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FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
CONFERENCE IN MARRAKECH, MOROCCO
"EDUCATION AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR; A DEVELOPMENT
IMPERATIVE"
MARCH 31, 1999

"Thank you very much, Mr. Minister, for that kind introduction and for explaining to us how we came to be here today on behalf of this very important issue. It is a pleasure and an honor for me to join so many distinguished dignitaries and leaders, from both the public and the private sectors, as well as the non-governmental organizations. You are here because you recognize the vital connection between education, and economic development, and human progress.

"I want to thank the Ministry of Education for co-sponsoring this event, and I'm pleased that so many other ministers have taken the time to be here and participate. I also wish to thank Wafabank and its president. It is extremely important for the private sector to recognize the stake that business has in these issues. And I am very grateful that Mr. Bennani has become a leader in this country's commitment to education. I also wish to thank the General Confederation of Moroccan Enterprises and the international partners who are participating: USAID, UNICEF, UNESCO and the World Bank.

"I have long looked forward to coming to Morocco, and I must say that the gracious hospitality extended to me by His Majesty, by the government, and by the people of this beautiful country has exceeded any expectation I could have ever had. I also have been heartened to see first hand the progress that you are making to increase your commitment to your common future.

"So, I'm particularly pleased to join you to discuss what I believe is the single most important investment that any country in today's world can make -- and that is an investment in the education of its people. We will pay particular attention, in this conference, to the education of girls.

"Minister Alaoui said that he attended a conference sponsored by USAID in Washington, D.C. last year. I, too, was there because it was one of the most important conferences that USAID has ever sponsored. It was an international conference on girls' education. We heard strong calls to action, to redouble our efforts to educate girls, to open up more opportunities for women so that they could take their rightful place in their societies.

"As we have just heard from the minister, many participants from

throughout the world returned from that gathering filled with a new energy to promote girls' education.

"There is a wonderful story, that I learned in preparing for this trip. It is about how King Mohamed V set an example for the people of Morocco by educating his own daughter, Princess Lalla Aicha. After completing her schooling, the Princess traveled across Morocco, from village to village, from city to city, explaining why it was important to educate daughters as well. I've read how in 1947 -- at the very young age of 16 -- she electrified a crowd of thousands in Tangiers, speaking passionately in three different languages about the value of educating girls, and the importance of women as citizens.

"She based her arguments, I am told, on an Islamic principle that, in front of God, both men and women are full human beings, and that both have a right to everything that is important in life. Her call for the universal right to education may have been spoken more than 50 years ago, at a different crossroads in Moroccan history; but her call is still clearly relevant to today because, although progress has been made, all over the world there is much that is left to be done.

"I have worked on the issue of education and economic enterprise for more than fifteen years. In the state where my husband was governor, we had many young children who were not well educated. The schools, and especially in the rural areas, were not well equipped. And we understood from a very early stage that, if we did not change the approach to education, if we did not upgrade the standards that were to be expected, then we would not see the progress we wanted to see in one small part of America.

"One of the ways we did that was to form alliances with private business. I remember very well how we persuaded the leaders of the most important businesses in that state, that included some of the most successful businesses anywhere in the United States, that their future economic prosperity and the stability of their society depended on education.

"I was serving at that time on the board of the corporation Wal-Mart; and Sam Walton who at that time was the richest man in the world, with his family became utterly convinced, as many of you who are business leaders in Morocco have been convinced, that his bottom line, his future profits, depended on an educated workforce. And he had to make a commitment to bringing that about.

"Well, there is much evidence that progress is being made in my country, but it is also difficult, and we have a long way to go to ensure that our

public education system provides the best possible education to every child, boy and girl, rich and poor, black, white and brown.

"So, I come with some sense of the challenge you face. And I believe that your challenge, or course, is much greater than the one we face in the United States. You have a widely dispersed population, in some very difficult terrain to reach; and so you, in a way, have to be even more creative than we have had to be to deal with our educational problems.

"The very first stop that I made when I came to Morocco was in a small school in a village outside of Er-Rachidia -- where I spoke to a young girl about her aspirations for her future. 'My dream is to become a doctor,' she said.

"That simple statement echoed the dreams and voices of millions of girls and boys around the world. Her father was sitting next to her, and he told us that he had nine children, and none of them yet had been able to finish school.

"I'm illiterate," he said, "but I want a better life for my children." And he hoped that the young girl sitting next to him would be able to fulfill her dream. That is really why we are gathered: to equip all of Morocco's citizens and, indeed, the world's citizens with the tools they need to make better futures for themselves.

