

Invitation to the Press

The Geneva Press Club - Club suisse de la Presse, has the pleasure to invite the international, the Swiss press and its members to a press conference on the topic

48th International Conference on Education

“Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future”

In the presence of

Mr. Charles Beer, State Councillor of the Republic and Canton of Geneva in charge of the Department of Public Instruction and Head of the Swiss Delegation to the International Conference on Education (ICE)

Mrs. Clementina Acedo, Director of the International Bureau of Education and representing the Director General of UNESCO

Thursday 20th November, 9.30 a.m.

"La Pastorale", 106 route de Ferney, Geneva

Children with disabilities and children from marginalized groups (migrants, street children, HIV/AIDS orphans) are still today largely excluded from the school system. The International Conference on Education, organized by UNESCO's International Bureau of Education (IBE) from 25 to 28 November in Geneva (Switzerland) will examine ways for schools to become more open to diversity and effectively reduce the drop-out rate.

The Conference, whose central theme is " Inclusive Education: the Way of the Future", will gather together 1500 participants, among them hundreds of ministers and vice ministers of education, experts on education, representatives of NGOs and agencies of the United Nations. It will open with an introductory debate in plenary session, chaired by the Director General of UNESCO, Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura.

Seventy-five million children around the world still do not have access to education. And among those who do have access to school, it is estimated a substantial number will never reach the educational level needed to succeed professionally and personally. Moreover, some 650 million people are estimated to be deprived of their right to education because of physical or mental disabilities, or their special learning needs. In developing countries, the percentage of children with disabilities attending school varies from less than 1% to 5%.

Within the framework of the general presentation of the 48th ICE, the State Councillor of the Republic and Canton of Geneva in charge of the Department of Public Instruction and Head of the Swiss delegation, Mr. Charles Beer, will discuss the priorities of Switzerland and the Canton of Geneva regarding inclusive education.

Mrs. Acedo will then present a contextual analysis of the global situation, perspectives for solutions and will provide examples of “good practices” that were observed during the preparatory activities of the conference. She will also emphasize the vital role of governments in the implementation of educational policies that facilitate inclusion.

The IBE was founded in Geneva in 1925 to centralize documentation related to public and private education, to take an interest in scientific research in the field, and to serve as a coordinating centre for concerned institutions and societies. Initiator of the International Conference on Education, the IBE is one of UNESCO’s specialized institutes in the field of education.

Press kit available during the conference or upon request.

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Breakfast will be served.

I look forward to meeting you in Geneva on this occasion,

Guy Mettan, Executive Director.