QUALITY EDUCATION: PRESENT AND FUTURE

The 5th Education International (EI) World Congress meeting in Berlin (Germany) from 22 to 26 July 2007,

Quality public education
1. **Affirms** that Education International is committed to the achievement of quality education for all people through publicly funded and regulated systems of education.

2. **Notes** that attacks on the quality of public education are used by those who promote privatisation of aspects of public education systems in order to undermine the public’s confidence in public education and to justify cutbacks in public investments.

3. **Notes** that many international institutions wish to extend privatisation to the social sectors, in particular health and education, and are increasing pressure for withdrawal by the State and cuts in public budgets.

4. **Recalls** that Education International has consistently campaigned for public education budgets to be allocated at least 6% of gross national product (GNP).

5. **Notes** that, in a very large number of comparative studies carried out on the achievements of pupils in the public and private education systems, there is no evidence to support the view that achievements of pupils in the private system are superior to those in the public system, when pupils’ socio-economic backgrounds and the selective nature of the private education system are taken into consideration.

Assessment
6. **Notes** that the assessment of teaching and learning is an important tool in the provision of quality education and one that has traditionally been used effectively in public education.

7. **Considers** that any evaluation of the quality of education provided by any public education institution must not be based solely on student achievement test scores but take into account a range of factors related to the context of the school and the class, such as students’ capacities, skills, socio-economic circumstances, financial and learning resources, facilities, school administration, class sizes and school organisation characteristics.

8. **Recognises** that assessment systems may become a political and economic tool to promote privatisation: private assessment agencies use inappropriate assessment tools designed for use in business, not in schools.

Public-Private Partnerships
9. **Affirms** that the provision of public education is the responsibility of public authorities, which are accountable to the community through democratic governance structures and which mandates them to determine education policy and principles and the regulatory framework within which the education institutions operate.
Notes that the increasing use of public-private partnerships in the public education sector has potential negative consequences for access to, and the democratic control and quality of, public education.

Notes that public-private partnerships may be appealing when initiated as a means of supplementing scarce or non-existent public financial resources if they are set within clearly defined educational goals. But at the same time public-private partnerships carry with them the risk of reductions in governments’ investment in public education services, and may promote the privatisation and the commercialisation of education.

Emphasises that the social partners must be consulted by the public authorities whenever it is proposed to use public-private partnerships in the public education sector.

Brain drain
Notes the growing trend of industrialised countries recruiting education staff in developing countries by offering significantly better living and working conditions. This practice penalises the countries of origin, which inevitably lose the best amongst the qualified educators in whom they have invested, and who are urgently needed to maintain and improve the quality of education in their home countries.

Emphasizes that the "brain drain" in teaching from developing countries to industrialised countries creates an international labour market in the education sector, particularly in higher education and research. A system of international regulation, including forms of compensation, is required to protect the interests of developing countries in this competitive labour market.

Digital divide
Notes that, in complex modern societies, acquisition of competence in the use of technological tools is vitally important, and that educators have a responsibility to help young people acquire the technological knowledge and skills they need.

Emphasises that education authorities must invest in the necessary facilities, resources and training of teachers to enable public schools to meet this challenge.

Recognises that access to technology and to the necessary training to make use of it, is not universal and that the current “digital divide” is undermining efforts to achieve quality Education For All. Governments, international organizations and agencies should ensure that all students are educated in the use of technology and have access to appropriate technological tools.

Education for global citizenship
Notes that preparing young people to be active and productive global citizens is an important element of their education. The development of critical thinking, conflict resolution skills, respect for diversity, gender equality, artistic and sporting values and environmental awareness are among the behaviours that must be developed in young people through appropriate learning opportunities.

Urges education systems to encourage young people to learn additional languages so that they can develop their communication skills, have a better understanding of the cultural values underpinning these languages, and thereby build better understanding between people.

Notes that, in a world where peaceful co-existence is threatened by terrorism, by the invasion and occupation of sovereign countries, by religious and racist violence and war, education systems must promote peace, democracy, mutual understanding and cultural diversity.

Recognises, in light of the recent United Nations report on the catastrophic damage to the environment and the implications of global warming for the future of the planet, environmental
Therefore, the 5th EI Congress

22. Mandates the Executive Board to promote the ideas and recommendations contained in this resolution in international organisations, including strategies to provide initial and continuing education and training for teachers aimed at the achievement of the Education for All goals by 2015 and to support the member organisations in any actions directed at their governments.

23. Mandates the Executive Board to commission a study on the best content and format of initial and continuing training for educators to enable them to meet the multiple professional challenges of teaching in a global context.

24. Mandates the Executive Board to establish a task force which will examine the implications of public private partnerships in the provision of public education and consult with the EI research network in order to develop EI policy in this area.

25. Mandates the Executive Board, in order to reduce the effects of “Brain Drain” in teaching, to promote the adoption of the principles in the Commonwealth Protocol on teacher migration in countries throughout the world.

26. Mandates the Executive Board to (i) undertake a study of the effects of migration in the education sector and, in particular, with regard to its gender implications, (ii) encourage member organisations to have regard to the effects of international migration in their work, taking into account its gender dimension and (iii) seek the ratification in full of the ILO Convention on Migration.

27. Mandates the Executive Board to include in the Program and Budget initiatives which will enable EI affiliates to inform their members about, and act on, the urgent issue of urgent issues of environmental awareness and global warming. Such initiatives should involve actions undertaken at the individual, community, national member organization and international level.

28. Mandates the Executive Board for EI to take action in international bodies so that all countries begin to ratify the Kyoto protocol.

29. Encourages member organisations to pursue the inclusion of global citizenship, environmental awareness, peace education and positive social values in teacher training and school curricula.

30. Encourages member organisations to develop relationships with other member organisations from different cultural, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds in order to foster mutual friendship and understanding.

31. Provide members organisations with access to updated information on international trends and surveys, on reports of comparative tests and on decisions taken at international summits and conferences which affect education globally, regionally and nationally, including information about the developments in the policies of international financial organisations and their impact on education policy and the implementation of core labour standards.