

Global Campaign for Education Press Release
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Media Contact: Alex Kent +27 76 428 5390

Contacts in Oslo: Michelle Dixon +1 202 279 1039, Lucia Fry +44 7976 908 006

**Oslo High Level Group on Education for All:
High hopes for a big change**

Campaigners for education are converging on the eighth High Level Group meeting on Education for All in Oslo 16th – 18th December. Government ministers, UN agencies, private sector and civil society use this annual meeting to discuss the progress and future steps to achieving education for all. The Global Campaign for Education will be calling for urgent reform of the international system to ensure that developing countries get the assistance they need.

Several trillion dollars have been committed by the governments in the past six weeks to reward the failures of the market place whereas only \$16 billion is needed to fund Education for All. This would allow countries to expand education, recruiting and training the teachers that shape the minds and abilities of every child, even those in the most challenging of circumstances. The poorest and most vulnerable children must not fall further victim to a global recession that was not their making. In a time of financial crisis, this is the most worthwhile investment the global community could make.' Kailash Satyarthi, GCE President.

For the first time ever the meeting is taking place in a donor country - one of the few countries to actually meet their aid commitments to education. Most donors, including all but one of the G8 countries, have yet to fulfil these. With 75 million children out of school, and struggling in desperate conditions such as child labour, refugees and victims of conflict, GCE is calling for more and better quality assistance to developing countries. Aid to basic education has stagnated around \$4 billion a year – less than 50% of what is needed to achieve universal primary education, and less than 25% of what is needed to achieve the full set of Education for All goals by 2015.

GCE is also calling on donors to prioritise teachers and declare how many professional teachers they will assist to train, hire and retain, backing such words with substantial predictable aid flows that can be spent on teacher salaries. Currently only 17% of aid to basic education is available for teachers' salaries, despite the fact that they account for 70-90% of education budgets. 18 million teachers are needed to be trained, recruited and retained in order to meet the 2015 goals. World Bank and IMF policies have exacerbated this situation, insisting on macro-economic prescriptions and low inflation that restricts governments spend on teacher salaries. GCE is calling on the World Bank and IMF to re-orient their policies and practices to support quality public Education for All and especially the recruitment of professional teachers. They also want further and deeper action on the hardest-to-reach children, including child labourers and those affected by conflict.

"Teachers are the life-blood of education. There are no quick fixes in creating a teacher workforce. The teachers of future generations need good training and decent wages to be paid on time every month. Donors must stop trying to cut corners when it

comes to financing teachers, remember the inspirational teachers you've had in life, and give others that chance." Helga Hjetland, President, Union of Education Norway

GCE is calling on this Oslo meeting to deliver a radical overhaul of the global system for financing education. With seven years to the Education for All target date the timely and sufficient disbursement of predictable funds must be an immediate priority.

Notes to Editors:

For more information or to organise interviews please contact:

Michelle Dixon michelle@campaignforeducation.org +1 202 279 1039

Lucia Fry lucia@campaignforeducation.org +44 7976 908 006

Alex Kent alex@campaignforeducation.org +27 76 428 5390

GCE's conditions for a new global financing for education system must include the following:

- Focus on the inclusive 'Education for All' goals – not just the MDGs
- Independence from any international financing institution
- Enhanced multi-lateralism to be globally owned
- Participatory Governance
- Transparency and Mutual Accountability
- Predictability

GCE's Spokespeople available in Oslo:

Kailash Satyarthi – Global Campaign for Education President (Chair of the Global March Against Child Labour, lives in India)

Helga Hjetland – Global Campaign for Education Board Member (President of the Union of Education in Norway)

Owain James – GCE's Global Coordinator

Lucia Fry – GCE's Policy Advisor

Michelle Dixon – GCE's campaigns advisor and coordinator of GCE-USA

Daniel Adzo – ex child labourer (from Ghana)

Hem Lata Parik – ex child labourer (from India)

What's GCE doing during the High Level Group:

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| 16th December, 16.50 | Ex-child labourers from India and Ghana are presenting the 'Class of 2015' to Heads of State at the opening ceremony. |
| 17th December, 07.45 | Developing Country Education Ministers' breakfast hosted by Angelique Kidjo and Kailash Satyarthi. This will include briefings on financing education, teachers and hard-to-reach children. |
| GCE new report | "Reviving the global compact on education: what more could the international community do?" |
| GCE new report | In conjunction with the Global March against Child Labour GCE has produced a new report "Children Missing from Class of 2015" |