

RESOLUTION ON EDUCATION IN CORRECTIONAL SETTINGS

**The 5th World Congress of Education International meeting in Berlin, Germany
from 22-26 July 2007,**

1. Notes:

- (a)** The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 45/111 on Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners at Article 6 states: "All prisoners shall have the right to take part in cultural activities and education aimed at the full development of the human personality."
- (b)** Education is a right. It improves individual's lives, including their vocational outcomes, and it promotes overall societal cohesion;
- (c)** Increased benefits accrue to individual inmates and also to society broadly as a result of the provision of education in correctional settings;
- (d)** Being imprisoned is a transitional situation. From a lifelong education perspective (particularly for the young) this transitional situation must be taken into account, and the focus of education whilst incarcerated must be part of a lifelong education continuum;
- (e)** Teachers who work in correctional settings have a right to a safe and healthy working environment.

2. Recognises the overuse of custodial sentencing evident in the massive growth of inmate numbers. Imprisonment should be a punishment of last resort.

EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL 5th WORLD CONGRESS

3. Believes:

- (a)** That the provision of education in correctional settings should be guaranteed in legislation. Access to education should include classroom subjects, adult basic and general education, accredited vocational education sensitive to trends in the labour market, distance education, creative and cultural activities, physical education and sports, social education and pre- and post-release programmes;
- (b)** The provision of educational programmes in correctional settings should be adequately resourced, publicly funded, and not subject to outsourcing to private, for profit organizations;
- (c)** The development of educational programmes in correctional settings should recognize the diverse backgrounds and needs of inmates, with respect to education, vocational education and personal development;
- (d)** The development and resourcing of programmes should be set within the context of, and underpinned by an understanding of the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the criminal justice system, and their specific needs;
- (e)** Educational programmes should be integrated with the educational and vocational education and training system of nations so that after release, inmates can continue with their education and vocational training with less difficulty;
- (f)** Teachers teaching in correctional settings should be teacher qualified, with their professional status recognized and linked to teachers teaching in schools, vocational, community, higher education or other appropriate sectors;
- (g)** Within correctional facilities:
 - I.** All inmates should be provided with access to educational programmes which are comprehensive and which meet individual needs and aspirations, no matter what their legal status;
 - II.** Education should have no lesser status than work and no inmate should be disadvantaged financially or otherwise for taking part in education;

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- III.** Appropriately resourced teaching facilities including a library or similar facility with a range of appropriate resources and technology should be available for all inmates;

- IV.** All inmates need to have access to information on sexuality and HIV/AIDS.

- (h)** Students in correctional settings have the right to access an accredited programme of education, including vocational skills training, for the purpose of improving their overall level of education and their life chances after release. Specifically:
 - I.** Young inmates and those with special needs should be given priority;

 - II.** Young inmates subject to compulsory education should have access to such education;

 - III.** Inmates from indigenous backgrounds should have access to programmes which are culturally appropriate and relevant to their needs;

 - IV.** Inmates from traditionally marginalized groups including women, persons from linguistic minority groups, GLBTI and inmates with disabilities should have access to appropriate education programmes;

 - V.** Inmates with literacy and numeracy needs, and those without basic or vocational education should also be given priority;

 - VI.** Inmates in correctional facilities have the right to educational programmes which deliver recognized qualifications.

- (i)** Teachers working in correctional facilities have the right to:
 - I.** Be protected by industrial awards and agreements which ensure their conditions of work;

 - II.** A safe and healthy working environment protected by OH&S legislation which covers blood borne communicable diseases;

 - III.** Be represented by their union, especially within their working environment;

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- IV.** Approved courses of teacher training, and access to well resourced, ongoing professional development;
- V.** Secure employment, with appropriate additional financial compensation for the particular circumstances of their working environment.

4. Resolves that EI should:

- (a)** Actively campaign for the legislative guarantee of education for all inmates in correctional facilities;
- (b)** Promote the establishment of communication networks between teachers working in correctional settings internationally;
- (c)** Promote the role of teachers working in correctional settings, and recognize their unique position in the lifelong learning continuum;
- (d)** Campaign for the right of all inmates to take part in cultural activities and education aimed at the full development of the person;
- (e)** Contribute to the visibility and development of education for inmates to facilitate their return to society as active citizens.