes beyond their own country. We need an education system that prevents our youth from feeling ashamed of their identity, that keeps them from developing an inferiority complex, that does not turn them, using a British expression, into "coconuts."

Appreciating our regional history is important, but not enough. A Turkish youth should know about the Algerian genocide. An African youth should know what happened in Hiroshima. A Kashmiri youth should know about the Native American genocide. An Iraqi youth should understand the apartheid system in South Africa.

Let me end with a quote from Thomas Sankara: *"You cannot carry out fundamental change without a certain amount of madness in courage, in honesty, and in the desire to constantly improve yourself."*

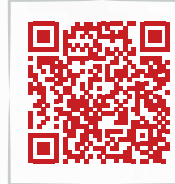
I want to give an example from a story. When Moses was escaping from Pharaoh, he came just in front of the Red Sea. He says, "My God, please separate the sea into two so we can pass." And after God says, "Hit the ground three times with your staff." But why was the most powerful one waiting for a kind of action from a very small human? It is nothing. But God is waiting us, waiting it from us. So moving it should be always and we should not give the responsibility to others. Taking responsibility for human dignity is for everyone.

So keep going on, never listen to others who want to take your motivation and make it for yourself and others. In any case, we are part of society. At the end of the day, it will also affect us. Thank you.



ELİF LEYAL UĞRAŞ

Medical Student & Researcher, Bezm-i Âlem University



Elif Leyal Uğraş is a medical student, researcher, and writer at Bezmialem University with a strong background in international research and clinical practice. She has presented her work at global forums, including as the youngest and only Turkish presenter at the 2nd International Symposium of the UNESCO Chair in Mexico City. Her research on "Cross-Stress Resistance in *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* Cells" received 2nd place at the 2024 RIMSA International Medical Student Congress in Poland. She has also presented at international congresses in Istanbul, including Cansağlığı and İSAR symposiums. She has completed clinical internships in neurosurgery (Universitas Riau, Indonesia) and cardiothoracic surgery (Assiut University, Egypt), as well as laboratory research at the Jordan University of Science and Technology. She also has skills in statistics and data science, supporting her interest in data-driven medicine. She received the "Best Overall Award" from the Harvard Future Doctors Program and is fluent in Turkish, English, and Arabic.

I need to take you back few years ago. I was alone in the laboratory, extremely tired. I took the very last slide, put it under the microscope and I was praying so hard that I see even a tiny sign of life because otherwise my experiment could have been a complete spectacular failure. It was the biggest research project of my life, and I was studying a phenomenon called cross-stress resistance. It is a phenomenon first discovered in plants, and basically, if a plant, a flower, for example, is exposed to high heat, extreme temperature, it dies. But when it is exposed to two of them at the same time, it survives sometimes under certain conditions.

And what I saw that day under the microscope changed the trajectory of my life. The very last cell that I saw that day was a healthy functioning unicellular organism. Even though I exposed it to multiple stressors at once, high temperature, acid, heavy metals, it survived. It was alive. We learned that when a cell faces physiological stress, the organism actually develops resistance. I learned that we do not need to be protected from every stress in this life. So the pressure we feel today is not breaking us down, but actually it is building our immunity.

The second tool that I chose is identity. I remember a very distinct night in Jordan. We were sitting by the campfire in the desert with my friends from all around the world. I remember realizing that I was the west to the east, and for the east, I was the west. And I remember asking where do I really belong in this world? After a painful thought process, this is what I learned: no textbook can tell you where you belong. How do we know how to answer those questions? For me, this happened last summer in Indonesia. I was a visiting student in the neurosurgery department, and I was invited to make a presentation about my country, about the medical curriculum, and about the health



care system we have here. It forced me to see my life here as a medical student in Istanbul through the lens of another culture. I understand that I am a unique synthesis of different ways of existing in this world.

My third tool that I choose for myself is action. I learned not to wait for a degree or a title to take action. But it is a habit for me to do things before I am exactly ready. I was in Mexico City last year at an international conference. I was invited to deliver my work on Ebu Bekir el-Razi, who was a prominent figure in medical history. I presented my work here in Istanbul first, and I translated it into English and sent it out to the world just to see who would be interested in my work, and UNESCO was interested. There I was, a 20-year-old only speaker from Türkiye and the youngest person in the whole conference.

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ELİF LEYAL UĞRAŞ

*Medical Student & Researcher,
Bezm-i Âlem University*



I met incredible people there, and I invited them to my home, and I explained to them why Istanbul is possibly the best city in the whole world to have a scientific heritage conference. But there was a voice inside me saying, "What if it works? What if I am not too young? What if I actually can?"

So just last month, in November 2025, with the contribution of an amazing team, we successfully organized the third international symposium of the UNESCO chair on science, diplomacy, and scientific heritage right here in Istanbul. And the conference was really something big. This all happened because a student had a dream. All of this happened because a 20-year-old asked herself, "What if I can?"

One thing that my mother told me when I was young was that she told me, "When the world asks who is there, you need to say I am here without looking right or left. I am here". To truly understand what she meant by this, I had to go all the way to Hatay. It was a year after the earthquake. I went there with a program for medical students to volunteer to support people living in the container cities. Once I arrived in Hatay, they placed me in a psychosocial support group. I

spent my days playing with children from morning to night. As the day passed, I realized that these children did not actually need another adult telling them what to do, but instead they needed a big sister. While I was trying to heal their wounds, they were actually healing my wounds. In that container city surrounded by loss, my own exhaustion, my own stress just vanished.

Two days before I was set to leave, I learned something terrifying. There were no volunteers to come after us. So after we left, the program was about to be stopped. With a friend there, we started filming the raw reality of what it means to live in a container city. We made a short documentary about our experience. We sent it to every medical faculty's WhatsApp group in Türkiye. We asked them who was there, and we got a lot of replies. They said I am here. We are coming.

I know from personal experience that it is really hard to make sense of this world. It is hard for me also to comprehend that we have the technology to heal almost any wound, yet still we witness entire populations getting destroyed. But I do believe that there will be a difference if you say, "I am here."

When the world asks who is there, you need to say I am here without looking right or left. I am here.



CUMHUR ERSİN ADIGÜZEL

*Assoc. Prof. Dr., Head of the Academic
Affairs and Publications Department*

Manifesto for Healing the World through Education: In the face of growing inequalities, conflicts, and despair in today's world, we come together with a firm belief in education's transformative power. This manifesto is a call to all individuals and institutions who share the responsibility of building a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world.

We believe that education is not merely the transmission of knowledge, but also a process of cultivating values and nurturing human beings. Guided by this belief, we embrace the following principles:

Education must be human-centered: An individual's development should be supported not only academically, but also emotionally, morally, and socially. The steps taken to heal the world must, above all, be human-centered. Alongside material needs, the spiritual dimension of the human being must also be taken into consideration, and emotional needs must be acknowledged. Just as the human body becomes ill when its physical needs are not met, the human spirit also suffers when it is not properly nourished or is neglected. While physical illnesses are visible in the body, illnesses of the spirit appear in behavior. Healing the world through education is only possible through individuals whose spiritual dimensions have been nurtured in a healthy way.

Moral values must lie at the heart of education: Conscience, justice, empathy, and a sense of responsibility should be integrated into all educational processes. It should not be forgotten that any educational approach that is not built upon moral values and that is not accepted by the conscience of individuals and society is destructive.

