



**United Nations Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization**



**SEVENTH CONFERENCE ON
MINISTERS OF EDUCATION OF AFRICAN
MEMBER STATES (MINEDAF VII)**

Durban, South Africa, 20-24 April 1998

FINAL REPORT

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I. GENERAL REPORT

PREAMBLE

Pursuant to the provisions of Programme 1.1. of Document 29 C/5, as approved by the 29th Session of the General Conference, UNESCO organized the Seventh Conference of Ministers of Education of African member States (MINEDAF VII) from 20 to 24 April 1998 in Durban, Republic of South Africa.

The Conference focused on "Lifelong Education for All: What Strategies for the 21st Century", as the general theme and also covered the following sub-themes:

- Basic Education in Africa : Review of the situation since the Jomtien Conference;
- Looking at the future I: Generalizing access;
- Looking at the future II: Closing the gender gap;
- Looking at the future III: Promoting relevance and efficiency and improving the quality of education;
- The role of higher education;
- Education and African integration
- Resource mobilization and utilization.

The MINEDAF VII Conference was organized as part of the implementation of the UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy (1996-2001). It was inspired by the United Nations Special Initiative for Africa which considers "*education for all African children as a basic means of ensuring a promising future for the rising generation*

It was also inspired by the OAU (Organization of African Unity) Decade for Education in Africa, the Ségou perspectives and the Paulo Freire African Decade on Literacy for All.

The Ministers undertook to work towards formulating a new vision of Africa by intensifying education and promoting human rights and the culture of peace and democracy on a constant basis, particularly by the year 2000, the International Year of Peace.

The Conference ended with the adoption of the Durban Statement of Commitment which opens new prospects for the development of education by strengthening African regional integration.

These results were achieved, thanks to the following *particular structure* adopted for the organization of the conference.

Unlike the other MINEDAF, this Conference adopted *the interactive style* by maximizing dialogue and minimizing the plenary sessions, in the traditional sense of the term.

After the official opening session, the deliberations were pursued in the form of *Panel* debates on the seven selected sub-themes. Each Panel comprised selected representatives of Member States and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) involved in educational development in Africa.

Each sub-theme was briefly introduced by a Moderator. After the presentation, Panelists read short papers on corresponding themes/sub-

themes prior to an in-depth debate on the major issues raised in the working document.

At the end of the debate the Moderator summed up the main conclusions of the discussions. The abstracts were reviewed during the ministerial caucus and used in preparing a Statement of Commitment.

This final report includes the report on the Conference proceedings, the report of the seven panels, the Durban Statement of Commitment and the annexes.

1.2. ELECTION OF BUREAU AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Conference elected a Bureau comprising the following officers:

- Chairman: The Minister of Education of South Africa**
- Vice-Chairman: The Ministers of Education of Guinea-Bissau, Uganda, Rwanda and Algeria.**
- Rapporteur: The Minister of Education of Madagascar.**

The Conference approved the draft agenda without any amendment. The final agenda of the Conference is provided in the annex to this report.

1.3. ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE

The Conference brought together about 500 participants including representatives of African member States, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), United Nations Agencies and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). Thirty-nine delegations of the member States were led by Ministers.

Also held concurrently with the main Conference were the Second Regional Consultation of African Educational NGOs, a workshop for teachers and journalists and a meeting of the *Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ)*.

Moreover, a grand exhibition was organized on education in South Africa, UNESCO and NGOs. The UNESCO exhibition focused on the general theme of the Conference.

The deliberations were held in two stages. Panel debates were organized on the seven selected sub-themes from 20 to 22 April. On 23 and 24 April, the Ministers met in closed sessions to examine the conclusions of the Panel debates and prepare the Statement of Commitment.

The opening ceremony of the Conference was chaired by His Majesty Goodwill Zwelithini Zulu, King of Kwazulu.

Four speeches were delivered at the ceremony:

- **Speech by Mr. Alfred NZO, South African Minister of Foreign Affairs;**
- **Speech by Mr. Sibusiso BENGU, South African Minister of Education;**
- **Speech by Mr. Federico MAYOR, Director-General of UNESCO;**
- **Opening Address by His Excellency B. NGUBANE, Premier of Kwazulu Natal Province.**

In his opening address, the Premier of Kwazulu, His Excellency B. NGUBANE, first recalled South Africa's experience in educational development and the role education has played in the construction of a democratic society that enforces equality of all social groups and human dignity.

He then indicated that the recent political and social developments in South Africa paved the way for increased access to education particularly for the disadvantaged peoples. He finally stressed the need to promote lifelong education for all so that adequate provision can be made for the present and future needs of the African societies subjected to perpetual transformations and to the effects of the globalization process.

For his part, the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr. Federico Mayor, first thanked the Government of South Africa for hosting the Conference and then emphasized the central role teachers play in the development of educational systems. He also stressed the need to provide teachers with adequate training and opportunities for retraining in the present-day society characterized by rapid development of knowledge and technologies.

Mr. Mayor further pointed to the crucial role education should play in promoting a culture of peace, democracy and tolerance as an essential factor of sustainable human development.

In his address, the South African Minister of Education, His Excellency Sibusiso BENGU, indicated that the development of human resources constitutes the sole investment that can make a significant contribution to economic and social development. Hence, he maintained that education should be accorded priority in all development strategies.

The Minister noted that, in spite of their meager resources, African countries should resolutely undertake to promote lifelong education for all in order to meet societal needs as well as the challenges posed by the globalization process.

As indicated in Section 1.1. the Conference deliberations were held in seven Panel meetings corresponding to the various selected sub-themes.

At the closing ceremony, the Deputy-Director General of UNESCO in charge of Education, Mr. C. POWER, thanked the Government of South Africa, on behalf of UNESCO, for hosting the Conference. He also thanked the Member States and other participants for their enthusiastic support and

intellectual contribution to the success of the Conference.

In his closing address, the South African Minister of Education, His Excellency Sibusiso BENGU, first expressed his gratitude to the staff of UNESCO and the South African Ministry of Education for the quality of the work done during the organization of the Conference. He said that his country felt honoured to have had the opportunity to host the Conference, given its importance to the future of education in Africa. He finally reaffirmed the commitment by Education Ministers of the African member States to "join efforts in promoting African integration through OAU and the African Economic Community so as to make education the prime mover of African Renaissance".

An Inter-governmental Committee (comprising members of the MINEDAF VII Bureau) was set up to follow up the implementation of the resolutions of this conference.

II. REPORT ON PANEL DISCUSSIONS

PANEL I

Theme : BASIC EDUCATION IN AFRICA: REVIEW OF THE SITUATION SINCE THE JOMTIEN CONFERENCE

Moderator : Senegal

Panelists : UNICEF, Central African Republic, Burkina Faso, Zambia, Angola, Namibia and Seychelles

1. Introduction

The Moderator recalled the challenges inherent in "lifelong education for all" and the need to eliminate illiteracy and achieve the objective of universalizing primary education in Africa. He then gave a brief account of actions taken in Africa since the Jomtien Conference and also mentioned the various initiatives undertaken recently to promote basic education, particularly the Ségou perspectives and the OAU Decade for Education in Africa.

2. Achievements

The participants admitted that ever since the Jomtien Conference, several countries have considerably improved the enrolment rate at the basic education level.

3. Obstacles

The participants identified the following obstacles to the development of basic education:

- inadequate human, financial and material resources;
- low level of teacher training ;
- inadequate teaching aids;
- low output of the educational system which finds expression in the high drop-out rates.

4. Strategies for promoting basic education

The participants renewed their support for the recommendations of the Amman Conference on the mid-term evaluation of the Jomtien Plan of Action. Among other things, they considered it necessary to:

- intensify new forms of learning that develop enterprise and creativity.
- develop Education for All programmes particularly in mother tongues that would highlight the cultural peculiarities of each society and open them to the rest of the world.

The participants also formulated the following recommendations:

- **establish adequate mechanisms to ensure better co-ordination of formal, non-formal and informal education;**
- **develop sub-regional co-operation in textbook design and production;**
- **capacity building for specialized education centres to improve access to basic education for children with specific needs as well as marginalized youths;**
- **strengthen educational programmes for refugees and displaced persons.**

PANEL 2

Theme : GENERALIZING ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Moderator : South Africa

Panelists : Guinea-Bissau, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Togo, Comoros and ISESCO.

1. Introduction

After defining the concept of access, the Moderator briefly analyzed the sociological, cultural and economic factors influencing access to education. He then presented some efforts made by certain member States to improve access to education. The Moderator finally identified the constraints limiting access to education.

2. Achievements

The participants acknowledged that, ever since the Jomtien Conference, the member States have made important progress in improving access to education, particularly, by constructing new educational facilities, developing learning premises, abolishing the payment of school fees and establishing school-feeding programmes.

3. Obstacles

Among the obstacles to the generalization of access to education, the participants identified the inadequacy of school buildings, qualified teachers and financial and material resources.

4. Strategies for Generalizing Access to Education

i) Access

The participants noted that access to all levels of formal and non-formal education is a prerequisite for the development of democracy and African economy. They also emphasized that access to basic education should be considered as a right.

ii) Quality

The exigencies of educational quality should be complied with while improving access to education. Such quality is mainly contingent on the quality of teachers. Consequently, the participants considered it essential to establish viable and efficient training and retraining programmes for teachers.

iii) Education and Development

It was recognized that education is an important investment for economic and social development. It is however observed nowadays that education

does not automatically guarantee employment. Under the circumstances, the participants recommended that curricula be adapted to enable learners to develop their sense of initiative and creativity.

iv) Financing Education

Obviously, the member States are no longer in a position to finance all the educational requirements of their populations. It is therefore necessary that they establish appropriate partnerships, particularly with the grassroots communities and the private sector in order to improve access to quality education.

