

Speech by Julia Gillard, Chair of the Global Partnership for Education.

Special Session 4, Uskudar ICC.

4 – 5pm, May 23 – 2016.

Rawdanur, thank you for so powerfully telling us your life story.

I want to share a story too – it's about the African nation of Chad, which is now hosting large numbers of refugees fleeing violence from bordering nations. In August last year, Chad, a member of the Global Partnership for Education, asked for its grant to be accelerated to address this crisis.

Of course, GPE agreed and that money constructed classrooms, purchased text books and trained teachers.

But that money could only be made available once. Chad's usual grant for education development was used for education crisis.

Given nearly half of our 65 developing country partners are conflict affected or fragile nations, the story of Chad is a far too common one.

And today, we have come together to say we can and will do better. Thanks to the work of technical experts, Education Cannot Wait has been well designed and will combine new resources with new ways of working. Responding to educational crisis will be better co-ordinated and our capacity to act will be improved.

GPE has and will continue to support Education Cannot Wait. We are wholeheartedly committed to ensuring its success.

Our thanks go Gordon Brown for his advocacy and leadership. Thanks also go to Tony Lake and UNICEF for taking on the interim hosting responsibility. Can I thank my own team at the GPE Secretariat, led by CEO Alice Albright. UNHCR and UNESCO also must be recognized.

I'm delighted that a number of partners have come forward today to support the fund financially but this is just the start.

You are the pioneers and I'm convinced that many will follow because so many share our vision of a world in which every child, no matter the circumstances, has access to a quality education – the education they deserve so no child is left behind.