Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. I am delighted to be with you today and honoured to be invited to open this Global Education Professional Learning Conference.

We live in tense times. As recent world events have demonstrated it is difficult for any of us not to be touched by the effects, negative or positive, of globalisation. Some regard globalisation as a threat; at its very worst offering an excuse for the rich and powerful to enrich themselves further at the cost of the poorer and weaker. Others are more hopeful. They imagine an increasingly interdependent world at its very best, opening up marvelous opportunities for all global citizens to share and benefit from advances in science, technology and industry; an opportunity to offer humanitarian assistance and economic support to struggling countries, providing the route for a sustainable and prosperous global society for future generations.¹ This is of course our hope, for we have to hope, and it is why we must endeavour to help our students become informed, knowledgeable, compassionate, ethical and responsible global citizens.

The United Nations predicts that by 2050 world population, currently at 7.2 billion, will have grown to over 9.6 billion. The population in developed countries is predicted to remain largely the same or decline, but the population of the 49 least developed countries — for example, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and Ethiopia — is projected to double in size to 1.8 billion. India is expected to become the world’s most populous country, surpassing China around the year 2028. Nigeria’s population, currently 167 million, is expected to surpass that of the United States, currently at 317 million, before 2050. Australia is expected to reach approximately 40 million in the same period².

¹ Peter Ellyard p16
This is our global neighbourhood. Whether we acknowledge it or not we are all global citizens. As Nelson Mandela reminded us in 2000: “Together we live in this global neighbourhood and it is not to the long term benefit of any, if there are islands of wealth in a sea of poverty. We need globalisation of responsibility. Above all that is the challenge of [this] century”³.

Given the positive correlation between education and a socially just and equitable society, do we not owe it to our children to create the circumstances for them to become responsible global citizens? What does it mean to be a responsible global citizen? In my view it means being educated, well informed, it means holding a global perspective, being strong and active in service and willing to take up the challenge of global responsibility. I take being educated to mean being knowledgeable about what is happening in the world; having the capacity to think, reflect and make informed judgments guided by moral and ethical principles; having the creative capacity to find solutions to challenges and take independent action; and believing that you are not powerless.

Erica McWilliam reminds us that being educated also means being able to think across boundaries and having the ability to “repurpose information by viewing linkages across disparate fields of knowledge and activity as well as using high levels of literacy and numeracy to work across the domains of the conceptual and the aesthetic.” ⁴All of these attributes make us autonomous human beings and maximise our resilience in an era of rapid change.

In this era of unprecedented rate of change the imagination and creative capacity of their workers is now the most valuable resource of companies, particularly in the fast growing area of social entrepreneurship, involving philanthropic investment and innovative, sustainable business solutions to social and global challenges; solutions that will provide long term employment for people in developing countries

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³ http://think-left.org/2013/12/07/nelson-mandela-on-globalisation/

⁴ McWilliam, Erica The Creative Workforce University off NSW Press 2008
In my professional life, in another life, I was inspired by the work of Ernest Boyer, former US Commissioner of Education, former Chancellor of the State University of New York and former President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. A great humanist, he argued that knowledge must be placed in a larger moral context. “As educators,” he said, “we must consider the human condition; first that each person is unique. We must affirm [the identity and] special characteristics of each student and create the conditions of learning for each to reach his or her potential, but beyond the diversity of individuals we must acknowledge the reality of the deeply rooted characteristics that bind together the human community. Each student deserves to see the world clearly and in its entirety.”

To have a global perspective is to see that people around the world share a great many experiences; that the same human family connects us all. To help students develop into globally aware citizens we must create the conditions for them to discover the connectedness of things. As Boyer said: “The student who can begin early in life to see things as connected has begun the life of learning.” Creative insights come from seeing connections and similarities between things we haven’t noticed before, imagining possibilities and asking: why not?

The poet John Donne drew our attention to this connectedness in the 17th Century. Today, in a world where we can see and hear the agony of people half a world away, his words still resonate with 21st Century clarity, poignancy and relevance. He famously wrote:

“All mankind is of one author and is one volume...No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friends of thine own were. Any man’s death diminishes

5 Boyer, Ernest  The Educated Person  From 1995 ASCD Year Book
6 Boyer, Ernest  The Educated Person  From 1995 ASCD Year Book
me because I am involved in mankind: and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee.”

Or as Martin Luther King put it: “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly.”

However, as a teacher and former principal I can well relate to the comment — “I would love to do this stuff but I don’t have time.” I note that the Global Education Project offers an excellent framework for teachers to integrate global education into their delivery of the National Curriculum. When I was Principal of the The Friends’ Junior School my personal solution to the practicalities of introducing a global perspective to the learning environment, without adding to an already overcrowded curriculum, was to implement the Primary Years Programme of the International Baccalaureate. Our school’s purpose was to help students develop into men and women who will think clearly, act with integrity, make decisions for themselves, be sensitive to the needs of others, be strong in service and hold a global perspective.