Equal opportunities must be ensured: Access to quality education must be guaranteed as a fundamental right for every individual. Ensuring that individuals in all societies, as well as all societies across the world, have access to quality education and making this access sustainable is necessary.

Differences should be regarded as a source of richness: Cultural, linguistic, and intellectual diversity should be regarded not as a cause of division but as a source of development. An approach that, beginning with the individuals, respects the society they live in, their environment, and the world; that regards all forms of difference not as a cause of division but as an opportunity for enrichment; and that aims for the good not only of a specific group of people but of all humanity, should be adopted as a guiding principle.

The voices of young people must be strengthened: Young people should be included in decision-making processes as active stakeholders not only of the future but also of the present.

Education must promote peace: A culture of dialogue instead of conflict, and cooperation instead of competition, should be fostered. In this way, healing and progress can be achieved not only at the individual level but also at the societal level and, ultimately, across the world.

Sustainability awareness must be fostered: Raising environmentally conscious individuals should be one of the fundamental goals of education. The healing of the world through education is possible through individuals who see themselves as humble members of the universe and who protect it.

Lifelong learning must be supported: Education should not be limited to a specific period but should extend to every stage of life.

Technology must be used in harmony with ethical values: Technological and digital transformation should be guided with respect for human dignity and social benefit. Technical and technological developments will contribute to healing the world to the extent that they align with human nature and ethical values.

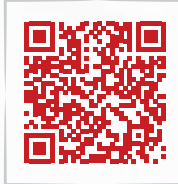
Global cooperation must be strengthened: International solidarity and joint projects in education should be encouraged. Healing of the world through education is only possible through the unity of individuals, families, institutions, and organizations. It must not be forgotten that establishing an effective and sustainable system of cooperation is our shared responsibility.

Healing the world is the shared responsibility of all of us, not of a single individual or institution. Education is the most powerful instrument of this transformation. Through this manifesto, we call on all stakeholders to think together, produce together, and act together. A more just, more hopeful, and more humane world is possible, and it begins with education.



**ZEYNEP
ARKAN**

*Assoc. Prof. Dr., Head of Istanbul
Education Summit Organizing Committee*



Esteemed president, dear Turkish Maarif Foundation Family, distinguished guests, here, for two days, we sat at the same table; sometimes we listened to pain, sometimes to hope. We spoke different languages, but we met around the same word; we focused on the same word: healing...

Within the heart of this city, which has connected different stories for millennia, we understood once again that: No society can heal alone; no child grows up alone, no future blossoms in the shadow of a single mind. Healing begins only when we draw closer to each other. When we hear each other's voices... When we dare to touch each other's wounds...

The panels whispered to us: The world does not heal with a single glance, but it begins to transform when many glances come together. That is why, in Istanbul, not only thoughts but also hearts touched each other. Although the panels of these two days were referred to by different titles, they were actually intertwined veins of the same great story. In one panel, we learned to look in the mirror; in another, the inner architecture of the human being. In one, we heard the pulse of society; in the other, the future rising on the shoulders of young people. In the high-level session, the voices of states merged with the voices of young people in the youth session. And we understood that no idea discussed at this summit was overshadowed by another; they all nourished, complemented, and deepened each other.

In the high-level session, we heard that education has no borders, does not belong to any single country, and that what it heals is not only society but also the common conscience of humanity. In our main theme speech, we learned that education should not just be a mirror, but a transformative mirror. If the mirror only shows the wound, despair grows; if it only shows beauty, the truth is lost. The mirror of education should reflect both the broken and the whole. Both the mistake and the possibility... In the Education Talks, we saw that knowledge without conscience is exhausting. The mirror of education, the art of humanity, the cooperation of society, and the call of young people... All



united around the same idea of healing, becoming four powerful pillars of a whole. This harmony showed us once again that healing can only be born from within a multi-voiced chorus.

Our first panel reminded us that looking in the mirror requires courage. A mirror reveals not only flaws but also potential. Education is similar: it is not merely a surface for transmitting information, but a depth that reveals the light within a person. If knowledge continues increasing but conflicts persist, it means we need a perspective that transforms reflection into wisdom. Our second panel reminded us that education is not just about words and achievements; it is built upon those subtle, invisible pillars that make a person human. The values carried by every culture and society; a person's conscience, compassion, and pursuit of truth... All these are nurtured not in the lines of the curriculum, but in the pulse of life.

The first panel reminded us to look in the mirror, and the second to read the inner world of a person. It was as if Sezai Karakoç's words gently rose between the two panels: "Resurrection is the rediscovery of oneself." Because both sessions focused on how a person can reinterpret both themselves and their future.

In our third panel, we learned that healing does not only take place within four walls; healing continues in the street, at home, and in the pulse of society. A child's access to education changes the course of a community's destiny. A teacher's hope brings light to hundreds of homes. And that light will not grow unless we support each other.

The young people did not just tell us something; they called us to the future. They reminded us that the world is not only an inheritance to be left to them,

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ARKAN**

*Assoc. Prof. Dr., Head of
Istanbul Education Summit
Organizing Committee*

but also a home they will rebuild. And they said: "The future is in our backpacks, and that backpack becomes lighter when we learn together, when we walk together."

And these two days were not only an academic discussion, but also a human gathering. The participation of our honored guests showed us this: Pain is too heavy to bear alone, but it heals when shared. Hope trembles in one hand, but it walks when multiplied. A country can stand alone, but the world becomes beautiful when it walks together.

The voices from Syria filling the hall gave us our deepest hope for the future: A country rising from the ashes will rise again with its children. And we will be honored to be a part of their story.

Distinguished guests,
Behind every thought discussed, every panel title, every call to conscience over these two days, lay the silent breath of the world's wounded lands. A child's notebook left in the sand in Gaza, a school bag forgotten amid the sirens in Ukraine, a half-finished alphabetical dream buried under the dust in Syria... The same test of humanity is being experienced in the thirst of Yemen, the drought of Somalia, the conflict-ridden neighborhoods of Sudan, the interrupted paths of hope in Afghanistan, and in many other places. The name of war changes; the broken voice of children remains the same. And when a child's voice is silenced, all the sentences of the world become incomplete. Therefore, every idea, every suggestion, every call, actually nurtured a single common quest: an education that can counter everything that wounds humanity with a conscience, a justice, a proposal of goodness...

That is precisely why Nurettin Topçu's great words resonated within us once more: "Education is the art of elevating humanity to freedom in the face of material things." Because education is the only way to carry humanity beyond molds, fears, impositions, and darkness. It is the only power that can raise a society when it has fallen to its knees, that can rekindle the light in a child's eyes that is about to fade...

And today, we all heard together the silent truth that rose from all this suffering: The world will only heal on the shoulders of people who learn from each other. Not on the shoulders of one country, not on the shoulders of one continent, but on the will of a circle of humanity that knows how to draw closer, learn from each other, and expand as it gets to know each other. And at the end of all these conversations, we felt this: We believed... A morning will come, brighter than snow.

Despite all the pain that weighs heavily on the nights, the light of a classroom will shine again, a child's pen will write again, and the horizon of a society will open anew. Walking towards that morning is in our hands. Believing, supporting, healing... All together. And we know that: We will succeed together.

When we choose to listen to each other, not silence each other... When we choose to understand each other, to come closer to each other... The power of education will change not only lives but also history. When we learn together, walk together, heal together, the world will be a more beautiful place than we have ever seen.