"As I have traveled around the world, I have met with many government officials, private business leaders, and those who work in the non-governmental sector, who have banded together to try to improve education. My husband has a saying that he started speaking many years ago -- that in the future what you earn will depend on what you learn. And no matter what the stage of development of any country might be today, that is a true statement. Some countries have further to go than others, but everyone must recognize that the globalization of the international economy means that forces are at work that will leave no society untouched. And the goal must be to educate people to be flexible and able to learn and keep learning as they go through their work lives.

"We also know from research done by the World Bank and others that educating girls is the single best development investment a nation can make because, when we educate a girl, we improve her health and the health of her family. We make it possible for her to earn income to supplement a family's income.

"We see that, not only do we improve health and decrease poverty, we also create leaders, leaders in families and communities.

"There's a wonderful phrase that I've heard, that mothers are schools, and we know that an educated mother is the single biggest determinant as to whether a child will be educated; and so when we educate a girl, we are not only educating that one student, we are educating many others who will be touched, by her in the future.

"Now, how do we increase the enrollment of girls throughout the world? Well, first, you have to set that as a goal; and I know that Morocco has accomplished a great deal. Primary school enrollment has increased by fifty percent since 1960. Yet, I also know that you've set some new goals. In the last 12 months -- I want to congratulate you for enrolling far more first graders than last year; and even more impressive to me, you have dramatically increased the number of girls in rural communities who now have the opportunity to go to school -- in just one year.

"I know that His Majesty King Hassan II has underscored his commitment by creating a new education commission to explore ways of providing greater educational opportunities for Moroccan people in the twenty-first century. I have seen in other gatherings like this, in other countries, the fruit of such labors. Many different plans have been tried to reach rural girls.

"I have visited schools in rural areas, in countries like Bangladesh which has also many problems of illiteracy; and (I have noted) the fact that many girls do not stay in school even if they start. There I saw some experiments with communities being able to provide, through the government, scholarships for primary school and secondary school, and even, in some communities, food commodities so that the family would not suffer from the loss of the labor of a daughter.

"In Uganda, where the president there has committed himself to universal primary education, I've been in classrooms that for the first time ever have the same number of girls as boys. Because girls' families are being urged to send them to school to help rebuild that country after the terrible troubles it endured in the 1980's.

"I've also seen private businesses in countries starting schools in villages or in poor urban neighborhoods, supplementing what the government has been able to provide. I understand that, this afternoon, you'll be hearing about some of the progress that is being made in Guatemala, where that government is trying to close the education-gap between the indigenous, native population -- the Mayan Indians -- and those who are more privileged, in the urban areas.

"When I visited Guatemala last year, I met some of the students who are benefiting from the government's new program, young girls who have

been given scholarships so that they can buy the books and the uniforms that they need -- and, also, so that there is a little money left over so that the family can keep an income coming in that they may have lost because the girl is no longer working in the fields or selling fruit in the market place.

"Now, those are just a couple of the examples that I have seen and learned about around the world. There are success stories in Morocco, and in every country; but clearly there is a huge gap that is getting bigger. In many countries, the proportion of people in the population that are under twenty-one is anywhere from thirty to fifty percent. If those young men and women are not educated, as the economy continues to expand through technology and information technology in particular, they will not find a place in the workforce. They will be unemployed.

"They will be idle, and they will cause social and political problems for every society. "I was very pleased when I visited Tesselmente and saw first-hand some of the ways that people in Morocco are coming together to deal with the difficult issue of delivering education in some of your remote rural areas. They had started a class, not only for girls, but also for young women and older women.

"Because one of the problems is that, if a girl does not start primary school on time, because perhaps her family cannot afford to send her or they are not yet ready to send her, then if she tries to enter the formal education system at an older age, the school does not want her in the classrooms with the younger children, and there is no place for her. So, many young women who would otherwise want to be educated, here and elsewhere around the world, are not able to enter the formal education system after the time of the usual entry of around six, seven, or eight, whatever it is, has passed.

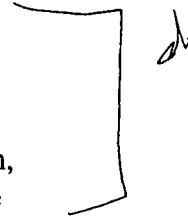
"In this classroom, however, there were girls and women of all ages; and the two teachers were the only two girls who had graduated from primary school. Any nation would be proud to have these two young women. They handled themselves with great poise as they conducted the class in front of me and the entourage that was with me; and I could see on the faces of the girls and women their excitement and their eagerness to please those two young teachers.

