

## The Director-General

To All Ministers of Education

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Dear Minister,

As you may recall, participants from 164 countries at the World Education Forum in Dakar in April 2000 made the commitment through the six Education for All (EFA) goals, to provide quality education for all by 2015. In order to remind the world of the EFA goals and to renew that momentum, UNESCO, in collaboration with the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), a coalition of NGOs and teachers' unions in over 150 countries, has been promoting the celebration of an annual EFA Week around the time of the Dakar anniversary.

In previous years, the Global EFA Weeks have proved successful in mobilizing children, their parents and teachers and a host of NGOs in support of basic education and in raising global awareness of the EFA goals. In 2003, over 2 million people in 70 countries participated in the "Big Lesson" on girls' education, thus breaking the world record for the largest lesson in history. In 2004, 2 million people took part in the "Big Lobby", when children asked their elected representatives to do more to give every child a chance to go to school. Last year, 5 million people requested world leaders to "Educate to End Poverty" and "Send my Friend to School".

To build on this success, the Global EFA Week 2006 will be celebrated again this year from 24 to 30 April 2006. This year's Week will focus on teachers with the slogan "**Every Child Needs A Teacher**". The following key messages will be addressed: 1) achieving EFA depends on having enough teachers (40 pupils per teacher); 2) teachers need to be professionally trained, adequately paid and well-motivated to achieve the EFA goals; and 3) to achieve this, there must be sufficient financing for the expansion of education systems. UNESCO and GCE will spread these messages across the world to mobilize the interest, commitment and actions of politicians and leaders.

Your leadership of and support for this global awareness-raising campaign will be crucial for the success of the Global EFA Week 2006. Your collaboration with us and our partners in organizing the following events which might be planned in your country would be greatly appreciated.

- In the run up to and during the Global EFA Week 2006, a dossier called **“The Case for Teachers”** will be created by teachers and learners. This dossier will compile evidence on the contribution of teachers to delivering EFA. The dossiers will be used in three main ways: 1) to be handed over during “Official Back to School” Day; 2) to be presented during the “Big Hearing”; and 3) to be collected and delivered to a Head of State or government, Minister or other high-level official.
- On a nationally agreed **“Official Back to School” Day** during the Global EFA Week, politicians, parliamentarians or district-level representatives or dignitaries are invited to visit a school, non-formal education centre, or adult literacy centre. The dossiers will be presented to and discussed with those visitors.
- A national event called the **“Big Hearing”** will be organized at a central national landmark to give chances for public debate on the issues raised by “The Case for Teachers”. The dossiers will be presented to eminent people, including the Head of State or Government, the Ministers of Education and Finance and donors as well as others, such as celebrities, teacher union leaders and journalists. When the dossiers with the name of an author are given to eminent persons, they will be requested to commit to improving the situation and write back to the author to report what has been done to keep their pledged commitment.

In the interest of promoting EFA in your country, I would appreciate it if you could kindly take measures to collaborate with NGOs and other grassroots groups to facilitate the “Official Back to School” Day and the “Big Hearing”. I would be most grateful if you could inform the Head of State or Government or Prime Minister’s office as well as other education authorities about these events. You may also wish to encourage other politicians to visit a school during EFA Week and participate in a learning activity with teachers and pupils, which would send a powerful message about the level of commitment that your country makes to provide quality education for all its citizens.

Last but not least, I would also like to encourage you to organize your own awareness-raising activities during that week. UNESCO looks forward to the Global EFA Week 2006 as a means to further strengthen our partnership.

Yours sincerely,

Koïchiro Matsuura