



CHAIR'S STATEMENT – THE OSLO DECLARATION

Education is a human right. It is a catalyst for job creation, economic growth, healthier lives and gender equality. Education is a prerequisite for sustainable development and poverty eradication.

The World Education Forum proposed an ambitious global education agenda demanding increased attention to and support for education. The Oslo Summit on Education for Development accepts the challenge of the Incheon Declaration. Our ambition is that 2015 will be decisive for transforming our commitment into action.

The Summit has been informed by the voices of civil society and the private sector. It has recognised the need to review political priorities, to increase ODA to education, mobilise further domestic public and private funding, use existing resources more effectively and transparently, and establish new and innovative partnerships. It also recognises the need to implement evidence-based, inclusive and effective education policies.

The benefits of education for the individual, for society and for the economy are well documented but not reflected in investment. The proposed SDG 4 calls for inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. To reach this by 2030 we need to close the global financing gap between available domestic resources and the total funding need of USD 39 billion annually. The provision of education is a national responsibility. Additional resources through results-oriented, coordinated and aligned ODA are however necessary, focussing on the least developed and most fragile countries.

The Summit has addressed the lack of consistent data on streams of finance for education, which are needed by policymakers, parents, teachers and donors alike.

Child labour and exploitation must end. Reaching the most marginalized communities and vulnerable children and youth, notably those with disabilities, is imperative if we are to meet the education goals. The cost of inclusive and equitable education must be integral in national education budgets. No target in the SDG agenda can be considered met unless it is met for all.

A high-level *Commission on the Financing of Global Education Opportunities* was announced at the Oslo Summit. The UN Secretary-General welcomed this, and has agreed to receive the report of the Commission in September 2016 and act on its recommendations. Its purpose will be to explore and invigorate the case for investment in education and bring about a reversal of the current underfunding. It will seek to identify means of deploying the resources available in more effective, accountable and coordinated ways. The Commission will look at a wide range of sources of financing, including how to support increased domestic resource mobilization through more strategic and catalytic ODA, non-traditional partnerships, innovative finance and the private sector.

The number of children and youth out of school due to conflicts, disasters, displacements and epidemics is increasing at a chilling speed. Neglecting their right to education undermines not only their future, but also the future of their societies. In addition, learning

is crucial for the success of other interventions in crises, such as in the fields of sanitation and health. Education must be protected from armed attack.

The Summit has addressed the need to examine the global aid architecture in order to bridge the divide between humanitarian interventions and long-term development assistance to education. It is urgent at the same time to mobilise additional resources to close the financing gap of USD 4.8 billion needed to provide children and young people in crisis situations with quality education.

A group of countries and organisations have already started to address this formidable task. A *Champions' Group on Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises* is at work to advance global action. It has agreed on a set of principles that reaffirm existing commitments, and proposes to set up a common platform to improve the current aid architecture. It will urgently address the financing gap by creating a dedicated fund or a new modality for education in emergencies by the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016.

Education for girls yields high returns not only for the girls concerned, but also for their children, families and communities. Girls' education greatly improves children's life expectancy and health, contributes to later marriages and child births, as well as increased family earnings and economic productivity. Still, girls are more likely than boys not to go to school and the poorest girls remain the least likely to enrol. Stronger advocacy and increased resources for girls' education are needed. The Oslo Summit also stresses the need to end school-related gender based violence.

The private sector, civil society, parents and local communities are encouraged to establish new partnerships to ensure that girls enrol in school and complete higher levels of education. We are committed to eliminate differences in the quality of education given to girls and to boys. We recognise the need for gender-sensitive education policies, learning environments and curricula. Furthermore, there are untapped synergies especially for girls in combined interventions in the health and education sectors, not least in the field of sexual and reproductive health.

Teachers are the most significant in-school determinant of educational quality together with instruction materials and a positive and safe learning environment. The Oslo Summit has highlighted the imperative of addressing the shortage of qualified teachers and of investing in teacher education. There has been a call for the development of international guidelines for professional teaching standards and teacher competences. Tangible new projects on quality and teaching have been presented at the Summit, including the setting up of a global network on quality and teachers.

The Summit recognises the need for appropriate curricula and learning materials, whether printed or digital. It also acknowledges the importance of providing equitable access to learning through ICT infrastructure and digital learning material. This is important for the participation of the poor in an increasingly interconnected global economy. We welcome and encourage the private sector's engagement in innovation for education.

The Oslo Summit on Education for Development unites behind the pledge to bring education to the forefront of our agendas and individually and jointly to follow up and transform our commitments into concrete results. Sustained commitment and political leadership will be needed to mobilize the necessary resources. Financing of education is fundamental for the realisation of sustainable development. The Oslo Summit insists that the third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa commits to a scaling up of investments and international cooperation for education.