"As I talked with the students and the teachers, and later with some of the parents, I realized that this initiative came out of the energy that was created by the beginning of a women's association in the village. And that was helped by a foundation, our USAID, and the Moroccan government coming together to help start a women's association so that the women could have some say over what they needed in their village. And they

needed things like better cooking stoves that used less wood, that would cut the time that they spend looking for firewood; they needed a good water system; and they needed education. In every area, progress has been made because of the partnership that I saw in action. That is really the goal that many people around the world now see as the achievable way of creating educational opportunity.

"It is very difficult for any national government, in a centralized way, to reach out and cover a country that is as diverse as this one is. It will take the national government, the Ministry of Education, the private sector, and the not-for-profit sector, working together as I saw at Tasslemante, to create opportunities for people to seek out and achieve these goals on their own. If that occurs, then there is the need for more teacher training and teacher education because there have to be teachers for all these new educational initiatives.

"And the teachers themselves have to be trained differently in today's world. They have to understand that they are not just teaching by rote memorization, because that is no longer adequate for the challenges of the future. They have to understand that their real goal is to teach people how to learn throughout their lives: how to read to find useful information, how to write, how to acquire the kind of knowledge and skills that will be available to them across the lifetime.



"I met a teacher who had been through a training program and was deeply committed. She returned to her village to set up a school and, with the help of the local representative of the Ministry of Education, was given permission to set up an experimental literacy-training program. On the first day of the training, only two women showed up; but, by the fourth day, there were 80 participants eagerly lined up for their literacy class. Today, these women can read and write in Arabic, and do simple math.

"And, maybe most importantly of all, they began bringing their daughters with them. So it will take time; it will take some experimentation; and it will take flexibility and decentralization in order for this partnership you are discussing today to work.

"I have thought about some of the issues that you confront; and they are quite significant challenges; but I am convinced that, with a gathering like this, with the energy and resources represented here, there is no reason why Morocco cannot continue to make the impressive gains that you have demonstrated in the last year.

"I've also heard about how Wafabank is working to strengthen education at a small school in Casablanca. I would urge other businesses to adopt a

school, to adopt a village, to be willing to have your resources, and even your employees, work with people, work with parents, work with women's associations, to understand how best to organize themselves in order to proceed with an educational effort.

"There's also the great need to make sure that, as you proceed, you are not discouraged by mistakes or setbacks. There is no simple formula or easy answer about how to overcome the educational gap that exists here and elsewhere. I know that, for every company that makes a commitment in Morocco, you will be rewarded by what you learn about what happens in the lives of many ordinary citizens. I understand that Wafabank's vision is for every company in Morocco to eventually sponsor a school and contribute resources and expertise. Well, I think that is a very worthy goal.

"Where I have seen in my own country, in some of the most distressed neighborhoods in America, companies that have adopted a school, change occurs. All of a sudden the walls get painted, the outdated schoolbooks are replaced by the ones that need to be in the classroom, and many of the people working in the businesses are willing to be tutors and support teachers in order to improve the atmosphere for learning.

"This cooperation is showing results everywhere. In India, the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation is partnering with the local government, the community, and an international donor to set up 1700 preschool centers. In Uganda, an agricultural company is contributing seeds to a school district to establish school gardens, so that the children can have something to eat during the school day.

"In Guatemala, coffee producers are administering a government program that currently supports thousands of scholarships for girls in over 2600 schools. In Malawi, a South African publishing house is printing supplementary school materials for the students there. I saw and heard when I was in Egypt about the business community's commitment to underwrite the construction costs of more than fifty girls' schools; and, here in Morocco, the Moroccan Bank for External Commerce has plans to build 100 schools in rural areas.

"There are many other examples of good corporate citizenship that we could discuss today. Businesses can sponsor scholarships, mentor students, build schools, or build protecting walls around schools. I've also heard first-hand that many families do not let their girls go to school because there are no adequate restroom facilities. That's an issue that businesses could also take on -- constructing such facilities.

"I've also heard that many girls cannot go to school because the school is



too far from their home in their families' eyes; they don't want their girls walking home by themselves, coming home after dark, so they just don't go to school. There might very well be ways to improve transportation or provide transportation that would permit such girls to come and go from school.

"And, finally, in listening to the girls, and the men and women in this country who are committed to girls' education, I think that one idea that should be looked at is boarding schools for girls, that are all female-staffed, safe places, where girls can attend Monday through Friday as they advance in their education; and, perhaps, some of the brightest and most capable girls could be identified for such an effort.

