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Statement submitted by Presbyterian Church USA, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2011/100.



Statement*

The Presbyterian Church USA welcomes the 2011 Annual Ministerial Review “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education”. This statement focuses on the Presbyterian Church USA’s historical support for education, increasing access to and quality of universal primary education, and the importance of education as a factor in development.

Recent policies and actions include:

(a) The 199th General Assembly (1987) adopted A Call to Church Involvement in the Renewal of Public Education urging Presbyterians to join others in their communities to provide public schools that will secure for all children an education that develops their capacities to serve as creative and responsible persons in the common life and to mobilize the resources available in each community (home, church, community organizations) that will support public schools and share in achieving the necessary education of children and youth;

(b) The 204th General Assembly (1992) renewed the church’s commitment to public education for all, not just for an elite few and its vigorous support of and commitment for public education available to all children;

(c) The 207th General Assembly (1995) reaffirmed the church’s support for a public education of high quality for all children;

(d) The 208th General Assembly (1996), through “Hope for a global future: toward just and sustainable human development”, affirmed a rights-based approach to education and education importance to development: education is a basic human right and is essential to human development because it enhances human capacities, improves opportunities, and widens the range of choices;

(e) In 1998 the Presbyterian Church USA observed The Year of Emphasis on Education. This involved a broad range of initiatives related to education, including public education;

(f) The 219th General Assembly (2010) affirmed the long-standing commitment of the Presbyterian Church USA to public education as an essential institution contributing to the common good in a democratic society by its commitment to equip all children to be effective citizens, capable of living full and meaningful lives and contributing to their society.

The Presbyterian Church USA commitments encourage all stakeholders to consider policies and actions that would:

(a) Recognize universal access to a public, affordable primary education as a necessary component of a developing state’s infrastructure;

(b) Make universal access to education for girls a priority and demonstrate that in enrolment statistics;

(c) Create race and gender-balanced curriculum;

(d) Make primary education affordable, including the abolition of school fees as recommended by the World Bank and the United Nations Children’s Fund;

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

(e) Encourage Member States to consult with civil society in the development of curriculum and safe schools;

(f) Utilize established data collection mechanisms to hold Member States accountable for the commitments they have made.

The Presbyterian Church USA supports the goal of universal primary education and encourages Member States to recommit themselves to recognizing education as a component to development and the hopeful realization of the Millennium Development Goals.
