

CLOSING REMARKS
RIGHT TO EDUCATION: GENERAL DISCUSSION
Monday 7th July, 2014

- Madam Chair, On behalf of the Committee and particularly the WG on the RtE, I wish to express sincere appreciation to all who have participated in this discussion and, although there is no time to reiterate all the critical substantive issues that have been raised in relation to the elaboration of a GR on girls' and women's right to education, I really want to assure you that they will be seriously considered. We have to ensure that at the end of this process we will have an instrument that, as noted earlier by UNESCO, will address 'systemic and persistent challenges that hamper efforts promoting girls' education through a human rights-based approach'.
- Madame Navi Pillay we thank you for joining us and for your insightful contribution to the dialogue. We know that you will shortly demit Office as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and wish for you good health and hope that you will find more time for family and friends as you move into retirement from the daily routine.
- We are also very pleased that the UN Rapporteur on the Right to Education accepted the invitation to be a keynote speaker and to all other KN speakers, and to the representatives of Permanent Missions and NGOs that provided statements – the Committee receives your

inputs with deep appreciation, having brought to our attention critical issues which will be an essential source for informing the substantive content of the GR on the RtE.

- We are particularly privileged to have had inputs from the two UN agencies, UNESCO and UNICEF who, over the years through their work globally, have made invaluable contributions to providing for, and protecting the rights of girls and women to education. Further appreciation is extended to them for their financial support of this HDGD and indeed we anticipate, with gratitude, their continued support of this initiative.
- We are grateful to have heard from the UNICEF National Ambassador to Ethiopia and for the remarks made in relation to protecting girls from sexual and other forms of violence in schools.
- From the outset we had hoped that Malala could have joined us in this dialogue but regrettable that was not possible. We are, however, fortunate that we were able to have her teacher from Pakistan join us and for the vivid testimonies that she shared with us which only serve to reinforce the need for this GR.
- Special thanks to Professor Mattar not only for being on the podium as a KN speaker but also for the invaluable assistance provided through The Protection Project at John Hopkins University in Washington and

for which he serves as Executive Director, for the development of the early drafts of the Concept Note, which guided today's interventions.

- I also wish to acknowledge the participation of two NGOs as KN speakers: the Right to Education Project as well as Plan International. We are particularly grateful for Plan International's association with this initiative and am pleased that their Advisor on Education could join us, and, we will continue to work closely with Plan International and anticipate their generous logistical and financial support of three regional seminars that will follow this HDGD and will be an integral part of the process leading up to the elaboration of the GR.
- That leaves we only to extend special thanks to Mr. Lukas Machon of the CEDAW Secretariat, for his invaluable contribution to the planning and organisation of this event and to you, Madam Chair, for expertly guide us through a very tight but well managed agenda.
- Again, thanks to one and all.