



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'Éducation,  
la Science et la Culture

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

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

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Address by Mr. Koichiro Matsuura

Director-General of UNESCO,  
on the occasion of the Annual Ministerial Level Substantive

CONFERENCE

Geneva, 4 July 2007

Ministers,  
Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

through education. UNESCO has been the global coordinator of international efforts to achieve Education for All by 2015. Since then, helping countries reach the six Dakar goals has been the Organization's principal priority, and my main objective as Director-General.

As you know, two of the Dakar goals have also been adopted as Millennium Development Goals—that is, achieving universal primary education and eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education. While these are central to the goals of EFA, they are also central to the broader goal of universal primary education and literacy. Such a broad and holistic approach is essential in providing quality education for all.

UNESCO is also working to address education needs at the secondary and higher levels.

As global coordinator of EFA, UNESCO is responsible for a series of mechanisms aimed at mobilizing political and financial support for EFA, identifying key policy issues, and monitoring progress. At the centre of these is the EFA High-Level Group, which meets at the end of every year to provide strategic leadership to the EFA movement and commission reports that inform policy decisions. The High-Level Group also convenes national agencies and civil society and the private sector.

The High-Level Group can draw in its deliberations on the findings of the EFA Global

This year's High-Level Group will convene in December in Dakar—a symbolic location for a meeting that takes place at the mid-way point for reaching the EFA goals. The 2008 Group will also conduct a comprehensive review of EFA progress and examine the nature of the challenges in 2010.

the World Bank, the EFA Global Action Plan. Contributing to broader efforts within the UN system "to deliver as One" the Plan defines "one country, one education sector plan" as the pivot for better coordination.

development and implement sound education policies. We are focusing in particular on such the greatest education needs.

Our action is centred on three core initiatives: the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) in the Sahel and Africa, the SSA Funding Forum

The EFA Global Monitoring Report, drawing on the data provided by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, is monitoring the progress we are making in this area, demonstrating the real difference advances in education can make in the battle against poverty.

But stepping up international support is only part of the equation. Strong national

not recognized, especially as regards their potential for poverty alleviation. Cultural and creative industries are capable of yielding real results both socially and economically, and need to be integrated into international and local development strategies.

management of freshwater where UNESCO plays a leadership role of critical importance to the longer term evolution of environment policy, the Organization's own action is of immediate impact for those countries, in Africa and elsewhere, where the management of water resources is continually a question of life and death. UNESCO promotes a holistic approach the right technological approaches for conserving a resource that is essential for livelihoods

development. UNESCO has a specific mandate within the United Nations system to act as a navigator in the private sector. UNESCO has developed particularly fruitful partnerships with civil society organizations, especially in the field of EFA. We are also working actively to expand our collaboration with the private sector, a vital source not only of additional finance but also advocacy, expertise and innovation.

so complex and immense that it can only be met by concerted action across the international community. Partnership is the very key to success.