



## **Statement from the Government of Australia**

### **Delivered by Peter Baxter, Director General, Australian Agency for International Development**

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Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ministers, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I would like to thank the Government of Denmark for hosting this event – the very first pledging conference of the Global Partnership for Education.

Australia is very pleased to be a co-sponsor of this event.

We are here today because we are bound by the firm belief in the power of education.

We are here today because we know that much more needs to be done to give all children the opportunity to transform their lives through education.

Over one third of all children out of school around the world live in my region, the Asia-Pacific.

Australia is committed to doing its part to help get these children into school.

We are working to improve access and quality at all levels of education by helping poor families send their children to school; upgrading school facilities; and training teachers.

Australia is investing almost 850 million Australian dollars in education this year to get millions of children into school in countries including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia.

Last year, we committed to spending 5 billion Australian dollars on education before the end of 2016.

We expect our investment in education to increase to be 25 per cent of the aid program by 2015, making Australia one of the largest donors to education.

More than 50 per cent of Australia's development assistance will continue to support countries considered to be fragile.

There is an overwhelming moral imperative that all children should be given the chance to benefit from the opportunities that a quality education can provide.

Today it is my great honour to announce that Australia will increase more than five-fold its previous pledge of 50 million Australian dollars provided to GPE over the past four years.

Today, Australia pledges 270 million Australian dollars to GPE over four years from 2011 to 2015.

I am very pleased to make this pledge and to be part of this historic moment for education.

I sincerely hope that today and over the coming months, GPE can achieve its replenishment ambitions so the Partnership can work to provide a quality education to millions of children around the world.

I call on national governments and donors alike to increase their investment in the education of our children.

Together we can close the gap and give all children, everywhere, the chance to build their own futures through education.