

مكتب صاحبة السمو الشيخة موزا بنت ناصر

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HH Sheikha Moza urges political leaders to complete primary education goal, attends Clinton Global Initiative plenary

New York, USA, September 24 – Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser today addressed Heads of State, Government and notable dignitaries at the Global Education First Initiative (GEFI) high-level event, emphasising that basic education is not only the responsibility of governments but a universal responsibility. The comments came in a speech held during the 69th UN General Assembly.

The First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama welcomed the international leaders and global partners of the education forum and delivered a keynote address about the quality of education for girls.

In Her Highnesses' opening remarks, she asked the question; "If we have not managed to achieve universal primary education over the last 15 years, what makes us think that we will do so in the next 15 years. As we look ahead to the future development goals, have we really reflected enough on where we have failed? Until we do, we will not reach our goals."

Her Highness argued that the steps to universal primary education are clear but only achievable if political leaders see the potential in primary education. She also asserted that investments in education yield rapid returns, citing UNESCO estimates that each additional year of schooling raises a country's annual GDP growth by 0.37%.

Her Highness stressed the importance of protecting schools in conflict through strong international legal mechanisms and sanctions against those who attack schools. "I believe that until we have these, we will not meet MDG 2 by 2015, or even by 2030. If we fail to educate children in conflict zones today, we may meet them again later as hopeless adherents of violent ideologies. As we are learning now, the cost of dealing with them later on is billions."

Her Highness called for the global community to prioritise completing the agenda of universal primary education in the upcoming Sustainable Development Goals, and setting realistic targets towards this. Her Highness highlighted the achievements of Educate A Child, which in less than two years, has already committed support to 2.5 million children across 33 countries.

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In Her Highnesses' closing remarks, she underlined the benefits of building strong alliances with trusted partners; "We cannot do this alone. Education is a universal goal, and a universal responsibility that requires universal solutions." The Global Partnership for Education, a key partner, estimates that a \$3.5 billion dollar injection over the next three years could support the schooling costs of 29 million children. This, coupled with increased domestic commitments and better protection of schools could achieve the goal of universal primary education, in six years, by 2021.

Her Highness also today attended a Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) plenary session, The Equality of Girls and Women: 2034 instead of 2134. Leading participants included Hillary Clinton, Former U.S. Secretary of State and U.S. Senator and Melinda Gates, Co-chair and Trustee, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

CGI, an initiative of the Clinton Foundation, convenes global leaders to create and implement innovative solutions to the world's most pressing challenges. Talks during the meeting discussed challenges and progress that have been made over the last 20 years in achieving equality for girls and women across the world and discussed solutions to significantly accelerate progress and strengthen the foundation for women's equality and societies' prosperity.

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