

18 March 2009

Interactive Thematic Dialogue of the UN General Assembly on Access to Education in Emergency, Post-crisis and Transition situations- caused by Man-made Conflicts or Natural Disasters

Programme

OPENING SESSION:

10:00 -10:30 AM

- Introductory remarks by H.E. Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the United Nations General Assembly
- Statement by Asha-Rose Migiro, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations
- Keynote speech by H.H. Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al Missned, UNESCO Special Envoy on basic and higher education

PANEL I: EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES – WHY WE NEED TO ACT NOW

10.30 AM– 1:00 PM

Introductory Video

- Moderator: Dr. Kevin Cahill, Chief Adviser for Humanitarian Affairs, Office of the President of the General Assembly.
- H.E Mr. Pierre Nkurunziza, President of the Republic of Burundi
- Mr. Vernor Muñoz, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education
- Mr. Wildenes Etienne, teacher from a CRS school in Haiti
- Q & A

LUNCH BREAK

1:00 - 2:45 PM

PANEL II: HOW TO MAKE EDUCATION WORK-- INVESTING IN LEARNERS, INVESTING IN SUCCESS

3:00 - 4:30 PM

- Moderator: Ms. Hilde F. Johnson, Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF
- Mr. Nicholas Burnett, Assistant Director General for Education, UNESCO.
- Ms. Leslie Wilson, Country Director Afghanistan (former country Director- Bangladesh), Save the Children
- Ms. Brenda Haiplik, Representative of INEE (Inter – agency Network on Education in Emergency)

- Mr. Maiwand Rahyaba, youth representative from Afghanistan
- Q & A

PANEL III: SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY: WAYS TO MOVE FORWARD

4:30- 5:45 PM

- Moderator: Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict
- HE Ambassador Claude Heller, Mexico's Permanent Representative to the UN, Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict
- Mr. Lothar Krappmann, member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
- Mr. Brendan O'Malley, Author of UNESCO study, "Education under Attack"
- Ms. Sradda Thapa, "Women's Refugee Commission", Youth Representative from Nepal
- Q & A

CLOSING SESSION

5.45 – 6.00PM

Closing remarks by H.E. Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the United Nations General Assembly

18 March 2009

**Statement of Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann,
President of the 63rd Session of the General Assembly,
at the Interactive Thematic Dialogue on Access to Education in Emergency, Post-
Crisis and Transition Situations Caused by Man-Made Conflicts or Natural Disasters**

Your Excellency Mr. Pierre Nkurunziza,
Your Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned,
Excellencies,
Madame Deputy Secretary-General,
United Nations Colleagues,
Representatives of Civil Society,
Dear Sisters and Brothers,

In my inaugural address to the General Assembly last September, I dedicated my presidency of the sixty-third session to the poor and oppressed of the world. Some people wondered how this would be expressed in the work of the Assembly. Today's dialogue on the right to education for children is one concrete answer to this question. I am pleased we are taking up the right of education of these young people whose lives have been disrupted by violent conflict and the calamities of natural disasters. These are precisely the people I was referring to and who should be the priority of the work of the United Nations.

I wish to thank the Member States that supported this initiative, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Norway and Qatar, and all of you gathered here for joining us today to address this fundamental right that is being denied to an estimated 75 million children worldwide. We will explore the reasons why the world community, including many UN humanitarian policy makers, have failed to make this right central to the assistance provided to communities disrupted by violence and disasters. I think that most of us here believe that children need schools in the same way they need food and water and medical care. Yet today only six development partners include education as part of their humanitarian policy. Let us, as a body, as Member States and specialized agencies look for ways to integrate this simple conviction into the complex policies of our humanitarian assistance operations.

Before we begin, allow me to thank Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned for her dedicated work in pressing the world community to address this issue in a global and also in a very local way. As you may know, she has been working tirelessly to restore as quickly as possible the scores of UN-sponsored schools that were damaged during the horrific invasion of the Palestinian territory of Gaza two months ago. She has made the case and the government of Qatar has been instrumental in raising the funds to rebuild the secure, nurturing learning environment that children and young people so desperately need.

Her Highness's international efforts to defend, promote and support the right to education, including and most particularly, in situations of armed conflict, underscore a deep-felt conviction that children and young people born into, or thrust into, situations of adversity have the right to a future with dignity and purpose. Education is the gateway to the full exercise of all other human rights. I share Sheikha Mozah's conviction that, even in the most dire of situations, access to education and safe learning environments creates oases of normalcy that help learners and their communities to heal, recover and grow despite the trauma of violence and disaster around them.

The issues we are addressing today and the recommendations that will flow from this interactive dialogue must be translated into concrete policies and programmes that will make the difference for tens of millions of children and young people around the world. Too often, we as the international community, have failed in our obligation to protect these vulnerable groups. We should not compound this wrong by denying them a way out of their plight. Sustained access to and continuity of quality education offers them 'a way out'. And it is their right.

Gaza is but one of many conflicts and disasters that are disrupting and, in some cases, ending the educations of an estimated 75 million children world wide.

Today we will hear from children and from teachers, as well a policy makers, about their particular experiences and 'lessons learned' through trial and error, action and reflection. We will hear from a teacher working in Haiti in the wake of the devastation caused by recurring hurricanes; youth in Nepal who galvanized their communities in the midst of insurgency to create schools as 'zones of peace'; and staff working in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, the Caribbean and Latin America.

I think that the diversity of participants in this meeting – from education specialists and practitioners, to government officials from Haiti, Afghanistan, Nepal and Burundi -- will help us raise the profile of the right to education. More importantly, let us identify specific ways to strengthen the policy and operational work of the UN, of Governments and NGO by better integrating the right to education into any humanitarian response.

Let us find ways to assure that we are feeding young minds, as well as bodies; creating safe havens for learners, as well as their larger communities. Let us give these girls and boys, youth and women the opportunity to contribute in the recovery and the future of their societies. Let us give them hope by learning to overcome what, in the midst of chaos, must seem to be insurmountable challenges. This is a real opportunity to transform poverty and oppression into opportunity and integration. I am sure that this very special gathering will add real value to this debate.

Thank you.

18 March 2009

**Statement of Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann,
President of the 63rd Session of the General Assembly,
at the Closing Session of the Interactive Thematic Dialogue on Access to Education in
Emergency, Post-Crisis and Transition Situations Caused by Man-Made Conflicts or
Natural Disasters**

I wish to thank once again, for gracing this forum,
His Excellency Mr. Pierre Nkurunziza of Burundi,
Her Highness Sheikha Mozad bint Nasser Al-Minad,
Excellencies,
United Nations Colleagues,
Representatives of Civil Society,
Dear Sisters and Brothers,

As we come to the close of this interactive dialogue on access to education in emergency situations, I want to thank all of you for deepening our understanding of the complexities of this issue. I especially thank our expert panelists for drawing our attention to the concrete actions that we – particularly the United Nations and Member States -- can undertake to ensure that education continues for the millions young people whose lives are being disrupted by violence or natural disasters.

You have advanced the dialogue to identify the steps to protect our schools and ensure that they remain safe and nurturing environments even in the midst of the most difficult circumstances. You have provided us with the legislative strategies to combat the impunity of attacks on schools, students and teachers that has risen steadily in recent years.

Today's dynamic panels have highlighted the urgent concern that Member States, the United Nations system and our NGO partners in humanitarian assistance have not made education a priority in their response to complex emergencies. Clearly the international community, including the General Assembly, needs to develop a more coherent, rights-based response to these challenges. We are grateful to the human rights experts, education specialists and practitioners as well as representatives of a range of governments for providing us with new information and the arguments. You have spoken and we have heard. We will press for clearer resolutions, legislation and policies to close this glaring gap in our policies and operations.

From my perspective as president of the General Assembly, I am most concerned about the recommendations that have been made by representatives of Member States and those that affect the policies of our Member States. As pointed out by the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, fully 90 per cent of the countries where natural disasters and violent conflicts take place have

governments that are unable to respond adequately to the humanitarian needs of their citizens, much less to maintain the safe havens of schools.

Government disaster relief policies must integrate education into our humanitarian response and into the broader educational framework as well. This requires cooperation and partnerships at all levels. I welcome the recommendation that more regional consultations are needed and encourage Member States to explore this option with UN Regional Commissions, perhaps led by or with the participation of education ministers. I have no doubt that such meetings will facilitate the development of better response and monitoring mechanisms at local, national and global levels. They can also contribute in a significant ways to improved data collection and analysis.

We must monitor peace agreements to ensure that they too consider the integration and protection of schools and the educational infrastructure. Our planning must keep in mind that the restoration of the education system and poverty reduction must go hand in hand. And always, we need more reliable data on the conditions that are faced before, during and after crisis situations if we are to devise more effective response mechanisms relating to education.

As is so often the case, we have been reminded that the legal basis for the protection of the right to education is a part of much of our human rights legislation – from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the Convention on the Rights of the Child to the second Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education. But in the face of rising incidents of violence and human disasters caused by natural phenomena, these lofty goals fall victim to a culture of neglect, or even worse, impunity. Our collective failure to stop impunity serves as a license for the perpetrators.

Finally, I am heartened by government speakers who have called upon governments to take on greater responsibilities. I agree with the recommendation that we must urge all those involved, including UN bodies and agencies as well as civil society organizations, to develop clear policies that call on State Parties to protect schools and make them safe havens, especially in the most difficult situations. I support the call that States should criminalize attacks on schools as war crimes in accordance with the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and prosecute offenders accordingly. This must be done as a matter of course, routinely and systematically.

Our work is ever more urgent. As was pointed out earlier today, while violent conflicts are more lethal, the increasing frequency of natural phenomena affect seven times more people than violent conflicts. This is a trend that we must live with and we should apply all our tenacity and creativity to develop sound responses, ones that are feasible and that work in the worst of conditions.

And lastly, I hope as we end today's session, we all feel strong and more prepared in our commitment to better protect our learners, their teachers and all those involved in the delivery of their right to education. I believe that we have made some progress towards these important goals today and thank you all for your ongoing dedication and your steadfastness in defending the right to education, under any circumstances.

Thank you.

Speech of

**Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser Al Missned
of Qatar**

Opening session of the Thematic and

Interactive Debate on Education in Emergencies

**United Nations General Assembly
New York, NY**

March 18, 2009

Mr. President of the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin my speech by extending my sincere gratitude and deep appreciation to all those who made it possible to hold this thematic and interactive debate within the UN General Assembly.

I would like to particularly thank the President of the UN General Assembly His Excellency Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann and your Excellencies, the ambassadors of member countries Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Norway and Qatar, for recognizing a child's right to education and lending your support to the protection of education in areas of crisis.

I am deeply appreciative that Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann endorsed the objectives of the Al Fakhoora campaign by participating in one of its functions. This campaign was launched by the students of Qatar in a show of solidarity with their counterparts in Gaza against the latest military invasion which denied them their basic right to education. Mr. Brockmann's support confirmed the commitment of the international community to support just causes all over the world.

I am here today addressing you from this podium due to two factors. First there is my deep belief – despite all the frustrations and disappointments deepened by the war on Gaza – in the sacred nature of this cause to which I dedicate my efforts. The right to a quality education is, I believe, the perfect path to bridge the gap between different cultures and to reconcile various civilizations. Without such a right, the values of liberty, justice and equality will have no meaning. Ignorance is by far the biggest danger and threat to humankind.

The second factor in my presence here today is the subject of this thematic and interactive debate: the dire need to protect the right to Education in Emergencies.

It is my view that the General Assembly's gathering of decision makers and experts to discuss Education in Emergencies indicates recognition by the international community of this problem. I believe it also recognizes the threat this issue presents to the principles

and foundations of society, and reflects that we share a concern about the fragility of the international will and its ability to adequately address it.

I am certain you will grant this sensitive and delicate issue your utmost care, and that your conclusions today will put us on the right track to preserve the principles and regulations of international charters.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Education in Emergencies signifies that the right to education is being threatened by natural causes such as tsunamis but also, unfortunately, by man-made causes.

