
Bishop Caccia's speech, which we report below, focused on the Global Compact on Education.

**SPEECH BY MONS. GABRIELE CACCIA**

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Last year, as today, Cardinal Pietro Parolin addressed the UN General Assembly at the 'Transforming Education Summit', presenting Pope Francis' project on the 'Global Compact on Education'.

The Holy Father, through the Covenant, invites educators from all over the world to work together to build the 'Village of Education', in which all people, according to their respective roles, share the task of forming a network of welcoming human relations, according to the African proverb that says: 'It takes a whole village to educate a child'. We have to create this village before we can really educate.

To begin with, the ground must be cleared of discrimination and fraternity must be allowed to flourish. Today, as we discuss 'Education as a catalytic investment for development', I would like to emphasise the second part of the title: 'Offering young people the freedom to build their future'.

One mistake that is often made is to create educational programmes for young people designed by adults and from an adult perspective, without even considering what young people really need for their education and future. "Offering young people the freedom to build their future" means listening to them: what could we offer young people if we do not even know what they expect to receive?

The path of the Catholic Church, which is at the forefront of education in schools and universities on all continents where millions of Catholic and non-Catholic students receive a quality education, goes precisely in this direction. The Global Compact on Education, which wants to change the world through education by educating everyone to universal brotherhood, has among its first objectives "Listening to the young generations" and promoting them as protagonists. In his message to the EU YOUTH CONFERENCE last year in Prague, Pope Francis addressed the young people present saying: "Seeing, however, how our world is led by adults and elders, it seems that perhaps you should be the ones to educate adults in fraternity and peaceful coexistence! Therefore, dear young people, make your voices heard! ... you have every right to have your say on what concerns your future".

Last month, in Lisbon, one and a half million young people made their voices heard on the occasion of World Youth Day (WYD) and with their festive and peaceful presence they communicated to the Church and the world their desire for peace, encounter and friendship between peoples, demonstrating at the same time that this is possible. During those days, many young people on various occasions personally met the Pope who, after listening to them, addressed them with words...
of hope. "At this time we face enormous challenges; we hear the painful appeal of so many people. Let us find the courage to see our world not as in agony, but in a process of birth, not at the end, but at the beginning of a great new chapter in history". The Dicastery for Culture and Education of the Holy See was present at WYD and spoke to thousands of young people from all over the world, eager to learn about and deepen their understanding of the objectives of the Global Compact on Education, inviting them to respond in writing to this question: "How do you imagine the education of the future?". Only together with young people can we re-imagine the "futures" of education and grant them the freedom to be protagonists of their own future. I conclude with the words of Pope Francis when he received the ‘African Education Pact’: “I urge you to listen to the voice of young people and their ideas, without authoritarianism: the Spirit also speaks through them, and I am sure they will be able to suggest good and surprising things”. And we would like to conclude with another African proverb that says: ‘If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together’. Education is not something fast but long, and we must all walk together. Thank you.

Address by the Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça to the 26th session of the Permanent Conference of Education Ministers of the Council of Europe.

Dear Mr President
Allow me first of all to express my sincere gratitude to the Latvian Presidency for organising this 26th session of the Permanent Conference of Education Ministers of the Council of Europe and for the opportunity to speak on such a topical issue. Education is no stranger to reality. It is the best way to grasp the complexity of developments in the real world. Through the vital prism of the younger generations, it is able to read the signs of the changing times with a dynamism all its own. Overcoming distrust and indifference, let us make ourselves capable of understanding the dreams of young people and initiate processes of educational renewal, without losing sight of reality in its concrete and spiritual dimension. This will be good for them, but also for our common future. Our societies have a duty to protect and promote the full exercise of citizenship by young people. Although, as stated in the encyclical Laudato si’, ‘change is part of the dynamics of complex systems, the speed that human actions impose on it today contrasts with the natural slowness of biological evolution’. This is even more evident in the wake of the pandemic, with its tragic consequences, especially for those in the most vulnerable situations. In this sense, teachers make an essential contribution to the success of the pedagogy of encounter. Catholic schools and universities are aware of these challenges and intend to join the common effort to improve the situation.

