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*Newsletter of the World Education Forum in Dakar*

# WORLD EFA COUNCIL A Futures Group Proposal

Determined to put education on top of government agenda across the world, the Futures Group has recommended the setting up of a Global Education for All Council. "The goal would be to put education at the heart of the international political agenda," avers John Longmore, head of the Futures Group.

The Council would be an independent political body, serviced by the UNESCO. It will be composed of representatives of governments at the highest level; heads of UN agencies and bilateral donor organisations; leaders of civil society organisations, and relevant foundations.

Its functions will include "advocacy, resource mobilisation, monitoring and knowledge sharing" and it will be served by an upgraded Secretariat. Mr Longmore who is a director in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs at the UN headquarters, hastens to explain that the Secretariat will be "strong" in the sense of influential. It will seek to influence the policy of the UNESCO, and other organisations in the UN system, and raise additional funds from national governments, from multilateral agencies, from Foundations and others. "Part of the criticism is that UNESCO has not given enough importance to EFA," he says disarmingly.

The Futures Group spent over two days since Tuesday afternoon to hammer out a consensus on what to do after Dakar for the implementation of the goals and strategies at the national, regional and international levels. Group members were clear that the EFA activity would succeed only with the committed participation of all stakeholders at the national level.

National EFA Forums will be strengthened or established to support this activity, and countries will have to prepare comprehensive national plans by 2002. Ideally the plans should be prepared in consultation with national civil society, be backed by all deve-



lopment partners, have the necessary funding support, be time-bound and action-oriented. Mr Longmore says the Futures Group would like to see not just education ministers in the National EFA Forums. The participation of finance ministers would be relevant, he adds.

At the regional level, the Futures Group recommends there should be support for national plans, coordination, monitoring, advocacy, sharing of best practices and other means of cooperation. "Regional and international support will be available to strengthen Regional Forums and relevant EFA capacities, especially within Africa and Asia."

The Futures Group comprises representatives of the UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO, World Bank, Sweden, France, USAID, 5 NGOs representing each region, and government representatives from the five regions.



1. Presidents WADE and OBASANJO, the Director General of UNESCO and Malian astronaut Modiba Diarra.  
2. Crown Princess of Luxemburg with pupils of "Baraques" school  
33. One of the artistes who entertained guests at the Meridien.