I wholeheartedly believe that this shared breath rising from the heart of Istanbul will carry hope to the children of tomorrow and healing to humanity of tomorrow. Thank you all. These two days were a journey where ideas met, and labor was visible. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who made this journey possible. Above all, I offer my gratitude to the President of Turkish Maarif Foundation, who defined the horizon of this summit and guided this meeting with his intellectual framework. I would like to thank our Board of Trustees, our Board of Directors, and all our colleagues around the world who proudly carry the name of the foundation, for their support at every step. This gathering came to life and gained meaning through the collective efforts of a large family.

Finally, I would like to especially mention one team among these thanks... The Summit Coordination and General Executive Team... You did not merely undertake the task of planning the flow of the two days; you shaped the spirit of this hall, you carried the harmony of all these interactions. I witnessed your attention to every detail, your discernment in resolving problems without making them apparent, your calmness and kindness in softening stressful moments. The peace on the faces of our guests, the confidence the speakers felt as they stepped onto the stage, the energy of the hall that never diminished throughout the two days, are visible traces of your efforts. And know that you did not just run this summit. You gave this Summit a character, an atmosphere, a warmth. You didn't just create a program; you built an experience. You combined your effort with intelligence, you blended your dedication with subtlety, and the resulting picture flowed from your hearts. I sincerely thank each and every one of you. This path was strengthened by your contributions; this hall breathed thanks to your efforts; this summit gained meaning through your endeavors. Thank you for never leaving me alone at any stage, for standing shoulder to shoulder with me, and for growing stronger with every step. I'm so glad you are here. I am so glad we walked this journey together.



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Prof. Zié Ballo

The experience of Félix Houphouët-Boigny University and the Ministry of National Education's 'curriculum orientation framework' highlights the integration of civic awareness, moral values, citizenship, and interdisciplinary skills into education reform. By fostering empathy, dialogue, and non-violent approaches to problem-solving, this model contributes to bridging social and cultural divides and supports the development of more peaceful and livable societies.



Mahmut M. Özdil

The strong interest shown by teachers, educators, and international participants demonstrates that the Summit addresses a genuine need and that meaningful steps are being taken to meet it. The opening session was particularly significant, with the participation of Türkiye's First Lady, Emine Erdoğan, as well as the First Lady of Syria. Their presence was especially meaningful given Turkish Maarif Foundation's long-standing educational engagement in Northern Syria.



Khady Diop Mbodji

From the early years of schooling, children acquire knowledge, learn to live within society, and prepare for life. At the same time, education plays a key role in instilling values, enabling individuals to develop the solid and ethical foundations needed to change the world.

Jenny Molendyk Divleli

One of the most striking aspects of the Istanbul Education Summit is the inclusion of youth as panelists, grounded in a strong belief in mentorship and reverse mentorship. (...) Giving youth a voice in these discussions is a distinctive and essential strength of the Summit.



Prof. Martin Lopez Armengol

At every level of the education system, from universities to primary schools, entering a classroom requires activating early warning mechanisms to monitor both institutional dynamics and student well-being. The classroom reflects the broader social structure, where many of the challenges facing society, such as discrimination, violence, socioeconomic hardship, and the difficulties experienced by forcibly displaced individuals, become visible.

Sümeyye Sena Polat

Healing the world requires rethinking and, in many respects, decolonizing education. This calls for educational models that move beyond a solely Western-centric perspective and foster confidence rather than inferiority. Institutions such as Turkish Maarif Foundation play an important role in this regard by promoting an approach that enables young people to understand their own histories and identities, engage with the wider world, and participate globally with a strong sense of dignity and belonging.



Dr. Ayhan Öztürk

At the core of our educational vision lies the goal of humanizing education, society, technology, and systems, and ultimately, rehumanizing human beings themselves.

Dr. Maida Pasic

Education holds transformative power. It not only equips children with the knowledge, skills, and resilience needed to navigate and cope with these challenges but also empowers them to become agents of change capable of contributing to the reversal of some of these global crises.



Dr. Ruşen Ahmet Albayrak

Education is not confined to schools; it continues within families, workplaces, and society at large. Therefore, it must be approached through a unified and holistic perspective grounded in strong cooperation between school, family, and society.

Prof. Akodah Ayewoudan

In a rapidly changing world, education lies at the center of transformation, making it necessary to critically examine how we define and deliver it. This also requires questioning how educational practices can be improved and how insights from different cultures and approaches can contribute to a more inclusive and universal educational vision.



Prof. Dr. Mehmet Naci İnci

Across different regions of the world, societies face distinct challenges, ranging from substance abuse and the pressures of digitalization to poverty, limited access to education, and unsustainable living conditions. While these issues vary in form, they underscore a shared reality: education remains essential to addressing them.



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zeynep Arkan

Under the theme Healing the World through Education, this year's Summit focuses on identifying urgent global challenges and exploring how education can serve as a transformative force in addressing them. Youth engagement remains central, highlighting young people's perspectives on today's pressing issues. The Summit brings together diverse stakeholders from across regions and educational levels, distinguished this year by its multilingual format.



Paolo Marchi

Education extends far beyond the individual learning outcomes of a single child. It serves as a key solution to broader societal challenges, including health-related issues and conflict, demonstrating an impact that reaches well beyond academic achievement. This conviction has guided my work since the beginning of my career with UNICEF, and the discussions at this Summit have reaffirmed that belief while encouraging renewed reflection and commitment.

Mehmet Hasan Yaci

Education serves as a vital bridge between roots and youth. While young people are the driving force of change and hold the potential to build a better world, they must also engage with and understand the experiences of previous generations. In this sense, education is essential in connecting past wisdom with future transformation, an insight strongly reinforced throughout the Summit.



Marie Garnier

Increased parental engagement in schooling, along with a deeper appreciation of education's value, has led to tangible improvements in the living conditions of some vulnerable communities.



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EUROPE & RUSSIA, NEWS, TURKEY

Istanbul to host global education summit

1 Comment December 3, 2023 at 8:29 am

President of the Maarif Foundation, Mahmut M. Özdil

Educators from around the world will gather in Istanbul for the fifth Education Summit on 5-6 December. Organised by the Turkish Maarif Foundation, the Summit will convene under the theme "Healing the world through education." Organisers affirm that it will comprehensively explore the role of education in social transformation.

The opening ceremony will be held with the attendance of First Lady of the Republic of Türkiye HE Emine Erdoğan and First Lady of Syrian Arab Republic HE Latifa al-Droubi. The program will bring together policymakers, academics, experts and youth representatives.

Education ministers from various countries will discuss the impact of education systems on economic development, social cohesion, cultural interaction and crisis management in a high-level session.

President of the Maarif Foundation, Mahmut M. Özdil, conveyed the growing interest in the Summit with the following words:

"Since 2021, the global experience of the Maarif Foundation has taken shape as an intellectual platform through the Istanbul Education Summit. Over these five years, interest has grown far beyond expectations—growing from an online initiative into a worldwide platform that today engages and influences tens of thousands."

At present, the Turkish Maarif Foundation operates in 64 countries with 583 educational institutions and 2 universities; they provide educational opportunities to nearly 70,000 students, prioritising not only academic growth but also cultural awareness and character education.

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TÜRKİYE

Education is key to healing the world: Emine Erdogan

Erdogan praises the Turkish Maarif Foundation for carrying this approach beyond the country's borders, describing it as "a pioneering model in education diplomacy".

December 5, 2023

Türkiye's First Lady Emine Erdoğan has highlighted the transformative power of education, saying it is "the only remedy capable of healing the world", in a message marking the opening of the 5th Istanbul Education Summit.

