



Australian Federation of Graduate Women Inc.

PO Box 224, Enmore NSW 2042

www.afgw.org.au

2 October 2012
The Hon Julia Gillard MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
CANBERRA
ACT 2600

Dear Ms Gillard,

On behalf of the Australian Federation of Graduate Women (AFGW) I am writing to congratulate you on your recent appointment by the United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, as one of ten champions of the Global Education Initiative, Education First. We note that Education First's three major priorities are to enable every child to attend school, to improve the quality of education and to foster global citizenship. These are indeed commendable goals; however the education of girls and young women continues to need additional support, particularly in nations affected by war.

Next August the Triennial Conference of our international group, IFUW (the International Federation of University Women) will be held in Turkey and members of AFGW are currently collaborating with the Canadian Federation to formulate a resolution on the access to education of women and girls in Afghanistan. If adopted, all sixty-three member countries would be expected to pressure their governments on this resolution. This would be in pursuit of IFUW's Smart Objectives 2012 - Aim 1 Girls' and Women's Rights to Quality Education 1.4: To campaign for access to education for those most excluded groups of women and girls.

We understand that Australia has already done much towards building safe places of education for girls, training teachers and educating women about their legal rights. We would welcome any information that your office could provide about what Australia has done with regard to these issues to date. With this information we should be more able to ensure we are working towards a united front with respect to education for women and girls in Afghanistan in the resolutions we are proposing.

We understand that Education First is primarily aimed at improving access to education in developing nations; however your appointment to this position will attract attention from other countries interested in seeing what Australia has done regarding education at the domestic level. We trust that principles underpinning Education First will also underpin the implementation of the Gonski Review of School Funding and we look forward to the day when all Australian children have access to high quality public education in a system that is designed to promote equity rather than preserving privilege.

There will always be tremendous challenges in working towards a future in which women and girls have equitable access to education, and we congratulate you in working towards this goal. We hope that we can also contribute towards this admirable goal and look forward to your early response.

Yours sincerely

| Jane Baker President, AFGW Inc
Madeleine Laming Education Convener
Lynda Roberts Hall Co-ordinator for International Relations (Elect)

Cc Senator Carr Foreign Minister DFAT
Penny Williams Global Ambassador for Women and Girls
Stephen Smith Minister for Defence

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