**International Conventions for Free and Quality Education**

Provision of free and quality education has been declared as fundamental rights. They want all children to get basic elementary, secondary education.

**1. Universal declaration of human rights**

This convention was approved by the world nations at the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. According to this convention everyone has the right to education and education shall be free at least in the elementary and fundamental basis.

Elementary education involves pre-school, the early years and education up to grade 5. It is supposed to be free. It means that govt. or any other agency shall be sponsoring that. All the children shall be in school in those grades.

**2. Convention on the rights of the child**

Convention on the rights of the child in 1989 explicitly recognized education as a fundamental right. All children must be in school progressively meaning gradually. They also have equal opportunity for all the students. The elements of this convention states make primary education compulsory and available free to all children. Encourage the development of different forms in secondary education including general and vocational. Education of a child does not stop at elementary level. Vocational education helps a student to earn a living.

**3. DAKAR world education forum**

April 2000 164 countries combined together, to ensure Education for All (EFA). They focused at achieving the goal in developed, developing and under developed countries to achieve till 2015. Pakistan has not met most of the targets set under that convention.

**EFA Goals**

Following are some of the EFA goals with explanation.

 Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood education. There is a need to improve the comprehensive basic education

 Ensuring that by 2015 all students particularly girls and those belonging to the ethnic minorities receive an education. 2015 was the target, 15 years were given to countries to plan that. We have not met this target. Many of our children are not going to school. We have to see what countries have achieved these targets. We have to compare our country with others.

 Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills

Every child should have equitable access. No child should say that there is no school in my area. For that we have to improve our infra-structure

 Achieving 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015

Based on 2000, whatever the adult literacy was then, they wanted that in coming 15 years it should improve by 50%. Most of our adult population is not literate.

 Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005

Only 5 years were given to remove gender disparity from schools. In 2015 the target was set to equalize the gender in schools i.e. to make the same number available for boys and girls.

We have to look at the countries in our region, the developing countries that have come close to achieving the targets.

 Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognize and measurable outcomes are achieved by all

Improving education, it is not a simple task. By improving education we mean we mean to improve the facilities, teacher training, schools, curriculum, examination, and assessment system. Unless all that is improved, the quality of education cannot be improved.

**4. Convention Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**

Eight millennium development goals were set by the United Nations for the signatory countries.

Following are the details of those 8 MDGs

I. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

We need to feed our population through a balanced diet.

II. Achieve universal primary education

Universal means across the globe. Primary education up to grade 5 should be provided to all free and mandatory.

III. Promote gender equality and empower women

Equal access to primary and post primary education for girls. Gender equality especially in Pakistan is a difficult task. But according to MDGs girls have to achieve that as well.

IV. Reduce child mortality

Mortality is the death rate. There could be many reasons like malnutrition, diseases, poor health care, poverty, not enough food. We need to get sure that we can eradicate that.

V. Improve maternal health

Good healthy mother would breed good healthy child.

VI. Combat HIV aids, malaria and other diseases

In our case it could also include dengue.

VII. Ensure environmental stability

We have polluted water, polluted air. Our entire population should receive clean and safe water.

VIII. Develop a global partnership for development

More aid, more debt relief, more access to essential drugs etc. in other words living in cooperation.