RESOLUTION ON CHILD LABOUR

The Education International First World Congress meeting in Harare (Zimbabwe) from 19 to 23 July 1995:

1. **Recalls** the UN Declaration on Human Rights which states that all children (for the purposes of the Convention, a child means every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier) should have the right to free compulsory education for at least the elementary level of education, the Convention on the Rights of the Child which declares that all children have the right to be protected against neglect, cruelty and exploitation and the ILO Convention No. 138 and Recommendation No. 146 concerning the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment;

2. **Endorses** the remarks of the Director General of the ILO:
   
   “Childhood is a period of life which should be devoted not to work, but to education and training; child labour, by its very nature and the working conditions in which it is carried out, often compromises children's potential to become productive and useful adults in society; finally, the use of child labour is not inevitable, and progress toward its elimination is possible wherever there is political will to oppose it with determination.”

3. **Observes** that despite the growing awareness of this scandalous form of exploitation of the most vulnerable within our society, child labour continues to exist in many forms, including bonded labour;

4. **Notes** that this exploitation of childhood is increasing in both industrialised and developing countries;

5. **Condemns** the fact that governments in many countries turn a blind eye to the plight of abandoned children, street children, economically and sexually exploited children, child prostitution and the use of children as soldiers;

6. **Condemns** employers who exploit children to increase profits and who thereby deny children their right to education and their right to childhood;

7. **Denounces** governments which fail to enforce legislation or to enact legislation on this issue;

8. **Welcomes** the increasing action being taken on child labour by the ILO, UNICEF, UNESCO, the ICFTU and its associated with the ICFTU;

9. **Supports** the boycott on the importation of goods produced by child labour and further measures to eliminate the exploitation of child labour.

The Congress determines that the Education International shall:

10. **Continue** to publish material itself and in conjunction with ICFTU and International Trade Secretariats in connection with the issue of child labour;

11. **Continue** to work with other appropriate organisations in developing appropriate strategies to develop the campaign;

12. **Work** with EI affiliates in the countries where child labour is prevalent to seek advice and assistance and particularly highlighting the fact that provision for proper primary education together with the provision of free school meals is the most important component in any programme to tackle the problem of child labour.

The Congress calls on member organisations to:

13. **Recognise** that work on child labour will require very close cooperation between EI and its member organisations;
14. **Work** with Education International and thereby with ICFTU, ILO, UNICEF and UNESCO to find ways to eliminate child labour;
15. **Promote** the right to free public education for all children at every opportunity;
16. **Adopt policy statements** on child labour and to become actively involved in the programmes being developed to end child labour;
17. **Advocate** for educational reforms which will make education more accessible and within the realm of possibility for the children of poor parents;
18. **Demand** that governments ensure that poor children will be provided with some nutrition during the school day;
19. **Work** with other unions, NGOs and intergovernmental agencies to design programmes and prepare appropriate strategies to develop the campaign and make the transition from work to school more successful;
20. **Publicise** the issue of child labour at all levels of their organisations and in society. Such information should be directed at mobilisation efforts to educate communities and parents about the cost and dangers of child labour to the child, the family, to local communities and to society at large;
21. **Encourage** teachers to become child labour monitors by helping to survey the extent of non-attendance at school and its relationship to child labour;
22. **Support** literacy and other basic education programmes for adults, especially women, as vital supportive measures in combatting child labour;
23. **Pressure** their governments to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child without exemption, in all these cases where information provided by Education International indicates that the states concerned have so far failed to ratify the Convention.