"There are many more, creative ideas that I'm sure you know of and have already discussed; but the real issue is what will we do after this conference. Sometimes, conferences don't have any follow-up. People come together with energy and enthusiasm; but, then, somehow it just never gets implemented into action. Well, we are here today in part because the minister of education attended a conference that sparked his commitment, and his understanding of what was happening around the world. If this conference has the same effect, than I am confident there will be great strides made in education, in general, and in educating girls, in particular.

"I have often heard that knowledge is like water and air. Well, it is true, especially today; and it will be more true in the future. In the twenty-first century that we are about to enter in a brief time from now we have to have an educated citizenry and an educated work force. That is a great challenge that can be met. If a nation harnesses its commitment with resources, and energy, and if individuals, both in the public and the private sector, take this on a mission.

"I'm often reminded as I visit schools and talk with teachers and meet with students like the young girl that I met, that every child has the spark of god within him or her. Every child has dreams; some may not express it well, and some may not even feel they have a right to a dream. But every child, boy and girl, is a gift from god. If we do our work in treasuring these gifts, then we will have fulfilled the most essential of our human responsibilities to nurture the next generation. To make life better for our children and our grandchildren. One only needs to turn on the television news today to see how much strife and conflict exists in this world. We may not be able to end it everywhere, but we can make a very strong commitment to ending the deprivation and the feelings that too often stalk a country when people don't think they have a future of hope.

"Education is one of those gifts that you are now going to be given in increasing numbers to thousands and thousands of the Moroccan children who will be able to take their rightful place in helping to build a stronger nation for the next century.

"Thank you very much."

**Remarks by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
United States Agency for International Development
Girls' Education Conference**

Ronald Reagan Building
Washington, D.C.

May 7, 1998

Thank you so much. It is such a great pleasure for me to be here at this conference with all of you who are committed to the education and well being of girls around the world. I am also pleased to have the first occasion to visit this new, very large building and see this auditorium in action. This is now the second largest building, second only to the Pentagon. So I think it is appropriate that while the Pentagon houses those who strive to keep us safe and secure and keep peace around the world, this building would host a conference about educating girls and building a future that we hope will be peaceful for all children. I hope that we are able to do that through the work that you are doing at this conference and that the results of this conference and what you carry away from it will enable you to be strong voices throughout the world on behalf of young women and girls.

The best description that I have ever read about why this conference is so important did not come from a think tank or a government report or a research study but instead from a college student, a young woman from New Delhi who gave me a poem she had written about why it was so important that she be the first young woman in her family ever to go on to college and have that opportunity. Here is what she wrote:

"Too many women in too many countries speak the same language -- of silence... There must be freedom -- if we are to speak. And yes, there must be power -- if we are to be heard."

We are here today to make sure that all children have the freedom and the power to make their voices ring as loudly as the 75 members of the World Children's Choir we heard a few minutes ago. We are here because there are already powerful voices present in this room that are making themselves heard on behalf of education for all children. I want to thank everyone who made this extraordinary event possible, particularly Brian Atwood, Margaret Lycette, Susie Clay and the entire United States Agency for International Development staff. All over the world, I have seen the fruits of the Girls and Women's Education Initiative, that was pioneered by USAID, and I have been gratified to see the work that is being done to put quality education within the grasp of every child.

I also want to thank the co-sponsors of this conference: the United Nations Children's

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Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, the Delegation of the European Commission, and the Lewis T. Preston Education Fund for Girls. Thank you all.

I, too, extend a warm welcome to the First Lady of Ghana and the First Lady of Peru. I also wish to welcome all Ministers and Vice Ministers, Cabinet Officials, Parliamentarians, Ambassadors, leaders of non-governmental organizations, the media, businesses, religious organizations, and other distinguished guests from the 42 countries represented here.

As I look out at this impressive gathering, I believe that we are truly at the beginning of a great international effort to give all children access to quality primary and secondary education. As I have been privileged to travel around the world, I have met many, many citizens who are struggling to find their voices in a time of increasing democracy, information, and globalization. I've met with many families who work hard everyday just to put a roof over their children's heads and food on their tables for meals. I have visited communities, where people have banded together to create healthier, more prosperous opportunities for all who live there. Often when I ask a very simple question, I get the same answer. I ask, "How is it that you are able to accomplish so much?" The answer usually in one way or another comes back to education. Education is recognized throughout the world, even by those who themselves have not enjoyed an education, as a powerful tool for a child, or a family, or a whole society to make progress. Education is no longer viewed as a luxury for some, but as a necessity for all. The World Bank has said repeatedly that education provides the highest rate of return of any investment in developing nations. And that is especially true of girls' educations.

