

TUESDAY

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**DRAFT REMARKS ON EDUCATION FOR
AMBASSADOR BARTON'S STATEMENT AT THE ECOSOC
MINISTERIAL**

Thank you, Mr. President.

Your excellencies:

The United States believes everyone benefits when we invest in education. Education transforms individual lives: empowering people to pursue their dreams of a better life and expand their human potential. One extra year of schooling increases individual earnings by 8.3% on average. More education also empowers women: giving them the skills and earning potential they need to help support their families, build businesses, and send their own children to school. But the advantages extend beyond individuals. More education, especially for women, promotes healthier societies. Fully one half of the drop in child mortality between 1970 and 1990 can be attributed to increased education for women and girls.

The United States is committed to promoting education because it is in our interest as well. More education -- and the accompanying economic growth -- is linked to decreases in conflict. These factors are also crucial to successful transitions to democracy, and the ability to sustain democratic governance after the transition. Education also empowers people, including women, to fully participate in their societies, becoming citizens in the truest sense of the word.

Our position as one of the largest donors to education reflects this commitment. Bilaterally, our Overseas Development Assistance for education is higher than ever. Over the last decade, we have increased our education aid over 1000% for a total of \$1.2 billion in 2010. We are using this aid to help countries all over the world meet the Millennium Development Goals and the Education for All Goals. USAID's new Education Strategy sets three goals: by 2015, we will to improve reading skills for 100 million children worldwide in primary grades, improve tertiary and workforce development programs to better generate skills relevant to each country's development goals, and to increase equitable access to education in conflict and crisis situations for 15 million learners.

We are also supporting these goals through our work with multilateral partners at UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, the World Bank, and many others. In May, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton joined UNESCO Director General Bokova to launch a new Global Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education. We are also working

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together with multilateral agencies on the ground: With UNICEF, we are training teachers in Benin and building sanitation facilities for students in refugee camps in Cameroon. With UNICEF and the Government of Jordan, we are working to integrate Iraqi refugees into public schools.

Over the last decade, the international community has made great progress in education. Since 1999, the number of out of school children has dropped by more than a third, and the number of girls out of school is decreasing even faster. Yet there are great challenges ahead of us. There are still 796 million illiterate adults in the world, almost two thirds of whom are women. While access to primary education has improved, quality education and access to secondary education remain a problem, especially for girls.

Today, everyone is feeling the constraints of limited budgets, but we cannot lose sight of the importance of education. Even in these times, there are ways that we can all strengthen our commitment to education.

First, we can all share our experiences on making education delivery stronger and more cost-effective. The United States has lessons to learn about building a better teacher workforce from countries. At the same time, we can help other countries as well. For example, we can assist other nations develop stronger technical and vocational education programs, an area we have excelled in. We want to initiate and continue more of these dialogues.

Second, we can include the private sector and other non-traditional partners in our conversations. Look, for example, at UNESCO's new Global Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education, which mobilized millions in new investment in education for women and girls. In the United States, organizations – such as the Lumina Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation – have made huge investments in making classrooms more effective. These lessons can also be shared.

Finally, we need to be proactive about setting the agenda for the future. Both the MDGs and EFA Goals will end in 2015, but some challenges – like illiteracy – will continue beyond 2015. This is not a reason to give up the fight. Instead, it is a reason to redouble our efforts to ^{PROMOTE} ~~end~~ literacy, strengthen secondary education, and ensure that all children – both girls and boys – have a chance for a quality education.

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