



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Halfway to 2015, Halfway to Universal Primary Education?**

**House of Commons, Tuesday 17 June 2008**

Douglas Alexander, Secretary of State for International Development will talk on progress towards Universal Primary Education at a special event to be held at the House of Commons on 17 June 2008. The Secretary of State will join a number of international speakers including Cream Wright, UNICEF Global Chief of Education, Llius Riera, European Commission Director for International Development and Bience Gawanas, Commissioner for Social Affairs at the African Commission at this special event organised by the Africa Educational Trust.

The event which is part of the Africa Educational Trust's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations is being hosted by Baroness Ann Taylor, a patron of the Trust. It takes place at the half-way point towards the 2015 target for Universal Primary Education and will focus on efforts to achieve Universal Primary Education in Africa.

The Africa Educational Trust supports primary, secondary, higher education and adult literacy in Africa, especially in countries in conflict and post conflict situations. Its programmes include a Radio Literacy programme, run in partnership with the BBC World Service, for young people who missed out on education due to conflict, a distance teaching programme in public administration for senior civil servants in the new Government of Southern Sudan and a programme to help local communities establish internationally recognised examinations for primary and secondary school students in Mogadishu and the rest of Somalia. Over 750 000 children and young people from Africa have been supported by AET's work to date.

"As a former beneficiary of the AET during my days in exile, I convey my profound gratitude to the organisation for not only contributing to my personal educational needs, but also for the commendable role which AET has played during the past decades, and continues to play, in Africa. AET has made an enormous contribution to the development of people who are now running their governments, academic institutions, judiciary and business and civil society organisations.."

*Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of South Africa*

"I am proud to be a Patron of the Africa Educational Trust which does such excellent work in conflict-affected regions of Africa where there are no satisfactory education structures. Over its 50 years I know that the Trust has helped almost a million people obtain some literacy, numeracy and vocational skills"

*Rt Hon Neil Kinnock, House of Lords, Patron of AET*

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