The summit, organised by the Turkish Maarif Foundation under the theme "Improving the World Through Education", brought together representatives from across the globe for discussions on the human, cultural and social impact of learning.

In a post on social media, Erdogan said she was pleased to welcome Latife al-Droubi, the wife of Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa, to Türkiye for the event, and wished the summit success.

"We know as Türkiye that education, when elevated to wisdom, is the only medicine that can improve the world," she said.

"For this reason, our understanding of *maarif* is rooted in raising fair-minded children who feel humanity's burdens at the very centre of their hearts."

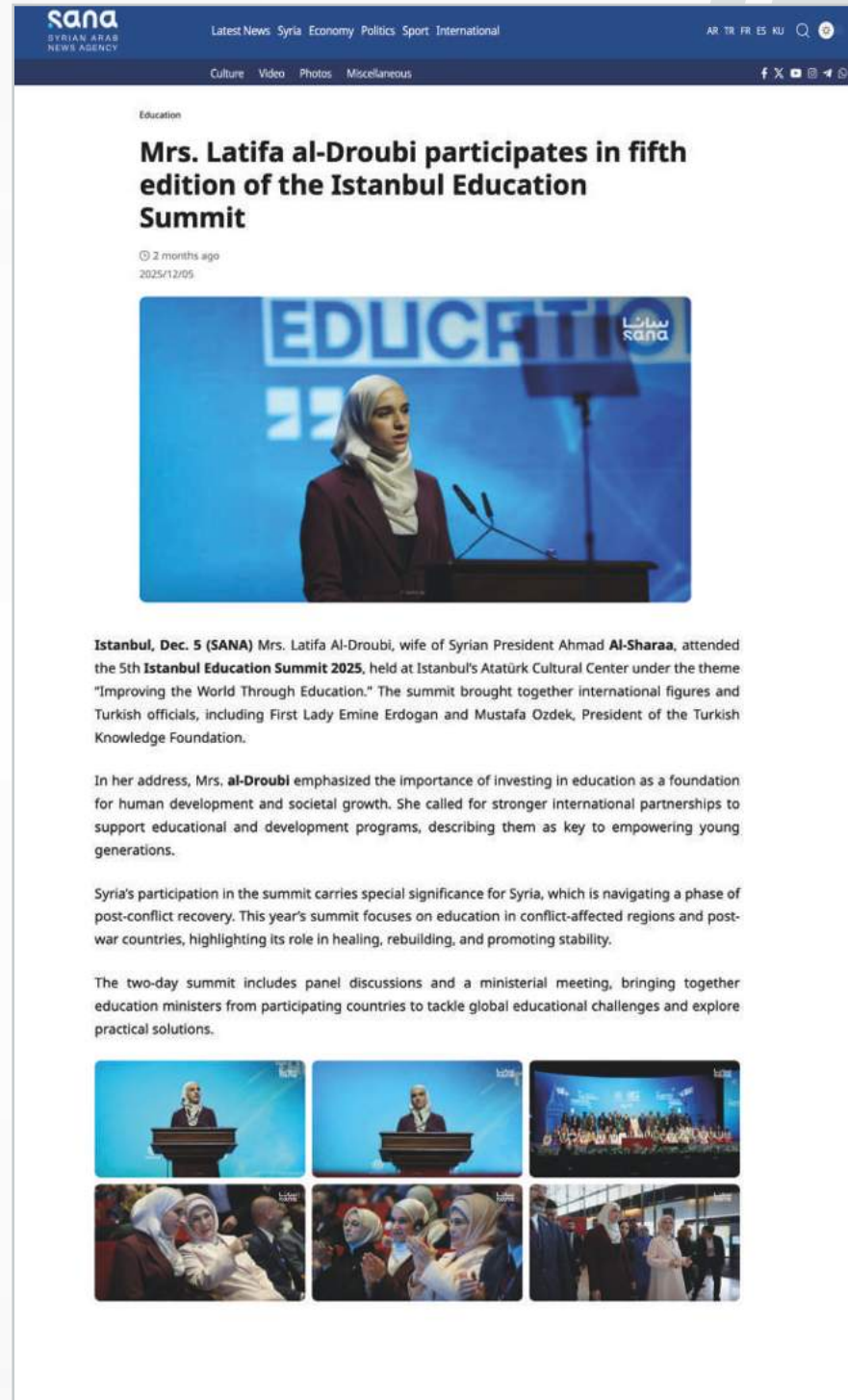
'Pioneering model in education diplomacy'

Erdogan praised the Turkish Maarif Foundation for carrying this approach beyond the country's borders, describing it as "a pioneering model in education diplomacy".

"It is a source of pride that in 56 countries, through more than 500 educational institutions, our foundation is nurturing good people and making a tangible contribution to global peace," she noted.

Erdogan expressed hope that Türkiye's education vision — shaped by its deep cultural heritage — would continue to strengthen the foundation's influence across its "geography of the heart" and inspire future generations.


She also thanked all those who contributed to "this meaningful summit where ideas turn into action."



Education

Mrs. Latifa al-Droubi participates in fifth edition of the Istanbul Education Summit

2 months ago
2025/12/05


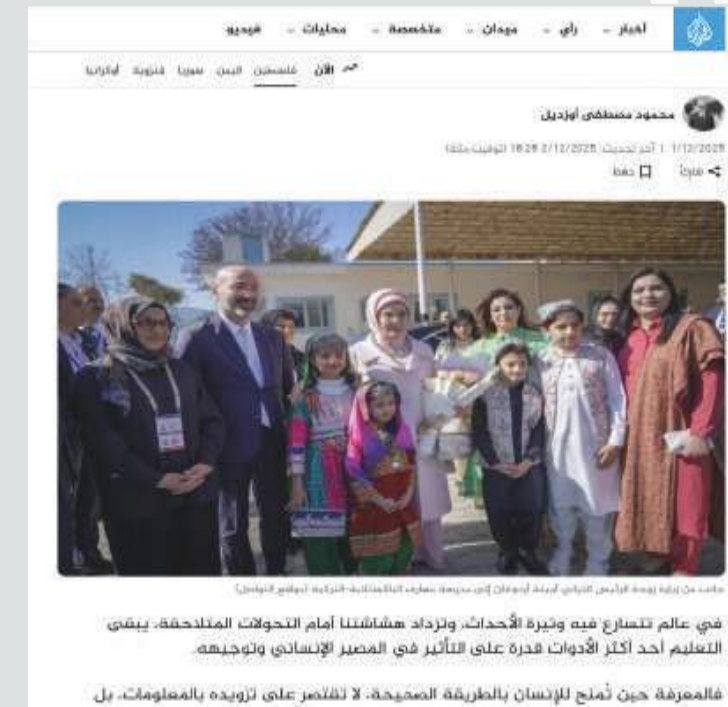


Istanbul, Dec. 5 (SANA) Mrs. Latifa Al-Droubi, wife of Syrian President Ahmad Al-Sharaa, attended the 5th Istanbul Education Summit 2025, held at Istanbul's Atatürk Cultural Center under the theme "Improving the World Through Education." The summit brought together international figures and Turkish officials, including First Lady Emine Erdogan and Mustafa Ozdek, President of the Turkish Knowledge Foundation.

In her address, Mrs. **al-Droubi** emphasized the importance of investing in education as a foundation for human development and societal growth. She called for stronger international partnerships to support educational and development programs, describing them as key to empowering young generations.