Because we know that when we educate a girl, we improve the health of women and families. We know that a woman who has had even a single year of education has children that have a better chance of living. We know that as the years of schooling increase, the chances of the child living, and living well, increase as well.

When we educate a girl, we decrease poverty by helping women support themselves and their families. A single year of education usually correlates with an increased income of 10 to 20 percent for women later in life. In Senegal, I visited a small village where education for girls, and women's adult literacy programs, have been the first steps in helping the village understand how it could work together to create more prosperity, how it could take five hectares of barren land and turn it into an oasis of green, growing products that could not only support the village but be sold in the marketplace as well.

When we educate a girl today, we also help to create a leader for tomorrow, a leader within the family and the community, perhaps a teacher, an engineer, a lawyer, a doctor, a nurse, a mother of a healthy and educated child, a woman who is working hard to make her life and the lives of her family as good as they can be.

That's why at international conferences and summits in Paris, Cairo, Copenhagen, and Beijing, we have joined together to call for universal primary education. We called for ending the disparities between boys and girls that, for too long, have plagued primary and secondary schools making it very difficult for girls to attend. I want to thank all of you who have worked to

make the words that appeared on the pages of the declarations from these international conferences living realities.

In developing countries, the primary school enrollment for girls has increased by 50 percent since 1960. In the poorest countries, it has more than doubled during this period. But that is not enough, we have to do more. We have to see that we support governments and NGOs in reaching out to afford access to education to as many girls as possible. I have seen such activities bearing fruit all over the world.

In Bangladesh, I visited a school run by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, a non-governmental organization that believes that education -- especially girls' education -- is a pre-condition for economic development. Because of that belief, some of the BRAC schools have been burned by extremist groups. But the schools keep being rebuilt and families keep sending their children to attend.

I also saw where the Bangladesh government is attempting to provide incentives for families to keep their daughters in school. Families get food each week if they send their children, particularly their girls, to school. To help give girls the chance to go to secondary school, the government actually deposits a small amount of money in a family banking account as long as the daughters attend school.

I have seen the results of President Museveni's promise of Universal Primary Education in Uganda. I have been in classrooms that are absolutely filled with children -- 70, 75, 80 third graders -- a very big challenge to any teacher. But instead of being frustrated the teachers I have met have been proud. Proud because children are coming to school and everyone is working very hard to create the materials and train additional teachers to meet this challenge. Overwhelming pride is felt because for the first time, more girls than boys are attending school.

There have also been results in Guatemala where the government and the Foundation for Sugar Producers teamed up to offer small scholarships to girls in rural schools because they knew that the drop out rate between the first and second grades for girls in those schools with scholarships was only one percent compared to 30 percent nationwide. In another Guatemalan program, afternoon school sessions have been introduced to accommodate girls who must carry out domestic and agricultural work in the mornings.

In Malawi, the villagers were not only asked why girls are not attending school, they were asked to come up with solutions. They performed plays and skits. They waived school fees. They took responsibility for enrolling girls in school. As a result, enrollment increased from 50 to 83 percent.

In the Community Schools Program in Egypt, the number of girls enrolled in school increased from 2,000 to 35,000 because schools were located closer to homes, making them safer and more accessible. Curricula were designed so that they were culturally appropriate and approved by village leaders. Girls were trained to be sure that they were understanding how important this gift of education was and parents were asked to become actively involved as well.

As we look across the globe, therefore, we see success stories everywhere. Yet, right now, there are still 100 million children worldwide who are out of school, and two-thirds of them are girls. 900 million people cannot read or write, and sixty percent of them are women. Two-thirds of the children who complete less than four years of primary education are girls and countless others do not even have access to a primary school, let alone a secondary school.

Without the ability to read and write or do math, girls will be increasingly left out of the information age. Unable to compete, to increase their own incomes, or contribute to their families, they will have their own dreams and aspirations short changed.

So as you attend this conference, starting yesterday going through today, I hope you will continue to look at solutions and that you will share information about the best practices from each of your countries that have made a difference in making sure that girls are able to attend school.

