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**** DELIVERING EDUCATION TO 800 MILLION LEFT-OUT CHILDREN NOW BIGGEST LONG-TERM ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND – POTENTIALLY – SECURITY CHALLENGE OF OUR TIMES**

- Reforms and investment will get every child on track to enter school by 2030 and increase the number of qualified high school graduates in low and middle-income countries from 403 million to 850 million – and during the next decade, raise the numbers even further to 1.2 billion. The numbers in the lowest income countries will rise from 8 million to 80 million learners.
- Investment consortium of world’s development banks can raise multilateral bank aid from \$3.5 billion today to \$20 billion by 2030. Overall aid would be just \$35 per child – less than \$1 per week by 2030 – to get countries back on track for universal learning.
- A ‘ticking time bomb of discontent’ poses a serious threat to security in the Middle East, East-Indian sub-continent and Africa if children and young people are left without skills or on the streets without a chance of education and employment.

Today, the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity (the Education Commission), a group of world leaders composed of presidents, former prime ministers, business and education leaders set out an ambitious and credible program of reform that will make us the first generation in history guaranteeing a basic education to every single child. The Education Commission has set out the first-ever budget for global education, detailing from now to 2030 the costs and benefits of delivering a universal, high-quality primary and secondary education for all. The report is presented today, Sunday 18 September, to the United Nations Secretary-General at the start of the 71st General Assembly.

THE SHOCKING FACTS

Even in 2030 - on current trends:

- 825 million children in low and middle income countries, half of the world’s 1.6 billion children, will not be able to secure basic secondary-level skills equipping them for the labor market
- 228 million children will not be in school
- 400 million will leave school without primary level qualifications

Instead of leaving behind half of today’s youth generation, the Commission sets out a plan under which the 1.3 billion children in low and middle-income countries can in the future attain at minimum the same level of basic skills achieved by children in high-income countries today.

The neglect of education is the biggest challenge countries will face over the next 15 years, the Commission reports. Lack of investment in education systems is crippling the chances of young people in the global workplace and hindering growth, making it impossible for low and middle-income countries to make the transition to high-income status. Failure to change course could result in a loss of \$1.8 trillion for low-income countries alone by 2050 – losing 70% of GDP potential.

The Commission finds that the unequal distribution of opportunities fuels further discontent – eagerly exploited by extremists, especially in the Middle East and North Africa – and is a critical motivating factor for mass migration. Evidence shows that the failure to provide education for young children in conflict countries like Syria propels migration to Europe.

The first stage of the Commission’s plan is to have all countries adopting the reforms of the fastest improvers – the 25% of education performers around the world. Instead of only one in 10 schools being online, all schools would go digital.

Stage two of the plan is for every country to see education as an investment in the future and raise spending in low-income countries from 3% of national income today to 5% of national income.

REFORM THE GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS TO MOBILIZE \$20 BILLION FROM NEW MULTILATERAL BANK CONSORTIUM

The third stage of the plan is mobilizing the combined resources of the international institutions. No country committed to reforming and investing should be denied the chance to deliver universal education for lack of funds.

The Commission proposes major reform of the global institutions and calls for a new consortium of multilateral development banks that will pool resources, in part by leveraging the flows to the World Bank from repayment of past debts. By raising their commitment to education to 15 per cent of their combined budgets, they can generate an additional \$20 billion annually by 2030 – increasing the number of qualified learners to a level ten times the number today in low-income countries.

NEW COMPACT: MULTILATERAL BANKS, DONORS AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WORKING TOGETHER

The fourth stage of the plan calls for a Financing Compact between developing countries, donors and

multilateral institutions under which overall aid will rise to \$35 a year per child by 2030 – significantly less than \$1 a week, hardly a wasteful use of the world’s resources.

The benefits are clear – the aid given by individual donor countries would be more focused, better coordinated, and more cost-effective; loans from multilateral banks would be more widely and cost-effectively used; and by blending grant and loan finance in a more coordinated way, developing countries would receive more funding at a lower cost. To add to the education budgets and to get more children into school as a result of philanthropy, the Commission proposes a specific ‘education giving pledge’.

