

## A Celebration for an International Day of Education for Global Citizenship

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New York – July 18 of every year may soon be a world-wide celebration for the International Day of Education for Global Citizenship (IDEGC), alongside such popular celebrations as March 8, International Women's Day and April 22, International Earth Day.

On July 18, 2018, members of civil society groups at the United Nations officially kicked off the event to promote grassroots values education in order to bring about peace and prosperity, in the wake of increased global division and wars. The launch

event was held at the Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations and organized by [the NGO Steering Committee for an International Day of Education for Global Citizenship](#) (IDEGC) in collaboration with [UNESCO-NY](#), the [UN Academic Impact](#), and the [United Nations Alliance of Civilization](#) (UNAOC).

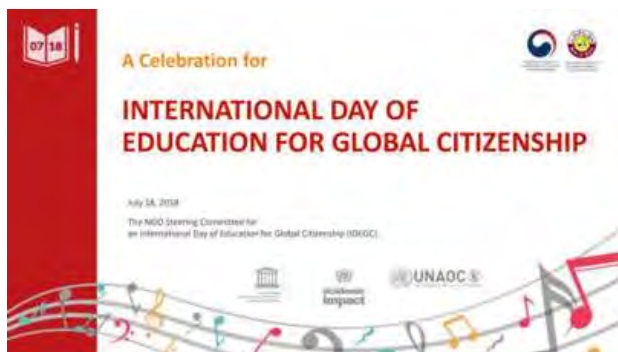
The event was sponsored by the Permanent Missions of the Republic of Korea and the State of Qatar to the United Nations which formally headed the endorsement of the IDEGC to the UN member-states - that July 18 of every year will be dedicated to the celebration of education for global citizenship. On this day (July 18) in 2014 the term global citizenship was added to Sustainable Development Goal #4.

### SDG #4 QUALITY EDUCATION

**Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.**

Joy Theriot, a member of the NGO steering committee, and Director of Recruitment at [Unification Theological Seminary](#) (UTS), is particularly excited about this new development. "The IDEGC is an affirmation of the UTS expression of interfaith and intercultural education which UTS is espousing," Theriot said in an interview.

She said that graduates of the UTS Masters' and Doctorate programs have been encouraged to introduce interfaith education which bridges religious and cultural divides through youth programs, in diverse houses of worship, and in community programs. "We initiate quality values education at school; we want to start with youth. The IDEGC boosts these kind of local efforts," she remarked.



Like all the other international celebrations, the International Day of Education for Global Citizenship had quite a long time coming. But here it is, thanks to the persistent efforts of the participants of the [66th UN DPI/NGO International Conference in 2014](#) in Gyeongju, Korea.

The Gyeongju Action Plan committed member-states to utilize formal education, informal education and training, as well as advocacy and public information "to reduce inequalities that

impede the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs)."

According to the IDEGC steering committee, global citizens are those who identify with being a part of an interdependent world community, respect cultural diversity and human rights, and understand that their perspectives and actions impact the world and local communities.

During the launch event, Superintendent Ned Kirsch of the Franklin West Supervisory Union in the state of Vermont, presented its public school program which has introduced the idea of 'Global Citizenship' among high school students. "We are teaching children to think of others, help others, and regard the world as their community in our curriculum," he said.

Kirsch said that in their school program, teachers motivate their students by asking them how many people have they helped today as a way to inspire them to be reflective and proactive. This daily inspiration and motivation at school, said Kirsch, will hopefully instill the perspective of global citizenship when they finish high school.

Taj Hamad representing the [Universal Peace Federation](#) (UPF) and the [World Association of NGOs](#) (WANGO) said, "The event was well organized with a good balance of speeches, entertainment, and food. All were of a very high quality that matched the high importance of the topic. The Korean Mission overflowed with participants from all backgrounds and nationalities, all concerned about global citizenship education. UPF and WANGO were invited to join the NGO Steering Committee and will surely continue cooperation with the organizers and possibly form a partnership with them, especially in the area of character education."

## As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen



The Founder of UTS, Sun Myung Moon, penned an autobiography in 2009 to celebrate his 90th birthday: [As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen](#). In the foreword he wrote

*I see hope... that an age of peace is about to be inaugurated in Korea. The Korean peninsula has been trained through endless suffering and the tragedy of division, and I can feel in every cell of my body that a powerful energy has been stored here and is ready to burst out. In the same way that no one can stop a new season of spring from coming, no human power can stop heavenly fortune from coming to the Korean peninsula and spreading throughout the world.*

Rev. Moon died in 2012, but with this celebratory event at the Mission of the Republic of Korea, it seems that his prediction may be coming true. The call for peace and for global citizenship is growing. Education is recognized as the key to success. UTS continues to be the primary location to learn about peace and global citizenship in New York City, just a few blocks from the United Nations at [4 West 43rd St. New York, NY 10036](#). Learn more about the [UTS programs](#).