

# OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT ZUMA

## Dear President Zuma

In 1990, the attention of the world was on South Africa as we witnessed the release of Nelson Mandela. His release from prison inspired hope in a South Africa free from the tyranny of oppression and a society based on equality, freedom and the dignity of all human beings.

Much has been achieved by the democratically elected government. For South Africa to fully realise the dream of an equal and prosperous nation its children need to receive the best quality education possible. Education remains the best weapon against poverty, one that can bring about real change in the lives of the poorest members of society.

In the early 1950s both learners and their parents rejected the Bantu Education system intended by the apostle of apartheid Hendrik Verwoerd to limit them to become no more than hewers of wood and drawers of water. The youth of 1976 realised the value of education in improving their circumstances and thus took to the streets to demand a quality education.

The youth of today share the same passion and place the same value on receiving an excellent education.

The eyes of the world are once again on South Africa as it celebrates the fantastic achievement of hosting the first FIFA World Cup in Africa.

Equal Education is a new movement of young people, their parents, and teachers who are advocating for that most fundamental of rights which gives people the tools to better their lives. President Zuma, these young activists are a credit to South Africa and our struggle for democracy and equality for all.

Both local and international research indicates that one way of improving literacy and the overall academic performance of learners is for every public school to have a well stocked and adequately staffed library. At present only 8% of schools in South Africa have functioning libraries.

In his book, *Long Walk to Freedom*, Nelson Mandela wrote, "Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that a son of a mine worker can become the head of that mine, that a child of farm workers can become the president of a great nation."

Nobel Prize Laureate Nadine Gordimer has repeatedly said that she became a writer because there was a library in the small town she was born in, which she used during her early age.

I am adding my name to the call by Equal Education for quality and equality in education by supporting the **ONE SCHOOL, ONE LIBRARY, ONE LIBRARIAN CAMPAIGN**.

Sincerely,

George Bizos

A further 100 national and international activists, authors and leaders in education, from 40 different countries, have added their signature to Bizos' call:

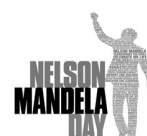
Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Vernor Muñoz, Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Human Rights Council, United Nations, Jay Naidoo, Chairperson, Development Bank of South Africa, Ellen R. Tise, President, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, Rachel More, President, Library and Information Association of South Africa, Ahlin Byll Catarina, Executive Secretary, Association for the Development of Education in Africa (Tunisia), Boaz Waruku, Regional Project Coordinator, Africa Network Campaign on Education For All (Kenya), Lourense H. Das, Chair and Coordinator, European Network for School Libraries and Information Literacy, Rakesh Rajani, Head, Twazewa (Tanzania), Abbas Rashid, Convener, Campaign for Quality Education (Pakistan), Adam Hochschild, Author and Journalist, University of California, Ahdaf Soueif, Novelist (Egypt), Professor Albert Boekhorst, Information scientist (Brazil), Alexandru Crisan, President, Network of Education Policy Centers (Romania), Alicia Petrasova, President, Orava Association for Democratic Education (Slovakia), Angela Melchiorre, Research Coordinator, Right to Education Project (UK), Anupam Ahuja, Senior Lecturer, National Council of Educational Research and Training (India), Baroness May Blood (Northern Ireland), Biddy Fisher, President, Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (UK), Bjørn Einar Aas, President, European Association for International Education, Bradley Broder, Executive Director, Kenya Education Fund, Ltd., Carmen Calilil, Writer and Critic (UK), Carol Bellamy, Chair of the Board, Education For All Fast Track Initiative (USA), Chinara Ahmedova, Aijan NGO, Fergana Valley (Kyrgyzstan), Christopher Hope, Founder, Franschoek Literary Festival, Cynthia Hugo, Founder of Read Educational Trust (South Africa), Professor Crain Soudien, President, WCCES World Council of Comparative Education Societies (South Africa), D.E.S. Kandakai, Executive Director, Liberian Education Trust (Monrovia), Daniel Cara, General Coordinator, Brazilian Campaign on the Right to Education, Dasharath Thapa, Chief Librarian, Nepal National Library, Dr. David Frost, University of Cambridge Faculty of Education (UK), David Archer, Head of Education, ActionAid International (UK), Denzil How, Trustee, Cambodian Children's Education Foundation, Dukagjin Pupovci, Executive Director, Kosova Education Center, Dr. Elena Lenskaya, OBE, Head of Projects and Development Department, Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences (Russia), Elinor Sisulu, Writer, human rights activist and political analyst (South Africa), Elmina Kazimzade, Programme Director, Center for Innovations in Education (Azerbaijan), Enkhtuya Natsagdorj, Executive Director, Mongolian Education Alliance, Enver Motala, Interim Steering Committee Member, Public