To alleviate the debt burden and its negative impact on development, it was recommended that necessary steps be taken to convert debts into educational investments.

The participants also recommended the repatriation of investments abroad and the return of African professionals to alleviate the debt burden and offset the shortage of highly qualified personnel required to develop educational systems in Africa.

PANEL 3

Theme : CLOSING THE GENDER GAP

Moderator : Gabon

Panelists : FAWE, Niger, Uganda, Madagascar, Tunisia and Botswana

1. Introduction

The Moderator recalled the various arguments in favour of schooling for girls and women's education, especially the positive correlation between the rate of girls' enrolment in primary schools on the one hand, and gross national product and the increase in life expectancy, on the other. He gave a brief account of the efforts made in recent times to improve girls' education and the obstacles encountered during the process.

2. Achievements

The participants generally appreciated the substantial results achieved with respect to improving access for girls at all levels of education. In particular, they recognized the efforts deployed by FAWE (Forum of African Women Educationalists) in promoting policies aimed at closing the gender gap in education.

3. Obstacles

The panelists observed that several studies have been carried out to determine the obstacles to girls' schooling and women's education.

The Conference indicated that the attitudes of society, early marriage and pregnancy and successive confinement constitute the most visible obstacles to girls' education.

4. Strategies for Closing the Gender Gap

The panelists recommended that African countries formulate and implement general policies that would help reduce the gender disparity and guarantee the safety and security of girls in schools.

PANEL 4

Theme : PROMOTING RELEVANCE AND EFFICIENCY AND IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL QUALITY

Moderator : Algeria

Panelists : Pan African Teachers' Organization, Swaziland, Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ), Democratic Republic of Congo, Sao Tome, Eritrea, Liberia and Malawi.

1. Introduction

The Moderator first introduced the concepts before giving a brief account of the factors influencing educational relevance, efficiency and quality in Africa. He then presented actions taken recently towards improving the situation in the three fields.

2. Achievements

Certain activities recently undertaken by African countries have helped in enhancing educational relevance, efficiency and quality.

The panelists identified the following activities:

- **curricula reform and production of teaching aids;**
- **continuing training for teachers;**
- **training programmes on educational management.**

3. Obstacles

The participants identified the following as factors influencing the low level of relevance, efficiency and the overall quality of education in Africa:

- **inadequate financial resources, facilities, teaching aids and teaching staff;**
- **inefficient institutional management;**
- **teachers' working conditions;**
- **inadequacy or lack of continuing teacher training programmes.**

4. Strategies for enhancing educational relevance, efficiency and quality

The participants formulated the following recommendations:

- **creating a national or sub-regional structure to monitor and evaluate the relevance, efficiency and quality of educational systems;**

In this regard, African countries were urged to draw on the experience of SACMEQ which monitors the quality of education in 15 Southern African countries.

- **Organizing remedial courses;**
- **National and sub-regional capacity building in the field of teaching aids**

design and production, particularly in the national languages;
- developing technical and vocational training courses to prepare graduates better for careers on the labour market.

PANEL 5

Theme : ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIFELONG EDUCATION FOR ALL

Moderator : Kenya

Panelists : Egypt, Mozambique, South Africa and Burundi

1. Introduction

The Moderator gave a brief account of developments in the university environment and the obstacles they pose to the improvement of higher education.

He also stressed the role higher education should play in developing other educational sectors and in promoting lifelong education for all.

2. Achievements

The panelists acknowledged that one of the major achievements of higher education in Africa consists in training professional staff to run the civil service and public enterprises.

3. Obstacles

The panelists identified a series of obstacles to the improvement of higher education, namely:

- **rapid increase in student population;**
- **reduction of public expenditure per student;**
- **decline in the relevance and quality of higher education and research;**
- **discrepancy between training provided and the present and future societal needs;**
- **inadequate reception capacity and disparities based on students' gender and social background.**

4. Strategies for developing higher education

i) Missions of universities

Missions of universities should be redefined to enable universities to meet individual needs as well as the present and future aspirations of the African society which is contending with phenomena such as globalization, democratization of political systems and rapid development of knowledge and information and communication technologies.

ii) Place of higher education in educational systems

The participants reaffirmed the conclusions of the Jomtien Conference on Basic Education for All and urged member States to continue giving priority to development of primary education without ignoring the other educational

sectors. The development of educational systems should be envisaged through a global approach rather than a sectorial one to ensure the systems' internal coherence and organic unity. It was in this context that the panelists recommended the continuous development of higher education. It was also concluded that higher education should contribute to the development of the other educational sectors, particularly through trainers' training and production of teaching aids.

iii) Institutional capacity building

It is necessary to promote the use of local experts in planning and carrying out studies and consultancy services.

It was recommended that the World Bank reserve part of the resources allocated to technical assistance in Africa for institutional capacity building in the higher educational sector.

iv) Regional co-operation

Regional co-operation should be strengthened, especially in the field of academic mobility of teachers and students, curricula reform and production of teaching aids. The example of a university co-operation agreement within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) was mentioned. Under this agreement, each university reserves 5% of its enrolments for students of the sub-region who also enjoy the same learning conditions as the nationals. Priority should be given to the regionalization of certain educational sectors and to the creation of centres of excellence.

v) Financing higher education and research

The participants recognized that the governments do not have the requisite resources to offer free higher education. Consequently, students should participate in the financing of their training, particularly through loan schemes. In this regard, universities should consider privatizing their feeding and accommodation systems.

Governments should allocate more resources for scientific and technical research to enable universities to make a greater contribution to technological development.

vi) Management of Universities

Governments should respect academic freedoms and accord universities greater autonomy in their administration and financial management. Vice-Chancellors should be provided further training in university administration so as to improve the efficiency of African universities.

vii) Relevance of Higher Education

It is necessary to undertake curricula reforms to enable universities to produce graduates who can create jobs rather than demanding them as a right.

viii) Distance Learning and Private Higher Education

The participants encouraged the development of distance learning and private higher education as a means of increasing access to higher education. The development of distance learning should help strengthen regional co-operation and foster the emergence of a learning society in Africa. The opportunities offered by the new information technologies and the African Virtual University Project should be used in developing distance learning.

ix) Women's Place in Higher Education

Necessary steps should be taken to ensure a greater participation of girls and women in university life as students, lecturers, research fellows or members of the administrative and technical staff.

x) Solutions to the Problems of Higher Education

The member States should provide appropriate solutions to the following paradoxical problems:

- **Reception capacities are exceeded whereas there is an increasing demand for human resources;**
- **The need to produce professional staff to contribute to their countries' economic development whereas some graduates are still unemployed;**
- **The need to expand higher education at a time when university admission is subject to rigorous selection criteria;**
- **The demand for institutional autonomy whereas almost all funds are provided by Governments;**
- **The need to develop research whereas the budget allocated for research is far inadequate and the current research does not address economic concerns.**

PANEL 6

Theme : ROLE OF EDUCATION IN AFRICAN INTEGRATION

Moderator : Lesotho

Panelists : OAU, Chad, Tanzania, Cape Verde, Nigeria, Gate d'Ivoire, Benin and Mali

1. Introduction

The Moderator gave a historical account of efforts made by African Countries towards creating an African Economic Community. He briefly recalled the objectives and priorities of the Lagos Plan of Action and the Abuja Declaration. The Moderator highlighted not only the essential role education should play in promoting regional integration but also the benefits education could derive from such integration.

2. Achievements

In spite of the difficulties encountered in implementing regional integration programmes, the participants noted that several initiatives have been taken through co-operation in education.

These include:

- **Development of centres of excellence:**
- **Exchange programmes for students and teachers.**

3. Obstacles

The participants identified the following obstacles to the materialization of regional integration in Africa:

- **Language barriers;**
- **Inadequate expertise in certain priority fields:**
- **Inadequacy of financial resources required to support the running of joint institutions;**
- **Social crises and civil wars which result in mass movement of people, including pupils, students and teachers;**
- **Lack and/or inefficiency of follow-up mechanisms for the implementation of regional integration policies.**

4. Strategies for Enhancing the Role of Education in African Integration

The following strategies were proposed:

- **Promote the use of at least two major languages to facilitate the exchange of teachers;**
- **Intensify student exchange programmes especially for post-graduate training. In this regard, it was recommended that all the member States ratify the Arusha Convention on the mutual recognition of programs, certificates, degrees, grades and other qualifications conferred in the higher educational sector.**

PANEL 7

Theme : MOBILIZING AND USING RESOURCES TO PROMOTE LIFELONG EDUCATION FOR ALL

Moderator : Guinea-Bissau

Panelists : UN Economic Commission for Africa, The World Bank, Sudan, Mauritius, Rwanda, Mauritania and Ghana.

1. Introduction

The challenges inherent in the development of Lifelong Education for All call for the mobilization of substantial human, financial and material resources. The Moderator recalled that, despite their economic constraints, African countries continue to allocate huge resources for the development of education. He pointed to the international community's renewed interest in the development of education in Africa and presented some resource mobilization opportunities open to African countries.

2. Achievements

The participants realized that, in recent years, several African countries have successfully undertaken innovatory initiatives in mobilizing resources. They mentioned, in particular, the experiment with educational volunteers and the running of multi-grade and double-shift classes,

3. Obstacles

The participants noted that, as a result of the economic difficulties facing African countries, they are unable to increase budgets allocated to education.