Education today is a frontier territory where the fear of the unknown and the wonderful sense of discovery meet. We are called to cross this threshold courageously and together, with the aim of building a fairer world and a more fraternal society. This is the invitation that Pope Francis addressed to us by launching the Global Compact on Education. To educate is to know how to take risks “in a positive tension between head, heart and hands”. This creates the conditions for a harmonious analysis of reality, without turning in on oneself or going off on a wild goose chase, without perpetuating anachronistic forms of isolation, but by educating in relationship with others and with the Other. In the current context, it is important to join forces in the name of an educational alliance that can take all the necessary steps to create quality educational opportunities for all young people.

Thank you.
On 20 September 2023, His Eminence Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, delivered the following address to the Rectors and Representatives of Latin American Universities gathered at the Pontifical Patristic Institute Agostinianum in Rome. The event was organised by the Pontifical Commission for Latin America.

Magnificent Rectors and Distinguished Representatives of Latin American Universities

As Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, I am pleased to greet you and thank you for all your commitment to the cause of education, which is truly a common passion and an indispensable horizon of hope. The Brazilian writer João Guimarães Rosa wrote that ‘there are times when I think we must suddenly wake up from a kind of spell’. Now, the awakening that the world of the present and the future most needs cannot do without education, the art par excellence of hope.

In classical culture, human experience was defined on the basis of three dimensions. The first dimension was memory (mnemis), which is the primary basis of knowledge that makes life possible. Without memory, we would have to relearn everything all the time. It is thanks to it, for example, that we sleep and then, the next day, are able to walk, eat, recognise the world around us, know who we are. If we were to constantly ask ourselves, ‘How do we walk?’, ‘How do we talk?’, ‘How do we love?’, life would certainly be very different. Another fundamental dimension of life for the ancient world was aesthetics, that is, the sensitive perception of the present. Our experience takes the form of a sensory practice: we can see, hear, touch, feel, shape. Life is tactile, it is what we grasp, it is what we hold and can work with, be it matter or ideas. But beware: life is not only memory and the present that we perceive with our senses. The ancients named a further and necessary dimension, which they called hope (elpis), explained as the knowledge that there is, for men and things, a beyond, a tomorrow. The idea of a future - one that can be hoped for and cared for - has also always been seen as culturally determinant. Although for the Greeks, hope was something that could not be trusted too much. Pindar makes this clear when he relates that, in the beginning, the gods put all the good things for man in a jar and placed a lid on it, forbidding him to remove it. But man approached the jar and uncovered it. And when he did so, all things suddenly came out. When the jar was covered again, the only thing left inside was the hope of those lost things.

I believe a twofold conclusion can be drawn: human beings cannot live without hope, but hope is not a fact, it is a task, a fragile and delicate process, a painstaking art, a construction.

A theme that is never missing when Pope Francis speaks of universities is that of hope. It almost makes us think that they are synonymous terms. In the apostolic exhortation Evangelium Guadium, in which he set out the programme of his pontificate, the Pope makes a decisive appeal: “Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of hope!” (no. 86). It is an exhortation not to be discouraged by the difficulties of this historical season, but on the contrary to face it enlightened by a fundamental trust. Instead of globalising fear and certainty, Francis exhorts us to ‘globalise hope’. Hope is not an accessory or an eventuality: it has an ontological root. At the University of Roma Tre, Francis reiterated that ‘when hope is missing, life is missing’. This is why it is up to us to be guardians and sentinels of hope, against that ‘deceptive existence offered by the merchants of nothingness’. Those who live in the university world cannot afford not to have hope. “Man cannot live without hope and education is a generator of hope. In fact, education gives birth, it makes one grow, it is part of the dynamic of giving life. And the life that is born is the most sparkling source of hope...”.

Communities of knowledge and the future, such as universities, cannot conform to the spread of indifference and fear, nor allow the universal right to hope to be overwhelmed by the steamroller of nihilism. Hope is our mission. And it is not, as Francis insists, ‘a superficial optimism..., but it is above all knowing how to take risks in the right way, just like education’. 

THE UNIVERSITY AS A BUILDING SITE OF HOPE
It is true that we are in the maelstrom of an epochal change with unprecedented challenges that we have to face, with the dawn of the era of the algorithm and artificial intelligence. One objective of this new era can be identified in the need for ethical definition in new areas, from bioethics to ecology and responsibility towards future generations in the management of the planet’s resources. The **Global Compact on Education**, the project launched by Pope Francis that many of you are familiar with because so many Latin American universities are committed to it, has among its objectives precisely the care of our common home, the protection of its resources and the defence of more sober lifestyles, choosing renewable energies that respect the environment.

