

Leaders, experts to discuss early childhood care in Moscow ^[1]

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World conference on early childhood care and education, Moscow, Russia, 27-29 September 2010 ^[2]

EXCERPTS

State leaders, education ministers, experts and representatives from civil society across the world will meet in Moscow from Sept. 27 to 29 to examine ways of accelerating access to Early Childhood Care and Education, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) said on Tuesday.

UNESCO Director-general Irina Bokova will open the event with Mayor of Moscow Yuri Luzhkov and Russian Minister of Education and Science Andrei Fursenko.

"Children are our most precious resource," Bokova said in a pre-conference message, urging people to seize the opportunity "to renew and expand our commitment to a healthy, happy start for all children."

"By investing in the early years, we shall all be enriched," she said.

With world well-known experts, the meeting would present a platform to share experience on Early Childhood Care and Education, explore mechanisms for setting benchmarks and targets, for overcoming obstacles and monitoring progress toward service delivery.

Early childhood, from birth to 8 years old, is a period of remarkable brain development, but also extremely vulnerable from impact. In the developing world, according to UNESCO, about 40 percent of young children live in extreme poverty and 10.5 million children under the age of five die from preventable diseases every year.

Early Childhood Care and Education is a right recognized in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has been ratified by 149 countries. The first international conference on the issue is expected to adopt a Moscow Plan of Action, setting out a roadmap for future action.

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