4. Strategies for Improving the Mobilization and Use of Resources

The panelists recommended the following strategies:

- **Optimize the use of available resources to enhance the profitability and efficiency of educational systems;**
- **Promote innovator-y approaches to improve resource mobilization and utilization. To this effect, it was recommended that African countries draw on the following experiments:**
 - **Adopting incentive taxation systems in order to motivate the richest social groups and enterprises to promote lifelong education for all:**
 - **Using educational volunteers:**
 - **Running multi-grade and double-shift classes;**
 - **Establishing schools near villages:**
- **Ensure a better use of facilities established through regional integration programmes.**

THE DURBAN STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Preamble

1. We, the Ministers of Education of African member States, convened by UNESCO in a free and democratic South Africa, in Durban, from 20 to 24 April 1998 on the occasion of the Seventh Conference of Ministers of Education of African member States (MINEDAF VII),

** are aware that we are at a period of crucial crossroads in the history of our continent, when, more than at any other time in its history, Education is called upon to play a decisive role in shaping Africa's future. The diversity of our continent and the richness of our different experiences provide some examples of great progress, with some countries showing that difficult problems can be overcome. This diversity also includes experiences where entrenched poverty, war and strife, and the burden of external debt hamper efforts at educational development. Only in fifteen countries are there sufficient school places for all eligible children, and in seventeen countries, which are the homes to over half of Africa's children, the gross enrolment ratio has actually dropped. Illiteracy rates are still 33% for men and 54% for women among adults in Africa.*

** are aware that we must take on the responsibility for our own development if we are to triumph over adversity, and that as a continent we are rich in the experience, talent, culture, and even resources to change the face and fate of Africa. We have much to learn from one another: we have already turned the corner, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), the Segou Perspectives, the Decade for Education in Africa of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, and the Paulo Freire African Decade on Literacy for All are some of the signposts pointing to a more determined and purposeful future, to the dawning of a true African Renaissance.*

A New Vision

2. In the light of this, we, the Ministers in charge of Education, commit ourselves to working towards a new vision for Africa. We commit ourselves to an Africa where knowledge, democracy, respect for human rights and a culture of peace will always guide our actions, an Africa where all the nations will stand side by side with the rest of the world, contributing to the planet its unique vibrancy, energy, culture, creativity and pluralism. We commit ourselves to maintaining the balance between pro-active participation in globalisation and the need to preserve and enhance positive aspects in our own cultures, traditions, values and ways of life.

We commit ourselves to an expanded role for Education which should be a lifelong process, a continuum which transcends schooling systems and which focuses on the building of a learning society, taking full advantage of what technology, appropriately adapted, can offer. This will be a reformed vision of Education that de-colonises the mind and liberates the individual for full citizenship.

3. Most importantly, we are determined to realise this commitment in unison, collaborating fully with one another to develop common strategies and to provide mutual support to one another, to link regional efforts to national aspirations and actions. We count among ourselves a good number of the world's least developed countries, as well as countries facing serious economic and social difficulties, and we recognise that there is much that we can do together, that no one country can go it all alone. We thus pledge to reinforce co-operation through regional and subregional initiatives, seeking as much as possible African solutions to African problems, and to establish and/or strengthen pan-African mechanisms, adequately funded, to accelerate institutional capacity building, to develop collaborative strategies and to monitor progress.

Challenges and Commitments

4. We recognise the specific challenges before us as we face the twenty-first century. We have given very serious thought to these challenges, and we are determined to face them squarely and act on them in new and innovative ways.

5. We have reviewed progress in basic education since the 1990 Jomtien World Conference on Education for All and the Amman Mid-Decade Meeting of the International Consultative Forum on Education for All, to whose goals we remain committed. We recognise that access to basic education must include access to early childhood programmes, and, in countries with near-universal participation, access to secondary education, paying adequate attention to the needs of disadvantaged groups. We resolve to reach these groups by designing and expanding formal, non-formal and distance delivery systems, tailoring and targeting programmes specifically to reach them and meet their needs, for example through the development of intensive skills training programmes for marginalised youth.

6. We are concerned that, in spite of our efforts, gender gap in participation in Education remains a major issue. We undertake to tackle the problem forcefully by developing appropriate policy frameworks and an enabling environment, to provide for the safety and security of girls in schools, to develop gender-sensitive teaching/learning materials, teacher training and monitoring instruments, and to work with ministries concerned with gender, the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) and other concerned groups to ensure a constant increase in enrolment, retention and success of girls and women at all levels and forms of the educational system.

7. We have carefully analysed the future challenges of Education, and recognise that all progress depends on the quality, relevance and efficiency of our educational systems. At the heart of this matter is our concern for the teacher, to whose role, status and career-long development we resolve to give the highest priority. We recognise the need to give the teachers of the future competence in the use and control of the new information technology necessary for their work, and will mount programmes and create institutions that can provide this much-needed expertise.

We also recognise the status of science education in Africa to be of particular concern. We will work collaboratively to develop and share science teaching/learning ideas, materials, kits and equipment, and will take appropriate steps to strengthen teacher education in science, mathematics, and technical/vocational education.

We also recognise that quality is fundamentally contingent on an environment conducive to innovations, the availability of the right type of teaching-learning materials, the assurance of minimum levels of nutrition, learning achievement monitoring mechanisms, adequate and appropriate infrastructure, an enlightened language policy which takes into account national and local languages. We undertake to improve on all these in our respective countries. Relevance in Education is in turn contingent on the inclusion of basic messages and basic skills in the curriculum, such as those dealing with the scourges of HIV/AIDS and drug-abuse, the promotion of democracy and human rights, and preparation for the world of work.

We note with great concern the devastating effects of both HIV/AIDS and a growing incidence of drug abuse, and resolve to combat these scourges with all the means at our disposal. For this purpose, we call upon all relevant ministries, organisations, and members of our society to join hands with us in taking necessary measures against these scourges.

8. We recognise that education for democracy, peace and human rights must always be a priority. As we approach the year 2000, the International Year for a Culture of Peace, we pledge ourselves to emphasizing our common African identity and learning to live and move forward together through collaborative educational development efforts.

9. We have examined issues related to higher education and recognise that a fundamental recasting of its mission and role is absolutely necessary. To this end, we resolve to pursue in greater depth the promotion of higher education for service to basic education, to the creation of a learning society, and for overall socio-economic, cultural, scientific, and technological development. We will strengthen our universities and other tertiary institutions so that they can provide the necessary knowledge and leadership for the rediscovery of African history and identity, for the general promotion of science, technology, arts and culture - in short, for the realisation of the African Renaissance. We have documented our thinking and experiences on the subject during the 1997 Dakar regional consultation on higher education, and we will table these at the 1998 Paris World Conference on Higher Education, where we can contribute to a universal search for solutions.

10. Since Education should be a matter of concern to society as a whole, we recognise the crucial role of community participation and public awareness in all programmes that seek to be sustainable. We reaffirm the principle of government responsibility for educational policy based on equity and for quality control and standards, infrastructure and resources, especially where communities are unable to contribute. Nevertheless, we resolve to involve (in an appropriate manner) the entire civil society, as well as non-governmental organisations, the private sector, media organisations,

parliamentarians, other ministries, religious organisations and teachers' and parents' organisations in the conceptualisation, planning and execution of programmes and in the mobilisation of resources. The furtherance of decentralisation and greater sharing of responsibility are helpful measures in this regard, and we are determined to promote these ideals.

We reaffirm the principles of a learning society and lifelong education, and reiterate our commitment to the Declaration and Agenda for Action of the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFITEA V).

11. We recognise that a greater amount and a more efficient and judicious use of financial resources are prerequisites to accomplishing our goals. Financing Education adequately is an urgent task and governments must assume responsibility for protecting this from the curse of corruption. They should also secure for Education as large a share of government budgets as possible, involving the civil society in partnerships, giving special attention to promoting equality of opportunity, and establishing appropriate financial assistance schemes for students. We encourage the return to the continent expertise and of capital of African citizens from the other parts of the world.

We believe African nations should always show solidarity in assisting one another in the development of Education, while not doing away with collaboration with the wider international community. In any event, national and international financing must be transparent, and every effort must be made to avoid the developmental tragedies caused by the imposed conditionalities and dependency-syndrome which have characterised international co-operation in the recent past. Our governments will continue to take all possible measures to restructure, swap or cancel existing debts and thus release additional resources for Education, especially for girls and women and all categories of disadvantaged groups.

Mechanisms

12. We resolve to designate the President and the Bureau of MINEDAF VII as an intergovernmental committee to follow up on the implementation of this Commitment, and we request UNESCO to continue to provide the Secretariat for the Committee. We will keep in mind the need for rotation and balanced participation of Member States of the region, and the need to synchronise and collaborate with similar activities of the ADAE.

13. We resolve to use the above Committee and other mechanisms, contacts and modalities, such as regional centres of excellence, a data bank on African intellectual capacity, the sharing of materials and exchange of African experts and expertise, to further regional collaboration.

14. In this connection, we will take appropriate steps to ensure the creation and strengthening of African training infrastructures and centres for capacity building and human resources development in Education, capitalising on existing facilities and structures in a number of countries on the continent.

In particular, we welcome the offer of the government of South Africa to make its experience, expertise and existing infrastructures available to the rest of Africa, and we re-echo the need for adequate financing of this and similar exchange opportunities.

Final Resolve

15. We, the Ministers of Education of African member States, conscious of our commitments as articulated in the forgoing, are resolved to work together towards regional integration within the framework of OAU and the African Economic Community, and call upon UNESCO and our regional and international partners to give priority support to our capacity-building and reform efforts, so that together we can shape Education as the lead instrument for the fashioning of the African Renaissance.

