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\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\*

## SHAKIRA TO SERVE AS HONORARY CHAIRPERSON OF THE GLOBAL CAMPAIGN FOR EDUCATION'S ACTION WEEK

*Washington, D.C., April 4, 2008*—Grammy award-winning artist Shakira will be the Honorary Chairperson of this year's Global Campaign for Education (GCE) "Action Week" from April 21-27, 2008. Shakira will appear in Washington, D.C., on Tuesday, April 22, with members of Congress as well as students who are coming from across the United States to raise awareness for the bipartisan *Education for All Act 2007 (EFA)*.

The purpose of the EFA Act is to "ensure that the U.S. provides the resources and leadership to ensure a successful international effort to provide all children with a quality basic education." It calls for \$1 billion for bilateral global basic education investment for FY 2008, scaling up to \$3 billion by 2012. The EFA Act requires the president to develop a comprehensive integrated strategy for the United States government to follow in working to reach the 2015 goal of universal access to education for all children.

"Universal education isn't about charity—it's about investment," said Shakira. "By providing vulnerable children with a basic education we can create a better, safer world."

The Global Campaign for Education is a coalition of organizations in more than 120 countries that raises awareness for universal basic education in the world's poorest nations—especially the 72 million young children and 226 million older youths who are out of school around the world. This is the 6th consecutive year that the GCE has coordinated a global week of action for education, giving young people the opportunity to make the case for education for all children.

"We are thrilled that Shakira has agreed to be Honorary Chairperson of the GCE's Action Week," said Gene Sperling, Chair of the U.S. Chapter of the GCE. "Her participation is invaluable for raising public awareness of the importance of ensuring every child around the world gets a quality education."

Shakira is an active advocate for universal education and a major philanthropist in Colombia, where her Barefoot Foundation supports universal education programs. In her role as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, Shakira recently visited Bangladesh where she saw programs aimed at rebuilding schools following the cyclone that devastated the country.

Events are being held worldwide from April 21-27 as young people call upon their leaders to support education for all children, including the very poorest. Millions of children worldwide will also participate in the "World's Biggest Lesson" on April 23. By taking part in this lesson, each child will be joining an estimated five million of their peers in learning about the importance of education and the barriers that young people face all over the world in accessing a quality education. They will attempt to break the world record for the largest simultaneous lesson through learning and teaching a curriculum about the denial of quality education to tens of millions of poor children.

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“As a long-time champion for education for those most excluded in Latin America and girls education everywhere, Shakira is an ideal choice to be the Honorary Chair for the Global Campaign for Education,” said Camilla Croso, Latin America Campaign Coordinator for the GCE.

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### **Global Campaign for Education (GCE)**

The **Global Campaign for Education**, founded in 1999, brings together major nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and teachers’ unions in **more than 120 countries**. GCE promotes access to education as a basic human right and raises public awareness to create the political will for governments and other leaders in the international community to fulfill their promises to provide at least a free, public basic education for all children. [www.campaignforeducation.org](http://www.campaignforeducation.org)

The U.S. Chapter of the Global Campaign for Education is a broad-based coalition of more than 40 non-governmental and religious organizations, teachers unions, foundations, and child advocates to promote the cause of universal basic education in the world’s poorest nations. The GCE is also well-placed to raise the profile of other goals pertinent to universal education, such as pre-school education, prevention of abusive child labor, the inclusion of children with disabilities and special challenges, and efforts to close the digital divide.

The U.S. Chapter of the Global Campaign for Education includes the support of organizations such as: Basic Education Coalition (BEC), RESULTS, American Federation of Teachers (AFT), National Education Association (NEA), National Peace Corps Association, Global Kids, Global AIDS Alliance, Mercy Corps, CARE, Save the Children, ONE campaign, National Peace Corps Association, Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children, and Teach for America. [www.campaignforeducationusa.org](http://www.campaignforeducationusa.org).

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