If you will allow me, I would like to shed light on the second aspect of this equation, because this type of interference constitutes a serious danger and requires a clear and substantive response and not just a creative slogan.

And this is precisely our concern. The vision and strategies that we have implemented since the Dakar conference to meet our 'Education for All' objectives today seem very far from being achieved, despite our best efforts and goodwill. And we are only a few years away from our 2015 deadline. In addition, the developmental goals adopted by this Assembly in September 2001 are, unfortunately, out of reach as well.

Therefore, the threat to the right of education stands as a wall between us and the achievement of our objectives, a threat to which no one but we can respond.

Can we, as an international community, truly understand what it means to have students deliberately denied their basic right to education because checkpoints are preventing them from reaching their schools and universities?

When electrical power is purposefully withheld from their institutions, can we truly understand the impact – that this also restricts their ability to learn and benefit from their laboratories and information technology services, causing them to fall decades behind the rest of the world?

Do we realize the danger of losing a society in its entirety when its elite group of writers and academics are targeted and killed in cold blood? How can such a loss be compensated?

Do we realize what we risk when educational institutions bearing the UN flag, a symbol of righteousness and legitimacy, are bombed?

Do we comprehend that what is being built is a culture of despair rather than a culture of hope and life?

How do we feel when we hear about plans for mobilizing children and forcefully preventing them from going to school?

This is a simplified but accurate description of the current situation. And indications are that it is worsening rather than improving.

We acknowledge that it constitutes a denial of the right of education. However, in the best of scenarios, we only voice our condemnation. And sometimes we even hear people trying to justify it, hoping that the primordial cause will be put on hold while we address other important issues or become obsessed over a detail.

Sadly, our will to rebuild areas torn by crisis and war will never compensate for the loss of one human mind, and neither will it compensate for the lost opportunity to secure an education.

As such, when we talk about the right to education, we cannot neglect our duty and commitment to uphold this right by merely expressing sympathy or making only a symbolic gesture that fades with time. We must live our belief that the values of justice and equality still rule.

Mr. President of the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are gathered here today, full of hope, to build a better future for our children and the generations to come.

We share the same concerns and, even though our analyses might differ, our goals are the same. Our collective aim is to preserve and protect the sacred cause of education in all its aspects, in accordance with the rules and foundations of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

And because we believe in the value of life and appreciate the culture of peace, we have a duty to save our children from frustration and despair. That is why we must make sure, through accountability, to combat anyone who fails to show respect for life and humankind and who does not treasure the right to education.

Upholding this right also requires protecting educational institutions and personnel from attacks during times of conflict. This can only be ensured through the presence of two essential elements: sanctions and punishment.

To that end, existing international conventions must be activated and their content enhanced. We must establish, through profound and serious reflection, a practical and operational international mechanism to prohibit attacks on the right to education, punishing the perpetrators and obliging them to appropriately compensate for any losses, human and otherwise, that result from their actions.

That is why I would like to call on this debate to pave the way for an executive work plan under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of all countries. Let us put in place a mechanism for the protection of educational institutions in areas of conflict and crisis, making them a safe haven.

I would suggest that we accomplish this by organizing regional conferences with the participation of decision makers, alongside experts on this issue, in order to deepen the discussion and prepare studies and reports. These efforts must then culminate in an international conference which Doha is willing to host, and where all the results and conclusions can be presented.

Thank you very much. May we have a fruitful and productive discussion.



БЕЛАРУСЬ

Просьба сверять с устным текстом

**Организация Объединенных Наций
Генеральная Ассамблея**

**Тематический диалог о доступе к образованию в чрезвычайных ситуациях,
посткризисных и переходных периодах, вызванных действиями человека и
природы**

Тематическая дискуссия 1

18 марта 2009 года

**Выступление
Заместителя Постоянного представителя
Республики Беларусь
Зои Колонтай**

Никто в мире не застрахован от капризов природы и от той разрушительной силы, которую она посылает для испытания сил человеческих. Но человек может быть более осмотрительным в своих действиях пусть даже в самых благих намерениях, чтобы не навредить не только ныне живущим, но и будущему поколению.

Для Республики Беларусь как страны, испытавшей на себе ужас глобальной техногенной катастрофы XX века – аварии на Чернобыльской атомной электростанции, тема сегодняшних дебатов представляет особый интерес.

Мы выражаем признательность Председателю Генеральной Ассамблеи ООН господину Мигелю д'Эското Брокману за организацию этих тематических дебатов и за появившуюся возможность еще раз привлечь внимание мирового сообщества к чернобыльской проблематике и поделиться опытом Беларуси в этой сфере сквозь призму обеспечения доступа к образованию в период и после катастрофы на Чернобыльской АЭС.

Чернобыльская катастрофа оказала воздействие на все сферы жизнедеятельности человека – производство, экономику, сельское и лесное хозяйство, социальную сферу. Ударила она также и по образованию, учитывая, что в момент аварии в стране продолжался учебный год. В то же время благодаря предпринятым мерам Правительства Республики Беларусь удалось сохранить непрерывный процесс в обеспечении доступа к образованию всех детей и молодежи.

Более 137 тыс. человек, включая детей и молодежь, из 470 населенных пунктов были отселены в «чистые» районы Беларуси.

Для обеспечения доступа к образованию в новых местах проживания учащейся молодежи были введены новые **общеобразовательные школы, детские сады и ясли.**

На тех территориях радиоактивного загрязнения, где продолжали проживать люди, принимались меры по снижению радиационного риска для здоровья людей, включая **обеспечение функционирования учреждений социальной сферы.**

В системе образования в связи с массовым отселением и выездом из зон радиоактивного загрязнения молодежи и интеллигенции сразу возникла **проблема обеспечения учреждений образования пострадавших регионов квалифицированными педагогическими кадрами.**

Была также проведена **реорганизация сети учреждений образования.** Были закрыты школы, расположенные на территории с высоким уровнем радиоактивного загрязнения, и организован подвоз учащихся в близлежащие школы с меньшим уровнем загрязнения или расположенные на чистой территории. Для обеспечения преподавания всех предметов учебного плана к работе привлекались пенсионеры, студенты старших курсов.

Одновременно были приняты меры по **восполнению в пострадавших регионах дефицита учителей, других педагогических работников.** Был **увеличен прием** на педагогические специальности в средние специальные и высшие учебные заведения, введены дополнительные специализации.

Также на государственном уровне был предпринят ряд мер, **направленных на социальную поддержку специалистов, работающих в зонах радиоактивного загрязнения, что способствовало закреплению и привлечению педагогических кадров в пострадавшие регионы.**

В настоящее время в пострадавших районах все учреждения образования обеспечены квалифицированными кадрами. Более 80 процентов учителей, работающих в пострадавших районах, имеют высшее, то есть университетское, образование. Это позволяет обеспечивать в этих регионах **качество образовательного процесса на таком же уровне, как в целом по стране.**

Государство проводит целенаправленную политику в сфере образования и социальной защиты детей, проживающих на территории радиоактивного загрязнения. Каждому из них государством гарантировано право на получение **бесплатного общего среднего образования, профессионально-технического и на конкурсной основе бесплатного среднего специального и высшего образования во всех типах учреждений образования.**

Был принят Закон Республики Беларусь «О социальной защите граждан, пострадавших от катастрофы на Чернобыльской АЭС, других радиационных аварий», в соответствии с которым **проживающим на территории радиоактивного загрязнения, предоставляется преимущественное право на зачисление в учреждения, обеспечивающие получение профессионально-технического образования (при иных равных условиях), на курсы профессионального обучения, а также в средние специальные и высшие учебные заведения. Всем нуждающимся предоставляется место в общежитии на время учебы.**

В целях социальной защиты несовершеннолетние, проживающие на территории радиоактивного загрязнения, имеют право на **бесплатное санаторно-курортное лечение или оздоровление, а также бесплатное питание во время их обучения в общеобразовательных учреждениях.**

Для этой категории детей разработаны научно обоснованные нормы питания, которые обеспечивают в рационах питания необходимое количество продуктов животного происхождения, морепродуктов, овощей, фруктов и других продуктов повышенной биологической активности, способствующих поддержанию иммунного и антиоксидантного статуса детского организма в условиях неблагоприятной экологической обстановки.

С первых дней после аварии на Чернобыльской АЭС наряду с защитными мероприятиями принимались меры по оказанию психологической помощи семьям, которым пришлось покинуть родные места в связи с вынужденным переселением, а также проводилась работа по созданию системы их социальной защиты и социально-психологической реабилитации.

В учреждениях образования с целью эффективного обучения в новых местах жительства разрабатывались программы оказания психолого-педагогической помощи детям, пострадавшим от катастрофы на ЧАЭС.

Начиная с 1998 года, в Беларуси реализуется президентская программа «Дети Беларуси», включающая подпрограмму «Дети Чернобыля». В рамках этой подпрограммы обеспечивается проведение комплекса мероприятий по оказанию социально-педагогической и психологической помощи детям, пострадавшим от катастрофы на Чернобыльской АЭС, в том числе по разработке и внедрению образовательных технологий, учитывающих специфику образования и воспитания детей, пострадавших от катастрофы на Чернобыльской АЭС.

В настоящее время в рамках подпрограммы «Дети Чернобыля» осуществляется мониторинг физического развития и функционального состояния организма учащихся общеобразовательных учреждений, расположенных на территории радиоактивного загрязнения, в ходе которого изучаются уровень физической подготовленности, физической и умственной работоспособности учащихся, проживающих на территории с разным уровнем радиоактивного загрязнения.

Учитывая масштабы и долговременный характер последствий чернобыльской катастрофы, при организации работы с детьми, проживающими в пострадавших регионах, особое внимание уделяется формированию у них навыков безопасной жизнедеятельности в условиях радиационного риска. Во всех учебных заведениях страны был введен специальный курс по радиационной безопасности, жизнедеятельности в условиях воздействия различных неблагоприятных факторов, в том числе радиационного.

Нельзя не отметить активную роль международных организаций в этом направлении. Эта работа особенно активизировалась в 2003-2008 годах – в ходе реализации образовательных проектов международной программы CORE «Сотрудничество для реабилитации условий жизни в пострадавших от чернобыльской катастрофы районах Беларуси».

Так, в рамках проекта «Методологическая и информационная поддержка процесса радиоэкологического образования» программы CORE при поддержке ЮНИСЕФ было подготовлено методическое пособие для педагогических работников зон радиоактивного загрязнения «Основы радиоэкологии и безопасной

жизнедеятельности». Это способствовало повышению эффективности радиоэкологического образования и воспитания детей.

При содействии Представительства ПРООН в Республике Беларусь на базе одной из сельских средних школ был также создан учебно-консультационный центр по радиоэкологии и радиационной безопасности, оснащенный необходимой литературой и современной техникой для проведения радиологических измерений.

Нельзя не отметить вклад французских коллег в разработку инновационных подходов к организации образовательной деятельности по формированию у учащихся практических навыков безопасной жизнедеятельности в рамках реализации проекта **«Практическая радиологическая культура, передача памяти между поколениями и народами»**, который осуществлялся в двух пострадавших регионах страны.

Несмотря на достигнутые результаты в ликвидации последствий аварии на ЧАЭС, Беларусь все еще испытывает на себе последствия чернобыльской трагедии и осознает, что для более эффективного результата необходимо укрепить совместные международные усилия.

По инициативе Беларуси Организация Объединенных Наций провозгласила третье десятилетие после Чернобыля, 2006-2016 годы, Десятилетием реабилитации и устойчивого развития пострадавших регионов, осуществление которого направлено на обеспечение возвращения пострадавшего населения к нормальной жизни, поддержку национальных стратегий пострадавших стран, включая сферу образования. Это станет практическим вкладом ООН в оказание содействия государствам, находящимся в чрезвычайных ситуациях, включая обеспечение доступа к образованию.

REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI



Statement

BY

***H.E Hon. Pierre NKURUNZIZA, President of the
Republic of Burundi***

During

***The United Nations General Assembly Thematic and
Interactive Debate on “access to education in emergencies
and post-crisis and transition situations caused by man-made
conflicts or natural disasters”***

New York, 18 march 2009

Your Excellency, the Secretary General of the United Nations,

Your Excellency, the President of the United Nations General Assembly,

Your Highness the First Lady of Qatar,

Dear Participants

It is a real pleasure and an honor to be with you again after our successful gathering in Doha last December. I am pleased to see that the debate on the important issue of Education is continuing, to which I hope to contribute with our Burundi experience. In line with my intervention in Doha, I will develop the following points today:

- **First**, I will propose to replace the terminology on “fragile states” by words of hope and partnership.
- **Second**, I will show that Burundi did make large investments in the education sector, even though our national budget is as small as a medium size company here in New York.
- **Third**, I will show how Education for All contributes to a reduced risk to conflict.
- **Fourth**, I will propose concrete actions to improve the quality of our schooling system.
- Last, but not least, I wish to emphasize the need for all partners to streamline and coordinate their activities better around our priorities.

Fragile States

In Doha, I stated that the terminology around “fragile states” should only be used with caution. I am aware of the semantic debate among development practitioners, such as: “we will only speak of countries in a fragile situation”. But that does not take away the feeling of paternalism that is attached to these words. I strongly feel that it is not a neutral terminology. Apart from the emotional implications, it has financial and political implications. Moreover, it gives us a bad image in the eyes of foreign investors we so badly need. My **first proposition** therefore is to replace the terminology around “fragile states” by words of hope and partnership, of constructive relationships where we treat each other with respect. This is how we, the Burundians, want to become a proud people in the eyes of the world.

Investments

Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to give you an update of the situation in the education sector of Burundi. In 2005, I took a decision on free basic education for all children. This has had the following **results**:

- In 2005: 53% of the children between 6 and 12 years went to school, whereas today, the net enrollment is 85%. This is almost a doubling in the course of only a few years.
- During the last 3 years we built around 7,000 new classes and last year alone we distributed 50,000 school benches as well as note books to all children.
- We have finalized our National Strategic Plan for the Education Sector. This is a major step in better alignment and coordination for our financial and technical partners.
- We increased the spending on education by 50% for our national budget 2009 and now have 23% of our recurrent budget spent in the education sector. For your information, we recently carried out a census of our civil servants and we counted 57,000, of which 41,000 are in the education sector.

I give you these figures to show you that a post-conflict country with only a limited budget, of around 500 million US dollars, can still make an **enormous progress** if the political will exists. We, in Burundi, made it one of our highest priorities and the results are therefore tangible.

Reduced risks of conflict

Dear Participants, it is true that education plays a critical role in conflicts, as is rightfully mentioned in the background note of today's meeting. In Burundi, schooling has been used as a weapon. Those that were educated were the first ones to be killed in 1972. Later on, education was used for ethnic exclusion. One ethnic group was systematically refused access to schooling. Education was seen as wealth. This imbalance in education became a major source of conflict between ethnic groups, between poor and rich, between provinces and between urban and rural zones. We therefore stress the importance of education for all, in order to fight against the fragmentation of our society. All should have equal access to education, as an equal right to develop one's capacities: the same rights for all, which is a factor of reconciliation.

Quality of education

Let me now come to my fourth point. I am fully aware of the challenges in the education sector. Even if 85% of the children do go to school, the best quality is not always guaranteed. Some children still have to sit in an unfitting class for their schooling, or in a class of over 80 pupils, or without any paper or pencil to write with. But more fundamentally, it seems that we have lost the link between the needs of our society and our education system. We have lost the pertinence of our schooling system. Are the skills that we teach our children really the skills they need? Are our teaching methods anchored on Burundian values and traditional culture or are they copied from the Western world? In

Burundi, the children used to learn from their surrounding family and the people that lived on the same hill, from an oral tradition. We used stories and songs to teach. Let me therefore propose to work in partnerships to find an intelligent mix of skills, some as a contribution of the western world and some from our own culture.

Donors and Coordination

I will finish by addressing the **donor community**. We naturally applaud the strong call to the General Assembly for increased financing as well as the growing awareness for the need of better coordination mechanisms. We subscribe to the need for minimum standards as proposed by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). Nevertheless, allow me **some propositions**:

- Take our **local context as the main reference** and do not make a blueprint for all countries. This means that a cluster approach as advocated by the UN system is not always the most preferable solution. In Burundi, we have sector working groups, bringing the development partners and the government together, and we wish that the humanitarian actors align their interventions to existing instead of parallel coordination mechanisms.
- In countries like Burundi the line between development and humanitarian interventions in the education sector is very thin. We therefore wish a **dialogue with all the stakeholders**, bilateral and multilateral donors as well as international non-governmental organizations. We also desire a clear alignment of these partners to our strategic plan. Unfortunately, this is not always the case!
- And please, do not propose to re-invent the wheel concerning coordination mechanisms. The **models as laid out in the Paris and Accra Declarations exist**. We strongly urge the headquarters of our donors to communicate better to offices in the field to implement these declarations on aid efficiency, instead of continuing to produce small isolated projects.
- We also propose to be **cautious in proposing “transition measures”**. The transition measures almost pushed us to have a transition education strategy, whereas we were in a hurry to develop a “full-fledged” strategy. Transition measures could keep the country in a logic of “the short term” and “emergencies” whereas we want to develop our strategies in the longer term.

With these few notes I will close my intervention. I hope to contribute to today’s debate and I thank you for your kind attention.

GA Thematic Debate on Education in Emergencies (New York, 18 March 2009)

Statement on behalf of the European Union

Delivered by Mr. Petr Kaiser

Deputy Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the United Nations

Panel 1 – Why We Need to Act Now

Your Highness, Mr. Moderator, Distinguished panelists,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The European Union deems the right to education as one of the most valuable assets and a fundamental human right. The EU strives to ensure quality, unbiased and gender-sensitive education for all its citizens and is committed to assist other countries in achieving the same. As recognised in the World Declaration on Education for All, the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All, the Millennium Development Goals and other key documents, education plays an essential role in social development, contributing immensely to building a society of peace, justice and prosperity.

The EU fully recognises that children in countries affected by armed conflicts or natural disasters face great difficulties in the full enjoyment of the right to education. The European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO) as well as individual EU member states have supported many projects related to education in emergencies.

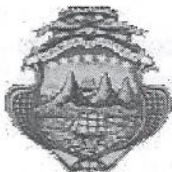
The European Union shares the concern expressed by the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Mr. Vernor Muñoz, about the lack of funding for education in the context of humanitarian aid.

Globally, only a fraction of funding for emergency humanitarian assistance is being earmarked for education. The European Union has recognised the importance of support to education in emergencies and is seeking ways of integrating it into comprehensive longer-term policies.

We consider the establishment of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies an important step forward, especially as far as awareness-raising and mainstreaming of the issue are concerned. However, strong partnerships between governments, relevant UN bodies, most notably the education cluster of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee as well as international NGOs and initiatives such as the Education for All–Fast Track Initiative need to be built or strengthened to address the issue through concrete actions on the ground.

The humanitarian community needs to integrate education into standard humanitarian early response schemes and allocate necessary funds for the education component of humanitarian actions. At times of conflict or post-disaster chaos, educational infrastructure is often destroyed or paralysed. This underscores the crucial role played by humanitarian actors: Humanitarian response is often the sole instrument of providing children with access to some educational activities.

Thank you.



Intervención en el diálogo temático interactivo de la Asamblea General sobre el acceso a la educación en situaciones de emergencia, pos-crisis y transición, causadas por el hombre, los conflictos o los desastres naturales

Embajador Jorge Urbina Ortega
Representante Permanente de Costa Rica
17 de marzo de 2009

Sr. Presidente,

Quiero empezar agradeciendo al Presidente de la Asamblea General por su decidido apoyo en la convocatoria de este debate. Asimismo agradezco las valiosas presentaciones de los panelistas de esta mañana, las cuales han dejado claro la importancia de garantizar el derecho a la educación en situaciones de emergencia y los principales desafíos para su plena y efectiva realización.

Debido a las limitaciones de tiempo quisiera destacar únicamente dos aspectos que nos parecen los más importantes:

El primero de ellos tiene que ver con la perspectiva de los derechos de la niñez en el análisis de riesgos y en la respuesta a emergencias. El segundo aspecto se relaciona con la necesidad de un enfoque más comprensivo de la asistencia humanitaria que permita encadenar la respuesta a emergencias con la transición hacia la reconstrucción y hacia el desarrollo, incluida la prevención. En ambos puntos el acceso a la educación es un pilar fundamental para la rehabilitación individual y colectiva de las personas y sociedades afectadas por las emergencias.

Con respecto al primer tema, la educación como derecho humano conlleva la obligación primordial de los Estados de garantizar el acceso a la misma y la responsabilidad política de la comunidad internacional para proporcionar la cooperación suficiente a fin de asegurar su realización efectiva. Por lo tanto, si reconocemos la educación como un imperativo de los derechos humanos, aun en situaciones de emergencia, no debe suspenderse ni la obligación principal de los Estados ni la responsabilidad subsidiaria de la comunidad internacional con respecto a los estándares mínimos de acceso y calidad de la educación de las poblaciones afectadas, sin discriminación de ninguna índole.

En este sentido acogemos las valiosas recomendaciones que ha realizado el Relator Especial para asegurar la continuidad del derecho a la educación durante las emergencias, como son la inclusión de planes flexibles, no discriminatorios, sensibles al género e inclusivos en los programas educativos generales, con base en las Normas

Mínimas para la educación en situaciones de emergencia, crisis crónicas y reconstrucción temprana, desarrolladas por la Red Interinstitucional para la Educación en Situaciones de Emergencia (INEE).

Con referencia a mi segundo punto, como lo han destacado los panelistas de hoy, pese a que en la mayoría de los casos las emergencias humanitarias interrumpen, deterioran o destruyen parcial o totalmente el acceso a la educación, la atención de las agencias humanitarias que intervienen en las emergencias es muy limitada o inexistente. Esto hace aun más difícil el restablecimiento de los servicios educativos, a veces durante períodos de tiempo excesivamente prolongados. Asimismo, el énfasis tradicional en alimentos, medicinas y albergues promueve la dependencia y no permite la construcción de capacidades, mientras que la educación tiene el potencial suficiente para convertirse en una herramienta de protección para reducir la vulnerabilidad, así como en una plataforma para la realización de otros derechos y en una base para lograr la estabilidad y promover el desarrollo.

Es necesario un enfoque comprensivo que incluya a la educación en los planes de asistencia humanitaria y asegure la continuidad y la sostenibilidad financiera desde las primeras etapas de la respuesta a la emergencia y hasta la reconstrucción. Por esta razón es de suma importancia contar con un mayor involucramiento de los países donantes y la creación de mecanismos de financiamiento como fideicomisos o fondos voluntarios.

Finalmente, mi Delegación considera oportuno continuar la discusión sobre los múltiples aspectos sobre este tema, analizando con mayor profundidad las implicaciones de las emergencias humanitarias causadas por el hombre, los conflictos o los desastres naturales en el derecho a la educación, así como posibles acciones para una mejor consideración de la educación en el establecimiento de las prioridades de la asistencia humanitaria.

Muchas gracias.



FRANCE

63^{ÈME} SESSION DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE DES NATIONS UNIES

Dialogue thématique interactif sur "l'accès à l'éducation dans les situations d'urgence, d'après-crise et de transition"

**Intervention prononcée par M. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Représentant permanent adjoint
de la France auprès des Nations Unies**

New York, le 18 mars 2009

(Vérifier au prononcé)

Monsieur le Président,
Mesdames et Messieurs,

Garantir l'accès universel à l'éducation à l'horizon 2015 constitue un objectif agréé par la communauté internationale, à la fois dans le cadre de la réalisation du « monde digne des enfants », que l'Assemblée générale a promis aux enfants du monde en 2002, et dans celui des objectifs du millénaire pour le développement.