ANNEXES

- 1) Speeches of the Opening Ceremony**
- 2) Speeches at the Closing Ceremony**
- 3) Recommendations of the Second Consultation of African
NGOs to African Ministers of Education**
- 4) Working Document**
- 5) Programme**
- 6) List of participants**

**Opening Address by Dr. B. NGUBANE,
Prime Minister, Province of Kwazulu-Natal
at the Seventh UNESCO Conference of Ministers
of Education of African member States**

President of the Conference,

His Majesty, King Goodwill Zwelithini Zulu

Mr Federico Mayor, UNESCO Director-General

**Honourable Ministers of Education from African member States and
members of their delegations,**

**Representatives of the Organisation of African Unity, of the Southern
African Development Community and those from other African regional
organisations,**

**Representatives of UNESCO, of other United Nations agencies, of the
Commonwealth, and the other inter-governmental organisations, High
Commissioners, Ambassadors, and other diplomatic representatives,**

**Members of international non-governmental organisations and all other
distinguished observers at the conference,**

Members of the international and local media,

Honoured guests

**It is my honour to address this Seventh Conference of Ministers of
Education of African member States, MINEDAF VII.**

**South Africa is proud to host this conference so soon after our re-admission
to UNESCO. This is an indication of your support to us and the will to
welcome us as part of the African continent family. We are proud to welcome
you to a land whose people have liberated themselves from oppression, who
have established a democratic state and freely negotiated and adopted a
constitution founded on a Bill of Rights which guarantees the equality and
dignity of every person.**

**We gladly acknowledge the wonderful example of all fellow-Africans who
have taken this path before us. We salute those who have supported us in
our struggle, and those who are working, like us, to establish just and
peaceful democratic societies on the soil of Mother Africa.**

**We acknowledge also, Director-General, the inspiring conduct of the United
Nations, and UNESCO in particular, in the international campaigns against
apartheid and all other crimes against humanity, in defence of intellectual
and cultural liberty, and in support of the poor and the oppressed.**

Welcome to a new and democratic South Africa! Some of you have passed through this country in transit to other countries while our country was still in transit to democracy.

International conferences of this scale are like milestones, marking the distance we have travelled on our common journey, and reminding us of the distance we have yet to go.

Our journey-“to achieve Lifelong Education for All in Africa”-is a journey without end. The paths we travel wind and unwind from the past into the future, across the African landscape. New leaders with fresh vision arise, and we find our way again. We mount to the heights, filled with resolve, and new horizons open before us. Our paths often double back, so that our efforts seem to have been in vain. They sometimes fade into the stony desert, into oceans of sand.

We know we are not alone. We draw strength from the strength of our African fellow travellers. We are heartened by the international comrades who have chosen to travel with us, even if only for part of the way. We forge on. We do not arrive, but we do not turn back.

At MINEDAF VII, we pause on our journey, to reflect on where we have come from, where we are now, and where we are going, to greet old friends and make new ones, and to renew our solidarity.

The advent of a new century and a new millennium adds poignancy to this normal process of reflection.

It takes an extraordinary effort of imagination to even begin to understand the texture of life on our continent, and on our own national soil, for our distant ancestors a thousand years ago, when the second millennium dawned.

Archaeologists, ecologists and geneticists are joining hands with historians to reconstruct that distant past, which was as vivid for our forebears as our present is to us. UNESCO, too has made its contribution to recovering Africa's history.

It was a time of great empires and small communities, a time before the centuries-long migrations which eventually gave birth to the language families, the kingdoms, clans and lineages, the statecraft, jurisprudence, diplomatic and military systems, the religious traditions and ceremonies, healing systems, myths, histories, art, music, dance, the settlement patterns, economies and technologies, the family structures and educational practices of the peoples of Africa before the European onslaught.

If a thousand years ago seems almost unimaginable, it is not so difficult for us. In 1998, to imagine the condition of our countries and our continent a hundred years ago, as the twentieth century dawned. That was the heyday of unbridled European imperialism in Africa, when the states and peoples of Africa became the stakes in the European powers' ruthless competition for dominance over world raw materials and trade routes. Over those crucial decades, straddling the turn of the new century, Africans resisted, colluded

and ultimately submitted to the superior European military technology and imperial energy. Our continent was carved into colonial states, and crudely but irrevocably drawn into the new international system.

A hundred years later, the colonial system has been dismantled, and all the successor nation-states of this continent are sovereign and independent. The vast world power systems which dominated the first and second halves of the twentieth century, respectively, have come and gone, and the governments of Africa are struggling to establish their places in the new and unprecedented global system of multiple economic power centres, universal communications, world-wide technologies, markets, manufacturing and distribution systems, international entertainment and sporting networks – in a word, globalisation.

This is the terrain, stretching between the past and future of our continent, through which we are undertaking the essential journey, “to achieve Lifelong Education for All in Africa”.

And, to tell the truth, we all have a long way to go. It is good to know that our continent is receiving respectful attention by international investors. So it should. But we here, assembled in this great conference, would be the first to say that the cognitive, intellectual, cultural, scientific and technological foundations for our peoples’ full participation in the new world system leaves much to be desired. In fact, in most if not all cases, our national education, training and scientific systems provide an inadequate support for our domestic political economies, which themselves - in world terms - are young, inadequately developed, and somewhat fragile.

The perceived economic strengths of our country obscure, in an agonising way, the cruel inequalities in educational provision and performance in our country. The majority of our people, young and mature, in this province of KwaZulu-Natal as elsewhere, suffer educational disadvantage to a degree which shames us, and which shackles our peoples’ attempts to break out of poverty and improve the quality of their lives. So, we in South Africa identify ourselves with the educational challenge facing our continent.

We also have a great need to learn from the experience of our fellow-citizens of Africa. In all humility, we would also want to share what we have learnt as we engage in the great struggle to reconstruct and develop our education, training, scientific and technological systems.

“Lifelong Education for All in Africa”: What strategies for the 21st century?” The theme is vast. The topic may seem over-familiar. But it is appropriate and it is indispensable.

In the world system of states, ours are young and immature. We are behind and we must catch up, not just because it is fashionable or a matter of national pride but because the circumstances of the 21st century leave us, with no alternative. If we do not catch up, cognitively and economically, we will consign our peoples to permanent poverty and absolute vulnerability, both to hostile or greedy external forces and also to internal exploitation and oppression.

The colonial and neo-colonial century in Africa is passing, leaving our continent profoundly and permanently changed but still essentially and authentically African. Our Africa of the 21st century is diverse, multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and international, curious, energetic, intellectually alert, argumentative, culturally buoyant, optimistic, and emphatically part of the great new global system.

In short, the peoples of this continent have the talent, the creativity and resilience, and the cultural confidence to grasp genuine opportunities and make the best of them.

This great conference is all about such opportunities, for personal growth and national and continental renewal and rebirth.

In the name of the African Renaissance, I have great pleasure in declaring UNESCO's Seventh Conference of Ministers of Education of African member States open.

I thank you, and wish you every success, both here and in your profoundly important responsibilities at home.

Address by Mr Federico MAYOR,
Director General of the United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural organization (UNESCO)

Your Majesty,

The Premier,

Honorable Minister of Foreign Affairs,

Honorable Minister of Education of South Africa,

**Assistant Secretary General of the OAU,
Excellencies.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour and a pleasure for me to greet all the participants in the Seventh Conference of Ministers of Education of African member States of UNESCO. I am particularly delighted that MINEDAF VII is taking place in the Republic of South Africa. Over the first three decades of MINEDAF conferences, the Bantu Education Act set South Africa's Apartheid regime apart on a continent where education was serving to build a new future for all Africans.

Today in this Seventh meeting, we all celebrate an apartheid free South Africa, whose President knows so well the long walk to freedom and who is giving guidance, not only to South Africa, but to the world as a whole.

We meet in Durban, Kwazulu-Natal, the centre of deep-rooted Zulu culture, a region of rock paintings thousands of years old, of a rich multicultural blending, open to the Indian Ocean. It is for this reason that I am delighted to be here. This multiculturalism is, in my view, a richness that we must preserve together.

Today, we are guests of the new South Africa at a time when it is embarked on transition and engaged in reconstructing an education system that will "open the doors of learning to all". As I was telling the Honorable Minister, Professor Bengu, 7.1% of GNP for education is an immense effort aimed at opening the education system to all African children without exclusion.

The training of the country's teachers is a priority. Teachers have been, are and will be the main pillars of the educational system. Equipment is important of course, but the teachers and the contents of education are what really matters. Retraining the countries' teachers and getting new curriculum material to every school is a monumental task. In spite of all the obstacles, the South African Government is pursuing its ambitious targets for education and is encouraging "a culture of learning and teaching". What more fitting venue could we have for the last MINEDAF conference of the century! - the one whose task is to guide inter-African co-operation in

education into the highly challenging world of the new Millennium?

I thank our South African hosts for the thorough preparatory work undertaken with UNESCO's Secretariat at very short notice to ensure that this meeting will be a success. I warmly welcome the ministers and delegations from all over the continent of Africa. I am glad to greet the representatives of the Organisation of African Unity and the United Nations' Economic Commission for Africa, our two traditional partners in MINEDAF conferences.

I also welcome the other Intergovernmental Organizations present and, of course, our partners in the execution of all the programmes, the NGO community. We expect to have a strong input from African and international NGOs whose pan-African NGO consultation is also taking place here in Durban. The Foundations, the bilateral and the multilateral agencies deserve a warm welcome. We are appreciative of the work of these agencies and of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa.

You, the education ministers of Africa have the future of the continent in your hands today. It is very clear at this turning point, at the end of a century in which we have seen great technological advances, that what we need is inspiration. We need values that can forge the right attitudes in our children. Ministers of education of Africa gathered here in this open city of Durban, you have the future of Africa in your hands!