I remember so well being in a small village about 40 minutes outside Lahore, Pakistan where I visited a school that had been built to give the girls in that area primary education. I sat out in the courtyard in front of the school and talked with mothers of children who attended. One mother told me about her 10 children -- 5 girls and 5 boys. Her worry was that she had sent all of her children to school, to primary school. And when her boys graduated from primary school they had gone on. They had gone to the nearest secondary school continuing their education. But when her daughters finished the village school, there were no secondary schools nearby for girls and she was not willing to send her daughters off alone to attend school far away. So, she asked me, and she asked all of the officials who were with me, if they could please have a secondary school built for girls near their village.

This one mother spoke, I believe, for countless millions of others -- women who know that their daughters will not live the same lives they have lived, that change is too pervasive, that they have to provide better opportunities so that their daughters will be prepared for whatever the future holds. As Brian mentioned in his remarks, a recently completed evaluation makes clear that the "second generation" of girls' education initiatives must continue to expand access to school, particularly secondary school, but we also must face up to the need to improve the quality of girls' education.

Because we've done a good job in reaching parents and telling them they should send their girls to school, we now have many, many girls and many, many boys crowding into the schools that are already available. These schools then face the tremendous challenge of trying to train new teachers, provide basic supplies, and maintain facilities. It is very hard, even for the proudest teacher, to get around to look at the work of 75 or 80 eight year olds. Because we have so many crowded classrooms, many children get lost in that crowd and many do not even remain to finish primary education. We have to make a commitment not only to providing access to education but to providing access to quality education as well.

We cannot think of girls schooling as something we put in a little box over in a corner It

must be part of the overall educational efforts of all of our countries. We have come to recognize that we must educate both boys and girls. We have to recognize that any child who goes without education in today's world may become a burden on the larger society. Therefore, it is in our interest to be sure that they all have access to quality schooling.

We also have to look at ways of reaching families so that they know how important it is to prepare their children for school and make sure that when those children walk through a schoolhouse door they are ready to learn. We now know, from scientific research, that the brain develops at an extraordinary pace in the first three years of life. Many of the traditions that we have all followed in caring for babies, holding them, rocking them, singing to them, caressing them, we have done because it was passed on to us generation to generation as to how we should care for a small infant. We now know that those habits, those forms of attention, are not just a wonderful way to develop a bond between a parent and a child but they actually create brain cells. The more a child is appropriately stimulated, talked to, read to, sung to, that child's brain is then creating more and more connections that will enable that child, when he or she is ready for formal academic learning, to be able to read better, to be able to do mathematics better.

We have to reach parents all over the world with this new scientific information to encourage them to pay attention to their babies, encourage them to space the births of their babies so they have the time and the energy to invest in each child. By doing so, we will better prepare children for the schooling to come.

There are many organizations throughout every society that have a role to play. Certainly the family bears the primary responsibility and the extended family must support the family in educating girls. But so too should religious organizations also understand how important it is to make sure every young girl is able to live up to her God-given promise as well. The media has a role to play in disseminating information such as the importance of the scientific research about paying attention to young babies. The media also can give us good examples of girls and boys going to school, learning, being able to go out into the world better educated.

Businesses can do things such as provide scholarships, help support schools, be willing to take the initiative to stand behind the idea of educating all citizens. Not only because it is the right thing to do but because it is a way for businesses in all of our countries to have better trained and educated workers and consumers. Certainly government leaders have to do everything within their power to make it possible for us to have as many good quality schools and teachers everywhere throughout every country.

With technology we can also leap frog over some of the obstacles that would otherwise prevent schooling from being available. In South Africa, I visited a school in Soweto where there were not enough teachers, where there were many children now coming back into the school with the end of apartheid and where they were attempting to teach English to as many children as possible. They were using tape recordings and the teacher could monitor individual students. In other schools there is even an effort to try to get one television with transmissions that can bring in distant learning so that we can expand the opportunities available even though the teachers are not present.

The computer, of course, is very expensive and in some of the schools I have visited there is not even electricity yet. However, if a computer can be made available you have opened the world up to students who live very far from any large city or large university and it is possible to provide access to the information age to those students. We have to be more creative and innovative in thinking about how to overcome the obstacles to provide for girls education.

I look forward to hearing the results of your deliberations during this conference. I am hoping that the ideas that you will discuss you can disseminate widely throughout the world. Certainly USAID and the United States government want to stand with you in helping to bring to reality our shared dream that we will see opportunities for every girl and every boy, everywhere in the world to receive a quality education that will enable them to take responsibility for their futures.

Thank you very much.