Syria's participation in the summit carries special significance for Syria, which is navigating a phase of post-conflict recovery. This year's summit focuses on education in conflict-affected regions and post-war countries, highlighting its role in healing, rebuilding, and promoting stability.

The two-day summit includes panel discussions and a ministerial meeting, bringing together education ministers from participating countries to tackle global educational challenges and explore practical solutions.





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الرئيسية

محمود مصطفى أوزديق

11/12/2025



عقدت من إقامة هيئة الأركان الثقافي لجمعية سورية للتعليم العالي - الجمعية السورية للتعليم العالي في مدينة إسطنبول، في إطار مشاركة السيدة الأولى السورية السيدة منى الأسد، في فعاليات المؤتمر السنوي العالمي للتعليم في العالم، وتضمنت فيه وتيرة الأحداث، وتزايد هباتنا أمام التحولات المتلاحقة، يبقى التعليم أحد أكثر الأدوات فاعلية على التأثير في المصير الإنساني وتوجيهه.

فالمعرفة حين تُمنح للإنسان بالطريقة الصحيحة، لا تقلص على تزويده بالمعلومات، بل



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Istanbul Education Summit 2025 Highlights Global Dialogue on "Healing the World Through Education"

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AJK Editorial 5 December 2025

RAŞİT'İN TEŞEKKÜRÜ

NIJER'DEN TÜRKİYE'YE GÖNÜL HATTI

Cocuk yaşına rağmen yetişkinlerin bile altından kalamayacağı dramlar yaşayan Nijerli Raşit'in hayatı, Türk okuluyla tanışınca değişti. Raşit, Türkiye'ye mesajını eğitim zirvesi için geldiği İstanbul'da verdi.

TAHTA DEFTERİ HEDİYE ETTİ

Raşit sahneye Afrika'da birçok ülkede defter gibi kullanılan tahta levha (tab) de çıktı. Bu tahta levhaya okuldaki arkadaşları kurbanest, Türkiye'ye teşekkür ederek 'Tab'la Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'a hediye etti.

ACI ÜSTÜNE ACI YASADI

Abdul Raşit Mamodu 2013 yılında Afrika ülkesi Nijer'de doğdu. Henüz 6 aylıkken annesini kaybetti. Abisi Raşit'i devlet okuluna yazdırdı. Raşit 7 yaşındayken gittiği okulda yangın çıktı. Öğretmeniyle 20 sınıf arkadaşı hayatını kaybetti. Tek kurtulan Raşit oldu. Ancak yüzünün bir tarafı ve eli yandı. 3 gün boyunca yoğun bakımda kaldı. Raşit yaklaşık bir yıl tedavi gördü.

AGABEYİNE DE İŞ VERİLDİ

Raşit eğitimine devam etmeye çalışırken yolu Türk Maarif Okulu ile keşifli. Türkiye Maarif Vakfı ve Nijer-Türk Dostluk Okulları, Raşit'e ilkokuldan ilseye kadar tam burs sağladı. Raşit'e bakan ağabeyi de Nijer-Türk Dostluk Okulları'nda işe alındı. İstanbul Eğitim Zirvesi'ne katılan Raşit, "Beni doktorlar iyileştirdi. Ben de büyüyünce doktor olup, çocukları iyileştireceğim" dedi. >> 10

KÖTÜ GÜNLER GERİDE KALDI

İstanbul'daki eğitim zirvesinde Raşit'in acı dolu hayat hikayesi ve Türk okulundaki başarılı öğrenciliği de anılabildi. Raşit, zirvede en çok ilgi çeken isim oldu.

5. İSTANBUL EĞİTİM ZİRVESİ

Emine Erdoğan: 251 milyon çocuk okulsuz

ÇİĞDEM YILMAZ Haber Merkezi

Cumhurbaşkanı Recep Tayyip Erdoğan'ın eşi Emine Erdoğan, Türkiye Maarif Vakfı tarafından Atatürk Kültür Merkezi'nde düzenlenen 5. İstanbul Eğitim Zirvesi'nde konuştu. Konuşmasında küresel krizlerden Gazze'deki saldırılara, yaygın zehrin sarımsaklı kullanımlarından Suriye'nin yeniden inşasına kadar birçok basitlikte değeriyle emelinde bulunan Erdoğan, eğitimin tek kurtuluş çaresi olduğunda toplumu irkiletik, ayrımcılık ve sömürgecilik gibi krizlere sürüklediğini söyledi.

"Terazi eğri duracak"

Zirveye Suriye Cumhurbaşkanı Ahmed Şarif'in eşi Latife El Durubi ile katılan Erdoğan, "Maarif Vakfımızın çalışmalarıyla Suriye'de eğitim altyapısının iyileştirilmesine destekleyeceğiz" dedi. Erdoğan, 2024 küresel Eğitim İzleme Raporu'na göre, hâlâ 251 milyon çocuk ve genç okula gitmediğini aktararak, sunları şöyle dedi:

"Dünyâ geliri ülkelerde okul çağındaki çocuk ve gençlerin yüzde 33'ü okula gitmiyorken, yüksek gelirli ülkelerde bu oran yüzde 3'tür. Eğitim, temel bir hak, yüzde 33 okula gidene kadar adaletin terazi hep eğri duracaktır. Eğitim, kalkınmanın, esatığın, iklim değişikliğiyle mücadele etme ve dünyanın tüm kotalarına hakın bir barış kültürünün inşası çabasının da ön koşuludur. "Değer" denildiğinde matematik hesaplamadan ötesini gören çeyrek eğitim sistemimizin yerini artık insan yetiştirme sanatına bırakması gerekiyor."

Kimler katıldı?

İMY Başkanı Özgül İnöz, sahnelendi yarıda zirveye Emine Erdoğan'ın yanı sıra Suriye Cumhurbaşkanı Şarif'in eşi Latife El Durubi, Türkiye'nin Sanayi Bakanı Mustafa Varank, Sağlık Bakanı Fahrettin Koca, Kültür ve Turizm Bakanı Mehmet Nuri Ersoy, Cumhurbaşkanlığı Yardımcısı Şuayip Bircan, Gençlik ve Spor Bakanı Yardımcısı Enes Ermişoğlu, çok sayıda ülkeden bakan ve bakanlar, milletler, üniversite, akademisyenler ve Maarif Vakfı öğretmenleri ile öğrenciler katıldı.

Emine Erdoğan, zirve sonrası Suriye Cumhurbaşkanı Ahmed Şarif'in eşi Latife El Durubi ile bir araya geldi.



GOOD PRACTICES IN EDUCATION

Since their establishment, International Maarif Schools have earned global recognition for their successful initiatives and original practices in education. Through innovative approaches and high-quality projects, the institution has secured an important place in the international education community and made it a central mission to contribute to the universal values of education.

The "Good Practices in Education" platform is a concrete reflection of this mission. It aims to disseminate exemplary practices, strengthen communication among schools, and create an effective sharing network for educators worldwide. More than an information-sharing space, the platform serves as a bridge fostering intercultural ties.

The platform is structured around a four-stage roadmap adopted by the Good Practices in Education Commission. This roadmap consists of the following steps: Sharing Good Practices with the Commission, Evaluating the Good Practices by the Commission, Sharing Selected Practices with Educators, and Dissemination and Follow-Up. This systematic approach enhances the platform's credibility and impact while encouraging the exchange of a greater number of initiatives.

