



SLOVAKIA

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STATEMENT

by

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**to the ECOSOC 2011 Substantive Session**

**High-level segment**

**"IMPLEMENTING THE INTERNATIONALLY AGREED GOALS AND  
COMMITMENTS IN REGARD TO EDUCATION"**

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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC TO THE  
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Mr. President, distinguished Ministers, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my particular honour to address this esteemed and very important forum. Slovakia aligns itself with the statement made by Poland on behalf of the European Union.

I would like to begin by expressing my great appreciation of the activities and initiatives of the UN in regard to education. Slovakia highly appreciates the fact that the main topic of the High-level Segment of this year's ECOSOC session is education, particularly the implementation of internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard of education. We also welcome the draft of the Ministerial Declaration, which is an important reminder of our international commitments and which, after its adoption, will certainly add considerable value to all that the UN has adopted in the area of education and development.

Mr. President,

Slovakia fully accepts its international commitments in regard to education and it has been seeking their full embodiment in its legislation and policy. Slovakia as EU member is also an integral part of the broad support performed by EU and is actively working towards EU ODA targets.

Education is certainly indispensable part of development. However, looking at education in its complexity, in our national circumstances we consider also development education as one of the most important part of the Slovak development assistance strategy. Public awareness-raising activities focused on the importance and relevance of ODA for developing countries are among the priorities of the Foreign Affairs Ministry's information policy. They help to better know the problems of the developing world, identify possible solutions, and enhance transparent use of public funds for this purpose. Global education as an integral part of the official development aid of Slovakia is based on values of solidarity, equality, inclusion and co-operation. Development education fosters participation in world-wide poverty eradication through understanding of the causes and effects of global issues and encourages personal involvement and informed actions. As Herbert Spencer, British philosopher, said, the aim of education is not only knowledge, but also an action. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovakia supports various activities of the Slovak nongovernmental organizations in the field of development education under the umbrella of the Program Slovak AID, which financially supports grants and programmes aimed at educational activities directly at schools in the selected countries in need. In the period 2005-2010, 1 million Euros had been invested in the development education programmes.

A long-term and inseparable part of the Slovak development aid in the field of education is granting scholarships to students from developing countries. The Ministry of Education of Slovakia grants scholarships in compliance with territorial and sectoral needs. Slovak universities currently host 180 students from developing countries, especially with majors in medicine, economy and management. The Slovak Government programmes amount to around one million Euros on scholarships for students from developing countries each year.

Mr. President,

Education, recognised to be a fundamental human right, is an important means improving social and sustainable development, economic growth, quality of democracy and significantly enriching a person's life. Fullfilment of the MDG's cannot be achieved without promoting the

right approach to the quality of education universally and at all levels. Despite the progress made in achieving the goal of universal primary education the international community should work harder and in more targeted way to achieve universal primary education by 2015. As it is rightly recommended by the Committee for Development Policy and is becoming generally recognized, increased attention needs to be paid to post-primary education and skill training. There is also a strong need to pay attention to better education for teachers and educators. Policy makers are in this regard expected to place education in the broader context of national development strategies to ensure its higher effectiveness. We have to arrange increased cooperation and coordination between the public and private sector in order to address the variety of problems related to unemployment of educated workers. There is an urgent need to rethink the overall international support to education in the light of emerging challenges. In this regard, we need to improve the effectiveness of aid and the financing of education.

Currently the whole world has to deal with the consequences of the financial and economic crisis. However, we must not allow discussions of the full realisation of the right to education for all to be drowned out by economic problems. On the other hand, making full use of the potential and talents of persons will undoubtedly help to increase economic growth, employment, competitiveness and social solidarity. We consider the issue of education to be extremely topical in the context of the global crisis, and we believe that fully functional quality educational systems will bring significant advances in the development of society and mankind. It is important to emphasise that effective financing of education should not be seen as a cost but an investment in sustainable development.

Thank you for your attention.