

SPEAKING NOTES

Minister of Education, Culture and Science, Ms. Dr. Jet Bussemaker

STUDY VISIT UNICEF ESL 11 NOVEMBER

1. Welcome in my ministry, policy makers, and specialists on education and youth.

A special welcome to the delegation of UNICEF. It is a special day for them.. And a special welcome as well to the officers of Unicef. This month you celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Convention of Child Rights, and to CINOP who made all the arrangements for this visit

2. Thank you for your interest in the Dutch approach to early school leaving

We feel honoured. The long journey you took to the Netherlands feels as a recognition of the Dutch approach to early school leaving.

An element of our approach is to stimulate the schools to learn from each other and share good practices.

On national, European and international level we do the same.

3. One of the recommendations of the EU working group on early school leaving was:

To be successful in attacking the problem of early school leaving is a long-winded work.

Therefore you need a long-term political and financial commitment to reducing ESL and keep it high on the political agenda.

As a minister of education I continue the good work of my predecessors and move a step ahead.

Try to push harder in order to keep reducing the number of children without a basic qualification.

4. You come from different countries, with different educational school systems with a variety of problems.

The Dutch approach to early school leaving is an answer to our system and your problems. It will not be easy to implement that in another country. But I hope you will be inspired by the examples you will see during the visit, and translate some of the elements of this approach for your country.

5. I also like to get inspired by visits in the country.

To hear from the management of the schools, the teachers, but especially from the pupils and students themselves what problems they have to face, and what solutions they would like to see.

In your program I have seen that you will be visiting the Junior Calvijn school in Amsterdam.

I have been there twice earlier this year, and I was impressed by the way this school handled students with multiple problems and managed to get them motivated and finishing school.

Education can make the difference.

6. Combating early school leaving is a priority of the education policy, not just because young people must have the chance to take their future into their own hands, but also in connection with the economic development of a country.

Good education is the foundation of our economy, our labour market and the future of our young people.