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Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

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10 – 12 November 2003  
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Final Communiqué

### **The New Delhi Statement**

1. We, Heads of States, Ministers, Heads of international organizations, Heads of non-governmental organizations and high-level officials of international agencies met, at the invitation of the Director-General of UNESCO, for the third meeting of the High-Level Group on Education for All during 10-12 November 2003 in New Delhi, India. We thank the Government of India for hosting the meeting and for generously providing the venue for us to continue our ongoing, annual monitoring of progress towards achieving the EFA goals. Two delegates of the Children's Parliament on the Right to Education that met in Delhi presented the conclusions of their debates. We paid particular attention to the imminent goal of 'Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality'.

#### *The Leap to Equality*

2. We welcomed the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2003/4. Gender and Education for All: The Leap to Equality*, the second in an annual series produced by an independent Team. The Report has provided us with high-quality analysis based on data reported to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics for the school year 2000/2001 to help us maintain political support for EFA and hold the international community to account for its commitments made at the World Education Forum in Dakar (April 2000). Its findings emphasize that education of girls and women is not only a human right but also a sine qua non for achieving other development priorities, including the Millennium Development Goals, and that gender equity is an important indicator for progress towards these goals. A commitment to Education for All is the best guarantee for humanity, of hope, peace, confidence and progress. As representatives in the High-Level Group, we consider ourselves to be champions for policies, reforms and actions that are critical to achieving the EFA goals. We shall work tirelessly with our constituencies to further accelerate our efforts.
3. We are encouraged by the evident progress in gender parity, particularly at primary level, where the proportion of girls to boys enrolled rose from 88 per cent in 1990 to 94 per cent in 2000. Girls' participation in secondary education also increased in all developing countries during the 1990s.
4. Nevertheless, the fact that the majority (57 per cent) of 104 million out-of-school children are girls and that almost two thirds of the 860 million non-literate people are women indicates that girls continue to face sharp discrimination in access to education at all levels. Progress needs to be drastically accelerated since more than half of the 128 countries for which data are available are unlikely to meet the gender parity goal in primary and secondary education by 2005. Unless policies change, even reaching gender parity by 2015 will remain a serious challenge for more than 40 per cent of the countries. This requires that special

measures be taken to target adult illiteracy since educated mothers enhance the access of girls to education. The global HIV/AIDS pandemic, armed conflict, child labour, various forms of disability and lack of resources all play a part in curtailing the right of children, particularly of girls, to education.

*Meeting the EFA Commitments: An Action Agenda*

5. We must not fail in the commitments we made at Dakar and reiterated at Monterrey. We, therefore, urge our constituencies to work in genuine partnership and give prominence to the following actions:
  
6. *Governments* should provide strong and visionary leadership. They should implement policies and reforms in an integrated manner to ensure effective and efficient use of domestic and external resources. They should seek to diversify their resource base and give budgetary priority to policies that promote gender equality. Prevention and mitigation of HIV/AIDS should be central to all national education and development policies, plans and programmes. Immediate strategic and other supportive actions towards gender parity by 2005 and gender equality by 2015 should include:
  - Enacting national legislation to enforce children's right to free and compulsory quality education, prevent and progressively eliminate child labour, and prohibit early marriage.
  - Eliminating school fees and reducing other indirect costs of schooling for parents, while sustaining quality through adequate investments.
  - Adopting policy measures that favour girls' education, such as developing and applying gender-sensitive curricula and teaching methods, establishing safe and positive learning environments, and integrating HIV/AIDS issues and reproductive health in curricula and teacher-training programmes.
  - Strengthening the number, competencies and status of teachers, particularly female teachers, and encouraging their retention in the profession.
  - Increasing investment to ensure quality, early childhood care and education, and skills and literacy programmes for women and adolescents.
  - Recognizing, encouraging and supporting communities, parents, teachers and children in carrying out their duties to uphold the right of all children to basic education of good quality.
  - Formulating national policies to ensure equal opportunities in access to jobs and equal pay.
  
