



**SOUTH AFRICAN PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND
OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS**

**Statement by Mr. Luvuyo Ndimeni, the Deputy Permanent
Representative and Charge d'Affaires a.i. at the South African
Permanent Mission to the United Nations during the Economic and
Social Council Substantive Session
High-level Segment
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Mr. President,

At the outset, allow me to thank you, members of the Bureau for the excellent work. We wish you, Mr. President, every success and remain confident that the Council will benefit under your stewardship. We would like to also congratulate on the timely and consensual finalization of the Ministerial Declaration.

The South African delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by Namibia on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Argentina on behalf of the G77+China (G77+China), respectively.

The Millennium Development Goals Outcome Document adopted in September 2010 and establishment of the UN Women are positive indications that through concerted efforts and political will, the achievement of the MDGs is possible.

As this year's theme is on the **"Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education"**, we have to bear in mind that all the Millennium Development Goals are inter-linked and mutual reinforcing, and we have to pursue these goals through a holistic approach. It is in this regard that South Africa views issues of education an intrinsic link with the right to development. Without education, the integration of societies to the national and international policies being pursued becomes unrealistic. An example of this can be seen in the area of health where malnutrition has been significantly reduced in rural communities through educating school-going children, who act as translators for their parents.

Mr. President,

The reports of the Secretary-General as well as reports received from the regional preparatory meetings provide an indication of the varied progress in the achievement of MDG2. Whilst some countries and regions have made progress, however, we must acknowledge that challenges still remain. Progress made so far can be reversed by combination of factors including:

(i) Constrained household incomes which could reduce household investment in children's education (ii) Quality of teaching and learning and; (iii) Poor infrastructure at some schools.

Mr. President,

Much has been said and heard during the past two days on what needs to be done to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. However, I wish to highlight the following:

Governments need to do more by increasing expenditure on education. Resources have to be pulled together. The economic and financial crisis should not be used as an excuse to shifting governments' service delivery in terms of funding education.

The so-called **Triple P-public-private partnerships** is also critical. Those involved in the actual teaching and learning including teachers must be made aware that we, as the international community, made commitments to achieve the MDGs by 2015. Therefore children's education should be everyone's responsibility and concern.

Provisions should be made that children have access to education, also recognizing that the provision of free or affordable transport, cash and food transfers have proven to be an effective ways to keeping children at schools.

Mr. President,

South Africa's commitment to the achievement of Millennium Development Goals is informed by the Government's priorities. Education was identified one of the five key priorities. This priority also feeds into the Government's Program of Action, Delivering Agreement and Action Plan to 2014: Towards the Realization of Schooling 2025. In this respect, the National Department of Education was divided into the Department of Basic Education and Department of Higher Education to ensure that adequate attention was given to the different levels of education.

As part of the overall Government's planning, announced in 2010, improving of quality of the education was declared "Outcome 1". In line with President Jacob Zuma's 2011 State of National Address, emphasis will focus on the **TripleT-Teachers, Time and Text. Teachers are to be in class, on time, teaching and making use of textbooks.**

Last week, the Department of Basic Education presented its Annual National Assessment (ANA) for 2011. According to the report, education will focus more on the quality of learning and teaching, with emphasis on literacy and numeracy at the lower levels. The current target is to have all pre-Grade 1 learners attending Grade R by 2014.

Mr. President,

International partnerships remain key in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. There should be concerted efforts to bridge the gap between political intention and action. The donors have to fulfill their previous commitments, including

supporting Africa's efforts to ensuring that by 2015 all children have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

At the regional level, South Africa collaborates with the Southern African Development Community and the African Union. My delegation also concurs with the views expressed during the Lome preparatory meeting that Africa can achieve Universal Primary Education by 2015, if concerted efforts are taken. In this regard, the Second Decade of Education for Africa Plan of action (2006-2015) is critical.

In concluding, South Africa looks forward to the adoption of the Annual Ministerial Declaration and welcomes further efforts to the implementation of the internationally agreed goals and commitments.

I thank you.