The future requires of us a new and integral vision of reality, realising that everything is interconnected, because the adventure of the human person goes hand in hand with the destiny of all creation. A very clear feature for the future is an active awareness of this interconnectedness. For this reason, we must deepen in common that hope that stems from an integral humanism, which places the human person firmly at its centre. And here universities play a decisive role, showing how hope is not a chimera, but a concrete dynamism, a labour of love, a doing, a commitment.

**Honourable Rectors and Distinguished Representatives of Universities**

In your Latin American context, you face many challenges, difficulties and questions. Do not forget, however, that working in a university makes you not protagonists of impasses, but administrators and mediators of hope. As the Pope urged at the recent WYD: “Friends, let me tell you: seek and risk. At this moment in history, the challenges are enormous, the groans are painful - we are living through a third world war in pieces - but let us embrace the risk of thinking that we are not in agony, but in the labour of a birth; we are not at the end, but at the beginning of a great spectacle. Be choreographers of the dance of life”. We are faithful to the hope that entire generations of young people place in the university. If we walk together, it will be easier. If we dream together, it will be more possible. Visiting the historic University of Bologna, Pope Francis asked the university world to become a true bridge in this fragmented world. He said: ‘How beautiful it would be if university classrooms were sites of hope’.

Card. José Tolentino de Mendonça
We would like to share with you the new book we have just published, entitled: “Learning from others: building the Educational Pact from the territory. The experience of the Northern Region of Santander Colombia”, coordinated and published with OIEC.

In response to Pope Francis’ invitation to build a Global Compact on Education together, we continue to propose and show ways to achieve it. On this occasion, in collaboration with the Dicastery for Culture and Education, the Global Compact on Education Team, the Education Commission of the Unions of Superiors and Superiors General, the Jesuit Global Network and CPAL, the EIS of LUMSA and the Governorate and Covenant Team of the Northern Region of Santander, we have co-created this book with clear guidelines to help weave the educational covenant together from the territory (village, neighbourhood, city or region).

The book challenges us, shows us paths to follow, steps to take, provides us with multiple suggestions, tools and guidelines to make the covenant a reality where we live, counting on everyone, without excluding anyone. Involving and mobilising the different educational and social sectors, to generate this local alliance with global openness.

The political initiative of the Northern Region of Santander (Colombia) to build an Educational Pact for the region, involving all citizens, inspires us and serves as an example, not to copy their path and options, but to create the most appropriate and relevant paths for each territory. They show us that it is possible to create a new social contract to improve education and generate a new society that is more human, peaceful, just, fraternal, solidary and sustainable.

Juan Antonio Ojeda Ortiz
Head of OIEC Projects

Hervé Lecomte
Secretary General of the OIEC

The felicitous term “Glocal” that we find in this text, “Construir el Pacto desde el territorio”, sums up the aim of the Global Compact on Education (GCE) project launched in 2019 by Pope Francis and that is to build an educational alliance starting from the territory. The Holy Father’s task was to initiate a process by indicating global goals (summarised in the seven commitments of the GCE) and he then entrusted all of us with the task of working in and from our own territory to build our own Local Educational Compact.

For too long, the international debate on education has been monopolised by the North Atlantic area of the world and has neglected or disregarded the richness of the educational traditions of the other continents. Now, thanks to the explosion of the mass media and the consequent expansion of planetary communication, and thanks to the development of greater sensitivity and attention to local cultural realities, the debate has been enriched with contributions, traditions and educational practices from all over the world.

The process of globalisation that has touched many aspects of social life (especially economic and cultural) also necessarily touches the world of education. This phenomenon of globalisation, if not well understood, can generate and exasperate the emergence of its opposite, namely that of localisation understood as a claim to a particular identity that escapes the logic of levelling out all cultures, while falling into the risk of tribalisation.

These two processes taken to extremes (that of globalisation and localisation), although diametrically opposed, have in common the same incapacity for an authentic relationship with the other, with the drift of an abstract universalism in the first case, and of an exacerbated nationalism in the second case, which goes to the absurd extremes of ethnic cleansing policies against the different.

