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NEW EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES FUND ‘EDUCATION CANNOT WAIT’ LAUNCHED AT FIRST WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT IN ISTANBUL

UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL ENVOY GORDON BROWN AND WORLD LEADERS TO HEAD INAUGURAL STEERING GROUP

UN SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN KI-MOON BACKS NEW FUND SUPPORTING CHILDREN IMPACTED BY EMERGENCIES

GOVERNMENTS, BUSINESS AND PHILANTHROPISTS KICK-OFF GLOBAL FUNDRAISING APPEAL – BUSINESS STEPS UP WITH \$100 MILLION PLEDGE

NEW FUND ‘A MAJOR STEP FORWARD IN BRINGING WORLD’S POLITICAL, BUSINESS AND PHILANTHROPIC LEADERS TOGETHER UNITED IN ONE COMMON ENDEAVOR’

The new ‘Education Cannot Wait’ Fund was launched today at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul. It was announced during a Special Session chaired by UN Special Envoy for Global Education and Chair of the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity, Gordon Brown.

Brown was joined by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for the announcement, heralded as a game-changer for a generation of young people impacted by emergencies and crises, locked out of opportunity and hope for a brighter future. The fund will support children and young people who have had their education interrupted by emergency situations, such as conflict, natural disasters and other crises. Some 75 million children have had their education disrupted by emergencies.

The appeal for funding, which will culminate in September at the United Nations General Assembly, was launched by a 14-member-strong High Level Steering Group. The Steering Group expressed delight that the business community, represented by the Global Business Coalition for Education, pledged to mobilise \$100 million in financial and in-kind contributions to provide education in emergencies.

A group of world leaders will provide strategic direction for the new fund. They include: Tariq Al Gurg, Chief Executive Officer, Dubai Cares; Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development and Francophonie, Canada; Irina Bokova, Director-General, UNESCO; Børge Brende, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Norway; Dean Brooks, Director of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies; Julia Gillard, Chair, Global Partnership for Education; Fillippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees; Justine Greening, Secretary of State for International Development, United Kingdom; Former Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete; Anthony Lake, Executive Director, UNICEF; Elias Bou Saab, Minister of Education, Lebanon; Gayle Smith, Administrator, United States Agency for International Development; and Tove Wang, Chief Executive Officer, Save the Children Norway.

Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Børge Brende said: “This is the right initiative at the right time. We must step up our efforts to deliver quality education to children and youth in conflict zones and crises. We cannot afford a future with millions of children without education.”

Brown added: “For when we ask ourselves what breaks the weak, it is not just the Mediterranean wave that submerges the life vest, nor the food convoy that does not make it to Madaya. It is the absence of hope – the soul-crushing certainty that there is nothing ahead to plan or prepare for, not even a place in school.”

“Without school, young children caught up in emergencies are at risk of becoming the youngest labourers in the field, the youngest brides at the alter, the youngest soldiers in the trench, and in some cases, the youngest recruits vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation.”

A historic, global first, the fund is being hailed as a “game changer.” Education Cannot Wait has several unique features. It is the first humanitarian fund dedicated to education. It is the first fund linking humanitarian and development aid for up to five years to support refugees. It is the first time a public private partnership has been created as a critical part of a fund. And, it will be the first time an opportunity for innovation, technology and online learning will be created as part of an education fund.

Education Cannot Wait will fill the gap where education falls through the cracks between humanitarian aid, which focuses on food and shelter, and development aid, which is by definition focused on the long-term.

The funding could not come sooner as UN OCHA figures show that education garners less than 2% of emergency funding in annual appeals, insufficient as the average refugee is out-of-country for more than a decade. The goal is to recruit 100 major foundations, businesses, governments and international agencies as contributors to the fund.

Announcing the fund, Gordon Brown said: “For the first time, we have a humanitarian fund targeting education. A fund that plans – not just for weeks or months – but for years

in support of a child's development. A humanitarian fund with windows for foundations, businesses, philanthropists and, for the first time, IT companies such that they may contribute funds and intelligence to support refugees wherever they may be found. And a fund with a contingency reserve allowing us to act when a crisis hits ensuring no begging bowl has to be circulated."

Strive Masiyiwa, Founder and Executive Chairman, Econet, said: "We cannot let children lose hope and opportunity when a disaster or conflict strikes. Instead, we must ensure they have safety, protection and education. This fund marks a turning point in protecting education for the most marginalised children – an issue that should be a priority for governments and the private sector."

Former Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete said, "The new education in emergencies fund will bridge the humanitarian-development divide to provide life-saving education. Bilateral and multilateral donors must fully finance this initiative because "education cannot wait."

Brown was also delighted that President Emeritus of New York University, John Sexton, will lead an initiative with IIE to create an online website clearinghouse to allow refugee youth to go to college and university.

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Notes for editors:

The ILO has the latest most up to date figures on child labour globally:

http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_358969/lang--en/index.htm

Latest child marriage figures:

<http://data.unicef.org/child-protection/child-marriage.html>

There are an estimated 30 million children who are forcibly displaced:

http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_89673.html