



## Economic and Social Council

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Geneva, 4-29 July 2011

Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda\*

**High-level segment: annual ministerial review**

### **Statement submitted by Action Aid, 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.

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\* E/2011/100 and Corr.1.



## **Statement\***

ActionAid International would like to commend the efforts by the Council to adjourn preparatory regional processes and reviews and recognize the importance of a coordinating body in the United Nations to bring together issues relating to economic, social and cultural rights. We applaud the Council for the timely choice of this year's theme, which is focusing on education-related goals. The need to discuss achievements towards the provision of good quality inclusive education cannot be overemphasized. We would like to acknowledge that the Millennium Development Goals have brought about tremendous improvements in education and other sectors however much remains to be done in order to achieve the 2015 aspirations in full respect of the human dignity and rights of the world's population. We believe that 2011 must be a year for renewed commitment from States, so that legal and policy frameworks backed by resources are put in place, towards the achievement of Education for All and the realization of the right to education.

Achieving the aims of the Education for All initiative is critical for attaining all eight Goals, in part due to the direct impact of education on child and reproductive health, as well as the fact that Education for All has created a body of experience in multi-partner collaboration toward the 2015 targets. We note that there are still 67 million children out of school and 759 million illiterate adults, poor quality of education still prevails resulting in hundreds of millions of children leaving school without key skills, low levels of transition to secondary school and limited opportunities for early childhood education and second change learning for those who have missed out.

We believe that there are two major priorities for action in 2011:

- States must fulfil their obligations in education adhering to principles of non-discrimination, so that all citizens enjoy their education rights, especially women and girls
- States must deliver sufficient predictable resources for the achievement of Education for All, including through international cooperation

## **Concluding remarks**

The Council must play a key role in holding Governments accountable for commitments by putting in place appropriate follow up mechanisms. In order to strengthen current efforts on education internationally, we recommend that the Council should be informed by the Education for All High-level group processes and the Education for All Fast-Track Initiative. In turn, the Council should provide robust and challenging reports on the performance of States to the global community. We also propose that the Council should engage with other actors such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, given their strong influence on countries' ability to pursue progressive policies and finance education fully.

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\* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.