MINEDAF Conferences seem to coincide with highly significant moments in African history. The first, in Addis Ababa in 1961, was lit by the dawn of African independence. Held - appropriately - in Africa's oldest sovereign state, it charted the course of educational development and inter-African co-operation at a time when most of the countries of the continent were just attaining political sovereignty. MINEDAF IV in Lagos in 1976 was marked by high hopes for Africa's economic take-off - coming as it did in the wake of the Lagos Plan of Action for accelerated socio-economic development of the continent.

MINEDAF V in Harare in 1982 followed the inspiring advent of Zimbabwe's independence which gave new impetus to efforts to achieve the total political liberation of the continent. When MINEDAF VI was convened in Dakar in 1991, the world was breathing fresh and hopeful air after the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the release of Nelson Mandela. What became known as the "wind of democracy" was blowing through Africa and political pluralism was on many countries agendas. In each of these eras, UNESCO has sought to respond to the situation and aspirations of African member States. Since educational development never occurs in a vacuum, UNESCO has always ensured that MINEDAF brings together decision-makers in education and those responsible for finance and economic planning.

When we look back at the present gathering, what will we say about its context? I believe it will come to be seen as the Conference which prepared education in Africa for the global age, for an era where society has to be a learning society. The most important resource is knowledge which provides each woman and man to be their own selves and to be full citizens, to participate - not to be observers or spectators, but to be social actors of this

global village. Only in this way will we be able to protect our fantastic cultural diversity and to protect the unique profile of every single human being.

We speak of a global age but is trade truly globalized? I do not think so. Until now, the globalization of the economy and of information has been a very unequal process. Unfortunately, the economy has not been globalized, nor has information in terms of the possibility of receiving and also of supplying information. Today some countries are globalizing and the rest are globalized. We must work to make all countries active partners who count in the process of globalization.

This process carries some advantages but also many risks. In a knowledge-dependent world, gaps within and between countries could grow dramatically. Globalization poses a specific problem for the learning process in Africa: how should it engage with globalization while Africanization of education is still incomplete - particularly as concerns educational materials in African languages? How can African education introduce young people to the global village, not through a surrogate Westernised culture but with an African identity and culture? How can Africa harness the possibilities offered by new technologies, not only for high level academic networking, but for basic literacy? The answers will not be found abroad. They are here in your continent, in your countries, in your cultures, in your minds.

In the search for answers, there are two key words. The first is "better sharing". We must share better all natural resources, starting with land. We must share knowledge and all other resources, because this alone will lead us to sustainable development, stability and peace. Only this will allow the interactive triangle of development, peace and democracy to form the basis of a brighter future for our children.

The second keyword is "education". Education for all - this means without exclusion. We must include all the excluded and we must reach all the unreached. Today this is feasible, if we invest more in education. We must be prepared to invest in important priority areas: education, the environment, AIDS research and treatment. We are prepared to protect our frontiers but we are unprepared to act when fires bum in Amazonia and in Indonesia! We realise we are unprepared for the many real threats of our times. There is only one response: endogenous development.

Endogenous development is not given, does not come from outside. It is the everyday task of everybody. President Mandela, Deputy President Mbeki and the President of Brazil, Fernando Henrique Cardoso recently said that the in-depth transformation which is needed cannot come from overseas aid. It comes from each country's people, resources and ability to master its own destiny.

Today, we live in an age of complexity. Decision-makers have to deal with a complex reality which requires daring decisions, anticipation and prevention. Ministers of education represent a sector where the universities serve as a watchtower, providing early warning of future developments. At this turn of the century and millennium, we need foresight and sometimes the courage to take unpopular decisions in order to cope with the threats

that we face. Many of our problems are transnational and therefore we cannot only address them at the national level. Here in South Africa, for instance, Deputy-President Mbeki has called for a code of conduct for multinational companies.

By developing our capacities for anticipation and prevention, we move towards a culture of peace. The United Nations was founded to save succeeding generations from the horrors of war. We must honour that pledge, reduce the world's asymmetries, determine national priorities and give our children a better, peaceful future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is in a climate of hope that MINEDAF VII is being held. This hope lies in the knowledge that we are ready to respond to the challenge. This hope lies in the collective determination of African peoples to forge ahead: to restore peace and political stability all over the continent, to ensure people's wellbeing, to work progressively towards regional integration. Regional integration is not only a matter of trade links; it is a matter of putting together your diversity, your cultures, your languages: the links of culture are sustainable, lasting ones.

MINEDAF VII is a hope raising exercise which - after a critical look at the past and the present - will devote most of the time focusing on ways in which education can be used to build a better future. Concrete action on many issues needs to be examined; generalising access to basic education; closing the gender gap: improving quality, efficiency and relevance: reforming higher education to enable it to build a learning society.

In this fiftieth anniversary year of the Declaration of Human Rights, we must restate the principle of merit in its Article 26 as the basis of higher education. The principle of merit applies both to professors and to students. Secondary education requires in-depth change to become a full level in itself. The role of secondary schools is not only to place students at the gate of universities. Education for peace is also a priority, education for living together as recommended in the Delors Report. Only in this way, can we in the United Nations, in UNESCO, say that we have accomplished our mission.

We have the teachers with us - they are the pillars of our future. The courage is there and so is the vision. The will to educate and the will to learn are there. UNESCO renews its commitment and determination to work side by side with you to make life long learning in Africa a reality. We have a wonderful programme before us. The world needs Africa, its wisdom and its foresight. Africa needs the world.

Nko'si Sikelel'i Afrika!

Speech by Prof. Sibusiso BENGU,
Minister of Education in South Africa, at the
Official Opening of the Seventh Conference of Ministers
of Education in Africa (MINEDAF VII),
Durban, Monday, 20 April 1998

Director of Ceremonies.

His Majesty, King Goodwill Zwelithini Zulu, Bayede!,

The Director General of UNESCO, Mr Federico Mayor,

My Colleagues, honourable Ministers of Education in Africa,

Members of the various delegations present at this conference,

Members of the NGO sector and other organisations in Africa and elsewhere,

Distinguished guests,

Members of the local and international media,

Ladies and Gentlemen

How I wish I could hear the sound of a cowhide drum droning through the rivers of our Continent, from the Nile through the Limpopo, to the mouth of Uthukela.

How I wish I could hear the African Horn blowing from the top of Kilimanjaro, echoing through the gorges of Ukhahlamba, blasting through the valley of a thousand Hills,

Is there no one who can sound the Ikolo and beat the Marimba so that the creatures of the African jungle may assemble in joy?

Where are the old men of Africa, where is the ululation of the African grannies?

Hlangalezwe!, I wish we had hundreds, no, thousands of bulls that his majesty would challenge us to slaughter barehandedly, while chasing our thirst away with African Home Brew?

For indeed your Majesty this day calls for celebration.

Indeed as we gather here today, as we have all descended into this city of Durban, in this wonderful and beautiful Province of KwaZulu-Natal, there are many things we ought to celebrate.

We must celebrate today, because this conference is taking place in the context of an Africa that is free from Colonialism and Apartheid.

We must celebrate today because this conference is a milestone for Africa, as it faces the challenge of producing clear and concrete proposals for the way forward.

We must celebrate because this conference bears testimony to Africa's recognition of the centrality of the development of its human resources in her great effort to have a competitive edge to the rest of the world in the next century.

Africa realises that decades of underdevelopment had devastating effects on its people, and consequently, on her natural resources. The colonisation of the Continent had as its underlying philosophy the dehumanisation and the humiliation of the people of Africa, in order to pave way for the exploitation of Africa's rich natural resources. The colonisers had taken care to ensure that the human capacities of this great land are so underdeveloped that they would fail to exploit the natural resources that so abound. Post-colonial Africa itself experienced a number of problems because of tendencies that had been developed by many during the colonial era.

We are therefore pleased that as Africa begins in earnest to tackle all the challenges facing the continent, she places education at the centre of all these efforts and initiatives. Investment in people is the only route to meaningful development in our continent. The development of our human resources will enable us to release the creative and imaginative energies of the people of our countries.

The dawn of a new era in Africa ushers the challenge to create and entrench democratic values and practices in the continent. As Africa moves to shape the future of this continent after Apartheid, there is an emerging consensus that democracy shall constitute a major aspect of that future. We in South Africa for example are busy putting in place structures of democracy, and enabling frameworks to allow the people to exercise the rights entrenched in our constitution.

But as we continue to do this, we are very conscious of the fact that its success is dependent very much on the way in which we handle our human resources, which are our most precious resource as Africans. If we fail to pay the necessary attention to the development of our human resources, we will not be able to respond in a meaningful manner to the challenges posed by the phenomenon of globalisations.

This conference therefore is faced with the responsibility of mapping out a concrete plan for the continent in so far as education is concerned, a plan that will place our continent on the path to growth and development. The conference needs to develop realisable objectives, within the perspective of the decade for education in Africa.

We would not have achieved anything if we come out of this conference feeling that we have been to just one of the conferences that take place from time to time on education. This particular conference must make a difference. It must launch us into the path to development, one that will catapult us into the next century, which we as a continent are determined to enter with our heads high, as equal partners to the rest of the world.

We are very conscious of the huge challenges facing us. We are also aware of the limited resources with which we have to tackle these challenges. But what we are gathered here to do is to pledge ourselves to commit all we have to the realisation of the goal of access to life-long education for all. We have come to commit ourselves to make some sacrifices if need be in order to attain this goal as we enter the new millennium.

And so as I take this opportunity to welcome you officially to this conference, I want to reiterate that indeed true to our African culture we should celebrate, for even as Africa goes to war, Africa sings. Even as Africa dies Africa sings. Today, when we celebrate the dawn of a new era in education in Africa, which will give real content to the concept of an African Renaissance, it is indeed fitting that we must sing. But my colleagues are already saying I am too fast, and I have to wait for Thursday night, when we shall have the South Africa evening.

