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**HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON THE SPECIAL INITIATIVE FOR AFRICA
AND THE EDUCATION SECTOR STRATEGY FOR MOZAMBIQUE
PARIS 7 AND 8 JULY 1997**

**JOINT STATEMENT BY DENMRK, FINLAND, SWEDEN AND
THE NETHERLANDS**

Representatives from some of the bilateral funding agencies invited to this meeting, these being Denmark, Finland, Sweden and the Netherlands, wish to use this opportunity to present a joint statement.

The Minister of Education has underlined that this meeting is part of a process aimed to enrich the draft education strategy and to enhance cooperation of the efforts of all partners concerned.

Our statement lists and comments on issues that should be developed further in the months to come.

Overall, the vision which Mozambique has of the priorities and long term objectives of its education sector is very clear. Evidence of this was once again given at this meeting. The provision of basic education to all Mozambican children over a period of ten years has been identified as the main-priority and we would like to take this opportunity to stress that we fully subscribe to this objective, while at the same time stressing the need to maintain and improve quality.

As was mentioned on various occasions in the opening statements of this important meeting, attaining the objective of basic education for all is only achievable through a coordinated effort and a long-term commitment on the part of the different parties concerned.

A strategic plan for the education sector is a necessary base and platform for such a long term commitment.

The Government of Mozambique has put considerable time and effort into the development of such a plan. It is ever encouraging to see that this process is led and driven by the Ministry of Education, that it has involved other parts of the Mozambican society, and that each successive step of the process has enriched the strategy document.

In our view, however, a firm commitment to a long term sector programme will require further elaboration of some aspects of the document.

The coming months will be crucial in this respect and here once again, we would like to stress the importance of ensuring that enough time is given for the Ministry to further Elaborate the document and for the different partners to reflect on the strategy. This approach has been advocated by E.U. Coordination Group in education and more recently by the bilateral donors represented here as well as by Spain, Ireland and the European Union in a joint letter to the Ministry of Education.

We would like to emphasize the following points that should be addressed in order to finalize the strategic plan.

- 1) The logical structure between policies, objectives, strategies, results, activities and indicators on the overall level as well as on the sub-sector level. In particular we feel that further analysis along these lines is required for the areas of teacher training, learning materials, secondary education, and non-formal education.
- 2) Identification of important policy decisions which remain to be taken in order to implement the plan.
- 3) Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the plan.
- 4) Identification of constraints for implementation as well as proposals for overcoming these, including capacity building needed.
- 5) Integration of the macro-economic framework into the strategic plan.

Further we feel that it is also important to address cross-cutting issues such as delivery mechanisms for education, girls participation and performance in schools, and collaboration of communities and other actors.

As regards the process of implementation it is important that the main partners agree on:

- 1) Criteria and mechanisms for planning, monitoring, reporting and follow-up, which could include joint annual reviews and joint reporting procedures.
- 2) A solid and transparent system of management and administration of funds.
- 3) To move away from a project towards a programme approach. The two will exist simultaneously during a transitional period which will allow for the technical implications of moving towards a sector approach to be addressed.

It is our belief that this meeting has provided valuable elements towards finalization of an education sector strategy. We would like to suggest that a follow-up meeting be organized in Maputo within the next few weeks to disseminate the results of this meeting and to plan the process ahead. Naturally, this discussion and the further elaboration of the document may require further investment in terms of time and human resources. In view of this, the bilateral donors would like to reiterate the offer which was made in the

letter mentioned above to provide any financial and technical assistance which is deemed necessary for the finalization of this plan.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank UNESCO for organizing this initiative and for providing us with the opportunity to discuss this crucial issue.

**UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL INITIATIVE ON AFRICA
MOZAMBIQUE**

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON THE EDUCATION SECTOR STRATEGY

UNESCO, PARIS 7 AND 9 JULY 1997

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the framework of the UN Special Initiative on Africa (UNZIA), a high level technical meeting on Mozambique Education Sector Strategy was hosted by UNESCO on July, 7/8, 1997. The Mozambican delegation was led by H.E. Dr. Nhavoto, Minister of Education and by H.E. Ms Diogo, Vice Minister of Planning and Finance. The meeting convened some thirty representatives from the UN family (UNDP, World Bank, UNESCO, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA), as well as major bilateral donors including the Netherlands, Denmark, Finland, and Sweden. (Sweden is the focal point for donors' coordination in the education sector in Mozambique.) Opening statements were made by Mr. Lopes, UNESCO Deputy Director General for Africa, Mr. Parsuramen, UNZIA Basic Education Coordinator for the World Bank, Mr. Dierckx de Castere, UN Resident Coordinator in Mozambique, and Dr. Nhavoto, Minister of Education.