Dans cette perspective, la France a fait de l'éducation un secteur de concentration de son aide dans les deux tiers des pays avec lesquels elle a signé des documents cadre de partenariat. Au niveau multilatéral, la France contribue également à la réalisation de l'objectif d'éducation pour tous à travers le fonds européen de développement, les fonds de la Banque Mondiale engagés dans ce secteur, ou à travers l'UNESCO. Elle soutient activement l'initiative 'fast-track' de mise en oeuvre accélérée de l'Education pour tous dans les pays en développement, pour laquelle elle a annoncé le 25 septembre 2008 une contribution supplémentaire de 50 millions d'euros.

Nous savons cependant aujourd'hui que l'absence d'accès à l'éducation dans les conflits armés est responsable à elle seule de la situation dans laquelle se trouvent la moitié des 75 millions d'enfants qui aujourd'hui n'ont toujours pas accès à l'école.

Nous souhaitons rendre hommage aux actions entreprises notamment par l'UNICEF, l'UNESCO et par les ONGs internationales et locales afin de permettre l'accès des enfants à l'éducation dans les situations les plus difficiles, par exemple dans les camps de réfugiés ou de personnes déplacées, ou pour faire en sorte que le retour rapide à une scolarité normale soit intégré dans les efforts d'assistance et de reconstruction suivant des catastrophes naturelles.

Il convient de souligner dans ce contexte l'importance particulière que revêt l'accès libre, sans contraintes et sans discrimination des enfants à l'assistance humanitaire, y compris celle fournie par les acteurs internationaux.

Dans les situations de conflit, la question de l'augmentation des soutiens techniques et financiers aux programmes d'éducation est indissociable de celle de la responsabilisation des parties. Trop souvent, les parties aux conflits armés violent le droit international humanitaire. Par leurs actions, qu'il s'agisse d'attaques contre les écoles, les écoliers ou leurs professeurs, d'opérations de recrutement dans les écoles ou à leurs abords, ou d'utilisation du système éducatif à des fins de propagande et d'incitation à la haine de l'autre, elles réduisent à néant les efforts entrepris pour permettre aux enfants de réaliser leur droit à l'éducation.

La France a soutenu en partenariat avec l'UNICEF le développement des « engagements et principes de Paris sur les enfants associés aux forces et groupes armés », agréés en Février 2007. Les principes de Paris reconnaissent pleinement le rôle que peut jouer l'éducation, à la fois dans la prévention du recrutement et de l'utilisation d'enfants dans les conflits armés, et dans la réinsertion et la réhabilitation des enfants qui ont été associés aux forces et groupes armés. Ces engagements ont déjà été souscrits par plus de 75 Etats, et nous espérons que l'Assemblée générale, comme le Conseil de Sécurité, continueront à contribuer à leur prise en compte et à leur mise en oeuvre par l'ensemble des intervenants.

La France soutient pleinement la Représentante spéciale du Secrétaire général pour les enfants et les conflits armés et son engagement avec les parties aux conflits en vue d'une meilleure protection de l'enfance, y compris sur la question du respect des lieux d'éducation comme « zones de paix ». Nous pensons par ailleurs que le mécanisme de rapport et de suivi mis en place par la résolution 1612(2005) du Conseil de Sécurité, qui repose sur des critères objectifs excluant toute sélectivité, constitue un instrument utile pour demander des comptes aux parties aux conflits armés, y compris sur leurs actions à l'encontre du système éducatif et des écoliers.

Enfin, la justice, que ce soit dans le cadre de juridictions nationales, internationales ou mixtes, a un rôle important à jouer pour assurer que ceux qui s'en prennent aux écoles et à l'éducation soient punis. Il est donc essentiel que l'Assemblée générale continue à soutenir les efforts engagés par ces juridictions, et notamment par la Cour pénale internationale, pour que les responsables de violations des droits de l'enfant, soient tenus responsables de leurs actes.

Merci Monsieur le Président./.



**Remarks by the Permanent Representative of Georgia H.E. Alexander Lomaia
at the United Nations General Assembly Thematic Debate on
“Access to Education in Emergency, Post-Crisis and Transition Situations”
March 18, 2008**

Check against delivery

First, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly—not only for having invited me to participate in this interactive dialogue, but for placing a spotlight on this critical and heartbreaking issue.

My time is limited, and so I will focus on describing the deprivations being suffered by children in the occupied territories of Georgia.

After the insult of the Russian invasion in August, today these kids are suffering the injury of being deprived a proper education in their own language.

In my view, it is their very *identity* that is being stolen from them. Left in many cases without homes, now their sense of self is being taken.

In this house, where we celebrate the plural nature of humanity and the sanctity of minority rights rights, this is a violation that we must not tolerate.

Allow me to give you just a few examples of what is taking place; everything I cite comes from reports by international organizations, including, most recently, a March 11 resolution of the Council of Europe.

Also, I must note that while the Russian invasion has brought yet more hardship in yet more areas of Georgia, the conditions I describe have prevailed—to one degree or another—in Russian-controlled parts of my country since the 1990s.

In Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Russian occupying forces and their proxies have driven out all Georgian civil and military personnel. Human rights and civil liberties are systematically ignored, especially in areas populated by ethnic Georgians; the situation has deteriorated sharply in recent months.

The August invasion led to the destruction or severe damage of 99 educational institutions. Schools have been shelled, burnt down, looted, school furniture and educational materials have been damaged, including school laboratories, libraries, and computer equipment.

Schooling was largely disrupted after the invasion, and it still has not resumed fully in all areas. But where schools are functioning, they do so under the rules of the occupiers. In Akhlagori Public School No. 3, it is prohibited to teach in Georgian; classes are only held in Russian and must abide strictly to the curriculum approved by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation.

This is a trend that has been confirmed by ODIHR throughout the occupied territories where ethnic Georgians reside: Hours of instruction in Russian have been increased, while the hours of instruction in Georgian have been reduced.

In the Gali region, since 2003, ethnic Georgians have had no or limited access to education in their native language. In its 2008 Human Rights Report US State Department stated that, “teachers who did not speak Abkhaz instructed their students in Georgian. Those who did so were often subject to harassment and prosecution by proxy regime.”

In 2007, Abkhaz de facto officials imposed Russian-language textbooks on history, geography and national culture. Our government has protested these moves, as has the UN Secretary General in his reports.

The ethnic hatred that motivates such actions is equally disturbing: The proxy governor of the Gali district, Ruslan Kishmaria, did not hide his attitude toward the language used by local ethnic Georgians in speaking with a Washington Post report. He said, and I quote: “We hate the Georgians. Why would we want to use their language?”

Understandably, some parents will go to any means to secure a Georgian education for their children; but even when they’re willing to take extraordinary measures, they face obstacles. Georgian children in the occupied territories are not allowed to go to Georgian schools in adjacent districts administered by our government. To take one example: On October 21, 2008, Russian forces closed the road from the village of Saberio (Gali district) to Tsalendjikha and prohibited the local children from going to the Georgian school in Chkoushi village (Tsalendjikha district). As a result, around 60 children were deprived of the possibility to study in Georgian.

Another serious impediment to the right to education is the new border regime in the Gali region. Georgian teachers in Gali were receiving their salaries from the Government of Georgia; however after the closure of crossing points, these teachers can no longer receive their salary.

In closing, allow me to make the following observation: The most tragic way to think of what is taking place in our occupied territories is this: The educational system is being used as the ultimate means of ethnic cleansing. By depriving Georgian children of their right to education, the occupiers are snuffing out a people and a culture that has lived in these territories for centuries or longer.

Thank you.

Statement by Mr. Takashi Ashiki
Minister of the Permanent Mission of Japan

To the United Nations

Panel I : Rights and Promises: Education in Emergencies
- Why We Need to Act Now

General Assembly Thematic and Interactive Debate on
Education in Emergencies

New York

18 March 2009

Mr. President,

I would like to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, for holding this very important thematic debate, and to all the panelists for their inspiring explanations.

Since Japan considers that guaranteeing education in emergency situations is a vital component of the concept of human security, as well as that it is a critical element of peace-building, we have long supported education in emergency all around the world. Due to the time constraint, I will offer only one example.

Recently, the Japanese Government, in cooperation with UNICEF, commenced a project in Afghanistan named “the Project for Construction of Educational Facilities in Kabul City”. In this project, the Afghanistan government will cooperate with UNICEF for the construction in 48 elementary and intermediate schools of around 1,000 classrooms, in addition to improving their water supplies, toilets and playgrounds. With this cooperation, it is estimated that 80,000 more children can start their studies in these schools and that the quality of education will definitely improve.

Mr. President,

I would like to refer to our efforts in the African region, too. In Niger, the Government has established school management committees consisting of local community members to improve community and parental awareness about schools. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) proposed, upon request from the Government of Niger, a model called “School for All” as a way of helping the committee function more effectively. This model includes democratic election of the committee members, development of school improvement activity plans by the committees in close consultation with local communities, and monitoring of related tasks, such as the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the school improvement activity plans.

These efforts have resulted in not only the expansion of the children’s educational opportunities, but also qualitative improvements in education and community support for schooling.

Although Niger is not in an emergency situation, I hope we can make maximum use of our successful experience in the country for use in such situations.

Thank you.

Diálogo Temático Interactivo sobre el acceso a la educación en emergencia, pos crisis y en transición debido a situaciones de conflicto causados por el hombre o a desastres naturales

Intervención de S.E. María Rubiales de Chamorro, Representante Permanente de Nicaragua ante las Naciones Unidas

18 de marzo de 2009

Primeramente queremos agradecer a Qatar por su liderazgo en este tema y especialmente a Su Alteza la Sra. Sheika Mozah Bin Nasser Al Missned, enviada especial de la UNESCO para la Educación Básica y Superior por su destacada labor.

Agradecemos al Dr. Cahill y a los panelistas por las excelentes exposiciones que nos han brindado sobre este tema, que nos traen nuevas luces para continuar impulsando este importante asunto en las Naciones Unidas.

Nicaragua es uno de los países que ha apoyado la iniciativa de traer el tema a la Asamblea General, para permitir un debate amplio entre los Estados Miembros y avanzar hacia propuestas concretas que garanticen el derecho a la educación en situación de emergencia.

Como Gobierno revolucionario la educación ocupa un lugar privilegiado que deviene de nuestra convicción de que la educación es un derecho humano fundamental e indispensable para alcanzar el desarrollo de nuestros pueblos. En este sentido, la educación en situación de emergencia adquiere aún mayor relevancia.

La celebración de este evento es una oportunidad para hacer un llamado a los Estados y Agencias Especializadas de las Naciones Unidas sobre la necesidad de incluir la educación como parte integral de la respuesta humanitaria a los conflictos y desastres naturales.

En Nicaragua nos esforzamos por cumplir con la obligación de asegurar el derecho a la educación en situación de emergencia. Por la posición geográfica que presenta Nicaragua en el continente Americano, nuestro país es azotado constantemente por fenómenos Hidrometeorológicos de diversas categorías. El último de ellos ocurrido en Septiembre del 2007, el Huracán Félix, de categoría 5 en la escala de Zafiro-Simpson, afectó fuertemente nuestras Costas del Caribe y las consecuencias aún se sufren en el país.

Hemos vivido en carne propia la triste historia de ver interrumpidos los ciclos escolares porque las instalaciones han sido ocupadas como centros de refugio, o porque los caminos a la escuela se dañaron o simplemente porque las escuelas sufrieron tremendos daños físicos y necesitan ser reconstruidas.

La Ley 337, Ley creadora del Sistema Nacional para la Prevención, Mitigación y Atención de Desastres establece el Comité Nacional encargado de establecer las políticas, planificación, dirección y coordinación del Sistema. El Ministerio de Educación y Deportes, junto con otros Ministerios relevantes de la Administración Pública, forman parte integrante de dicho Comité.

Dentro del Ministerio de Educación, se formó una Unidad Técnica de Enlace para Desastres (UTED), responsable de realizar labores antes, durante y después de una emergencia. Las acciones de respuesta del Ministerio de Educación, se clasifican según el tiempo que dure la respuesta, también, pueden ser de carácter administrativo, educativas, psicosociales, alimenticias, políticas o legales, de infraestructura y de coordinación.