7. *Donor countries and international agencies* should fulfil their commitments made at Dakar and Monterrey. Working with partners, they should bridge the financing gap between the current level of support for basic education, amounting to US\$1.5 billion per year, and the amount needed in external support to reach the gender goals and universal primary education by 2015, estimated at an additional US\$5.6 billion per year in last year's *EFA Global Monitoring Report*. They should redress the decline of total Official Development Assistance (ODA) that remains below the level of the early 1990s. This can be done by:

- Strengthening the Fast-Track Initiative as an effective instrument for mobilizing additional support to EFA and harmonizing donor contributions.
  - Paying early attention to the financial requirements of the five analytical Fast-Track countries, with due recognition to the need for flexibility so that country-specific reforms are taken into account.
  - Increasing ODA to, at least, the levels agreed upon in Monterrey and ensure that a higher proportion is allocated to basic education.
  - Increasing support for basic education by multilateral agencies, in particular the regional development banks whose recent declining support is particularly damaging.
  - Demonstrating visible movement on harmonization of procedures among agencies, and between agencies and governments in support of national policies.
  - Accelerating support to those efforts, partnerships and interventions that target girls' education in countries most at risk of not meeting the 2005 gender parity goal.
  - Increasing attention to gender in development assistance and budgeting, and strengthening a focus on gender and HIV/AIDS in all major instruments and initiatives, including SWAPS, PRSPs and the Fast-Track Initiative.
  - Supporting capacity-building to overcome institutional and other obstacles to the successful implementation of strategies and policies in support of gender parity and equality.
8. *Non-governmental and other civil society organizations* should become fully recognized and accepted partners in the effort to achieve the gender and EFA goals through engagement in national policy dialogue and other participatory processes between governments and international agencies. Civil society should complement government efforts, and governments should promote genuine partnerships with civil society organizations based on their respective comparative advantages for advancing EFA. The potential of the private sector to work in partnership with governments and within national education policies and programmes should be fully exploited. These organizations should increase their efforts to:
- Urge governments and the international community to fulfil their stated commitments for support of education.
  - Provide innovative education programmes for out-of-school girls and women within the context of development programmes.
  - Build a broader national constituency in support of EFA and girls' education.
9. The adoption of decentralization policies can provide a stronger voice for civil society and a fuller response to local and rural needs in basic education. International agencies should support capacity-building of local bodies and community-based organizations to improve delivery of educational services, particularly for the poor.

### *Coordinating work towards EFA*

10. We recognize the need for better coordination of the range of international initiatives concerned with achieving the EFA goals. This must be achieved at the global, regional and national levels. These include:
- The Millennium Development Goals.
  - The Fast-Track Initiative, SWAPs and PRSPs.
  - The United Nations initiatives, in particular the Literacy Decade and the forthcoming Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, and EFA Flagships.
  - A strengthened United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) along the lines recommended in the Istanbul Consensus Statement and support to the UNICEF programme to accelerate progress towards gender parity in 25 countries by 2005.
  - The E-9 Initiative.

### *The way forward*

#### International initiatives

11. The donors' meeting in Oslo, Norway (November 2003) should reach agreement on a clear framework to improve the effectiveness of the Fast-Track Initiative and mobilize resources for endorsed countries. A statement on its future should be made as soon as possible and no later than at the meeting of the Development Committee of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in Spring 2004.
12. Particular attention should be given to EFA in nations that are in the process of rebuilding their education systems following conflict, instability and disruption.

#### Statistics

13. The capacity of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) should be enhanced in identifying data gaps, improving data collection and quality, helping countries supply disaggregated data, and building national and regional statistical capacities.
14. Governments should strengthen their data collection systems and statistics-related capacities both to inform the development of national EFA policies and to enable the timely reporting of data to the UIS for the annual monitoring of EFA.

### *The EFA Global Monitoring Report*

15. The *EFA Global Monitoring Report* should:
- Provide a country-level assessment of the attainment of the gender parity goal in its 2008 edition.
  - Analyse the effectiveness of regional, sub regional and national coordination of EFA.
  - Continue to develop the EFA Index.
  - Review the status and implementation of national EFA and other education sector plans.

UNESCO

16. UNESCO should:

- Continue to play the key role in EFA coordination as stated in the Dakar Framework for Action. Other international organizations should continue to support the role of UNESCO in enhancing EFA.
- Review and enhance its capacity for coordination.
- Ensure more effective linkages between the Working Group on Education for All, the High-Level Group and the FTI Partners' Group.
- Take appropriate measures in these respects and report to the High-Level Group at its meeting in Brazil in November 2004.

*Next meeting*

17. We welcome the invitation of the Government of Brazil to host the next meeting of the High-Level Group in November 2004.