

**Statement by H.E. Rumen Radev, President of the Republic of Bulgaria,
at the Transforming Education Summit 2022**

Mr. Secretary General of the United Nations, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bulgaria welcomes this timely Summit as the way forward to shaping a new social contract for education for the 21st century, which must be inclusive, relevant, of high quality and accessible for all.

Against the background of the simultaneous global crises, it is imperative that our educational systems are fit for the purpose to better empower our citizens and enable sustainable and resilient development of our societies. To address the challenges decisively, we must strengthen education both as a fundamental human right, and as a global common good, making sure that no one is left behind.

Achieving this goal requires greater international cooperation and solidarity, and I would like to confirm my country's steady and continuous commitment in that respect.

3 years ago we gave the impetus to the Futures of Education initiative of UNESCO. The successful completion of this initiative is at the core of the transformation in education, that we all seek today.

To sustain the momentum of the last years, Bulgaria also supports the call of the Secretary General on the SDG4 High-level Steering Committee, to take on the responsibility to lead the Transforming Education Summit follow-up.

At national level, I would like to particularly stress Bulgaria's focus on the digital and inclusive education, along the other essential components of the Global Education Programme.

Digital skills are the new literacy. Developing quality digital education, is an investment with huge positive social impact. Bulgaria has already started to improve its national digital learning platforms, that are free and accessible at all education levels, and has launched a national programme to implement ICT at pre-school and school level. To strengthen the link between education and labour market, innovative teaching methods are introduced together with complex measures to support teachers as key players for a successful educational and social transformation.

With regard to inclusive education, Bulgaria has set up a special interinstitutional mechanism to counter early school leaving, as well as a national programme to reduce the number of children outside the educational system.

At the same time, I would like to also highlight that my country will join force with UNESCO through its Greening Education Partnership, delivering comprehensive and impactful action on environmental education.

Concluding, our educational systems must be future-oriented and based on shared values to live up to the requirements of our times. Let me assure you that Bulgaria, together with its like-minded countries, will be a reliable partner in pursuing this goal in the follow-up of today's Summit.

Thank you for your attention!