But I am so moved by the muse, and I am so full of inspiration that you will forgive me if at least I end this short address with a poem by a Mozambican poet. He says:

We are decolonizing the Land Rover!

It's not the tax collector's car any more

We've decolonised it!

Now there's no terror when it enters the village

For the Land Rover no longer belongs to the colonial policeman or soldier.

... now we've decolonised it!

Through the mud and the sand

Its power and its four wheels

Pledges safe arrival at the farthest machambas

And all the peasants co-operatives...

I am in full agreement with this poet that today we have come to decolonise the Land Rover called education, and we have come to make sure indeed that its four wheels do reach the remotest areas of our continent. We welcome you therefore to Africa's appropriation of the coloniser's Land Rover.

I thank you

**Closing Remarks by Prof. S.M.E. BENGU,
Minister of Education in south Africa, at the end
of MINEDAF VII, 24 April 1998**

The Assistant Director General of Unesco, Mr Power,

The secretary of Conference, Mr Obanya,

Honourable Ministers of Education in Africa,

The NGO's and Intergovernmental organisations present,

Honourable guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is only five days ago since you all descended from all the four comers of our beloved Continent onto this lovely city of Durban . Perhaps many of you had come to attend but one of those conferences that Ministers of Education attend from time to time. As we end the conference now, I have no doubt that all of us do feel that it was not just another conference.

Allow me on your behalf to thank the Director-General of UNESCO for his presence at this conference, his inspiring speech at the opening, and his ongoing support and commitment to Africa as a Continent. We thank him in his absence. Let me also thank Mr Power, the Assistant Director-General of UNESCO, and Prof. Obanya who has served this conference in the capacity of Secretary. We have worked so well together in managing the proceedings of the conference, and I personally want to thank them very much.

The organisers of this conference deserve a special word of gratitude from us for the excellent manner in which they have put together a conference of this magnitude, with very few and forgivable hitches and problems. In particular we must thank the UNESCO staff from all parts of the Continent, and from Paris, the staff from the National and the Provincial Departments of Education. Thank you so much.

Thank you to all the people that have participated at this conference in various ways, His Majesty the King, and the Premier of the Province, for their warm welcome, my Colleagues the Vice-Chairs of the conference, the moderators of the open forums, the panelists, the rapporteur, the interpreters, the management and staff of ICC, the VIP protection unit, the various performers who have entertained us, the local and international media, and all those I might have failed to mention. Thank you so much.

I want to apologise to our friend the Honourable Minister from Nigeria and her delegation, and the honourable Minister from Eritrea, for the omission in not ensuring that their country flags are raised. We hope they do take our apology on behalf of UNESCO and our country for such a terrible omission.

MINEDAF VII is now coming to a close. When the Director-General of UNESCO and I visited a teacher education college on Wednesday he told the story of a certain the President of Education International who looked at the development of technology in education and said: "Technology is the answer. What was the question by the way?"

I think this conference has come up with both the question and the answer. The question we have been trying to answer in the last five days is well expressed in the words of a poem by a twelve year old child writing about the experience of Peasants. The poem goes as follows:

**I am a peasant
I work all day for nothing
I have no money
To feed my children
To buy some books
To pay for medicine
To make life good
I cannot read or write
I want my children to read books
I want my children to enjoy being alive
My life is nearly over
I hope
Before the sun sets
There will be a change**

The question is further starkly put in a story of an old man who had with him a piece of paper. Whenever a car passed and its lights shone on the road, the man would emerge from the bush and put this paper on the way of the light, as if trying to see what was written on it. It turned out eventually that this man was expressing a very basic desire, a longing to capture the light of literacy, so that he could be able to read the letter from his loved one. But each time he tried, the car sped of, and passed him.

This therefore is the question we have been asking ourselves and trying to answer for the last five days. Will the children of the African Peasant be able to read and enjoy being alive, as we enter the new century? Will the lights of literacy, the lights of education, pass the old man in the street, or will it take him out of the bush for good, and stay with him to connect him to his loved one? That is the question we have been asking in the last five days.

The answer? You have heard the declaration, and I do not want to repeat it. Let me just reiterate some of the main decisions we have taken. "We have committed ourselves to an Africa where knowledge, democracy, respect for human rights and a culture of peace guide our actions, an Africa where the nations will stand side by side with the rest of the world, contributing to the planet its unique vibrancy, energy, culture, creativity and pluralism."

We have committed ourselves to working together towards regional integration, and to shaping education as the lead instrument in the fashioning of the African Renaissance. Such a commitment will require that we all ensure that our governments and the world at large recognise the centrality of education in African development. The key to all this is working

together, sharing resources, and building capacity where we need it.

We as a country want to pledge that we will do our utmost best to perform the responsibilities you have placed on our shoulders. In particular, we will see to it that we ensure that the commitments of this conference are implemented. With the assistance of UNESCO, and all of you, we will work towards the objective of an integrated continent. As I said day before yesterday, when the Director-General presented me with the UNESCO peace medal, we as a country have experienced how people can work together for Peace, and we therefore commit ourselves to play our role in deepening peace in the Continent.

We are indeed humbled by the confidence you have placed on us, and we promise to work tirelessly to achieve the aspirations of the continent, and the peoples of our lovely Mother Africa.

I wish you all the best as you leave our country. Since this country is a very rich country in linguistic terms, I want to select a way of bidding you farewell in one of our languages, because I believe it expresses what we all want to say as we part.

I want to say in Afrikaans, "tot Siens!", which simply means, till we meet again. For indeed we will meet again, as we implement the resolutions and the programme of action that has emerged from this conference. We will meet again as we continue to evaluate our progress. And surely we must meet again in the new millennium, this time with the old man from the bush smiling, and the peasants children enjoying life, and all of us proudly saying, we have indeed Decolonised the Land Rover?

**Ndlelanhle!
Bon Voyage!
I Thank you!**

Closing address by Colin POWER, ADG/ED at
the Seventh Conference of Ministers of Education
in Africa (MINEDAF VII), International Conference Centre,
Durban, Monday, 20 April 1998

President of the Conference, Professor Bengu, Minister of Education, RSA

Ambassador Haggag, Deputy Secretary of the OAU,

Your Excellencies, Ministers of Education

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

There can be no doubt that the Seventh Conference of Ministers of Education of African Member states has been a resounding success. While it is a little hazardous to compare this event with previous MINEDAFs, it does seem to me to have been a watershed conference. It is the first Ministers of Education Conference to include all Ministers of the continent. Indeed it has been a great joy for us to meet here in Durban for the first pan African Ministers of Education in a free and non-apartheid South Africa and to be part of the process of building African unity through education. Moreover, it has been marked by a new spirit of personal commitment by you, the Ministers, for working together to determine the destiny of the education systems for which you are responsible. In the private sessions, I certainly felt a new spirit of determination that this is a Conference of Ministers of Education of Africa, and that as Ministers you must exercise the leadership needed to meet the educational needs of your people, and to help each other to that end.

On behalf of the international and regional organizations present, I would like to assure you of our commitment to work with you following (rather than seeking to shape) your decisions as reflected in the recommendations of this Conference. We will certainly share the Durban Statement of Commitment with all Member States and partners in African development, and for my part, I will discuss with the Director-General ways in which we can adjust our programme and budget to better support your commitments.

The struggle for liberty,, for equity, for justice, for development will never succeed in the absence of education for all Africans, without a sound and equitable system of education in each and every African country. The most important task of UNESCO historically has been that of preventing the misuse of education by racist and totalitarian regimes to legitimate and reproduce their oppression. The first and most basic task facing President Mandela was that of destroying the roots of apartheid, that unjust and racist education system which spawned violence and reproduced inequity, thus keeping the bulk of South Africans in chains. As President Mandela himself put it in his message for the Education Africa Annual :

'When South Africa's first ever democratic elections took place in 1994, it became a priority for the new government to transform education. The imbalances created by apartheid education demanded urgent and immediate correction, not only in the provision of resources and infrastructure, but also by restoring the culture of learning and teaching. This matter has been given the status of Presidential Priority. As parents we want our children to have access to quality education and quality skills. Quality education will equip South Africans to raise their own living standards, to participate in the economic growth of the country and to compete in the global economy. We need to inculcate the attitude that education has value : that education means empowerment, but that it also means hard work. In addition, education must be viewed as a lifelong activity, as an ongoing process.'

Yes. Education is freedom. The possibility for all women and men to master their own destiny, to create a better future for themselves and their children. Ultimately, education is the path to personal, national and regional sovereignty. In a highly competitive globalised economic system, Africans will never be free from exploitation while Africa remains unequal and divided; and the hoped-for African renaissance will come only if all African countries make education a Presidential priority and, as is happening in the European Union, work hard to reform policies, programmes, curricula and textbooks to promote a sense of common destiny, an understanding of what unites rather than what divides Africans, of the richness and common threads of African culture as well as its diversity, of collective endeavours to facilitate ease of communication and movement, and joint venture to upgrade textbooks, curricula and assessment systems, or to combat the scourge of AIDS.

