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Statement submitted by World for World Organization, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2011/100.

Statement*

We aim to reach the goals of Education for All (EFA) and to give new impetus to forming a global coalition to reach our targets at the annual ministerial review 2011 and to implement the internationally agreed goals and commitments towards EFA/Millennium Development Goals. Education is a force multiplier for reaching all of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

EFA is a fundamental human right and is achievable. It is the key to sustainable development and peace and stability among countries. World for World Organization (WFWO) experience shows that investing in poor people leads to sustainable development and promotes human security. EFA is critical for the achievement of other Millennium Development Goals in areas such as poverty, health, child survival and environmental sustainability. The basic learning needs of all can and must be met as a matter of urgency. United Nations bodies and civil society organizations, including WFWO, are all working to address these gaps. We believe that by combining efforts even more could be achieved. EFA goals should be postponed no longer.

Progress towards EFA has been uneven, with many areas of the world not on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Almost half the world's out-of-school children live in sub-Saharan Africa, and a quarter live in South Asia. One third out-of-school children live in areas affected by conflict. Inequalities within countries related to such factors as income, gender, regional disparities and ethnicity greatly affect a child's chances of attending school.

EFA brings sustainability to development. Education leads to higher income and productivity. Some 171 million people could be lifted out of poverty if students in low-income countries finish school with basic reading skills, an equivalent to a 12 per cent cut in world poverty. Education, as another issue, merits more urgent attention at this time of the global crisis.

Recommendations

We recommend stronger commitments at the global level for achieving all the Millennium Development Goals and the full implementation of the right to EFA by 2015 by calling on Member States to: (a) eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education and achieve gender equality in EFA, particularly with regard to girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, and ensure access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality through sustainable approaches, social protection measures, and programmes that focus on poverty, water, education, health, environment and labour; (b) find more innovative ways to provide additional funding needed to make the Millennium Development Goals a reality; (c) dedicate at least 20 per cent of their national military budgets to education purposes and to abolishing the fees that prevent so many children from going to school; (d) meet the needs of education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability, and conduct educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and that help to prevent violence and conflict; (e) promote the development of alternative mechanisms to

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

support education in fragile contexts in the transition from humanitarian to development assistance; (f) ensure the engagement and participation of civil society and non-governmental organizations in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategies for educational development.
