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Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
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Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
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联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

**Message from Ms Irina Bokova,**

**Director-General of UNESCO**

**on the occasion of the Sixth Meeting of the Collective  
Consultation of NGOs on Education for All (CCNGO/EFA)**

**UNESCO, 24 October 2012**

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

The Education for All movement is built on the power of solidarity.

It draws on the belief that every child and every adult in every society must have access to quality education.

I believe we need this solidarity more than ever today.

The 2012 *Education for All Global Monitoring Report* that we released last week makes the stakes very clear.

There has been great progress across the world – but this is stagnating and gains may be lost.

There are some 61 million children are out of school today. We are facing the rise of a “lost generation” of young people without basic skills.

We need a strong new push to reach the goals by 2015.

Governments must act, and the international community must support them – but this is not enough.

To succeed, we need the power of civil society to promote new opportunities, to ensure accountability and to monitor progress.

This is why this 6<sup>th</sup> *Meeting of the Collective Consultation of NGOs* is so important, and why I am so pleased to host this for the first time at UNESCO Headquarters.

This is our mechanism to ensure your voices are heard in the overall coordination of EFA and as we move to 2015.

We cannot tire in reminding governments to invite you to the table when education policies and strategies are being designed.

Certainly, I count on your advice to gain momentum to reach the EFA goals and also to shape a post-2015 agenda.

Most especially, I count on your ideas for innovative solutions to tackle some of the more difficult challenges – for instance, to reach the most vulnerable groups of children and youth.

In this context, the *Education First* initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General must be seen as an accelerator of our work. This is a way to mobilise greater political will.

UNESCO will do everything for the success of the initiative, and I count on your contributions to the Steering Committee, which I chair, and which includes also the Presidents of *Global Campaign for Education* and *Education International*.

In moving forward, three issues strike me as critical.

First, we must focus on girls' education and women's literacy.

Second, we need a new deal on teachers to improve the quality of learning.

Lastly, we need a transformation in how we educate and what we educate for, to foster global citizenship.

This Sixth Meeting of the Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education for All is an opportunity to explore these issues.

I look forward to your views, and I thank you once again for your commitment.