Innovative practices across Maarif Schools provide multidimensional benefits, supporting teachers' professional development and enabling students to develop critical thinking, creativity, and social responsibility, while strengthening cooperation among schools. Since 2018, the platform has been enriched with content from various countries and continues to expand each year with new ideas and practices. By 2025, five projects were presented at the 5th Istanbul Education Summit, where two outstanding projects received special awards.

Turkish Maarif Foundation extends its sincere thanks to all administrators, teachers, and students who contributed to this process. Good Practices in Education platform will continue to inspire the educational world, open the way for innovative approaches, and uphold the universal values of education. We hope these important initiatives will reach ever wider audiences and bring benefits to all levels of education in the years ahead.

IES^{5TH}
ISTANBUL
EDUCATION SUMMIT



MEETING POETS WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



ALBANIA

*The poets speak, the students listen:
the past gives voice to the present.*

The "Meeting Poets with Artificial Intelligence" project brought together major poets of Turkish and Albanian literature with students in a virtual meeting environment. The primary aim of the project was to introduce the lives, works, and intellectual worlds of poets who shaped Turkish and Albanian literature, making this learning experience more impactful through the realistic narrative tools offered by AI technology.

Within the project, ten prominent poets who hold an important place in the literary memory of both cultures were selected: Yunus Emre, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, Mehmet Akif Ersoy, Şemsettin Sami, Sezai Karakoç, Naim Frashëri, Ismail Kadare, Jeronim De Rada, Dritëro Agolli, and Migjeni. Through AI-supported narrations available in Turkish, Albanian, English, and German, students were able to access information both in their native and target languages.

The project was built upon a physical learning environment: for each poet, a specially designed model house was created. By pressing the buttons inside these models, students accessed AI-based visual and audio presentations about the poet's life, literary vision, and works. At the end of each video, an excerpt from the poet's most well-known poem was recited, fostering students' sense of aesthetics.

Implemented through AI-driven narrations, the project presented poetry not as verses to be memorized but as an experience to be lived. It combined the preservation of cultural heritage with the possibilities of the digital age, making literature once again visible and accessible. In this way, young people, whose interest in classical texts has been waning, were reconnected with poetry, literature was made more appealing, and technology served a meaningful educational purpose.

MEETING POETS WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE





MAARIF MUSEUM AND ART HOUSE



GOOD
PRACTICES
IN EDUCATION

IES⁵
ISTANBUL
EDUCATION SUMMIT

MAARIF MUSEUM AND ART HOUSE

MALI

*To make effort visible is to carry
heritage into the future.*

Maarif Schools of Mali – Sebenicoro Campus launched the *Maarif Museum and Art House Project*, a pioneering initiative that unites education with art. Through this project, students' efforts moved beyond the classroom, becoming part of a lasting legacy.

Initiated in collaboration with the Maarif Mali Education Coordination Office and the Maarif Country Representation, the project was carefully planned and implemented through feasibility studies, layout designs, and artifact collection processes. Products created throughout the year, including pottery, bogolan fabric, textile design, recycling projects, paintings, leatherwork, and other crafts, were transferred into the museum setting under teacher guidance and with parental support, transforming into a permanent exhibition space.

The Museum and Art House was designed as two complementary sections: in the museum, heritage items from the African Maarif Sports Games were displayed, while in the Art House, students' paintings, handicrafts, and design products were exhibited. This dual structure made the educational process tangible. For visitors, the experience was enriched by guiding floor markings, thematic exhibits, documentary videos presented on smart screens, and interactive features.

A distinctive aspect of the Art House was that students' works, from paintings and designed t-shirts to beaded bracelets, leather accessories, and other creations, were showcased under their own names. Parents and visitors could purchase these items at symbolic prices, with proceeds directed to Maarif's Mobile Education Center, a social responsibility project. In this way, students' efforts were both celebrated and transformed into a new act of generosity for the wider community.

MMAU – MAARIF MODEL AFRICAN UNION



ETHIOPIA

We think together, we create solutions together!

The “MMAU – Maarif Model African Union” project, initiated at the Yeka Campus in Ethiopia, has emerged as a visionary platform to address Africa’s challenges through the voices of youth. The project’s primary participants are students and advisor teachers from private schools in Addis Ababa. Yet, the vision extends far beyond: by 2026, an international student platform is planned to bring together students from Maarif Schools across the entire African continent.

The preparation was comprehensive. Literature reviews were conducted, and current African issues were thoroughly analyzed. The chosen theme was: “Addressing the Issues of the African Continent with the Consciousness of a Maarif Student.” Based on this, the delegation structure was carefully designed, with representation assigned to each participating country. To increase visibility and support participant preparation, posters, banners, and promotional materials were produced, while a detailed booklet and declarations were published in advance of the conference. Thanks to this holistic approach, MMAU has become a high-quality platform contributing to both the academic and personal development of students.

One of the most striking aspects of the initiative was that it was held at the Nelson Mandela Hall, the official headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa. This offered students a highly valuable opportunity to experience the atmosphere of real diplomacy.

MMAU has become an international platform where young people make their voices heard as solution-oriented individuals. Through this initiative, students gained knowledge about Africa’s social, economic, and environmental issues and developed proposals through debate and negotiation. The project has carried the Maarif philosophy of education beyond classrooms, reaching across continents.

MMAU – MAARIF MODEL AFRICAN UNION





THE MAARIF OF ART



GOOD
PRACTICES
IN EDUCATION

IES⁵
ISTANBUL
EDUCATION SUMMIT

THE MAARIF OF ART

AZERBAIJAN

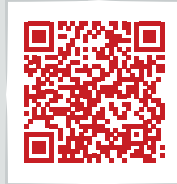
Art is a universal language; sharing is the spirit of the school.

The "Maarif of Art" project, carried out at the Youth Campus in Azerbaijan, was designed as a multidimensional development platform that enables students to explore their own interests.

The project is implemented regularly every Wednesday during the lunch break as sustainable practice. The "Maarif of Art" initiative stands out as a sharing platform not only for students but also for teachers, parents, and support staff, where everyone has the opportunity to showcase their talents. Through this inclusive approach, the school transforms from being merely a place for attending lessons into a stage where individuals can realize themselves.

A dedicated "Maarif of Art Corner" was established on the ground floor of the school, where each week one or more students, teachers, or staff members can perform. Students play instruments, dance, present robotics projects, or share other hobbies with the school community. All aspects of the organization, from poster design and announcement boards to time management and the presentation process are coordinated by the students.

Thanks to its continuity and inclusivity, the project has created a learning atmosphere that transforms not only individual development but also the entire social fabric of the school. Each week, the school community comes together to celebrate talents while experiencing the joy of creating collectively.



INTERCULTURAL ART BRIDGE

NORTH MACEDONIA

*Every painting carries
the story of a culture.*

Within the project, Maarif students collaborated with a partner school in Warsaw, Poland, to carry out a joint art initiative. Students painted their cities, and the artworks were exhibited in both schools. This exchange allowed children to express their own cultural values through art while simultaneously discovering a fresh perspective on their hometowns from abroad.

The process helped students recognize different cultures, explore architectural and geographical features, and gain insight into diverse lifestyles. This interaction not only contributed to intercultural understanding but also strengthened empathy. Students became more aware of cultural diversity and learned to respect differences.

