

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
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**E9 MINISTERIAL REVIEW MEETING ON EDUCATION OPENS,
IMPROVING EDUCATION QUALITY AND EQUITY OF THAT QUALITY A GLOBAL CHALLENGE, SAYS
THAROOR**

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Dr Shashi Tharoor, Minister of State for HRD says Education For All (EFA) goals cannot be achieved globally if they are not achieved in the E 9 member countries. In his opening address at the E9 Ministerial Review Meeting in New Delhi today, Dr Tharoor noted that some countries may face greater challenges than others in meeting the EFA goals by the 2015 target date, and that the quality problem is more acute in the developing world, in part due to the rapid expansion of access. However, it is recognized that improving the quality of education and the equity of that quality is a global challenge, he added.

The Minister said, today, children and youth in low-income, in middle-income and in rich countries alike are not always learning what they are supposed to learn, nor acquiring the knowledge, skills and competences which equip them for the world of work and for active citizenship. Any future education agenda will have to focus on the issues of quality and relevance

Prof. Ms. Ruqayyatu Ahmed Rufa'I, outgoing chair of the E9 and Minister of Education of Nigeria and Ms. Irina Bokova, DG of UNESCO also addressed the meeting.

India today assumed the chair of the E-9 Secretariat from 2012-2014.

India, in cooperation with UNESCO, is hosting the ninth E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting in New Delhi from 9- 10 November, 2012. This year's theme of the meeting, on 'Inclusive, Relevant and Quality Education for All', looks at similar challenges that the E-9 countries are facing, country-specific developments in education since the last E-9 meeting in 2010 with ongoing monitoring till 2015.

The E-9 Initiative was launched in 1993 in New Delhi at the Education For All Summit of the nine high-population countries. The "E" stands for education and the "9" represents the nine highly populated countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan. The member countries are home not only to more than 60 per cent of the world's population, but also to more than 70 percent of the world's adult illiterates, about two-thirds of whom are women and girls, and more than half of it out-of-school children.

Based on the discussions, the E9 countries will chalk out a plan of action to further relevant quality education in the respective countries which will be followed up over the next two years. Their focus will be on the challenges of improving education quality and how those challenges can be addressed collectively and cooperatively by E-9 Countries.

The education ministers of Pakistan, India, China (Vice-Minister) and Nigeria, as well as senior officials from Egypt and Indonesia are reviewing the challenges facing their countries with a view to increasing bilateral and collective cooperation.

At the close of the meeting, tomorrow, the ministers will adopt a joint Outcome Document.
