



**Global Education First Initiative - High-level Event: Quality Education for the World We Want
Report**

Trusteeship Council Chamber, UN New York, 24 September 2014

Global Foundation for Democracy and Development (GFDD) and Fundación Global Democracia y Desarrollo (FUNGLODE) are private, non-partisan, not-for-profit institutions, created by His Excellency Dr. Leonel Fernández, former President of the Dominican Republic.

FUNGLODE and GFDD are dedicated to formulating innovative and strategic proposals on global issues of national interest with the purpose of contributing to the creation of effective public policies related to the governance and social and economic development of the Dominican Republic.

About GEFi

The United Nations Secretary-General launched the five-year [Global Education First Initiative \(GEFI\)](#) in September 2012 to accelerate progress towards the Education for All goals and the education-related Millennium Development Goals. The Initiative aims to:

- Rally together a broad spectrum of actors for the final push to 2015;
- Put quality, relevant and transformative education at the heart of the social, political and development agendas;
- Generate additional and sufficient funding for education through sustained global advocacy efforts.

The initiative rests on three priorities: put every child in school, improve the quality of learning and foster global citizenship.

Statement by First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama

The First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama, delivered the special key-note address. She vowed to work with world leaders and education advocates to ensure all girls and young women have the opportunity to go to school; calling for quality education and the empowerment of girls and women to form part of the post-2015 development agenda. She stressed that “Keeping our girls safe on the way to school, teaching them relevant skills once they’re there, and ensuring they graduate from secondary school; all of these things must be a part of our agenda” including “Addressing gender-based violence in all of its forms.”

Statement by Deputy Secretary General, Jan Eliasson

Deputy Secretary General, Jan Eliasson, welcomed the political will from the highest levels for the event, which saw fourteen Heads of State/Government and Ministers from all regions of the world, along with UN agency heads and international education leaders pledging their commitment to quality education. He stated that quality education “is the foundation for personal fulfillment, for gender equality, for social cohesion, for sustainable development, for economic growth and for responsible global citizenship”. He also stressed that it “is a fundamental human right” and “a critical link to all of our aspirations for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals - and for the post-2015 development agenda.”

Statement by Executive Secretary of the GEFi Steering Committee and Director-General of UNESCO Irina Bokova

Pointing to the fact that 58 million children are out of school, that 258 million children are illiterate even after four years of school, with girls and women being the hardest hit, Ms. Bokova told world leaders that this global learning crisis undermines social cohesion and threatens stability. She stressed that “we must ensure every girl and boy can go to school, receive the right learning and

contribute fully to society. Education must come first, not just any education, but quality education; education to shape the world into a better place". She commented on the importance of the initiative explaining that it is a call to action; to harness the transformative power of education, to eradicate poverty and hunger, to improve health and to protect our planet."

Ms. Bokova highlighted that there is less than 500 days left to the deadline of the Education for All goals and Millennium Development goals. She called for the mobilization of all partners, to ensure that all children receive a quality education.

Statements by other speakers

- Mr. Gordon Brown, UN Special Envoy for Global Education stated we only need \$6 billion from states to achieve the MDG 2 on education;
- H.E. Ms Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway, announced that her government would double its financial support for good quality education through development aid over the next 3 years;
- Mr. Jim Kim, President of the World Bank, stated that students with great teachers advance 1 years further (in terms of academic accomplishment) than those who have a bad teacher.

Related links:

GEFI Website: <http://www.globaleducationfirst.org/about.html>