Hence, a Global Compact on Education stands on the one hand as the defence and universalisation of the values enshrined in the Charter of Human Rights and the Social Doctrine
of the Church and as the valorisation and safeguarding of local cultures and traditions; and on the other hand, it stands as the overcoming of the limits and risks of these two processes that, as mentioned above, are those of the levelling of cultures (in the case of globalisation) and the ghettoisation of them (in the case of localisation).

The 1996 Unesco international document on education, 'In Education a Treasure' (known as the 'Delors Report'), points out as one of the problems of education for the third millennium precisely the dialectic between global and local, as well as that between universal and singular, tradition and modernity, material and spiritual dimensions.

The **Global Compact on Education** offers answers or, at least, indicates paths of orientation for the resolution of this dialectic.

Like the 'Delors Report', the 'Global Compact on Education' also warns of the need for a reformulation of educational programmes, starting with the questioning of the purposes of education (educating whom and for what?) while holding firm on certain fundamental points such as:

1. **The primacy of the person with special attention to each person, proposing customised training paths.**

2. **Inclusion in the territory according to the principle of subsidiarity with the State, promoting the responsibility of public bodies and civil society.**

3. **Contributing to the construction of an “Educating Society” where all educational agents can work together for the same values.**

4. **Overcome the educational model that favours technical “horizontality” (instrumental causality, the ‘how’) rather than efficient causality (the ‘why’), thus creating a dichotomy between natural and spiritual phenomena. It is necessary to be open to other visions. This also entails overcoming a radical secularism that wants to silence the religious fact.**

5. **Education, however, cannot neglect this fundamental aspect that belongs to the very nature of man.**

6. **Educating to multi-multi-inter-culturality (right to existence, integration). Educating for the acceptance of the other (see Lévinas and Dussel’s reflection). Seeking common values in order to build one world for all (and not third worlds), where everyone can develop their potential.**

7. **The experience proposed here, carried out in the Northern region of Santander (Colombia), is an example (a good practice) of collaboration between the religious, social and political worlds, in accordance with Pope Francis’ invitation “to give life, in our countries of origin, to an educational project, investing our best energies as well as giving life to creative and transformative processes in collaboration with civil society” (Videomessage of the Holy Father on the Global Compact on Education, 15-10-2020).**

Like any 'good practice', however, this is only an exemplary proposal, a stimulus and not a model to be implemented in other territories as it is. Each reality is different and no one can exempt themselves from the reflexive effort in the construction of their own **Local** (or **Glocal** Compact on Education, to be produced through socio-analytical, hermeneutical and practical mediations.

In the message we addressed last year to the Conference in Brno (Czech Republic) “The global educational village from the union of local villages” (see: Journal GCE 12/22, pp.3-4) we said: “You will have to find your own original way to build the local educational village, without copying or standardising your contribution. Based on your culture, tradition, art, values, history, etc., you will discover your ‘blue flame’, that is, your creative and unique form of being educator-builders of the local village according to what God expects of you. Then the global educational village will not be a homologation or uniformisation of all cultures (like a new mental colonialism) but the union of many local villages in the richness of their diversity”.

We would therefore like to congratulate all the communities of Santander involved in this project because they have shown that this region, despite all its difficulties related to migration, rurality, guerrilla warfare, drug trafficking, etc., nevertheless possesses great resilience and willpower in wanting to transform its territory through education to build a promising future.

May this experience stimulate the work of many other local realities in building their own **Global Compact on Education**.

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**Series of initiatives ending in February 2024**

**CATHOLICS IN SPAIN AND THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION**

From October 2023 to February 2024, various initiatives will take place in Spain under the theme ‘La Iglesia en la educación. Presencia y compromiso’, in response to the **Global Compact on Education** launched by Pope Francis. The activities are organised by the Episcopal Commission for Education and Culture. President Bishop Rouco said: ‘The **Global Compact on Education** is an invitation to become aware of the historical presence of the Church in the field of education and schooling, as part of the fulfilment of its mission, and of its significance for society as a whole’. Information on this can be found on the website: [www.haciaelcongreso2024.educacionyculturacee.es](http://www.haciaelcongreso2024.educacionyculturacee.es)
I think we are all familiar with Antoine de Saint-Exupéry’s famous exhortation written in his book ‘Citadel’: ‘If you want to build a boat, do not gather men together to cut wood, divide up tasks and give orders, but teach them nostalgia for the vast and endless sea’. By ‘nostalgia’, the author does not mean longing or regret for something from the past, but the yearning for something that awaits us, that concerns the future (in this case, sailing for the endless sea). Hope therefore as ‘nostalgia for the future’, anticipation of something that will come to pass and that guides our present path.

