

**Declaration in the aftermath of
The assassination of Samuel Paty at Conflans Sainte Honorine,
France, the killing of 8 pupils in the school of Kumba, Cameroon,
and the killing of 22 students at the university of Kabul,
Afghanistan**

On the occasion of the 210th UNESCO executive board meeting today at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris we, member States of the European Union as well as Cameroon, Montenegro and Serbia, solemnly express our deep emotion following the cowardly assassination of Samuel Paty, professor of history and geography at the Collège du Bois d'Aulne, perpetrated in Conflans-Sainte-Honorine on Friday 16 October 2020 because of the teaching that he provided.

We also condemn the horrendous killing of 8 pupils during the attack against the Kumba school on 24 October in Cameroon and the assassination of 22 students at the Kabul university on 1st November in Afghanistan.

We reaffirm our unwavering attachment to the following provisions of the UNESCO Constitutive Act signed on November 16, 1945, which declare that :

- “since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed”
- “the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfil in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern”

We reaffirm the commitment made on that day in the Constitutive Act to:

- “strengthen through education, science and culture, the collaboration among the nations in order to ensure universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, that the Charter of the United Nations recognizes to every people”
- “prepare the children of the world for the responsibilities of freedom”

We also reaffirm that the role of education is fundamental in building societies that live in peace.

We condemn all violence in schools, against schools, colleges and universities, and online which hits teachers as much as learners, express our full solidarity with teachers around the world, and we stand by the victims of such violence.

We stress the imperative nature of the safe exercise of the teaching mission.

We firmly believe that school is the best place to teach and hold human values, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and learn how to fight any incitation to hate and violence.

We remain determined to act fully through UNESCO's mandate, for an education that gives future generations a free, respectful and responsible future.