The transformation of the concept of African renaissance from a largely individual dream to a concrete programme owned by the region as a whole will not take place by chance. The concept seems to have captured the imagination of the majority of the Education Ministers at this Conference. Of course, we need to be careful that the concept is seen, not only in its economic and integrative aspects, but that it incorporates the persistent concern of UNESCO for cultural and intellectual renewal. Education should not only underpin the goal of African renaissance, but the course of educational reform in this region should be informed by the rich mother load of Africa's cultures. Only then can education in the 21st century really aspire to the challenge of the Delors Commission : we must all learn not only to know and to do, but also learn to live together and learn to be

During the 1960s, UNESCO established regional networks of educational innovation for development as instruments for promoting regional capacity and inter-country co-operation in education. In some regions, the mechanism has worked fairly well, but our hopes for regional co-operative networks in Africa have been constrained by the problem of communication and lack of resources. Yet, the solutions to the problems of education in Africa are here in Africa. Looking at the displays at this Conference and the reports given by panel Members of what is happening in various parts of Africa, one cannot but recognize how much we can learn from the efforts made by African education systems to undertake necessary reforms. We have seen, for example, a whole series of South African reforms : Curriculum 2005 with its focus on outcome-based education; the

Presidential initiative on assessing and improving the capacity of teachers; the establishment of rural learning centres. Similarly, we have learned of reforms underway in all parts of the continent. The solutions to the problems of education in Africa must be African, not European or American. At MINEDAF VI, I suggested that we need triple A solutions: we need Affordable, Africa and Alternatives to the prescriptions which have been thus far imposed on Africa, and then from these solutions to weave the fabric of African unity.

While we do have a mechanism for promoting co-operation between the donor community and African Ministers(viz. the ADEA), MINEDAF VII has again challenged African member states to re-examine the advantages of African unity and strictly African co-operative approach to educational development, breaking the isolationism and neo-colonialism of most of the continent's so-called "reform" efforts. The Ministers have committed themselves to utilizing existing infrastructures and networks or making other co-operative arrangements which means agreeing upon and using existing African expertise to promote regional or sub-regional educational reforms and capacity building. Through such mechanisms, African Ministers are determined to help each other rather than to continue to rely on, and import at considerable cost, foreign consultants.

It is clear that there are some excellent educational centres and facilities in Africa, and that the Ministers are willing to take up each others offers to make this expertise available so that the capacity and experience of one or a cluster of countries becomes defined as part of the capacity of all African countries. In this regard, the commitments made by you under points 11 to 14 are particularly important. Like you: "we believe that African nations should first show solidarity in assisting each other in the development of education, even as it continues its collaboration with the wider international community.... that national and international financing must be transparent and every effort be made to avoid tragedies of the imposed conditionalities and dependencies of the past."

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen

The success of MINEDAF VII can be attributed very largely to the enormous amount of support and the many contributions of our hosts, South Africa. On behalf of all the participants, I would particularly wish to thank you, Minister Bengu, for your outstanding leadership both in the preparation for this conference and throughout our deliberations. We would like you to convey the gratitude of all African Ministers of Education, the regional and international organizations attending this conference to President Mandela, and to inform him that we have made significant progress in the quest for African unity and an African renaissance in the field of education. From our part in UNESCO we would wish to play a particular tribute to your Education Ministry staff and the team from the Ministry of Education of the Kwa-Zulu Natal Province for the enthusiastic, thorough and efficient way they have worked with us behind the scenes throughout this conference. Their work reflected insight and anticipation, graciousness, warmth and co-operativeness so that the arrangements for delegates and the running of programmes were always efficiently and

professionally carried out. We would also like to thank King Zwelithini Zulu and Premier Ben Ngubane for honouring us with their presence and the entire team at this spectacular Conference Centre in Durban. The uninhibited South African hospitality, the sight and sounds of Zulu drums, the hearty meals and conviviality were deeply appreciated and will long be remembered by us all.

I must also add our thanks to you the Ministers of Education of African Member states not just for coming, but for working so hard and so consistently throughout the Conference. The Durban Commitment will be remembered as a commitment of the Ministers which was forged primarily by them as the Ministers responsible for education in Africa, and not, as has been often in the past, by civil servants. It reflects your contributions, debates and commitments made in plenary and in private sessions.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to the Vice Presidents and Rapporteur of the Conference and to our partners in development, the bilateral, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations which joined us and contributed so much to our debates and decision making. In particular, I should like to pay tribute to the OAU and to you Ambassador Haggag. We share the commitment of the OAU to the cause of African unity, and can assure you that we will give the African decade for education every possible support.

In turn, we would like the help of the OAU in giving political support at the highest level to the Durban commitment.

In concluding this long list of congratulations, let me finish by thanking all of you for the part you have in producing such a bold and forward-thinking statement of commitment. Let me also remind you that tomorrow is always too late. The real work begins next Monday, as you begin to implement your commitments.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND REGIONAL
CONSULTATION OF AFRICAN NGOs TO AFRICAN MINISTERS
OF EDUCATION (MINEDAF VII)

Recognizing **that** lifelong education for **all is a fundamental human right and therefore must be a priority in national development programmes,**

Considering **that one of the essential missions of our governments is the organization of national education, and higher and vocational education,**

Considering **that peace, tolerance and stability are essential conditions for continuing education,**

Recognizing **the efforts made by governments and sub-regional, regional and international organizations to promote education in Africa,**

Noting **Africa's cultural, linguistic and artistic diversity,**

Noting **the emergence and important contribution of national, regional and international NGOs and national, sub- regional and regional NGO networks working in the field of education and recognizing the active role played by these organizations in the development of their respective countries,**

We, the national NGO coalition, sub-regional NGO networks and regional NGOs of Africa, present at the Second Regional Consultation of NGOs in Africa organized by UNESCO in Durban, South Africa from 18 to 24 April 1998,

RECOMMEND TO THE AFRICAN MINISTERS
OF EDUCATION THAT:

- 1 the role of national, regional, international NGOs and national, sub-regional and regional NGO networks working in the field of education, training, information and communication be officially recognized and supported;**
- 2 NGOs be involved in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national development policies, particularly in education policies;**
- 3 national NGOs be involved in the planning and development of national curricula;**
- 4 national education budgets be distributed to provide for the needs of the most vulnerable populations (women, the girl-child and children in specially difficult circumstances and the differently-able);**
- 5 special attention be given to the education of the populations of war-torn countries through the development of specific emergency programmes for target groups such as demobilized youth and children soldiers;**

- 6 civic, environmental, human rights education and career guidance and counseling be systematically introduced into education systems;**
- 7 arts, handicrafts and manual training in schools be promoted;**
- 8 programmes to be introduced recognize gender concerns;**
- 9 linkages be created between non-formal and formal education**
- 10 the conditions be created for good cooperation not only between the National Commissions for UNESCO and the national NGOs working in the field of education, but also between the UNESCO field offices and NGO coalitions and networks;**
- 11 a mutually acceptable framework for cooperation be established between the ministry responsible for education and national NGO coalitions.**
- 12 clear policies be formulated to promote early childhood education and development.**

And request the African Ministers of Education that these recommendations be included in the official report of MINEDAF VII.

Done in Durban, 22 April 1998

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE WORKING DOCUMENT
OF THE CONFERENCE ON "LIFELONG EDUCATION FOR ALL
IN AFRICA: WHAT STRATEGIES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ?

INTRODUCTION

The background Paper of the 7th Conference of Ministers of Education of African member States of UNESCO was intended to introduce the reflection on selected themes and set out guidelines and strategies for the development of education for all by the 21 st Century.

The document drew on the UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy (1996-2001) and the United Nations Special Initiative for Africa which considers education for all African children as an essential means of ensuring a promising future for the rising generation". It was also inspired by the OAU Decade for Education in Africa (1997-2006).

The document covered three chapters : An Assessment of the Past and the Present, looking at the Future and Prospects for Lifelong Education in Africa-

The first chapter reviewed efforts made by the Member States in educational development since MINEDAF I in 1961 and particularly since the Jomtien Conference on "Education for All" in 1990. The second chapter highlighted the major challenges and problems to be examined by MINEDAF VII with a view to reaching a consensus on concrete actions to be taken to enhance Africa's progress towards the 21st Century along with the rest of the world. Chapter 3 outlined the prospects of developing lifelong education for all. In fact, the document served as a framework for reflection and action on a number of relevant themes.

I. ASSESSING LIFELONG EDUCATION FOR ALL IN AFRICA

1. Lifelong education refers to the concept that human beings should continuously update their knowledge, know-how and especially their skills throughout their life to be able to meet their personal needs and contribute to the development of their immediate environment.

Lifelong education for all takes account of the need for continuous retraining as a means of updating initial basic knowledge to enable human beings adapt to a world characterized by rapid development of know-how. It helps to widen the scope of opportunities offered to the populations and allows for the emergence of a learning society.

i) Literacy

2. It is generally acknowledged that the eradication of illiteracy constitutes a major challenge to the African member States of UNESCO. The practice would make it possible for most people to benefit from the positive results of the various programmes on lifelong education for all.

The mid-term review of the Jomtien Conference in June 1996 in Amman emphasized the positive correlation between children's success and the

parents' level of education and literacy.

3. The results of efforts made to promote literacy varies considerably from one country to another. For example, the illiteracy rate for persons aged 15 years and above was estimated at 14.9% in Zimbabwe in 1996 as against 86.4% in Niger.

ii) Basic Education

4. There is need to continue making the necessary efforts to attain the objective of creating universal access to primary education, which has been renewed on several occasions since MINEDAF I in 1961.

This objective calls for the development of quality educational services and adoption of systematic measures to reduce existing disparities.

Educational quality could be improved by providing teachers with adequate training and adapting curricula to local realities and needs.

5. To ensure the universalization of primary education and improve educational quality, it is necessary to promote the use of national languages in basic education.

