

March 20, 2005

Dear Prime Minister Paul Martin,

Three years ago at the G8 Meetings in Kananaskis, the Canadian government played a leadership role in getting the issue of Education for All on the agenda of the international community.

Today this issue is even more important. We know that over 40 million children in Africa, many of them girls, are not in school. These children are being denied a fundamental human right. We also know that schooling has wide reaching effects on other issues of great humanitarian import. Getting an education can lower a child's risk for HIV/AIDS, enhance health, autonomy, and contribute to the economic life-chances of every child.

We also know that despite many commitments, the international community is not doing what it must do to ensure that every child has a chance to go to school. Today, many African governments have developed clear and credible plans for giving every child an education. But the international community has moved far too slowly and weakly. Current levels of funding are insufficient to meet the gender equity and school enrolment targets set out in the Millennium Development Declaration. Leadership at the global level is sorely wanting.

We, the founding members and friends of the Canadian Global Campaign for Education Alliance, urge you to continue and extend the tradition of Canadian leadership on the issue of Education for All. Our government has already become a strong supporter of basic education through its bilateral aid programs in many parts of the world. The Canadian NGO and academic communities are equally committed to this issue. Canada must build on these strengths. We can, and must play a global, catalytic role, offering innovation and leadership. You, Mr. Martin, could make Education for All a key international issue at a time when commitments are waning.

The international community continues to procrastinate on its promise to see that every child in the developing world gets an education. We ask you, Mr. Martin, to make Education for All YOUR issue.

Sincerely yours,

Karen Mundy, Ph.D
Founding Director, Canadian Global Campaign for Education
Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair, University of Toronto

The following organisations and individuals have asked to be signatories to this letter:

Canadian Council for International Co-operation – Brian Tomlinson

Canadian Teachers' Federation Trust Fund – Barbara MacDonald, Director International Programs

World Vision Canada - Dave Toyce, President

Council of Canadians – signed by Donna James, Executive Assistant

UNICEF Canada - David Agnew, President & CEO

Foundation Paul Gerin-Lajoie, François Gerin-Lajoie, Directeur général

Oxfam Canada – Rieky Stuart, Executive Director

Oxfam-Québec – Mohammed Chikhaoui, Director - Planning and Evaluation

CODE - Yvonne Appiah, Executive Director

CAW - Canada, Basil ‘Buzz’ Hargrove, President

Transformative Learning Centre - Daniel Schugurensky, Associate Professor
Ontario Institute for the Study of Education, University of Toronto

Canadian Federation of University Women – signed by Susan A.C. Russell

Women Building Peace by Peace – signed by Sharri Plonski

Carolyn Taylor, Executive Director - World Youth Centre

Bernard Taylor, Executive Director - Partnership Africa Canada

Paul Bélanger, President - International Council for Adult Education

Paul Gerin-Lajoie, Chairman - Paul Gerin-Lajoie Foundation

Paul Moist, National President - Canadian Union of Public Employees

Louise Zimanyi and Kathy Bartlett, Co-Directors,
Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development, Ryerson University

Avril Benoit, Chair - Give Girls a Chance

Budd L. Hall, Dean - Faculty of Education, University of Victoria

Vandra L. Masemann,
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Past President, World Council of Comparative Education Societies,
Original Member, Education for All Steering Committee

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Stephanie Garrow - McGill University

Blaise Salmon, President - Results Canada