



UN Secretary-Generals Ban Ki-moon launches his new education initiative -- [Education First](#) -- at a high-level event at UN Headquarters on Wednesday, 26 September.

The initiative will unite the agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, governments, business leaders and civil society in a final push to put education on top of the global agenda ahead of the 2015 [Millennium Development Goals](#) deadline. New major commitments for *Education First* will be announced at the launch.

In 2000, 189 of the world's nations pledged to achieve universal primary education by 2015. It was the second of eight Millennium Development Goals aimed at freeing people from poverty and multiple deprivations. Although significant progress has been made, the latest data shows a clear slow-down. Without a major effort, there is a real danger that more children will be out-of-school in 2015 than today.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will be joined at a high-level launch by several Heads of State, business and civil society leaders and UN officials, including:

- President Jacob Zuma of South Africa
- Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt of Denmark
- Prime Minister Julia Gillard of Australia

- Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic of Croatia
- Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser of Qatar
- Gordon Brown, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Global Education
- Irina Bokova, Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and Executive Secretary of the Steering Committee for Education First
- Anthony Lake, Executive Director of UNICEF
- Jim Yong Kim, President of the World Bank
- Aliko Dangote, President, Dangote Group, Nigeria
- Chernor Bah, youth leader, Sierra Leone

Following the high-level launch, a panel discussion will feature:

- Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan, UNICEF Eminent Advocate for Children
- Aung San Suu Kyi, Member of the Parliament of Myanmar and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate
- Teopista Birungi Mayanja, Teacher representative, Uganda
- Charles Young, Student representative, Jamaica

The panel will be chaired by UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson. International broadcaster and journalist Femi Oke will moderate the discussion.

In the evening, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will speak at a reception along with Special Envoy for Global Education Gordon Brown, Heads of State, a youth advocate, business leader and Heads of UN agencies. The reception will feature artist performances.

Source: [Education First - Media Advisory](#)