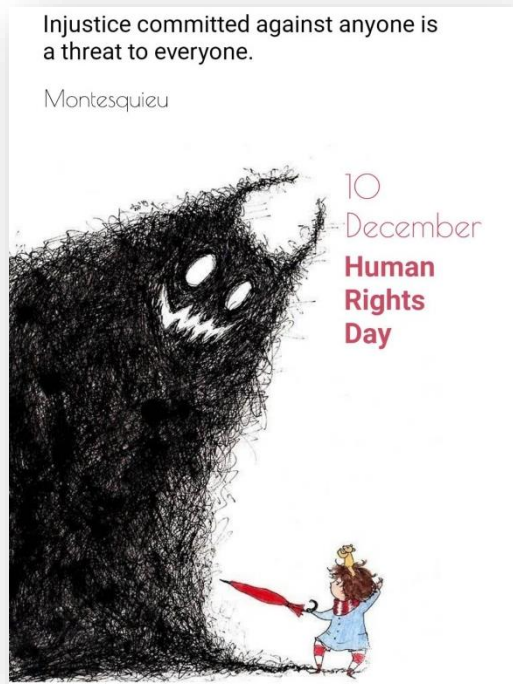




10th December 2022

Press Release: HUMAN RIGHTS DAY 2022

“facilitating the right to education will help facilitate other human rights”



This December 10th, Broken Chalk wishes not only to celebrate the 74th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but also to reflect on the many challenges and successes that the human rights community has faced this year. As always, it is **Broken Chalk’s mission today to spread knowledge about the importance of education in actualizing human rights.** Despite the multiplicity of advancements in human rights across the world, poverty, systematic and institutional violence, discrimination, and corruption continue to prevent children and young adults from fully realizing their right to education. As we begin 2023, it is worthwhile to consider what policies individual nations and the international community should adopt to foster accessible quality education for all.

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In 2022, one of the largest barriers preventing such education continued to be funding. Educational facilities across the world continue to lack safe infrastructure, clean water, sufficient supplies, books, and other teaching materials. Educators are rarely paid a living wage despite performing some of the most essential labor in a society. This funding crisis grows worse as global inflation grows. As the economy declines, governments tighten educational budgets, further reducing the quality of the education provided. At the same time, families need more income hence more children drop out of school to work. These two facts are self-reinforcing; if the quality of education a child receives decreases, families performing cost-benefit analysis are more likely to prioritize working over school because working presents a more immediate value. This can have lasting effects; an uneducated labor force can depress wages for all, widening income inequalities and exacerbating poverty. **To prevent this vicious cycle, we must remind our policymakers—national and international—that education is an essential human right in which sufficient funding must be allocated.**

Another issue facing accessible and quality education is the growing prevalence of internal conflict. Due to the unjust law enforcement practices used by the current government in Turkey, teachers have been exposed to torture, imprisoned, and lost their lives. Between the violence in Iran, repeated coups in

Burkina Faso, the invasion of Ukraine, the crystallization of the Taliban's power in Afghanistan, and the ongoing conflicts in Ethiopia, Syria, Yemen, Myanmar, and many others, 2022 did not bring an end to many of the world's most acute disputes. In conflict zones, fulfilling the human right to education faces nearly insurmountable challenges. The constant threat of violence prevents education from occurring at all, especially considering that educational facilities are frequently targeted by insurgent armed groups. Families suffer great losses ranging from loss of life, family members, income, and or home, and may even become refugees or internally displaced persons. Consolidating humanitarian aid efforts is essential to ensure that some basic educational services continue to be provided even during conflict. In many ways, education is an effective medicine to prevent conflict before it happens and treat the social consequences of conflict after it occurs. Education is critical to building social cohesion and offers a non-violent outlet to express and further political goals. In societies with higher risk of conflict, targeted education that assists social, political, and ethnic minorities can prevent violence. If conflict does occur within a society, education after the fact can fill developmental gaps left by displaced populations, helping to restore a society's economy. Education after conflict can also help those who were negatively affected by conflict, especially those who have lost their lives, family or home; education can provide the tools to resiliency and new, better opportunities. Finally, human rights education can reintegrate former combatants by teaching them the error of their violent conduct and comfort former victims by teaching them to appreciate their importance as human beings.

A final challenge that education continues to face is the ongoing dislocations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Those students affected most by digital learning, including young children and those who cannot afford internet or digital technology, continue to fall behind in school. We must prevent what is increasingly being called a "global learning crisis," as children do not receive the quality of education that was offered prior to COVID-19 and schools are failing to adapt to the changing demands of the 21st century. National and international policymakers must seek feedback from schools and families to learn how educational policy can change in the digital age, and how digitization can incorporate students of all backgrounds and learning needs.

In 2023, Broken Chalk will focus on these issues in addition to others. It is important to remember this International Human Rights Day that all human rights are interconnected and mutually generated; **facilitating the right to education will help facilitate other human rights**, like the rights to life, equality under the law, privacy, property, freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, freedom of opinion and expression, and more. Reciprocally, advances in other human rights will positively impact education.

Broken Chalk pledges that this New Year, we will work hard to promote all human rights by uplifting the right to education.

Signed by

Broken Chalk