Hope and future are two terms that recur together many times in recent times in so many speeches and official pronouncements of the Church.

The Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, spoke on 20 September at the synodal meeting between the Rectors of Latin American and Caribbean universities entitled “Organising Hope”, emphasising how Pope Francis every time he speaks of education he speaks of hope, as if they were two synonyms. The Pope urges to “globalise hope”, because “when hope is missing, life is missing”, because “man cannot live without hope and education is a generator of hope”. Universities, says the Cardinal Prefect, as communities of knowledge and of the future, “cannot conform to the dissemination of indifference and fear, nor let the universal right to hope be crushed by the steamroller of nihilism. Our mission as educators is hope, and universities must show how hope is not a chimera but a concrete dynamism, a doing, a commitment. And he concludes by urging the rectors to be faithful to the hope that entire generations of young people deposit in the university.

The Holy See’s permanent observer at the United Nations, Monsignor Gabriele Giordano Caccia, spoke about the future in his speech at the UN Meeting on 19 September entitled: “Education: a catalytic investment for development. Providing youth with the freedom to build their future” (Education: a catalytic investment for development. Providing youth with the freedom to build their future’). Mgr. Caccia, exactly one year after Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin’s speech at the UN “Transforming Education Summit” during which he had presented Pope Francis’ project of the "Global Compact on Education", recalled the common commitment to build the Education Village, listening to the voice of young people: “A mistake that is often made,” he said, “is that of preparing educational programmes for young people designed by adults and from the perspective of adults, without questioning what young people really want for their education and their future. Offering young people the freedom to build their own future’ presupposes listening to them: what could we offer young people if we do not even know what they want to receive?” He recalled how the Church in recent years has been going precisely in this direction of listening, through the Synod, the Global Compact on Education, the World Youth Day where the Pope personally met with many groups of young people to listen to them and to exhort them to hope, as he did in his beautiful speech to young university students inviting them to embrace “the risk of thinking that we are not in an agony, but in a birth; not at the end, but at the beginning of a great show”. The permanent observer concluded his speech by quoting the Pope’s words to the “pastors of the world’s youngest continent” when they handed him the “African Education Pact”: “I urge you to listen to the voice of young people and their ideas, without authoritarianism: the Spirit also speaks through them, and I am sure they will be able to suggest beautiful and surprising things”.

I would like to end by inviting educators to deepen these discourses on education and to take up the reflection of the great Brazilian pedagogue Paulo Freire left us in his book ‘Pedagogy of Hope’, Hope - says Freire - is the driving force for change and emancipatory education. Without hope people can feel powerless and disengaged. Educating for hope through dialogic education in order to develop critical consciousness in students is the driving force for change in the future society.

Let us enthusiastically nurture in ourselves as educators and in our young students the passion and hope that the Pope and the Church have passed on to us, and let us set out to sail fearlessly across ‘the vast and infinite sea’ in the certainty that we are not at the end but at the beginning of a great show!  

P. Ezio Lorenzo Bono of the Secretariat for the Global Compact on Education
In the last week of August 2023, the 26th International Conference on Service-Learning organised by the Latin American Centre for Service-Learning (CLAYSS) took place in Buenos Aires. The objectives of the Conference:
- To provide a space for training and refresher courses on ‘Service-Learning (SL) pedagogy’ for educators, authorities and students at all levels, as well as for members and leaders of community and civil society organisations.
- Promoting the international exchange of ideas and experiences between schools, higher education institutions, universities and social organisations that are developing solidarity education projects, especially those implemented in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Fostering opportunities for closer connection between civil society organisations and the formal education system for the benefit of equity and quality of education.
- Celebrating the continuity of the Conference as an expression of an innovative pedagogical movement that continues to grow through the creativity of educators and students.

During the conference, Prof. Maria Cinque, director of EIS-LUMSA and member of the scientific committee of the Global Compact on Education, and Prof. Rodrigo Andrade, GCE contact person at the Pontifical University of Paraná, spoke on the subject of the Global Compact on Education.