

UN conference adopts action plan for improving early childhood care and education



29 September 2010 – Participants at a United Nations-backed conference in Moscow today adopted an action plan to expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the world’s most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

In their concluding document, participants specifically asked the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (**UNESCO**) to reinforce efforts to promote and develop early childhood care and education. They also called on countries to work with UNESCO to mobilize international donors to increase financial support for these purposes.

Their “Moscow Framework of Action” also outlines a number of challenges that must be tackled to achieve early childhood care and education goals.

These include a lack of political commitment, inadequate public funding, low external support, and the need for effective delivery of services.

It also calls attention to the challenges posed by poverty and cultural barriers in many parts of the world – including in occupied territories and in conflict- and disaster-affected areas – which deny millions of children access to early childhood care and education.

Closing the conference, Vice-President Danny Faure of the Seychelles requested that UNESCO also lead the completion of “the Holistic Child Development Index” – to allow countries to follow progress towards the achievement of early childhood care and education, and to lay the ground for a major review to be carried out in 2015.

The three-day conference, which began on 27 September, was organized by UNESCO and the city of Moscow.

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