Participation in Education Network - PPEN (South Africa), Esther Freud, Author (UK), Estrella Torrico, Head of Documentation Department, Fundacion Alternativas (Spain), Eugènia Serra, General Coordinator, National Library of Catalunya, Professor Fatma Gok, Chairperson of the Department of Educational Science, Bogazici University (Turkey), Professor Forest Woody Horton Jr, Retired, U.S. Department of State, Geoffrey Walford, Emeritus Professor of Education Policy, University of Oxford (UK), Dr. Gerry Salole, Chief Executive, European Foundation Centre, Professor Gita Steiner-Khamsi, Teachers College, Columbia University (USA), Giorgi Machabeli, Executive Director, International Institute for Education Policy Planning and Management (Georgia), Gorgui Sow, Regional Coordinator, Africa Network Campaign on Education For All (Senegal), Helen Murray, Policy Officer, Young Lives, (UK), Hillary Musarurwa, Director, PENYA Trust (Zimbabwe), Hugh McLean, Director of the Education Support Programme, Open Society Institute (UK), Ian Whitman, International Education Specialist (Paris), Iracema Santos do Nascimento, Deputy General Coordinator, Brazilian Campaign on the Right to Education, Jasmine Whitbread, CEO, Save the Children International, Jussi Karakoski, International Education Specialist (Finland), Kamila Shamsie, Novelist (Pakistan), Katy Webbley, Head of Education, Save the Children International, Dr. Lori Heninger, Specialist on education in conflict-affected states (USA), Kim Porteus, Executive Director, Nelson Mandela Institute for Education and Rural Development, Kjersti Okkelmo, Adviser, Education Save the Children (Norway), Lana Jurko, Executive Director, Network of Education Policy Centers, Professor Leon Paul Tikly, Director of Research, University of Bristol (UK), Liana Ghent, Executive Director, International Step by Step Association (Hungary), Limbani Nsapato, Policy Research & Documentation Officer, Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (Zambia), Loreta Georgieva, Executive Director, Macedonian Civic Education Center, Maite Gautu, Policy Advisor, Brazilian Campaign on the Right to Education, Marcela Maslova, Executive Director, Orava Association for Democratic Education (Slovakia), Maria Lourdes Almazan Khan, Secretary General, Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (India), Mian Nawaz Sharif, Quaid of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Professor Michael Apple, Curriculum, Instruction and Education Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Education (USA), Milano Harden, Principal & President, The Genius Group, Inc. (USA), Monica Dvorski, Executive President, Foundation Center Education 2000+ (Romania), Nafisa Shah, Chairperson, National Commission of Human Development (Pakistan), Neyyir Berktaay,

Coordinator, Education Reform Initiative (Turkey), Nick Seaton, Chairman, Campaign for Real Education (UK), Professor Njabulo Ndebele, Writer, Academic, Former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town, Nurdan Sahin, General Manager, Educational Volunteers Foundation of Turkey, Olöf Ólafsdóttir, Director of Education and Languages, Council of Europe, Omar Robert Hamilton, Creative Producer, The Palestine Festival of Literature, Professor Pavel Zgaga, Director of Center for Educational Policy Studies, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education (Slovenia), Peter Hyll-Larsen, Project Coordinator, Right to Education Project (UK), Peter Mbatia, Vice Chancellor, Principal University of Venda (South Africa), Phumzile Mthetwa, Director, Lesbian and Gay Equality Project (South Africa), Raquel D Castillo, Asia Advocacy and Campaigns Coordinator, Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (India), Dr. Rebecca Winthrop, Co-Director of the Center for Universal Education, Brookings Institute (USA), Renato Operti, Coordinator of the Capacity Building Programme, IBE-UNESCO (Switzerland), Dr. Rupert Genseberger, Freudenthal Institute for Science and Mathematics Education, University Utrecht, Susan L. Robertson, Professor of Education, University of Bristol (UK), Tanvir Mohammad Muntasim, Campaigns Coordinator, Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (Bangladesh), Tina Merron, Chief Executive, The Integrated Education Fund (Northern Ireland), Tom Alexander, Chariman of the Education Sub Board, Open Society Institute (UK), Professor Tony Judt, New York University, Tricia Adams, Director, School Library Association (UK), Ulviya Mikailova, Executive Director, Center for Innovations in Education (Azerbaijan), Valeria Sakharova, Deputy Head, Centre for International Cooperation In Education Development (Russia), Dr. Viktor Bolotov, Vice-President, Russian Academy of Education, Vladimir Borkovic, Network Director, Streetfootballworld (Germany), Dr. Wim Hoppers, Former Education Adviser, Royal Netherlands Embassy, Wolfgang Leumer, Coordinator, Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (Zimbabwe), Yusuf Sayed, Senior Research Fellow, Human Sciences Research Council (South Africa).



www.equaleducation.org.za



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EQUAL EDUCATION DEPOT OR  
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