The IB’s purpose — to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect — fitted hand in glove with our school’s purpose. The IB, with its mission to create a better world though education, offers programmes that encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and life long learners who understand that other people with their differences can also be right. In primary school this is done through a series of transdisciplinary inquiry themes that spiral in complexity and depth of understanding from 3 years of age to 12 years of age. They are: Who we are; Who we were; Who we might be.

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7 Donne, John in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature Fifth Edition*
Where we are in place and time; How we express ourselves; How the world works; How we organise ourselves; and Sharing the Planet.

The programme sets out a series of desired student attributes that characterise students with a global perspective; eight fundamental concepts that propel the process of inquiry; a set of transdisciplinary skills acquired in the process of inquiry; attitudes to be fostered; reflection and action or community service that will help peers, school staff and the wider community. My experience was that it had to be a whole school commitment with every teacher on board, for values, skills, attributes and attitudes are slow growing habits, the result of daily nurture within a community of common purpose. Together we developed a matrix of inquiry topics from pre kinder to Year 6.

But for some in the global family there is no education at all. There can be no mass education without peace. For all our amazing advances in science and technology and our great artistic achievements, all of which bear witness to the ingenuity skill and capacity of humankind, the 20th Century has been described by former Prime Minister of Australia, Paul Keating, as “mankind’s greatest century of violence”. As my husband said in his ANZAC Day speech 2014, “What a terrible indictment on those of us who have lived the majority of our lives in the twentieth century”.

With our guided warheads, chemical and nuclear missiles, we may be cleverer now than when we fought with spears, but we are not wiser. Without peace there can be no personal freedom, no equity, no social justice or social mobility; without peace there can be no education; and without education there can be no understanding of human rights or international humanitarian law; no


11 Underwood, Peter ANZAC Day Address 2014  www.govhouse.tas.gov.au
understanding that the civil liberties of individual citizenship, those fragile concepts of freedom that we take for granted, are being eroded in response to the external pressure of terrorism; without education there can be no peace.

No one understood this better than 2014 Nobel Peace Prize winner and global citizen par excellence Malala Yousafzai. Two years ago she fought for her life in a hospital in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. A gunman had shot her in the head as she travelled home on the school bus. Her crime? To refuse to adhere to the Taliban decree that all girls must stop going to school. Why? Because she believed that education could liberate her and others like her and that with education she might fulfill her dream to become the prime minister of Pakistan and make a positive difference to the lives of others; a dream of personal growth, social mobility and service to her community. These things she learned from her father.

Sharing the prize with Malala was the Indian Kailash Satyarthi for his activism, in the tradition of Ghandhi, for the right of all children to go to school, something we take for granted and many of us do not value. How wonderful to have a Pakistani and an Indian share this honour. Maybe one day they will lead their countries to a peace process.

Some questioned the connection of equal access to education with a more peaceful world. But research from the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University, Sweden shows that the degree of equality between men and women in a society is strongly associated with peace. Individuals who have the most positive attitudes towards equality between the sexes in society are also less inclined to use violence, as well as less likely to support war like foreign policies, or torture of suspected terrorists. Children in more equal societies do not learn that oppression is normal. I quote from an Uppsala University press release: “The norms that all humans have equal rights and that violence is a last resort rather than something honourable and a natural way of settling differences are critical to how peaceful a society becomes and these norms change in a peaceful direction as a consequence of improved gender equity. Therefore the fight for gender equity and Malala’s work for girls’ right to
education is also a fight for a more peaceful world” 12

Malala paid a high price for valuing education. It didn’t stop her. What is stopping us? The least we can do is to create optimal learning conditions for the development of educated, just and equitable global citizens who, rather than being pessimistic uniformed bystanders, not only thrive, but flourish in the globalised and interdependent 21st Century; who, like Malala, not only contribute to a better world but become informed, optimistic future makers, who make wise, effective, contributions to our society and the future of our world and its global citizens.

To increase test scores without empowering students or affirming the dignity of human life is to lose the essence of what we and presumably education are all about.”13 Human resources, says English educationalist Sir Ken Robinson, are like natural resources; they are often buried deep. You have to go looking for them; they are not just lying around on the surface. You have to create the circumstances where they show themselves.”14 Learning should transform people. It should challenge and change belief systems and behavioural patterns to meet new needs and opportunities. Knowledge is not enough. It is possible to acquire knowledge without changing in any way but learning something that changes perception enough to alter values and behavior is another matter. In the end our goal must be not only to prepare our students for careers but also to enable them to live with dignity and purpose, not only to give knowledge to the student but also to channel knowledge to humane ends.15

I commend the University of Tasmania’s Faculty of Education and the Global Education Project for their endeavours to achieve this goal by providing learning opportunities for the public as well as educators, who will in turn inspire students to become knowledgeable, creative, active, ethical and responsible, global citizens.

12 http://www.uu.se/en/media/press-releases/?contentId=360196
13 Boyer, Ernest The Educated Person From 1995 ASCD Year Book
14 Robinson, Ken The Element Pub. Allen Lane Great Britain 2009
15 ibid
It is with great pleasure that I declare open the 2015 Global Education Professional Learning Conference.

Thank you.