Durante la fase de reconstrucción de las escuelas, estamos garantizando que la nueva infraestructura cumpla con los requisitos mínimos de construcción para resistencia a los desastres. Asimismo, hemos detectado un gran número de escuelas que requieren inversión para minimizar los riesgos ante una catástrofe. Sin embargo, lamentablemente aunque nuestra voluntad política es ambiciosa no contamos con los recursos suficientes.

Hacemos un llamado a los países donantes a tomar conciencia sobre la importancia de considerar la educación como parte de la ayuda y la respuesta humanitaria. En países como Nicaragua, la escasez de fondos hace más difícil el retorno a la normalidad.

En cuanto a los países en situación de conflicto, compartimos la preocupación sobre la necesidad de asegurar que las escuelas se respeten como zonas de paz y sean protegidas de acuerdo a numerosos convenios internacionales y el Derecho Internacional Humanitario, al tiempo que condenamos enérgicamente ataques indiscriminados o directos a las escuelas.

Finalmente queremos unimos a los países que han expresado la importancia de avanzar en este tema a través de una resolución de la Asamblea General que aborde los retos y las oportunidades estratégicas de la Educación en situación de emergencia. No podemos seguir ignorando los millones de niños que están fuera de las Escuelas debido a conflictos armados o por desastres naturales.

Muchas Gracias!



NORWAY

**General Assembly
Sixty-third session**

**The interactive Thematic Dialogue of the UN General Assembly on Access to
Education in Emergency, Post-crisis and Transition situations – caused by man-
made conflicts or natural disasters**

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Summary of interventions

By

**Mr Jostein Leiro
Deputy Director General**

New York, 18 March 2009

For education for all to become a reality, education needs to be respected, protected and fulfilled. We have committed ourselves to the Millennium Development Goal number 2 on education for all within 2015, and to be able to reach this goal, we need to intensify our efforts.

There are not only a few reasons, but 75 million reasons for including education in humanitarian response. Namely the 75 million children that are denied their right to education. The enrolment rates have increased substantially. It shows what governments can do with the support from the international community, and that it actually leads to progress. This should encourage us to do more. With the progress that has been made, and with the acknowledgement of the importance of the emergency education, why are we then not doing more? We tend to look at education as secondary to fresh water, food, shelter, blankets. But when we take this forward, we should try to see how we in practical manners can promote education in humanitarian situations. Education is an effective means of protecting children, and should also be seen as a way to make humanitarian assistance to children and youth more effective.

The cluster and humanitarian appeals are financing tools as well as means to integrate education in humanitarian assistance. They are also means to uphold education as a human right at all times in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Norwegian delegation recognises that further efforts are clearly needed to highlight education both as a lifesaving and life sustaining measure. Emergency education has to be more systematically addressed. In this regard, we appreciate that the Special Rapporteur applies the tripartite concept of respecting, protecting and fulfilling the right to education in emergencies.

Norway has a number of concrete recommendations to national authorities, donors, non-governmental organisations and UN organisations:

National authorities

1. Give priority to realizing education for all by developing measures to provide education for all groups of society, including children and adolescents living in emergencies by integrating it into national emergency plans;
2. Prevent attacks on schools, students and teachers by strengthening efforts to end impunity and prevent the attacks by implementing measures to address the ignorance and misconceptions that lie behind such threats and attitudes;
3. Fight corruption in non-transparent environments such as emergencies and post-crisis.

Donors

1. Make education an integral part of donors' humanitarian response.
2. Increase contributions to education in emergencies, and make contributions more predictable, through for example the CERF (Central Emergency Response Fund).
3. Support and fund emergency education through the education cluster.

NGOS and UN organisations

1. The UN should consider the usefulness of developing indicators for state obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the right to education in emergency, post-crisis and transition situations.
2. Education should be fully integrated in needs assessments and in consolidated appeals.
3. The cooperation between the education cluster and the other clusters be strengthened and one should make sure to avoid overlaps and fill gaps.
4. OCHA could play a more important role in the emergency education work.
5. Educational experts working in the development field should strengthen their cooperation with humanitarian actors.
6. Utilize schools as effective hubs for distribution of humanitarian assistance for children and youth.

Recommendations to all:

1. Ensure respect for the right to development by making it a reality.
2. Improve monitoring, knowledge and identify bottlenecks by studies and research on best practices.
3. Realize that education in emergencies need to start before the crisis strikes and by building it into prevention and emergency response plans, as well as integrating it into peace negotiations.
4. Integrate the gender perspective in all emergency education efforts.
5. Let the voices of the children and adolescents themselves be heard in planning, decision-making and implementation.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Intervention

by

**H.E. Ambassador Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser
Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar
to the United Nations**

**At
the Substantive Debate of the General Assembly
of the United Nations**

**on
Education in Emergencies**

* * * * *

New York, Wednesday, 18 March 2009

At the start, I would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly, for accepting the invitation addressed by the States of Qatar, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Norway, to convene this important thematic debate and for the strenuous efforts that he and the members of his office have made in the distinctive preparation for this important debate. I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks and gratitude to Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Misned, Consort of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, and UNESCO's Special Envoy for Basic and Higher Education, for her leading role in the promotion of the global responsibility to ensure quality education in times of conflict and emergency crisis, for accepting the invitation of the President of the General Assembly, for delivering a keynote speech, and for her distinctive and valuable contribution to our debate today. Her Highness participation has enriched the debate on a critical question, namely the realization of the right to education in emergencies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Convening this thematic discussion constitutes an explicit recognition by the international community of the gap that exists in the realization of the right to education in areas affected by armed conflicts and natural disasters. Such gap has prevented us from achieving the goals contained in the 2000 Dakar Framework for Action on Education and the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. The official statements during the morning session have stressed that the seriousness of the situation poses a threat to quality education for all. The repeated and deliberate targeting of students and teachers, in addition to attacks on schools and educational buildings, including educational buildings of the United Nations, and the frequent impunity for such acts, constitute an explicit threat to this sacred right and a flagrant violation of the norms and rules of the international law of human rights and humanitarian law.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The distinguished speakers have explained this morning that the sanctity of the principle of the of the right to quality education for all in crisis-affected and post-crisis areas is a two-fold subject: the first relates to the safeguard and protection of this right in accordance with the international norms and rules, and the second relates to its sustainability. Both aspects complement each other, and neither one can be implemented without the other. Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned has shed the

light in her keynote speech on what it called *the separation wall*. We share her view that such wall prevents us from achieving the international goals and the implementation of international legal standards to face the frequent violation of the right to education in the areas of armed conflict and areas under foreign occupation. Such aggression is being perpetrated by people who are indifferent towards the sanctity of this right, which is a universal right and not only for a chosen group of peoples. On the other side, other speakers, particularly Mr. Vernon Mons, Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, have focused on the development and humanitarian aspects. We share his view that the traditional priorities of intervention that consider education a development activity more than a human activity, have delayed the work of the international community in the area of focusing on the realization of the right to education in times of crises.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Her Highness has outlined a road map to address what we consider it the first and fundamental dilemma, namely the phenomenon of repeated violation of the right to education. In fact, we have recognized that such aggression is worsening and threatening the principles and foundations of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human rights, including the principles of international peace and security. Her Highness has put forward solutions based on two fundamental components, namely deterrence and punishment of all those who do not respect the sanctity of the right to education. As for the second dilemma, the solution resides in approaching the right to education in times of crises as an integral part of the humanitarian response, and to take necessary measures to provide education along with health, food and shelter as soon as a crisis develops. In conclusion, and based on the premise that the realization of the right to education is a national priority for the State of Qatar as the best way to contain violence and ensure sustainable peace, we reiterate, from this rostrum, that the State of Qatar will cooperate with Member States and partners in transforming these practical initiatives on the protection and sustainability of education in crises-affected areas, to reality, for we believe that it is high time to move from words to deeds. We will start working on including this very important issue on the agenda of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

I thank you.



**Informal General Assembly Thematic Debate on Access to Education in Emergency,
Post-crisis and Transition Situations caused by man-made or natural disasters,
New York, 18 March 2009**

***Statement by the United Nations Development Programme
Lead Agency for the IASC Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery***

UNDP welcomes the initiative of the President of the General Assembly to convene an interactive thematic dialogue on the Right to Education in Emergency, Post-crisis and Transition Situations. UNDP believes that this dialogue is very timely, given the fact that about half of the 75 million children currently out of school, live in conflict affected countries, and that schools have increasingly become the targets of attacks in conflict and are being increasingly misused by warring factions to stage attacks

As designated Cluster lead for the IASC Early Recovery Cluster, UNDP fully recognizes the importance of education in mitigating the psychosocial impact of conflict and disasters, and the important contribution it can make as an essential building block for social recovery. For education to succeed in emergency and post-crisis situations, it should be addressed as **one of the key elements of early recovery**, which begins within the timeframe of emergency intervention and seeks to generate self-sustaining, nationally owned, resilient processes for post-crisis recovery. Along with education, other equally important areas for early recovery include security, the restoration of basic services, livelihoods, shelter, and post-crisis governance. As the IASC Education Cluster has indicated, specific activities in the area of education may include:

- National policy development and advocacy on issues such as financing of education, gender, disadvantaged groups, building-back-better
- Capacity development for Ministry of Education at different levels
- Using restoration of schooling as “normalization” and establishing stability for communities
- Restoring teacher training, school supplies, information management etc
- Developing programmes for children who have missed out on education such as accelerated learning programmes
- Rehabilitation of schools (building-back-better), provision of furniture, teacher training manuals
- Establishing children’s clubs, resource centers for clusters of schools
- Developing a code of conduct for schools and teachers
- Payment/incentives schemes for (volunteer) teachers

The Early Recovery Cluster is working to enhance links with other clusters to ensure the mainstreaming of early recovery across all clusters and sectors. **Links between the Early Recovery cluster and the Education Cluster are vital** to ensure continuation of education during emergencies, through early recovery and on to longer-term recovery and development. Rebuilding education systems in early recovery focuses on reconnecting education in crisis-affected areas to the national system, or building back better by reforming the entire system to create a more inclusive and better quality education system. UNDP works closely with the other UN and non-governmental partners within the IASC Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER) to promote synergies and emphasize sectoral inter-dependence.

UNDP believes that everything should be done to strengthen education in emergency situations, the best preparation for effective continuity of education in crisis and post-crisis settings takes place in non-crisis settings, long before an emergency occurs. UNDP has consistently worked to support the international agenda on education as a universal right and as an integral component of global human development, including through its support to governments in the formulation of poverty reduction strategies that increase access to social services including education. The educational component of UNDP's **Human Development Index** (the others being life expectancy at birth and GDP per capita) is comprised of adult literacy rates and the combined gross enrolment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary schooling. All of these indicators are gravely affected by conflict and disaster which take a heavy toll on national capacities to provide formal and non formal education to the population. Continuity of educational services in crisis and post-crisis settings thus starts in non-crisis situations as an integral component of national strategies to promote sustained human development.

UNDP strongly urges governments and development partners to address education within the broader context of early recovery in both crisis and post-crisis settings in order to build a stronger foundation for sustained recovery from crises in the long-term, and consolidate peace by preventing a relapse into conflict. In this regard, the continuity of education, in addition to being a fundamental human right, is also a peacebuilding strategy and should be included in all early recovery strategies. For such strategies to be effective, additional and predictable funding for early recovery from crises will be needed to guarantee that education for both children and adults, along with other sectors, will receive the attention and support it needs.



**Statement by the Special Rapporteur on the Right to
Education**

Mr. Vernor MUÑOZ VILLALOBOS

Interactive thematic dialogue of the U.N. General
Assembly on :

**“Access to Education in Emergency, Post-crisis and
Transition situations-caused by Man-made Conflicts or
Natural Disasters”**

Trusteeship Council Chamber
UN Headquarters, New York
18 March 2009



**Presentación del Relator Especial sobre el Derecho a la Educación,
Vernor Muñoz, con motivo del Debate temático interactivo de la
Asamblea General de la ONU, sobre Educación en emergencias**

Nueva York, 18 marzo 2009

Estimado Señor Presidente

Distinguidas y distinguidos delegados

Representantes de agencias, instituciones y organizaciones no gubernamentales, profesores, colegas:

Deseo antes que nada agradecer al Presidente de la Asamblea General la invitación que me hiciera para participar en este debate dedicado a un tema de gran actualidad e importancia, que precisamente ocupó mi atención en el último informe que presenté al Consejo de Derechos Humanos: "el derecho a la educación en situaciones de emergencia".

