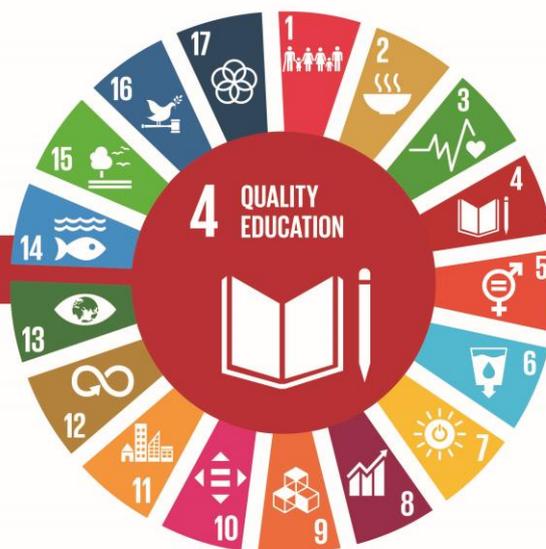




United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Globale Education Meeting 2018



Closing remarks by UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education, Stefania Giannini

*Ministerial Segment, Brussels, 5 December 2018*

Honorable Ministers, Excellencies, and distinguished participants

It is with mixed feelings that I share with you all some final thoughts at the closing of what have been three long but fruitful days of deliberations, together, in the true spirit of partnership and commitment.

On the one hand I am filled with hope and greater enthusiasm that we will succeed to deliver on the promise to all children, young people and adults that we have made not only for education but for the Sustainable Development Goals agenda as whole.

The commitment of governments and all stakeholders, youth, civil society, agency representatives to action is clear for all of us to see.

But at the same time, I have to be realistic and to acknowledge the challenges we face to ensure quality education for all especially the most vulnerable not least girls and women, migrants, refugees and displaced persons as well the excluded – those with disabilities, indigenous people, the poorest and many other groups.

While we recognize progress already made - from the Ministers to officials to youth and civil society - we also understand that more effort is needed if we are to translate the slogan of leaving no one behind into reality.

Brussels, 5 December 2018

Accordingly, we have reaffirmed our commitment to education as a human right recognizing that it is essential for individual dignity, justice and social cohesion and provides sustainability to all development.

Let me recall, therefore the key commitments we have agreed to :

- Making education and training systems more equitable and inclusive “leaving no one behind”
- Eradicating illiteracy
- Including migrants, displaced persons and refugees in our education and training systems
- Providing quality gender-responsive education and training
- Strengthening education for global citizenship and for sustainable development
- Open, flexible and responsive education and training systems to meet new skill needs
- Improving teachers, educators, trainers and school leaders
- Increased investment in education

Experience shows there is no stronger, no more lasting, investment a country can make than educating its citizens. This was UNESCO’s message in Jomtien, in Dakar, in Incheon and it is, more than ever, our message today.

As I have repeated many times over the past few days, I see next year as the Year of Education - we have an opportunity that we cannot and must not waste beginning with the new International Day of Education on 24 January, to the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) and G7 in July to the United Nations General Assembly 2019 and the UNESCO General Conference in November – it is a time for action!

I would once to again like to reiterate my and UNESCO’s appreciation and thanks to the Government of Belgium for hosting us.

**Global Education Meeting** is convened by UNESCO in its mandated role as lead agency and coordinator of the Education 2030 Agenda. The Meeting reviews progress towards the global education targets and commitments in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It brings the global community together to take stock of progress and identify strategic priority areas requiring political guidance and intervention for the effective achievement of the global Education 2030 Agenda.

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