The project was crowned with the creation of a small art gallery within the school, where students' works were exhibited and received with admiration by teachers, parents, and visitors. A special booklet compiling all the artworks was also published, turning the cultural bridge built through art into a lasting memory. Looking ahead, the aim is to organize exhibitions on a regular basis, enrich them with new themes, and expand collaboration with other international schools. In this way, students' artistic production will gain continuity, and intercultural sharing will be further strengthened.



INTERCULTURAL ART BRIDGE



VI. INTERNATIONAL MAARIF PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

ies^{5TH}
ISTANBUL
EDUCATION SUMMIT



The International Maarif Photography Contest, traditionally organized every year by Turkish Maarif Foundation, was held for the sixth time this year with the theme of "Family."

The contest was met with great interest from Maarif Schools students and staff. A total of 446 photographs were submitted from 30 countries.

Participants presented powerful visual narratives by interpreting the theme of family from their own cultural perspectives. The photographs were evaluated by independent jury members, and the winning entries were determined in two different categories (student and staff).

The winners were awarded valuable prizes at the 5th Istanbul Education Summit.

CATEGORY
OF MAARIF
STAFF



FIRST PRIZE
BURUNDI

MOHAMED
BASITA

SMILE
FACES

CATEGORY
OF MAARIF
STAFF



A SMALL GIFT FOR
MOM, AND A BIG SMILE

SHAFIN
JAVOID

SECOND PRIZE
PAKISTAN

CATEGORY
OF MAARIF
STAFF

STUDENT
CATEGORY



THIRD PRIZE
ETHIOPIA

SANIYE
AVGIN

A SINGLE TREE CANNOT CARRY
A LOAD; TWO TREES CAN



STEP BY STEP TO SCHOOL
WITH FAMILY SUPPORT

ABDIAZIZ
MOHAMED

FIRST PRIZE
SOMALIA

STUDENT
CATEGORY

STUDENT
CATEGORY



SECOND PRIZE
ROMANIA

NESLIHAN
YILDIZ

MY FAMILY MY FIRST
PLAYMATES



HAPPY
FAMILY

HANI
MENSUR

THIRD PRIZE
ETHIOPIA

M A A R I F P A I N T I N G C O N T E S T 2 0 2 5

ies^{5th}
ISTANBUL
EDUCATION SUMMIT



On the occasion of 2025 being declared the Year of Family, Turkish Maarif Foundation organized the Maarif Painting Contest with the aim of strengthening students' family bonds, supporting their artistic development, and enhancing their aesthetic perspectives.

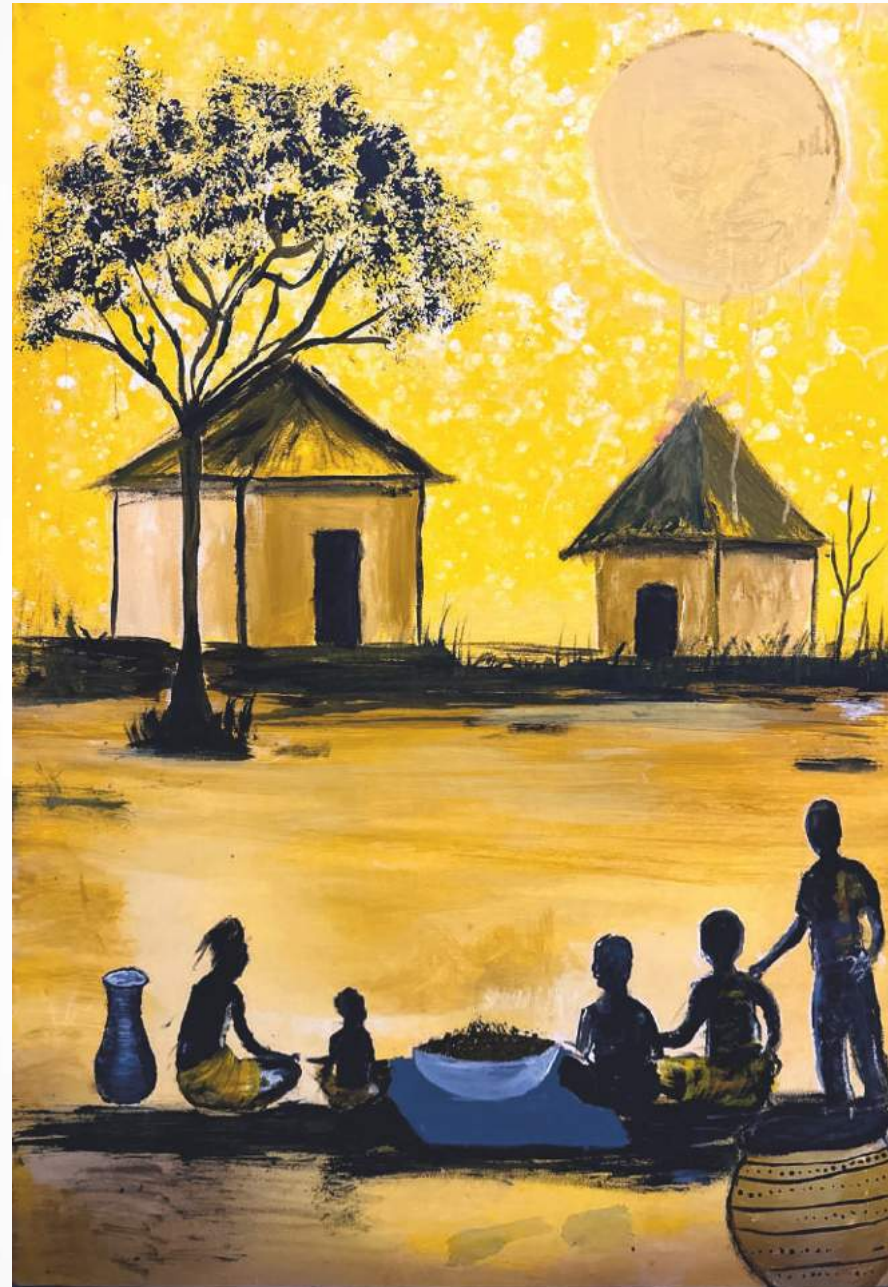
The contest was held internationally under the theme "My Happiest Moment with My Family" and was conducted in two categories: middle school and high school.

A total of 321 applications were received from 32 countries, including 160 applications in the middle school category and 161 applications in the high school category. The paintings were evaluated by independent jury members, and the winning entries were determined in two different categories: middle school and high school.

The winners were awarded valuable prizes at the 5th Istanbul Education Summit.