Pero además quisiera, señor Moderador, felicitar a su Excelencia don Miguel D'Escoto, por la feliz iniciativa de tratar este tema en uno de los más importantes foros de discusión política. Esta trascendental decisión refuerza las acciones que hemos venido realizando y debe llevar a comprometer a los gobiernos a asumir mayores responsabilidades en la realización del derecho a la educación.

Quiero agradecer también a la Misión de Qatar ante las Naciones Unidas, por su contribución generosa con la organización de esta actividad.

Las consecuencias de los conflictos armados y de los desastres naturales, específicamente sobre la educación, han llegado a ser cada vez más visibles. Tanto los unos como los otros pueden ocurrir en cualquier región y, a veces, sin previo aviso.

Ocurren en Estados que pueden hacerles frente financieramente y en otros que no, pero lo cierto es que la población civil es la principal víctima.

La evidencia demuestra que los asesinatos de estudiantes y maestras, los bombardeos y la destrucción de escuelas se han elevado dramáticamente durante los últimos cuatro años, en términos de víctimas y de brutalidad.

Durante estos años, hemos observado la destrucción de sistemas y de oportunidades educativas, pero también la limitada atención de las agencias humanitarias que intervienen en las emergencias, y la relativa ausencia de principios programáticos claros y de financiamiento para la educación.

La seguridad en las escuelas forma parte del derecho a la educación –me refiero a la seguridad física, cognitiva y socioafectiva-. Ello implica, por lo tanto, la responsabilidad de los Estados de idear métodos efectivos de protección.

El impacto de las situaciones de emergencia es enorme sobre las personas con discapacidades. Además, el conflicto armado y la violencia política son las causas principales de lesión, de discapacidad física, y las primariamente responsables de las condiciones de más de 4 millones de niños y niñas que actualmente viven con discapacidades, así como de la falta de servicios básicos y apoyo mínimo.

A esta falta de apoyo debe agregarse el declive económico y las dificultades sanitarias que acompañan las emergencias. No hay disponibilidad de datos estadísticos confiables que permitan comparar el impacto entre los desastres naturales y los conflictos armados. Sin embargo, sí es posible identificar un dato concreto: aproximadamente un 90% de las personas afectadas por desastres naturales viven en Estados con menor capacidad para enfrentar sus consecuencias.

Aun cuando los desastres naturales aparezcan en las estadísticas como "menos letales" que los conflictos, provocando un tercio del número de muertes, en la década de 1990 los desastres naturales afectaron a siete veces más personas que los conflictos armados. Es importante saber que los

desastres naturales son cada vez más frecuentes, ya que ocurren tres veces más a menudo desde los años noventa que lo que sucedía en la década de 1950.

Durante el tiempo de conflicto las escuelas pueden convertirse en sitios de reclutamiento de niños que son obligados a servir como soldados, lo cual constituye en sí mismo un ataque a la educación y a la vida de los niños y niñas.

Más allá del imperativo de los derechos humanos, la educación atenúa el impacto psicosocial del conflicto y de los desastres, dando un sentido de normalidad, estabilidad, estructura y esperanza durante una época de crisis, y proporciona herramientas esenciales para la reconstrucción social y la estabilidad económica futura.

La educación puede también salvar vidas protegiendo contra la explotación y el daño, incluyendo el secuestro, el reclutamiento de niños por parte de grupos armados, la trata y la explotación sexual y la violencia sexual y de género.

El marco legal y político internacional de la educación en situaciones de emergencia tiene su base en la Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos y en el Pacto Internacional de Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales, que estableció alcances más precisos, al requerir la disponibilidad de la educación para todos aquellos que no han recibido o completado la educación primaria.

La Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño obliga a los Estados a garantizar, sin ningún tipo de discriminación, el acceso a la educación de todos los niños y niñas que viven en sus territorios.

Bien sabemos que la amenaza a cada uno de estos principios se agudiza en tiempos de emergencia, cuando se requiere particular atención y esfuerzo para garantizarlos.

Señoras y señores:

El reconocimiento de los artículos 4 y 28 de la Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño, acerca de la necesidad de cooperación internacional para la realización del derecho a la educación, no ha sido completa y claramente traducido en responsabilidades políticas para la comunidad internacional.

Las metas de educación para todos, que lanzó la Conferencia Mundial sobre Educación para Todos, ciertamente "movió" el lenguaje de las obligaciones de derechos humanos "hacia" una futura responsabilidad en torno a la realización de estándares mínimos en la educación básica.

Resulta interesante el comentario contenido en el marco de acción de Dakar, en el que se indica que "ningún país que se comprometa seriamente con la educación para todos se verá frustrado por falta de recursos en su empeño por lograr esa meta".

Es precisamente este principio el que nos anima a insistir en la urgencia de multiplicar la atención hacia las necesidades educativas de los niños y niñas afectados por las emergencias. Esta es una cuestión que no puede confiarse a una agenda de desarrollo, sino a una agenda de derechos humanos.

En situaciones de emergencia, los Estados tienen la obligación de asegurar el derecho a la educación, pero pueden carecer de la capacidad indispensable para hacerlo. En su lugar, han intentado asumirlas una variedad de actores - ONG internacionales, agencias nacionales e internacionales y algunos donantes- que actúan conforme a sus visiones particulares.

El reconocimiento de la coordinación creciente entre todos los actores involucrados en la educación en emergencias, con responsabilidad limitada y ejemplos compartidos de mejores prácticas, ha llevado a la construcción de estándares cualitativos que, entre otros efectos, amplían el marco legal y político en el que se espera que aquellos actores funcionen.

Tal es el caso de las Normas Mínimas para la educación en situaciones de emergencia, crisis crónicas y reconstrucción temprana, desarrolladas por la Red Interinstitucional para la Educación en Situaciones de Emergencia (INEE), que emergieron producto de la negligencia de las respuestas humanitarias internacionales respecto de la educación.

Estimados delegados:

La ayuda humanitaria tiene un bajo financiamiento, que equivale apenas a dos tercios de los fondos que se solicitan. Lamentablemente, al establecer prioridades, la educación en emergencias no está bien considerada.

En 2007, sólo aproximadamente un 1,7% de los compromisos humanitarios totales se destinó a los programas educativos y nuestro mundo continúa la carencia de financiación suficiente y adecuada para la educación en general y la falta de cumplimiento de las promesas.

Además, los donantes se resisten a considerar la educación como parte de la ayuda y respuesta humanitaria, ya que sus prioridades han pasado de financiar necesidades de desarrollo de largo plazo, a concentrarse en el alivio humanitario de desastres. En tiempos de crisis financiera y económica, resulta fundamental que los donantes profundicen la solidaridad de sus compromisos humanitarios.

Las respuestas pedagógicas específicas a las emergencias reflejan cada vez más los desafíos particularmente percibidos por parte de las poblaciones afectadas, que son a menudo diferenciadas según su situación o estatus.

Como he destacado en mis informes, sabemos que las oportunidades educativas son, incluso en épocas de paz, frecuentemente desiguales y discriminatorias. En tiempos de emergencia, la desigualdad y la discriminación se exacerbaban para los grupos marginados, valga decir, para las niñas con discapacidades, las personas con VIH/SIDA, las minorías

étnicas, las comunidades indígenas y los migrantes. Estas personas y comunidades sufren una doble o quizás múltiple discriminación.

Por este motivo, en las situaciones de emergencia, el nuevo desarrollo curricular que se requiere debe estar influido por un análisis detallado y la comprensión del papel desempeñado por el sistema educativo anterior, de manera que la emergencia misma pueda constituirse en una oportunidad para el cambio cualitativo. En otras palabras, el contexto de cada emergencia debe influir en el enfoque pedagógico de la actividad escolar en especial, y de los procesos de reconstrucción social en general.

En mi reciente informe al Consejo de Derechos Humanos, he urgido a la comunidad internacional a comprometerse más profundamente con la realización del derecho a la educación en situaciones de emergencia. Para este fin, he recomendado que, en primer lugar, este derecho sea reconocido por los Estados, donantes, agencias multilaterales y organizaciones no gubernamentales como parte integrante de la respuesta humanitaria a los conflictos y desastres naturales.

Para garantizar la prioridad inmediata de este derecho, los Estados deben:

- a) Desarrollar un plan de preparación para la educación en emergencias, como parte de los programas educativos generales, que incluyan medidas concretas para la continuidad de la educación en todos los niveles y durante todas las fases en que dure la emergencia.
- b) Resulta necesario también que los gobiernos elaboren un plan de estudios adaptable, no discriminatorio, género sensitivo y de calidad que responda a las necesidades de los niños, niñas y jóvenes durante las situaciones de emergencia, recurriendo para ello a los estándares de INEE.

Estas medidas no serían suficientes, sin embargo, sin la participación de la comunidad internacional, de modo que los donantes, por su parte, deben:

- a) Incluir la educación en todos sus planes de asistencia humanitaria e incrementar la asignación a la misma en un mínimo del 4,2% del total de la asistencia humanitaria, según sean las necesidades.

Espero que estas reflexiones puedan resultar provechosas para alimentar el diálogo sobre la nueva educación que nuestros pueblos necesitan.

Ninguna palabra tiene el poder de devolver la vida a tantos niños y niñas que han sido víctimas de las guerras y de los desastres naturales, pero estoy convencido de que a las palabras seguirán acciones y que esas acciones tendrán que garantizar un mundo más solidario y justo.

Muchas gracias.

Address by Nicholas Burnett, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO, to the United Nations General Assembly Thematic Debate on Education in Emergencies

United Nations Headquarters, New York, 18 March 2009

Thank you to the President of the UN General Assembly for hosting this debate that provides us with a very important opportunity to discuss concrete ways to strengthen support for education in emergency situations. I would also like to acknowledge the commitment and determination of Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser Al Missned, UNESCO's special envoy on basic and higher education, in advancing the cause of education for all, in particular in conflict-affected areas.

Clearly we will not reach the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All goals as long as children living in fragile and adverse circumstances are excluded from school or only have access to limited and low-quality learning opportunities. We will not reach these goals when students themselves, their teachers and other education personnel are victims of threats and attacks. But the issue goes well beyond numbers. It is about how the denial of education in fact perpetuates a cycle of violence and exclusion, how we deprive children, youth and adults of the knowledge, skills and values they need to build a better and more peaceful future.

We are here to discuss what is working and what needs to be done better. From UNESCO's perspective, I would like to focus on three specific points: the importance of monitoring, the need for strengthened collaboration and capacity building of national partners; and the pressing need for increased financing for education in situations of emergency.

Education is about knowledge, transformation and empowerment. In a number of countries, acquiring such knowledge is regarded as a threat. *Education under Attack*, UNESCO's 2007 study whose author Brendan O'Malley is with us today, was groundbreaking in documenting the incidence of attacks on schools, teachers and students and the need for concerted action to stop them. A forthcoming publication will report on the follow-up and impact of the study. Our input to the Secretary General's 8th annual report on children and armed conflict further documents grave violations in a number of countries in 2008.

This regular monitoring is crucial because silence legitimates an unacceptable situation. In some cases, monitoring can act as a deterrent; in others evidence can be a tool for negotiation and mediation. Every single attack needs to be documented, investigated and brought to international attention. Without monitoring, we cannot denounce, and without denunciation, we cannot act to protect education and to end impunity. The Security Council must be encouraged to give equal weight to all categories of grave violations and to refer certain targeted attacks to the International Criminal Court for investigation and prosecution. In short we need to ensure that a systematic, reliable global monitoring system is in place to document violent attacks on education. From its side, UNESCO is looking into the best ways to contribute to this exercise.