6. During the mid-term review of the Jomtien Conference in Amman in 1996, the panelists acknowledged the efforts made by Africa to reverse the downward trend of educational standards in spite of certain difficult circumstances. The Amman meeting also proposed new strategies for basic education in Africa, namely:

- **promoting new forms of learning that develop the critical mind and enable individuals to understand our ever-changing world.**
- **developing Education for All programmes, particularly in local languages that would highlight the value of the cultural particularities of each society and open them to the rest of the world.**

7. In spite of the current difficulties, basic education should be provided to children with specific needs, marginalized youths, disabled persons, refugees, displaced persons and nomads.

8. In recent years, several initiatives have been taken to improve basic education in Africa. These include the Ségou Perspectives and the OAU decade for education in Africa.

II. THE FUTURE OF LIFELONG EDUCATION FOR ALL IN AFRICA

2.1. Generalizing Access to Education

9. It is generally admitted that, since the Jomtien Conference, the African member States of UNESCO have made considerable progress in improving access to education by constructing new educational facilities, abolishing the payment of school fees and establishing school-feeding programmes.

10. Access to specific programmes on lifelong education for all is limited by the inadequacy of school buildings, qualified teachers and financial and material resources.

11. In spite of the inadequacy of resources, the improvement of access to education should not lead to a decline in educational quality. In fact, the quality of education does not rely solely on the quality of the curricula used but also on the quality of pupils/students coming from the lower level.

2.2. Gender Gap

12. It is recognized that closing the gender gap constitutes one of the major challenges to the development of education in Africa. During the 1990s, the African member States of UNESCO on several occasions expressed their desire to redress the under-enrolment of girls and reinforce women's participation in the various lifelong education programmes.

13. The 4th World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, and the various conferences on girls' education in Africa, particularly the Conference of Ouagadougou (1993), and the Conference of Kampala (1996) highlighted the contribution that girls' and women's education can make towards improving the quality of life and promoting national development.

It is now clearly established that girls' education enhances productivity, improves mother and child health, reduces infant and maternal mortality rate and improves family planning.

14. Among the obstacles to girls' schooling and women's education, the Conference cited cultural attitudes, domestic chores, early marriage and pregnancies and successive confinement.

15. Non-Governmental Organizations, particularly the Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE), now play an important role in closing the gender gap. FAWE's work programme gives particular attention to the reduction of the drop-out rate and promotion of women's leadership in higher education.

2.3. Relevance, Efficiency and Quality of Education

16. It is difficult to define the notion of educational quality. Recent research has shown that educational quality depends on a series of factors, especially, resources and working conditions established for pupils/students and teachers, teaching and learning processes, curricula and teaching methods.

Educational quality may be assessed according to educational output in terms of knowledge, know-how, learning to be and learning to live together.

18. Economic crises and structural adjustment programmes have greatly contributed to the decline in efficiency, relevance and quality of education in Africa. It is becoming increasingly difficult to construct new classrooms and provide them with inputs, to recruit an adequate number of teachers and acquire appropriate equipment and teaching aids.

19. In recent years, substantial resources have been invested in school administration and educational management. Unfortunately, these efforts have not brought about any significant improvement in the efficiency of the educational systems.

2.4. Role of Higher Education

20. Through education and research, universities should train graduates who can meet the present and future requirements of the socio-economic, cultural and scientific development of their society.

21. The first Conference of Ministers of Education of African member States of UNESCO (MINEDAF I), which was held in 1961 in Addis Ababa, set for the States the objective of enrolling at least 2% of the relevant age bracket in the higher educational sector by 1980-81. Most of the countries have exceeded this objective. By 1993, Egypt and South Africa had attained 17% and 13% respectively.

22. Generally speaking, higher education in Africa has been confronted with the following major problems:

- rapid increase in student enrolments:
- inadequate financial resources
- inadequate reception capacity
- decline in the relevance and quality of teaching and research.

23. Higher education should contribute to the development of other educational sectors, particularly through the following actions:

- promoting continuous mass education and improving the quality of pre-university education;
- carrying out research on mass education and basic education in order to provide data for decision-making purposes.

2.5. Role of Education in African Integration

24. The Abuja Declaration (Nigeria), which was adopted in June 1991 by the 27th Summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), is one of the most important references on African integration. Adopted after an evaluation of the level of implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action, this Declaration defined the concept, content and scope of the African Economic Community.

25. The African Economic Community is being established at a very slow pace. Education should contribute to the establishment of the community, particularly through:

- the training of executives who can master the socio-economic and cultural realities of the member countries:
- the promotion of mutual understanding and tolerance among the various social entities.

Education could also benefit from the community as the latter would create access to the material resources available in the member countries.

26. The desire to promote and intensify inter-African co-operation in Education has been expressed on several occasions, particularly in Harare, Mbabane and Cairo in 1982, 1985 and 1989 respectively.

The major achievements made in the educational sector through inter-African co-operation include the creation of the Association of African Universities (AAU), the Council for Higher Education in Africa and Madagascar (Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur/CAMES) and the establishment of centres of excellence such as the inter-state educational institutions.

27. The regional convention on the recognition of course equivalence, certificates, degrees, grades and other higher educational qualifications, as adopted in Arusha in 1981, can play an important role in strengthening inter-African co-operation.

28. The implementation of inter-African co-operation is fraught with several problems, particularly language barriers, inefficiency of communication media and social crises.

2.6. Resource Mobilization

29. Substantial human, financial and material resources are needed to meet the challenges inherent in lifelong education for all in Africa.

In spite of the economic difficulties, there still exists a renewed interest in the financing of education. At the international level, this is mainly expressed through the United Nations Special Initiative for Africa.

30. Resources should first be mobilized through internal efforts which should particularly find expression in an increase in part of the GDP allocated for education in Africa.

31. Educational systems in Africa are characterized by inadequate learning premises, school textbooks, libraries and documentation centres. On the other hand, most of the resources allocated for education are absorbed by staff salaries and social services provided to students. Under the circumstances, a series of strategies have been implemented, e.g. recruitment of educational volunteers, running multi-grade and double-shift classes and establishing schools near villages.

III. PERSPECTIVES OF LIFELONG EDUCATION IN AFRICA

32. The recent initiatives taken to promote education in Africa and the United Nations Special Initiative for Africa reflect great ambitions with respect to the development of lifelong education particularly in the fields of adult education, basic education and vocational training for unemployed youths.

33. As regards the universalization of primary education, it is noticed that the OAU decade for education in Africa offers the opportunity for in-depth evaluation in each member State.

34. UNESCO's retraining programmes for teachers will help improve educational quality and relevance.

35. Strengthening and diversifying inter-African co-operation beyond the linguistic zones will enhance the mobility of teachers, researchers and students and ensure a better use of the opportunities offered by the new technologies.

36. The progressive use of national languages in the civil service and in public life will help in developing lifelong education and literacy programmes.

37. For their part, the new communication and information technologies and distance learning also offer other alternatives for literacy and lifelong education.

Programme of the Conference

| Mon, 20 April | Tue, 21 April | Wed, 22 April | Thur, 23 April | Fri, 24 April |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| 7.30-18.30 Registration & Information Centre (Main foyer) | 7.30-18.30 Information Centre (Main foyer) | 7.30-18.30 Information Centre (Main foyer) | 7.30-18.30 Information Centre (Main foyer) | 7.30-18.30 Information Centre (Main foyer) |
| 8.00-17.00 Exhibition, 2f | 8.00-17.00 Exhibition, 2f | 8.00-17.00 Exhibition, 2f | 8.00-17.00 Exhibition, 2f | 8.00-17.00 Exhibition, 2f |
| 9.00-9.30 Ministers' Caucus 2cde | 8.00-8.45 First Meeting: Bureau Hall 11a,b | 8.00-8.45 Second Meeting: Bureau Hall 11a,b | 8.00-8.45 Third Meeting: Bureau Hall 11a,b | 8.00-8.45 Fourth Meeting: Bureau Hall 11a,b |
| No tea break on Monday | | | TEA 8.30-9:00.2b | |
| 9.45-10.30 Election of Officials 2cde | 9.00-12.00 Open Forum, Panel III 2cde Looking at the future II: Closing The Gender Gap | 9.00-12.00 Open Forum, Panel V 2cde Role of Higher Education | 9.00-12.00 Minister's Caucus, 2a 110 NGO Consultation, 2cde 300 | 9.00-12.00 Ministers' Caucus, 2a NGO Consultation, 2cde |
| 10.30-13.00 Open Forum, Panel I, 2cde Basic Education in Africa: A review of situation since Jomtien | | | | |
| DELEGATES LUNCH on a cash basis 2b 12:00 - 14:00 Tuesday-Friday and 13:00 - 14:30 Monday MINISTERS' LUNCH on a cash basis ICC Coffee Shop 12:00-14:00 Tuesday - Friday and 13:00 - 14:30 Monday | | | | |
| 14.30-17.00 Open Forum Panel II 2cde Looking at the future I: Generalising access | 14.00-17.00 Open Forum, Panel IV 2cde Looking at the future III: Promoting relevance & efficiency & enhancing quality | 14.00-17.00 Open Forum Panel VI 2cde Education and African Regional Education TEA 17.00-17.30, 2b, Hall 2 foyer and courtyard 17.30-20.00 h. Open Forum, Panel VII 2cde Mobilising and Utilising Resources in favour of Lifelong Education | 14.00-17.00 Ministers' Caucus, 2a 110 NGO Consultation, 2cde 300 | 14.00-16.00 ADEA side meeting, 2a SACMEQ side meeting, 11ab Literacy Forum (UNESCO), 2cde |
| 17.30-19.00 Opening Ceremony Halls 1a | | | | 16.00-17.30 h. Open Forum closing Session Halls 2cde |
| 19.30-21.00 h. Welcoming Reception, 2b | 19.00-21.00 UNESCO Director General's Cocktail Function, 2b | Evening, at leisure | 18.30 SA Evening Plaza ICC | |

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