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Statement submitted by Pax Romana, 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*

As nations struggle with violence, poverty and unemployment, education is the sustainable solution. However, the global economic crisis poses a danger to achieving the goals of the United Nations Development Agenda. In this crisis, girls and women are becoming more vulnerable as youth in general are suffering. Global cooperation and the empowerment of civil society can help end this crisis. With regard to the implementation of internationally agreed upon goals regarding education, Pax Romana finds that the following issues require attention.

In places where violence is widespread, students are not able to attend school in safety. There is a constant threat that hinders education and prevents children from travelling to schools and in focusing on their studies. This is especially true for girls, as they are often targeted during times of instability. With two thirds of the world's uneducated children being girls, there is clearly a disadvantage placed on them. Girls and women, especially in countries where the right to an education is challenged, must be provided with equal access to education and a safe environment to pursue it. Despite progress towards women's empowerment, female-dominated professions do not yield an income equal to male dominated professions. As one of these professions, teaching does not yield an income that is comparable to other careers.

Recommendations

In places where the educational environment is threatened by violence, security procedures should be implemented in order to make schools safe for all students, especially girls. Without the protection of girls' education, there is no full commitment to Education for All.

Education should be prioritized in State budgets. It is impossible to demand exceptional results of students and teachers without providing proper tools. Teachers must be considered essential to the development of education policy and must be valued as resources by Governments. If there is true dedication to education, then a commitment to educators must be made to turn words into actions.

During this International Year of Youth, promoting the role of youth in the process of change is necessary. Countries should ensure that youth have a voice in national debates, especially in the development of domestic policies such as education. When implementing programmes in developing countries, there should be consultation with locals as to assess the needs of youth. The establishment of national youth councils and the assurance of their independence from government would ensure that the voice of even the most vulnerable groups are expressed and heard.

The Education for All initiative states that partnerships between governments, non-governmental organizations, communities and families can help ensure the provision of good care and education for children, especially for those most disadvantaged, through activities centred on the child, focused on the family, based within the community and supported by national, multi-sectoral policies and adequate resources. A true commitment to education and to the world's disadvantaged can be demonstrated.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.