The second important dimension is to strengthen collaboration and capacity building in the humanitarian response to a crisis. These responses typically involve a large number of actors and continue to suffer from lack of coordination. The Interagency Standing Committee, which after some intense advocacy accepted the cluster process to be applied to education in 2006, is facilitating a more strategic response to humanitarian crises. But a major shortcoming remains in the limited role often given to national partners in the reconstruction process, in particular those from ministries of education. Under the Global Education Cluster, UNESCO is taking a lead in developing and delivering regional trainings for ministries in planning and managing education response to emergencies in East Africa and Latin America.

Capacity development is not an add-on but must be an integral part of both our crisis prevention efforts and of our response to a crisis. Many countries experience chronic and intermittent conflict. Others live through frequent natural disasters. Capacity building improves the skills and confidence of education ministries to act in these situations and to better mitigate their effects. Integrating capacity building into the humanitarian response lays the foundation for a more coordinated response, and a response that ensures more resilient and effective education systems long-term.

Complementing other partners, part of UNESCO's expertise lies in contributing policy advice and technical assistance to ministries affected by natural disaster and conflict and to help them plan and deliver education. In Afghanistan, Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kosovo, Liberia, Sudan, Pakistan and Yemen, among others, we have assisted ministries in formulating national education plans, in bridging the data gap through better information management systems, in

piloting teacher registration and budgeting systems and in training senior ministry staff. This strategic capacity development approach nurtures ownership by ministry staff to rebuild more sustainable education systems.

Equally important, we bring our expertise to develop curricula and learning approaches that promote inclusion, human rights, mutual understanding, and peace. Teachers themselves can play a highly influential role as peace builders. Rebuilding education systems after natural disasters, conflict or other emergencies is often *the* opportunity to make education more inclusive based on values of peace, tolerance and non-discrimination. This is crucial to lay new foundations and to foster reconciliation especially when the social fabric has been deeply torn by conflict. Focus on policy issues and national and local capacity building right from the onset of the humanitarian response is critical if we want to capture and sustain these opportunities for reform.

Schools are where children learn
to live together.

The importance of a comprehensive approach should also be emphasized in terms of the programmes we propose in the response package: it is not enough to focus solely on primary education. Programmes must also encompass technical and vocational skills for youth, literacy and life skills for adults, interventions for young children and measures to promote girls' safety and education. There will be no teachers if there is no secondary education provided, and there will be no teacher supervision and no teacher salaries without competent school administrators and educational managers who have budgeting competence.

The third fundamental point is about financing. Our appeal to fulfil the right to education remains an empty shell if it is not supported by resources. Education is a peace dividend and yet it is still one of the least funded sectors in a humanitarian response. Only six donors – Canada, Denmark, Japan, New Zealand, Norway and Sweden – include education in their humanitarian policy and response. The first requirement we must work towards is to advocate for education to be explicitly included in these packages.

Let me let figures speak for a moment. In 2008, education constituted just over 5 % of the requests for the UN's consolidated appeal processes. 48% were funded – this is higher than in previous years but well under other sectors like food, water and sanitation. Preliminary figures for 2009 are disturbing. Education has only received 1% of funding requests so far, compared to the overall 24 percent. This means that education is not only

underfunded, but it tends to receive attention late in the response process, suggesting it is a low priority. And yet, education offers both life saving and long-term benefits and is typically one of the first priorities that children and parents consistently request during the early stages of recovery.

The establishment of the Education Transition Fund initiated by UNICEF and the Netherlands offers the opportunity to better address needs in emergency situations. I greatly hope that this Fund will be successful in this regard and that it will be fully integrated into the Fast Track Initiative which is at present not geared to finance support in emergency situations.

The lack of financing for education in countries experiencing fragility mirrors a larger gap in financing education for all. Donors are not delivering on past commitments and the financial crisis runs the risk of aid declining at a time when increasing numbers of people in developing countries are living in poverty.

Finally, in situations of emergency we face the challenge of reacting quickly but with a long term vision, because education is a life time social and economic investment. Failing to protect it opens the way towards more tension, marginalization and exclusion and the potential for ongoing instability. It is important not to lose sight of either the short or the long term.

In Pakistan for example, after the 2005 earthquake, UNESCO developed a psychosocial training programme for teachers that introduced participatory approaches and learner-centred methodologies. This became part of a broader capacity building programme, which included training for middle and senior managers. It covered immediate needs but also set foundations for improving the quality of education and the skills of teachers. National and provincial teacher training institutions were engaged in the process from the outset, and enriched by the collaboration. So this is a case of international support making a difference in the short and long-term.

We need to consistently reiterate the centrality of education for fighting poverty and exclusion because education is not a top priority on the development agenda. This thematic debate signals a determination to give more global prominence to the issue of education in emergencies. Our work must be about being present before, throughout and after a crisis, about strengthening mechanisms to prevent violence and end impunity, and enabling the right to education to exist in the most adverse

circumstances. The aim is to ensure that education provide the values, confidence and knowledge to build a more positive and peaceful future.

Thank you very much.

**UN General Assembly Debate on Education in Emergencies: Panel –
How to Make Education work: investing in learners, Investing in
Successes**

In August 1998, I was a high school student in the northern city of Mazar-i-shareef in Afghanistan when the Taliban militias occupied the city. It was summer vacations. I lived the first few weeks in fear of being tortured and killed like other friends and relatives. My family and I survived. I was hopeful that life would become normal, that the summer vacation would be over and that school would start. However, It did not take me a long time to find out that my dream of going back to school that year will remain only dream. Neither the teachers, nor the students showed up in the school. I, like many other students, decided not to go to school out of the fear of being arrested and tortured by the militias. I missed a year of schooling, but I was lucky and resumed my education the next year. My sister's destiny, however, was different. She was officially banned from going to school because girls' education was perceived as being against the religious beliefs of the ruling militias. She could not go to school for the next four years.

My story and my sister's story is the story of thousands of children and young people in Afghanistan and millions of children and young people around the world. Children who suffer from adults' wars, children who are victims of natural disasters and live in despair and fear, and children who are denied the most basic human right, the right to education.

Shelter, food and medical care are not the only needs of children and young people. They also need education. Educational assistance during emergencies, in the short term, enables children to learn, empowers them to cope with traumas associated with emergencies, helps them return to normality and dream a better future. In the long-term, education empowers children and young people to positively engage in their communities, break the poverty cycle and minimize the chances of lapsing back into conflict.

I have personally experienced the impact of education in emergencies. The reason that I am here today and the reason that my little sister who was denied access to formal education is a university student today is because we both were able to continue our education against all odds during emergencies. It is the responsibility of all of us to make sure that all children and young people receive proper educational support during emergencies.

One important group often left out during emergencies is Youth and adolescents. Early childhood development and education is essential for children's wellbeing. Equally important is the education and empowerment of youth. The failure to address the needs of youth and adolescents can have severe consequences for the youth and their communities. The current situation in Afghanistan presents an example of forgotten and disenfranchised youth. Although constituting more than half of Afghanistan's population, youth are not an influential constituency. They seldom participate in decision-making. Most youth do not complete high school and those who complete high school find it hard to attend

universities. These problems are manifested in the forms of increased frustration and disenchantment, participation in gang violence and recruitment by extremist groups, thus challenging the overall peace-building efforts in the country.

Girls and young women are particularly disadvantaged. They face additional challenges because of the existing disparities in gender roles. In emergencies, adolescent girls are at greater risk of sexual exploitation, forced marriage, restricted movement, and abduction with significant consequences to their educational attainments.

In Afghanistan, for example, a significant number of adolescent girls are denied the right to education because of the disparities in gender roles as well as deteriorating security situation. Girls who go to school are increasingly under attack by the armed groups. These groups use different methods to prevent girls' educations including burning schools, attacking teachers and even spraying acids in the faces of the girls who go to school.

Despite these daunting challenges, there is hope. During my work with youth-led organizations in Afghanistan, I have always been inspired and motivated by the dedication and high morals of educated youth who want to help their peers and by the strong desire of uneducated and marginalized youth for learning.

Youth in Afghanistan and other conflict-affected countries would like to be educated, empowered and participate like young people in other places around the world. They are enthusiastic, they are passionate and they are

US OPOS to Partner
willing to bring about positive changes in their communities. To do so, they need education. They need to be seen as valuable assets. And they need to be invested in and mobilized to effectively contribute to their communities.

Education is a fundamental human right for all children. Providing quality education for children affected by emergencies is essential for achieving the MDGs. I urge donor countries to increase the level of funding and technical assistance for education in emergencies. In the same time, recipient countries should make sure that they have the necessary policies and programs in place in order to ensure availability and relevance of educational services for children affected by emergencies.

Speeches and rhetoric is not enough. If you are committed to keeping your promises, if you want to achieve the MDGs, and if you want to make sure that all children are able to learn, develop and thrive, you need to support international education assistance in emergencies and do so quickly because children's education can't wait.

Thank you



**Statement by Mr. Lothar Krappmann
Member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child**

Interactive thematic dialogue of the U.N. General Assembly on:

**“Access to Education in Emergency, Post-crisis and Transition
situations-caused by Man-made Conflicts or Natural Disasters”**

Panel III: Shared Accountability: Ways to Move Forward

Trusteeship Council Chamber
UN Headquarters, New York
18 March 2009



Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Speaking as a representative of the Committee on the Rights of the Child I first would like to thank the initiators and organizers for making this debate on 'education in emergency, post-crisis and transition situations possible. In particular, I would like to thank our moderator Ms. Coomaraswamy, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, for her dedicated work to end the plight of children in armed conflicts.

The Committee is well aware that grave violations against children, including attacks on schools are identified in the annual reports of the Secretary-General. The Committee wants to express its high appreciation of the activities of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict established by resolution 1612 (2005).

These issues are addressed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC) to urge State parties to protect children, teachers and schools in crisis situations.

The CRC reaffirms the right to education, also articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and enshrined in international core human rights treaties. All States parties to the CRC have recognized the right of the child to education on the basis of equal opportunity. Children affected by emergencies are no exception.

In such situations it is particularly important to recall article 2 of the CRC, which stipulates that the rights set forth in the Convention shall be ensured *to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind ...* In situations of emergency the increased vulnerability of many children has to be given particular attention. The Committee has devoted the Day of General Discussion in 2008 to reconfirm the right to education for children also in situations of emergency.

States have further committed themselves to ensuring education to children through numerous global commitments, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), notably the second MDG (universal primary education).

I would like to use this opportunity to refer to the first annual debate on child rights of the Human Rights Council which took place last week, on 11 March, in Geneva. It is encouraging that on that occasion too, several speakers highlighted the importance of access to education in the context of emergency situations.

We are discussing an urgent subject: In view of the information contained in numerous State party reports submitted to the Committee, the Committee is deeply concerned that the right to education is often not enjoyed by all children, and notes that States do not always recognise education as a right, nor make provision of education a priority.

I would like to also recall that the second MDG will not be achieved, if access to education will not be provided for the millions of children living in emergency situations – I refer to emergencies caused by natural disasters and man-made emergencies.

Both types of emergencies have terrible and long-lasting repercussions on children. The man-made emergencies, however, have a special disturbing quality which presents additional challenges in providing education without discrimination. In order to ensure children's human right to education, provisions of education should be ensured as an integral component of the hu-

manitarian relief response from the outset as unanimously confirmed by the Committee and the participants of the Committee's Day of General Discussion.

So much attention, so many activities, so much will to change the situation! Why are the figures, which are reported about children out of school still so high? And even more appalling: Why do the numbers of attacks on schools, teachers and pupils/students increase? The Committee is alarmed about the information it has received from various sources. While we do note that numerous efforts are underway, much more has to be done!

The first request of the Committee is to make these worrying facts more widely known. Very much attention is focused on child soldiers, their exploitation and psychological destruction, but we must not forget about the millions of children, who do not go to school, because they are exposed to danger in schools as well as on their way to school.

This vast demolition of educational facilities is not only a side effect of blind military action. Thus, let me ask, whether these attacks on schools, teachers and children really get the attention these crimes deserve. I would like to urge all those involved, including UN bodies and agencies as well as civil society organizations, to consider issuing a clear statement, which calls upon State parties to protect schools and to make them a secure place. States should criminalize attacks on schools as war crimes in accordance with article 8(2)(b)(ix) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and prosecute offenders accordingly.

