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CABLE ADDRESS — ADRESSE TELEGRAPHIQUE : UNATIONS NEWYORK

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
CABINET DU SECRETAIRE GENERAL

REFERENCE:

6 August 2013

Dear Ms. Alka,

On behalf of the Secretary-General, I would like to thank you and your fellow signatories for your letter dated 10 July 2013, and your recommendations for the post-2015 agenda. I share your views that education and lifelong learning is a key aspect of social and environmental justice which is essential to the realization of sustainable development.

I welcome the active engagement of your organization in this process. The commitment and advocacy of all stakeholders are paramount to secure the necessary political will needed to accelerate progress on the Millennium Development Goals and agree on a new framework to succeed them. Your timely input, along with the recommendations from other key stakeholders, will be duly considered as input to the report of the Secretary-General to Member States at the upcoming Special Event hosted by the President of the General Assembly on 25 September 2013.

The Secretary-General and I appreciate your commendable efforts and continue to count on your support to further our overarching objective of advancing sustainable development in a more inclusive and peaceful world.

Please share this response with the other co-signatories of your letter.

Yours sincerely,

Amina J. Mohammed
Special Adviser on Post-2015
Development Planning

Ms. Alka
State Programme Director
Mahila Samakhya Uttar Pradesh
Lucknow



13-06505

22/10/13

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To:

Cc:

Bcc:

Subject: Fw: Request for Inclusion of Adult literacy and Education in the Post 2015 Agenda Report

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13-06505

From: Alka MSUP <alka@mahilasamakhyaup.org>
To: sgcentral@un.org, ecu@un.org, sg@un.org, info@un-ngls.org,
Cc: nirantar@vsnl.com
Date: 17/07/2013 06:32 AM
Subject: Request for Inclusion of Adult literacy and Education in the Post 2015 Agenda Report

Mr. Secretary-General,

In this last stage of development of its report "Accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and advancing the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015", we want to share the priorities of those of us who defend the right to lifelong education as a key aspect to social and environmental justice. As we are aware of your commitment expressed in the Global Initiative Education First, we are sure that the human right to education will be highlighted in your Final Report.

Currently, there are 780 million illiterate people, two thirds of whom are women, 51 million children out of school, 240 million young people who have completed four years of school and can not read, write or count. This reality, together with the current context of multiple crises makes it more urgent than ever to recognize the character of fundamental human right of education, as well as concrete and immediate actions to guarantee this right. If the idea is "not leaving anyone behind", lifelong education and learning are unavoidable aspects, as they represent the only way to offer a real opportunity for people to demand their rights and exercise their citizenship in an active form.

Education (beyond the formal education) must maintain a holistic and inclusive approach and contribute to the elimination of inequalities and discrimination. Only instrumentalist views that reduce education to serve the market and deprive it of its transformative and critical function have to be overcome and prevented. The nature of public good of education must be preserved, as well as its necessary inclusiveness, its free and quality nature. In order to achieve all this, the budget must be sufficient.

A key function of adult learning is to help people understand and influence economic changes that affect them. This is an absolute necessity if we are to achieve an integrated sustainable development approach, with cohesion and coherence.

We also believe that the goals need to be ambitious and wide enough not to reduce learning to reading, writing and numeracy. The targets presented must overcome the reductionism that characterised the Millennium Development Goals. They must go further primary education. But, in addition, we expect these targets refer to the fundamental dimensions of the human right to education, as the need for free education, a minimum level of financing, the existence of enough trained teachers and the overcoming of all forms of discrimination in and from education. Besides, adult education should be present in the targets, including overcoming illiteracy. This way, targets will reflect the final aims of education: the whole development of human personality, the preparation for decent work, exercising citizenship and peaceful coexistence, as it is set in the Universal Human Rights Declaration.

We agree eradicating extreme poverty and hunger by 2030 is an ethic imperative for every nation in the World and for the International Community and the United Nations System. But this is not possible without going to the root causes of these evils, the same as for violence and inequality. This way, the horizon of the post 2015 Development Agenda must be the attainment of all Human Rights, as well as justice and dignity. To achieve this, lifelong learning and adult education, including literacy of women and girls, is essential.

We hope, then, that your final report recognizes these issues and that one of the universal objectives to be established will be to provide "quality education and lifelong learning", as recommended by the High Level Panel Report "A New Global Partnership".

Therefore, we suggest the following recommendations to be included in the report:

1. The right to lifelong education and learning should be recognized.

We bet on recognition, justice and inclusion policies for the development of a full life of all people. States are obliged to ensure this right for all people equally and without discrimination by race, ethnicity, gender, age, sex and economic status. Privatization which views education as a commodity must be eradicated, as well as macroeconomic conditions that undermine investment in education. The international monitoring and follow-up mechanisms of commitments made at CONFINTEA VI are essential to think about the Post-2015.

2. Adult learning and education (ALE) is essential to overcoming poverty and (gender and generation) violence, in order to achieve greater equality

and to address the global food, energy, environmental and financial crises, for peace. Silent violence of economic, social and cultural inequality is unacceptable. Equal opportunities should be a central concern in the reorientation of youth and adult learning and education, with an emphasis on the education of women.

3. Literacy and lifelong learning are essential elements of the Millennium Development Goals and should be contextualized in the right to education and articulated with other intersectoral actions and policies. Adult Learning and Education, including literacy, must be clearly prioritized in international frameworks and national government policies. States and international agencies must demonstrate a clear political will and increase their resource allocation to ALE, commit to the qualified training of teachers and professionals in this area and ensure appropriate working conditions.

4. It is essential to bet on educational approaches that link education to transformation for social and environmental justice. In this way, Popular Education is relevant which, through its methodology, its vision of citizenship, of coordination of learning with the environment, of empowerment of social stakeholders, has given vitality to literacy, to ALE, to education linked to life and other kind of development with a sustainable and intercultural perspective.

5. Let us promote interculturalism, equality, gender equity, the link between citizenship and democracy, care and harmony with nature, the elimination of all forms of discrimination, the promotion of justice and the building of a culture of peace and non-violent resolution of conflicts.*

ACTION is required: we need to have legal and policy frameworks, governance structures and mechanisms, as well as international monitoring and follow-up mechanisms of commitments made, clear and appropriate to ensure the right to Education for all people.

We thank you in advance for your attention. Yours faithfully,

Alka
State Programme Director
Mahila Samakhya Uttar Pradesh
4/13 Vishal Khand, Gomti Nagar,
Lucknow- 226 010