



## PRESS RELEASE

### CSO; Speak Out Africa Initiative (SOAI) Public Statement on the 2024 International Day of Education.

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Today, as we join the global community in commemorating the International Day of Education 2024 under the banner of "**Learning for Lasting Peace**," we reflect on the profound impact of education as a catalyst for positive change. This year, we celebrate the transformative power of learning and its profound impact on fostering lasting peace.

While the recent Federal Government's Education is the cornerstone of societal progress and harmony. It has the potential to break down barriers, prevent drug abuse, challenge prejudices, and pave the way for a world where diversity and perspectives are embraced. On this special day, we acknowledge the pivotal role education plays in promoting understanding, tolerance, inclusion, and unity. Student Loan Plan appeared to be a tool to breaking educational barriers and fostering inclusivity, we cannot overlook the preceded spike in school fees, which in itself is an antidote toward education for all global goals. Also, potential challenges like loan inaccessibility by the marginalized, hike in fees and incoherence in the mode of repayment, will give **rise to increased out-of-school students** – which have a strong link to societal peace. Therefore, adequate measures must be in place to address these issues and make education accessible to every individual to keep promoting peace, unity, and harmony in the country. We call on relevant authorities to continually assess and refine the program to maximize its positive impact.

The theme "Learning for Lasting Peace" resonates deeply with the Speak Out Africa Initiative's commitment to promoting a peaceful and thriving Africa. Education equips individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate a complex and interconnected global landscape. It fosters critical thinking, empathy, and a sense of responsibility towards each other and the world we inhabit. SOAI is intentional in empowering the younger generation with quality education through the advocacy and integration of **digital skills education** into the Nigerian Secondary Schools Curriculum in preventing the young people from engaging in drug abuse through digital skills as a veritable too for life skill education (**Skool and Skill 4 Naija**), a project proudly supported by the European Union, in collaboration with Cooperazione Internazionale Sud Sud (CISS) and Gender Mobile as lead and co-applicants respectively. This is predicated on the understanding that Education serves as a pillar of peace by addressing the root causes of conflict, drug abuse, and promoting sustainable development.



In conclusion, on this International Day of Education, we call on Government, Organizations, Ministry of Education, Parents and every well-meaning individual to commit to providing the unhindered access to education especially to the marginalized if the world would enjoy peace. Let us harness the transformative power of education to create a future where lasting peace is not just a distant dream but a tangible reality.

**#Education4All**  
**#InternationalDayofEducation**  
**#LearningForLastingPeace**  
**#SpeakOutAfricaInitiative**

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