

Good day. I stand before you as Tafshier Cosby, a mother, grandmother, advocate, and Senior Director of Organizing and Partnership for the National Parents Union, as well as the CEO of Parent Impact. It is an immense honor to address this esteemed gathering today.

From the vibrant city of Newark, New Jersey, I bring forth an urgent plea to the Permanent Forum of the People of African Descent. I urge you to champion the inclusion of education as a civil right in your respective country's constitutions.

In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, Article 26 declared that every individual possesses the right to education. It emphasized that education should be directed towards the full development of the human personality and the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Regrettably, the United States has fallen short of upholding this declaration, perpetuating systemic injustice within our education system, disproportionately affecting **racially minoritized** groups. Children of African descent and those from disadvantaged backgrounds consistently face opportunity gaps and endure disparate outcomes, hindering their quality of life and upward mobility.

Now, more than ever, we must unite to address these deeply rooted issues. The National Parents Union is firmly committed to collaborating with this forum, working together to rectify the glaring inequities within our education system.

Education is the key to unlocking a brighter future. By championing education as a civil right, we can break the cycle of disadvantage faced by marginalized communities. Every child, regardless of their background, deserves unfettered access to high-quality education that empowers them to reach their full potential.

Education is not just essential; it is the catalyst for progress and prosperity. When countries adopt education as a civil right, they foster citizens who can actively participate in democracy, contribute to the economy, and shape their own lives. It leads to higher incomes, better health outcomes, increased political engagement, and a more equitable society.

I implore each and every one of you to harness your voices, influence, and advocacy to propel the adoption of education as a civil right in your country's constitution. Let us stand united in this noble cause, striving to create a more inclusive and equitable educational landscape.

In closing, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering attention and the privilege of addressing this esteemed gathering. Together, we can pave the way for a brighter, more just future where education becomes an inalienable right for all. Thank you.