THE DRAMATIC RESULTS

Reforms and investment will get every child on track to enter school by 2030 and increase the number of qualified high school graduates in low and middle-income countries from 400 million to 850 million by 2030 - and during the next decade, raise the numbers even further to 1.2 billion. The numbers in the lowest income countries will rise from just 8 million to 80 million children. This is what we mean when we say the lost generation can become the learning generation.

Norwegian Prime Minister and Co-Convener of the Education Commission, Erna Solberg says, “The imperative to get all children and young people learning is shared by all countries. All countries will gain from action and all will face the dangerous consequences of inaction. Evidence shows that, for example, when youth have equal access to education and employment opportunities the risk of engaging in extremist activities are lower. This is a time of opportunity, but that time is running out,”

Gordon Brown, the chair of the Education Commission and UN Special Envoy for Global Education, says, “Delivering high standards of education to millions who lose out is the civil rights struggle of our generation. The evidence before the Commission proves education is the best anti-poverty investment the world can make. I am confident that if we combine investment and reform, and mobilize domestic and international finance in a more coordinated way, we can be the first generation in history in which every single child is at school.”

- ENDS -

ABOUT THE EDUCATION COMMISSION

The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity (The Education Commission) is a major global initiative engaging world leaders, policy makers and researchers to develop a renewed and compelling investment case and financing pathway for achieving equal educational opportunity for children and young people.

The Education Commission is bringing together the best research and policy analysis on the actions necessary to increase investment in concrete, relevant learning outcomes that have a positive impact on economic and social development. The Commission is co-convened by Prime Minister **Erna Solberg** of Norway, President **Michelle Bachelet** of Chile, President **Joko Widodo** of Indonesia, President **Arthur Peter Mutharika** of Malawi and the Director-General of UNESCO **Irina Bokova**. The UN Special Envoy for Global Education, **Gordon Brown**, serves as the Chair of the Commission.

COMMISSIONERS

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- **José Manuel Barroso**, Former President, European Commission
- **Felipe Calderón**, Former President, Mexico
- **Kristin Clemet**, Managing Director, Civita; Former Minister of Education and Research and Former Minister of Labour and Government Administration, Norway
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- **Lawrence Summers**, Charles W. Eliot University Professor and President Emeritus, Harvard University; 71st Secretary of the Treasury for President Clinton and the Director of the National Economic Council for President Obama
- **Helle Thorning-Schmidt**, Chief Executive, Save the Children; Former Prime Minister, Denmark

EDITOR'S NOTES:

The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity's report, "The Learning Generation: Investing in education for a changing world," has put forward an action plan for the largest expansion of educational opportunity in history.

In order to build 'The Learning Generation', the Commission will call upon the world's leaders to commit to education transformations:

Strengthening performance – put in place the building blocks of delivery to strengthen the performance of the education system, maximize efficiency and put results first.

Fostering innovation - harness new technology and develop creative approaches to organizing and delivering learning.

Prioritizing inclusion - ensure that education reaches everyone, taking additional steps to include those at greatest risk of not learning.

Increasing finance - mobilizing new domestic resources and increasing international support and leadership, prioritizing investment in countries that demonstrate commitment to invest and reform education systems

Bringing these four transformations together, the Commission proposes a **Financing Compact for the Learning Generation**, bringing low- and middle-income countries together with their partners in the international community to increase education financing from \$1.2 trillion to \$3 trillion by 2030, and deliver comprehensive reform in the efficiency and effectiveness of how each dollar is deployed. The Compact will aim to incentivize new action by all partners, hold all countries to account for their responsibilities for education, and ensure that countries committed to getting all children learning are given the support they need.



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A full copy of the report; “The Learning Generation: Investing in education for a changing world” will be available from: 18 September 2016.

The key findings of the report can be found at: report.educationcommission.org

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