PRESS RELEASE

International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity to hold its Inaugural Meeting on September 29th 2015 during United Nations General Assembly

Five former prime ministers and presidents and three Nobel Prize recipients are among the 20-strong Commission announced to review the future of global education supported by the Government of Norway and Prime Minister Erna Solberg

Just days before the new international development agenda is agreed at the United Nations, more than twenty world leaders have been appointed to a major International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity to reverse the lack of financing for education around the world, which currently leaves 124 million young people out of school and hundreds of millions without quality learning opportunities.

The selection of this diverse group of individuals comes at a crucial time when more children are out of school than a year ago and increased conflict has forced millions of children out of the classrooms to become refugees with no prospects of education.

Aid to education has fallen by 10 percent in recent years and the share of government budgets for education has declined in a number of key countries with growing needs. The focus of the Commission will be to mobilize $40 billion per year so that all children in low and middle-income countries have equal opportunity through secondary education.

The Commission brings together world leaders from government, business, philanthropy, and civil society, including three of the world’s most successful business leaders – Jack Ma of Alibaba Group, Aliko Dangote of the Dangote Group and Strive Masiyiwa of Econet Wireless. They will join World Bank President Jim Kim and UNICEF Executive Director Tony Lake.

The Commission also includes former presidents and prime ministers Felipe Calderón of Mexico, Julia Gillard of Australia, Helle Throning-Schmidt of Denmark, José Manuel Barroso of Portugal, and high-level government officials Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, former Minister of Finance of Nigeria, Lee Ju-ho, Professor, KDI School of Public Policy and Management and former Korean Minister of Education, Lawrence Summers, former United States Secretary of the Treasury, and Kristin Clemet, Managing Director of Civita and former Minister of Education and Research of Norway.
Three Nobel Prize recipients will join their rankings – Kailash Satyarthi, Amartya Sen and Former President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso. Malala Yousafzai will also join the Commission’s youth panel, co-chaired by Rosemarie Ramitt (Guyana) and Kennedy Odede (Kenya).


Baela Raza Jamil a policy activist, adviser and innovator from Pakistan will serve on the Commission, strategizing for resource mobilizing for a sector that compellingly transforms lives, especially for girls and vulnerable groups; for Baela "education is definitely the key game changer to achieve SDGs by 2030".

Anant Agarwal, CEO of EdX will represent the education and technology community to help promote the next advancements in education globally.

Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi, Minister of International Cooperation and Development of United Arab Emirates will join the inaugural meeting of the Commission. Jeffrey Sachs, UN Secretary-General’s Special Advisor, will join the third meeting of the Commission.

The Commission is co-convened by Prime Minister Erna Solberg of Norway, President Michelle Bachelet of Chile, President Joko Widodo of Indonesia, President Peter Mutharika of Malawi and the Director-General of UNESCO Irina Bokova.

Gordon Brown, United Nations Special Envoy for Global Education and Former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom has been appointed Chair of the Commission.

Prime Minister Solberg said, “Education is key to fighting poverty, and I believe educating girls is the single most powerful investment for development. When you educate a girl, you educate a nation. I am confident that the Commission will play an important role in mobilizing the resources needed to achieve education for development set out for 2030 and beyond.”

World leaders meeting in New York at the UN General Assembly will agree to a new set of Sustainable Development Goals, but the goal on education requires an urgent action plan for financing if it is to be met and children are to have equal opportunity decades from now. Investments in quality education would lead to greater economic growth, better health outcomes and improved global security. The Commission will address all of these linkages in building a compelling case to inspire and persuade world leaders to action.
The Commission will hold its inaugural meeting on September 29 during the United Nations General Assembly to start building the case to inspire and persuade world leaders to action. In September 2016, the Commission will report to the co-conveners and the Secretary-General of United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, who has agreed to receive the report and act on its recommendations.