



## Economic and Social Council

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Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda\*

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

### **Statement submitted by Company of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, 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.



## **Statement\***

Currently, 72 million children are denied the right to education. Over half of these children are denied that right by armed conflict; 28 million of them are of primary school age. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in its recent report *The Hidden Crisis: Armed Conflict and Education*, stated, "... the devastating effects of warfare on education go largely unreported. And the international community is turning its back on the victims." The right to education was proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (article 26). The commitment to achieving universal primary education was made through the adoption of Millennium Development Goal 3, with 2015 as the target date to achieve it.

In the decade ending in 2008, 30 of the 35 countries that experienced armed conflict were low- and lower-middle-income countries. In these fragile States 42 per cent of the world's primary-school-aged children were out of school. Clearly, efforts need to be made to address this problem.

At present, 21 developing countries are spending more on arms than on primary education. In addition, only 2 per cent of humanitarian aid is given to education and 38 per cent of aid requests for education are met, which is half the average for all other sectors.

Finally, there is an alarming trend for schools and schoolchildren to be the targets of attacks. This is clearly a violation of international law.

## **Recommendations**

1. Countries, with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), develop ways to continue to provide education even in the midst of conflict.
2. United Nations agencies, with nations, strengthen efforts to make known the failures to protect the human rights of schoolchildren and educational institutions during conflicts.
3. UNESCO be delegated to monitor and report these violations to the Human Rights Council and the Security Council.
4. UNICEF work with countries to develop curricula that deal with peacemaking and reconciliation.
5. Humanitarian aid agencies and donor countries provide the necessary resources to reconstruct educational systems in post-conflict countries.
6. International financial institutions, with the United Nations, finance education in conflict-affected countries, replicating the pooled funding used in the health sector to secure long-term, predictable financing for quality educational systems.

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