

**PRESIDENT OF INDIA INAUGURATES THE FIRST EVER WORLD YOUTH  
CONFERENCE FOR KINDNESS BY UNESCO MGIEP  
-via The Policy Times**

**New Delhi, India, August 27, 2019** – The [UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development \(MGIEP\)](#) concluded the first-ever World Youth Conference on Kindness at the Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi on Friday, August 23 on the theme ***‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: Gandhi for the Contemporary World: Celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi’***. The conference was inaugurated by the Honourable President of the Republic of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, and saw participation from approximately 1,000 youth representing more than 27 countries.

Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, in commemoration of his 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary celebration, the World Youth Conference on Kindness aimed to provide global youth and policymakers an innovative, engaging and inspiring platform to come together and strive to discover ground-breaking pathways to achieve the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Grammy Award winner & UNESCO MGIEP’s global ambassador for Kindness, Ricky Kej created and produced a [special anthem on Kindness](#), “Shine Your Light,” which was also launched at the conference. The anthem is about showcasing simple acts of kindness in our everyday lives, and how these acts can help solve our problems. The anthem features musicians from 4 continents, including Grammy Award-winning flute virtuoso, Wouter Kellerman, Grammy Award-winning singer, Laura Dickinson, the Mzansi Youth Choir and Grammy nominee and co-author of the song, Lonnie.

The plenary topics at the World Youth Conference for Kindness included *‘The Art and Science of Peace’*; *‘Talking Across Generations on Education: Can Kindness Prevent Violent Extremism?’* and *Youth Agency: Scaling Up Acts of Kindness*.

The World Youth Conference on Kindness culminated with the adoption and release of the ‘New Delhi Declaration on Kindness for the SDGs’. The Delhi Declaration is a synthesis of 1,300+ submissions by young applicants from 117 countries; the meticulous work of the 60 youth from 27 countries who traveled and attended the intensive workshops organized by UNESCO MGIEP and Life University at O.P. Jindal University, Sonipat.

The conference aims to impart critical competencies (i.e. empathy, compassion, mindfulness, and critical inquiry) in global youth to inspire, empower and enable them to transform themselves and build long-lasting peace in their communities.

The conference started with a three-day training workshop at O.P. Jindal University, Sonapat, Haryana from August 20-22 on 'Compassionate Integrity Training'(CIT). UNESCO MGIEP organized the CIT training in partnership with the Center for Compassion, Integrity and Secular Ethics (CCisE) at Life University in the U.S. to build Social and Emotional Learning skills for 60 global youth.

Commenting on the partnership, Associate Director of the Center for Compassion, Integrity and Secular Ethics and co-creator of CIT, **Dr. Michael Karlin**, said, "UNESCO MGIEP and Life University will develop the SEL capacities of youth through the partners of global YESPeace network in India, Pakistan, South Africa, Tanzania and the 27 countries represented by youth in the conference."

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. (Dr.) C Raj Kumar, Founding Vice-Chancellor, O.P. Jindal Global University said, "O.P. Jindal Global University is privileged to extend the platform in association with UNESCO MGIEP at the opportune 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. India accounts for the largest section of youth, and to see them engage and articulate at this platform fills me with contentment. Each one, especially the youth, at large, is going to be more compassionate towards others in society. There should prevail a sense of inclusivity as it roots from Kindness. The conference's ultimate aim was to channelize this young energy help achieve the SDGs through innovation and engagement."

Last year, UNESCO MGIEP launched the **#KindnessMatters for the SDGs campaign** on the International Day of Non-Violence or the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, October 2. The goal of this campaign is to mobilize the world's youth to achieve the 17 SDGs through transformative acts of kindness. Thus far, through the campaign, close to 5,000 transformative acts of kindness have been generated from over 50 countries. The Campaign aims to be the foundational step towards the ultimate request (backed by 250, 000 transformative stories of kindness by global youth) for the Member States of the United Nations to declare a Decade of Kindness for the Sustainable Development Goals – 2020 to 2030. Earlier this month, UNESCO MGIEP launched a social media mass campaign **#VirtualGandhiMarch** on the **International Youth Day (August 12<sup>th</sup>), which will culminate on Gandhi Jayanti and International Day for Non-Violence (October 2<sup>nd</sup>)**. All the stories are being submitted [here](#). More information can be found here.

### **About [UNESCO MGIEP](#)**

The UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) is UNESCO's category 1 Research Institute that focuses on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.7 towards education for building peaceful and sustainable societies across the world. In line with its vision of "Transforming



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Education for Humanity', the institute's programs are designed to mainstream Social and Emotional Learning in education systems, innovate digital pedagogies and to put youth as global citizens at the center of the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development. For more information, please visit the [website](#).

*Some information from the original story was removed to condense for space. For the full, original article, [click here](#).*

### About Life University

Founded in Marietta, Georgia in 1974, Life University is a health sciences institution most known for its chiropractic program, the largest single campus chiropractic program in the world. Life University is regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, master's and Doctor of Chiropractic degrees, and also has programmatic accreditation through the Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE), the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) and the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE). The mission of Life University is to empower students with the education, skills and values necessary for career success and life fulfillment, based on a vitalistic philosophy.

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