The objective of the meeting, which constituted an important step in the policy dialogue process engaged by the Government of Mozambique with the Donor community, was to help to build consensus and donor support around the Education Sector Strategy being worked out by the Mozambican Government, in the context of the United Nations Special Initiative on Africa. In the education sector, the goal of the Special Initiative is to ensure access to basic education for all African children within ten years (1997-2006). Participants welcomed the successful collaboration between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Planning and Finance in designing the sector plan based on the 1997-2001 Plano Estrategico de Educacao. They also welcomed the rapid increase in the share of the national budget allocated to education and health in the past two years. The planning documents and associated ten-year scenarios presented by the two Ministries are a major advance in Mozambique's efforts to establish macro-economic and sector policy frameworks consistent with the Government's objectives of increased access and improved quality in the basic education system, with special emphasis on gender and equitable treatment for girls. Continued collaboration between the two Ministries is a key factor supporting the sustainability of reforms.

In his opening address Mr. Henri Lopes emphasized the importance of national program and strategy formulation which constitute a common platform for policy dialogue with partners – both internal and external – and recalled UNESCO's role in facilitating such dialogue in numerous countries. Mr. Parsuramen, reiterated the World Bank's commitment 'to place education at the heart of the development strategy of Mozambique' and the Bank's readiness to support the implementation of the education sector strategy in close cooperation with the Government and other UN agencies. Mr. De Castrle qualified the meeting as "a defining moment within the UNSIA". The UN Resident Coordinator mentioned that 'the meeting has come at the right time in Mozambique', when the economic boom of the country makes it possible to 'dream again of long term visions and to give due regards to priorities in education, health, and other social sectors'. H.E. Dr. Nhavoto stated Government priorities of promoting peace, democracy, stability, and national unity and eradicating poverty and in this connection recalled that 'it is through education and investment in human resource development that we will be able to improve living conditions'. The Minister stressed the importance of updating the education plan, which is being worked out by the Government as 'an instrument for coordination of activities and for more rational use of resources'. Highlighting that 'for the first time, the Government has the opportunity to present a product designed, prepared and directed by the Mozambicans', Dr. Nhavoto concluded his intervention by expressing his gratitude to UNESCO and UNDP for organizing and hosting this meeting.

In her presentation to the meeting the Vice-Minister of Planning and Finance, Mrs. Diogo emphasized the key role of education and human resources development in the Mozambican Government's development strategy. Between 1994 and 1996 the share of the national recurrent budget allocated to education increased from 10 to 17 percent; education's share of the investment budget has also increased.

The Mozambican Government made presentations of macro-economic scenarios and of the Education Sector Strategy and the related education development scenarios. This provided an opportunity for donor representatives to comment on the strategy and to express their support to the government in its commitment to make accelerated progress towards Universal Primary Education within a period of 10 years, corresponding to the time frame of the UNSIA. Decentralization of educational administration, tapping additional domestic resources, capacity building for system management and supervision, and curricular reform were emphasized as key elements of the sector strategy. As a result of the discussion, it was also agreed that the Education Strategy will further develop and reflect on the role of non-formal education and alternative means of delivery. All of the scenarios evidence the necessity of sustained and continued donor support to Mozambique's education system in the short and medium term, as is foreseen in the Special Initiative for Africa. A key component of the Government's strategy is the reduction of this dependence in the longer term as Mrs. Diogo made clear in her presentation.

A joint statement was also issued by Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and The Netherlands. In their statement, they concluded that the overall vision Mozambique has of the priorities and long term objectives of the education sector is very clear. The provision of basic education to all Mozambican children over a period of ten years has been identified as the main priority and they would like to take this opportunity to stress the full support for this objective. However, at the same time, they would like to emphasize the need to maintain and improve the quality of education. They also felt that the Government of Mozambique has put considerable time and effort into the development of the plan. They noted that the planning process was driven by the Ministry of Education and was also participatory since it involved other parts of the Mozambican society and that each successive step has enriched the strategy document. The bilateral donors voiced a number of points that in their opinion should be addressed in order to finalize the Strategic Plan. These concern the structure of the Plan, policy decisions still to be taken, constraints for implementation, and integration of the macro-economic framework in the Plan. Major issues they also highlighted were delivery mechanisms, girls' participation, internal efficiency, and community participation.

Regarding implementation, they recommended that the main partners agree on:

- i) criteria and mechanisms for planning, monitoring, reporting and follow-up, which could include joint annual reviews and joint reporting procedures;
- ii) efficient management and administration of funds;
- iii) a programme approach.

The participants have agreed that next steps in the planning process could include: further refinement of the database and simulation models that the Ministry uses for the development of scenarios, to make these more accessible in the process of policy dialogue; constitution of a small group of key donors in the education sector to work closely with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Planning and Finance on the development and implementation of the strategic plan; the preparation of guidelines for implementation of the Strategic Plan, including phasing; and the production of an annual report measuring progress toward the achievement of the Government's goals in the education sector. The final version of the strategic plan will be discussed in a series of meetings with stakeholders and representatives of civil society in Mozambique; the Government's strategy might also be presented to the 1998 Consultative Group meeting. Continuation of the planning process should not slow down the implementation of the Government's current education policies, nor delay the current development and implementation of education projects by Mozambique's external partners.

8 July 1997