Government of Pakistan Pledges 10 Million USD for UNESCO’s Global Fund for Girls’ Education

Paris and Islamabad, 10 December – Government of Pakistan has committed to contribute 10 Million US dollars to the global funding of UNESCO for girls’ education. This commitment came from President of Pakistan, Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, on the occasion of a high-level advocacy event called “Standup for Malala – Stand up for Girls’ Right to Education”, taking place at UNESCO’s Paris Headquarters today – this event coincides with the United Nations Human Rights Day.

Organized by UNESCO and the Government of Pakistan, the event will accelerate political action to ensure every girl’s right to go to school, and to advance girls’ education as an urgent priority for achieving Education For All.

The event pays tribute to Malala Yousafazi, an astonishingly brave 15 year old girl and to signify The human rights to education and gender equality which were both violated by attack on Malala Yousufzai. “Whenever and wherever a young girl is forbidden from going to school, it’s an attack against all girls, against the right to learn, the right to live life to the full; and it is unacceptable,” declared UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova in an official manifestation of support for Malala.

The President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari and UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova opened the event, this morning. UN Special Envoy for Global Education Gordon Brown in his keynote address stressed on the need of security and accessibility without fear for girl’s right to education. Video messages from UN Secretary General Ban Ki moon, U.S Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton were broadcasted, calling for coordinated efforts for the pressing challenges girl’s around the world face for accessing quality education.

Other speakers included French Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault, UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet, former President of Finland Tarja Halonen, Director-General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) Abdulaziz OthmanAltwaijri and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict Leila Zerrougui.

Messages of support for Malala were read out by children from several schools in the Paris area who were representing different regions of the world, to show solidarity aspiring from Malala’s example.

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