State parties have the primary responsibility to implement the right to education of every child. A zero-tolerance policy should not only be exercised with regard to recruitment and use of child soldiers, but be strictly extended to attacks on schools, teachers and children. It is a deep concern of the Committee that these crimes apparently rarely or never are brought to justice. Thus, increased efforts are required to prevent these crimes and bring the perpetrators to justice. Schools should be zones of peace.

There exists an international NGO (Geneva Call) that relatively successfully moves non-State actors to comply with the anti-personnel mine ban treaty. As far as I know this NGO is considering to request non-State actors to sign an agreement that condemns attacks on schools, abduction or killing of teachers, staff or students, sexual violence and misuse of schools for military purposes. All these activities have to be based on the principle of neutrality and without affecting the legal status of any party. Under this condition Governments should facilitate communication of relief and aid agencies with such non-State actors, as the Secretary-General as recommended. However, governments, UN agencies, national and international NGOs and civil society have to closely cooperate to this end; a focal point of mutual exchange and support could make efforts more effective.

From its experience in the context of considering State party reports, the Committee is of the view that programmes to re-establish schools should be firmly anchored in the local community. This sense of ownership of the Community is conducive to increased protection. The role of women has also proven crucial in this regard. Furthermore, it is important to bear in mind that the restoration of the education system and poverty reduction have to go hand in hand.

I would like to recall that the CRC stipulates in its article 29 that education should be directed to "understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin". This article underlines the pivotal role of education in peace building. Consequently education has to be included in peace negotiations and agreements and not be forgotten in the reconstruction phase. Monitoring is needed.

In order to summarize in keywords:

- Combating impunity for attacks on schools, teachers, and children,
- Campaign for schools as zones of peace (including pressure on non-State actors)
- Embedding of schools in community, participation of parents and children
- Links to poverty reduction strategies
- Monitoring of peace agreements with particular regard to education
- Close cooperation of all stakeholders

Schools as safe sanctuaries

A presentation by Brendan O'Malley

Schools as safe sanctuaries

A presentation by Brendan O'Malley

Right to education in safety

- “Schools should be respected and protected as sanctuaries and zones of peace.”

Dakar Framework for Action, 2000, expanded commentary, paragraph 58.

- “All higher-education teaching personnel should enjoy...the right to liberty and security of the person and liberty of movement.”

Paragraph 26 of the 1997 recommendation concerning the status of Higher Education teaching personnel

Education Under Attack (2007)

- UNESCO's study found alarming rise in violent political/military attacks on students, teachers, education officials and trade unionists
- Burning and bombing of schools, occupation by armed forces, murder, torture, abductions, rape, child soldier recruitment, threat of any of these
- Worst hit: Afghanistan, Colombia, DR Congo, Iraq, Israel/Palestinian AT, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, Thailand, Somalia, Zimbabwe

Impact on Education for All

- Devastating in worst affected areas
- Loss of life
- Destruction of buildings and materials
- Schools closed
- Flight of staff and pupils
- Fear inhibits learning
- Psychological impact of brutality

What can be done?

- Global monitoring
- Protection for teachers and students
- Action to end impunity by implementing international law
- Recognise how education aggravates conflict, make education work for peace
- Campaign with symbol to recognise and respect schools as safe sanctuaries

Global monitoring

- | | |
|---|---|
| International action | National action |
| • Pool information (build on existing reporting, eg. HRW, Education International, Amnesty International, UNESCO) | Governments and HR organisations monitor and report specifically on attacks against education targets, as part of EFA effort. MPs can provide annual report |
| • Establish global database | |
| • Encourage annual reporting (UNSG, OSRCAAF, EFA GMR) | |

Types of monitoring

Quantitative:

- Incidents: deaths, injuries, threats
- EFA impact: schools destroyed, schools closed, teacher flight
- Impunity: investigations, prosecutions, aid (including military) and trade conditions set

Qualitative:

- Motives and responses to motives
- Compare effectiveness of protection measures
- Analyse attempts to persuade combatants to respect schools as sanctuaries

Priorities protection in law

- Refocus use of human rights conventions to cover this problem: eg expand definition of the grave violation, "attacks on schools", to include attacks on students and all those who support their learning, ie teachers/staff
- Call on states to ensure national legislation conforms with international law protecting right to education in situations of concern and prohibiting attacks on education

Action to end impunity

- UNSG should refer cases of attacks on education that may constitute a war crime or crime against humanity to ICC for investigation and prosecution
- States should set adherence to international human rights norms, especially right to education, as condition for aid/military aid trade deals with parties to a conflict

Physical protection

- Soldiers, transport security, community defence, night watchmen, warning systems, multi-agency multi-ministry responses
- Retreat schools into homes, distance learning, rapid recovery
- Negotiation and persuasion of conflict parties to accept schools as sanctuaries or to keep schools open eg UNICEF 2002 Papua New Guinea

Co-ordinated responses: Iraq

- Iraq: school exams: 2007 militias enter exam halls and kill teachers and students. 2008: MPs press for co-operation of army, police, security, education ministries. Move school exams into university buildings, easier to guard
- Alaa Makki, President Iraqi education committee: attendance is up due to having Iraqi forces on streets, in universities and near schools, and that is due to ensuring "the importance of education in the mind of military officials"

Co-ordinated community response: Afghanistan

- 2006: Policy to ask communities to take ownership and help protect their schools
- PTAs post guards, villagers run out and confront attackers (often local people); linked to provincial response team (protection and repair), plus UNICEF rapid resupply.
- Correlated with fall in attacks in 2007, though now rising

Turn education into a force for peace

- Recognise how education can aggravate conflict. Achieve EFA goals of equity of access and equity of achievement, and good quality for all
- Achieve CRC Article 29: develop respect for “the child’s parents, his/her own cultural identity, language and values” as well as “national values”
- Give parents ownership (“our” school); offer curriculum sensitive to local language, culture, history, religion; run school transparently.

Promote peace, understanding

UNSG, member states, and EFA partners, should promote principles in 1966 blueprint:

Recommendation on the Status of Teachers:

“Education should be directed to... the inculcation of deep respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; ...the utmost importance should be attached to the contribution to be made by education to peace and to understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and among racial or religious groups.”

Respect safe sanctuaries

- Growing momentum: OSRCAAF, ICC case, UNESCO study, Iraq conferences, EFA GMR, UNICEF emergency education work, Amnesty solidarity campaigns etc. Next week: Education International Declaration.
- Must rally around calls for international community, states, and parties to conflicts to recognise right to education in safety and respect status of schools and colleges as safe sanctuaries. UNSG should commission symbol to denote international and local recognition of sanctuaries.

Thank you Special Representative Coomaraswamy and especially the president of the UNGA for inviting me. My sincere thanks to UNICEF and the Women's Refugee Commission for support.

I am one of millions of young people that have been affected by conflict and war. And, I am one of the millions who deserve to dream, who deserve opportunities to improve my life and reasons to hope for a better future. I urge you, ladies and gentlemen, to come together and assist the millions of children and young adults growing up amidst crisis, who deserve a chance to dream, to realize their potential and be met with opportunities.

There is no greater weapon against poverty, against war and against hopelessness than education. I know this, I come from Nepal.

And, yet the truth is quality education that is accessible and affordable has never been the norm in Nepal and the onset of conflict has only further exacerbated this national tragedy in my country—just as it has in many more around the world.

In 1997, I was starting 6th grade. As residents of Nepal's capital city, Kathmandu, my parents were determined to provide my sister, Shreya, and me with quality education. After living in Hong Kong for five years they enrolled us at Woodstock School, an international boarding school located in north India – a 2 hour flight, 7 hour train ride and another 2 hour bus ride away from our families and our home. I was eleven years old the time and I have vague recollections of police stations and army barracks under attack by Maoists. At the time, I had little idea of what that meant.

Very quickly though, things took a violent turn. It was impossible to ignore the headlines that screamed of killings, attacks and kidnappings. My parents were reassured of their decision to send my sister and me away to boarding school. In fact, we were considered fortunate by our relatives and neighbors to be attending school in India since we were far from the conflict and were able to study without disturbances.

Access to quality education, the basic human right of each child, made young girls like me 'lucky'. It is now 2009, we have read our history books, and we have understood the lessons and, yet, I am considered lucky.

PAUSE

As the war in Nepal gained momentum, more and more children began to study overseas. What was once an opportunity that only the wealthiest or the most talented could contemplate had become a desperate necessity. Families were selling their assets - their houses and land - to finance their children's

education in order to provide them with a chance to start a new life, in a new country. The comfort of one's home and the support one's family was traded for access to education at a young age. Most people felt Nepal was falling apart and that there was little future for their children.

The ten year insurgency in Nepal affected youth's access to education in various ways; those of us who were able traveled overseas. Some left the remote areas to study in the capital city, and the rest stayed in their villages. For those in Nepal, attending classes proved to be a challenge because of *bandhs*. *Bandh* means 'close' and it is a strike called by political parties, interest groups and student unions. *Bandhs* shut down the country - business close, offices close, and yes, even schools. These *Bandhs* last anywhere from a day to a month or at times even longer. A cousin of mine who studied in Kathmandu was in 9th grade for well over 18 months – because of the *bandhs*, school just could not cover the material, complete the course or finish in one year.

PAUSE

During the war both the government and the Maoists sought control of schools in the villages. These public schools were usually built on top of a hill, nearby some empty space (originally intended for assemblies and for students to play at recess). Because of their strategic location, both the army and the Maoists desired to make the schools their bases. Because of this, students were pushed out of their schools and sometimes even targeted. When Maoists graffitid the walls with their party logos, the building was turned into a political space and a military attack was deemed legitimate. It doesn't matter who the perpetrators were or who the heroes were, the victims were children and young adults.

Occupation of schools wasn't all there was to it, schools were also perfect for recruitment. Oftentimes entire classes were pulled from their coursework and made to attend seminars; these children have now grown up to be adamant supporters of the Maoists. Schools destroyed during the insurgency have yet to be rebuilt. Children are still are still used as political instruments, such as messengers and porters.

The fact remains, education, and in turn children and youth, have not been separated from politics as it ought to.

Last year when I was a senior in college I studied and lived in Nepal for a semester. I attended a university in Kathmandu and was overwhelmed by the frustration I saw in the youth. I could feel their exhaustion and taste their anxiety. They were hardworking students with potential and skills, but Nepal just did not provide them with opportunities. I did meet some very active,

creative and motivated young people who were holding workshops, organizing events, and encouraging other young people, but I saw many take to the streets with protests, and even more planning, hoping to leave.

Nepal's conflict hampered children and young adults' access to quality education. But, this fact is not unique to Nepal; it is a story that is all too common for so many youth from around the world. In fact, millions of conflict affected children don't go to school at all, not even primary school, let alone secondary school and university. What's more, most of them don't have a chance acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to the development of "peaceful and prosperous societies".

PAUSE

Ambassadors, dignitaries, leaders, thank you for being here to consider the situation of young people from countries like mine. These children and youth are no different from you children or your neighbor's. I urge you, first, to support governments that are in or emerging from crisis in their efforts to provide students with quality education. Education they can access. This will require rebuilding destroyed schools, and incorporating technology into the system to equip students with 21st tools and skills.

And, we can't stop with primary schools, ~~S~~ secondary schools, vocational and technical school, such the 64 vocational schools established by UNICEF in Nepal must be replicated across the world. Children and youth simply need a foundation – I assure you they are innovative, competitive and able.

Second, I urge you to support the work of local groups and communities in developing a curriculum that is sensitive and appropriate. We also in need of more teachers who are well trained and adequately compensated. We especially need female teachers so that they can be a source of encouragement and inspiration to the female students who are even more hindered from accessing education.

The children and youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow. A solid education in all of its forms will develop their skills and transform each into a contributing member of society. When quality education is made accessible, children and youth will secure the future of our nations and our world.

Thank you for your time.