MAARIF
MIDDLE
SCHOOL
STUDENTS

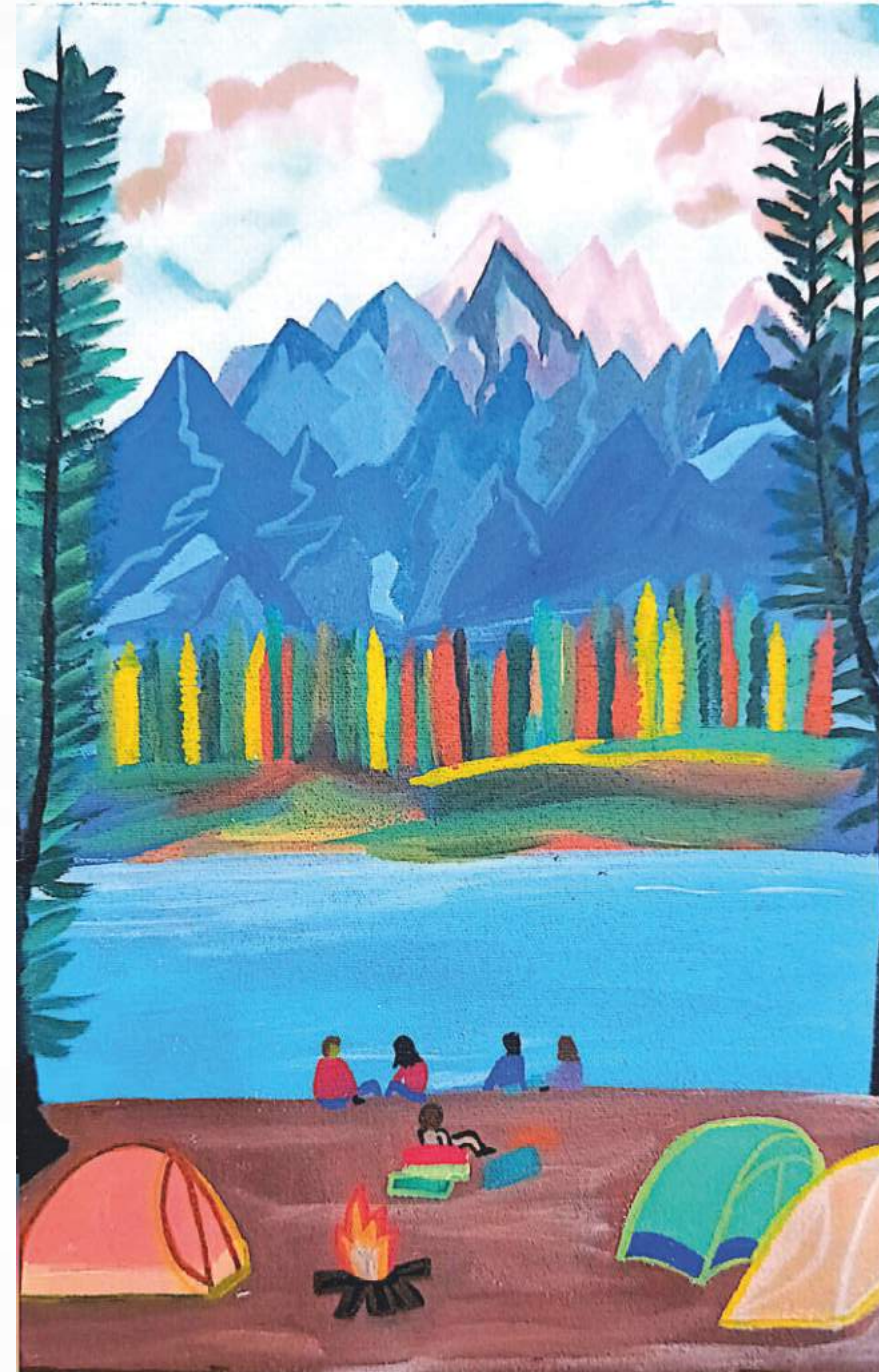
MAARIF
MIDDLE
SCHOOL
STUDENTS



FIRST PRIZE
SENEGAL

PAPA MASSECK
NDIAYE

DAYS SPENT IN
THE VILLAGE



CAMPING IN THE MOUNTAINS
WITH MY FAMILY

AMNA
JAMIL

SECOND PRIZE
PAKISTAN



THIRD PRIZE
CHAD

NADJAT MAHAMAT
AL HAFIZ

MY FAMILY'S
HAPPINESS



FILM
GATHERING

SHIER BANGIN AZIZ
BANAEY

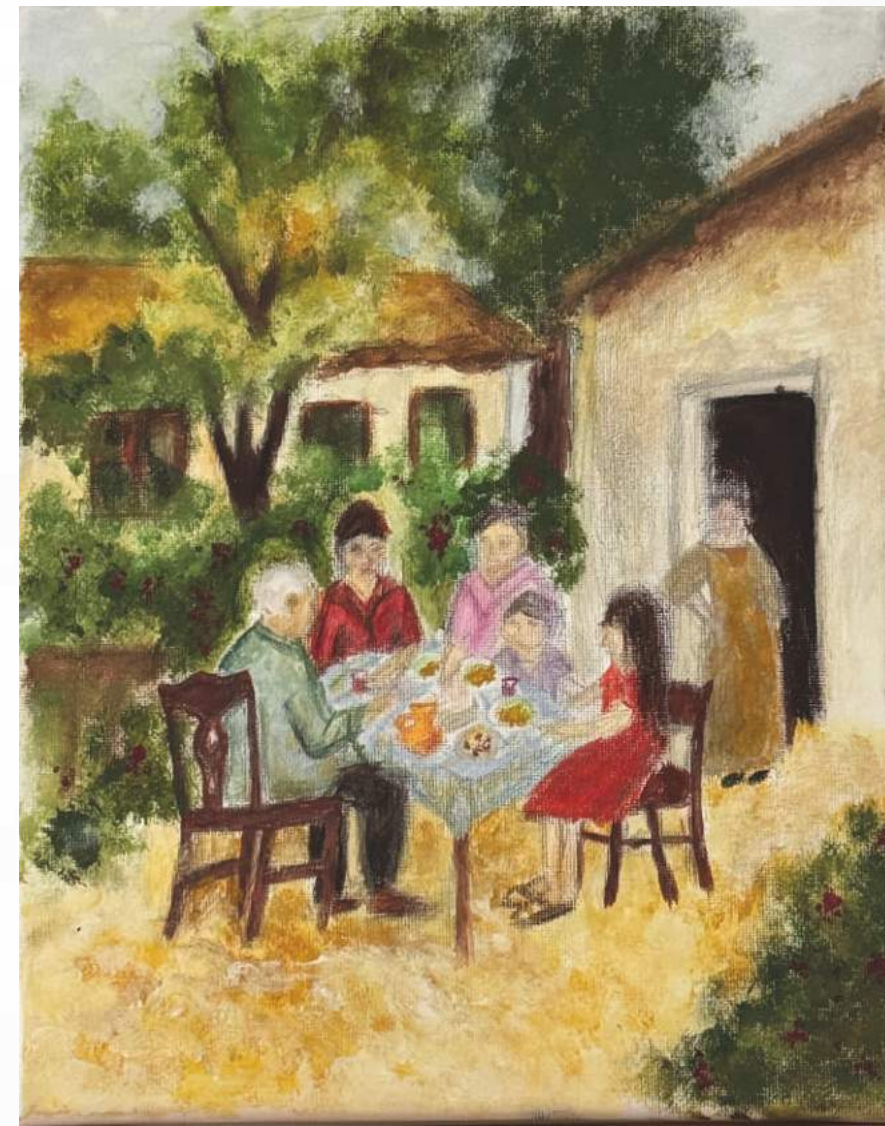
FIRST PRIZE
IRAQ



SECOND PRIZE
ETHIOPIA

SARA ABDURAHMAN
MOHAMMED

A FAMILY ON A PLATE, A
MOMENT OF HAPPINESS



**THE PLACE WHERE TIME
STOOD STILL**

KÜBRA
ADLI

THIRD PRIZE
ROMANIA



**TURKISH
AIRLINES**



HALKBANK



Türk Telekom
Değerli Hissettirir



We sincerely thank our Board of Trustees and Board of Directors, Heads of Departments, Executive Board of the Summit, Country Representatives, School Administrators, and all our colleagues for their unwavering support in the organization of the 5th Istanbul Education Summit.





REPORT
2025