RESOLUTION ON TRADE UNION RIGHTS

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

1. Recalls that trade union rights are human rights as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; their respect is a fundamental condition for democracy;
2. Recalls further that ILO Conventions uphold the rights of workers and promote collective bargaining, particularly Conventions 87 concerning Freedom of Association and the Protection of the Right to Organise, Convention 98 concerning the Right to Organise and to Bargain Collectively, Convention 151 on the Conditions of Employment in the Public Service and Convention 154 on the Promotion of Collective Bargaining;
3. Notes that the UNESCO-ILO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers clearly delineates the trade union and professional rights of teachers;
4. Considers that human rights are universal, inalienable, indivisible and inter-related and must be applied to all without discrimination of race, colour, gender, religion, political opinion or national or social origin;
5. Notes that trade unions are committed to the defense of human rights, democratic trade union freedoms and social justice;
6. Affirms that the full exercise of all trade union rights is a fundamental right of all workers and a prerequisite for improving the professional status and the welfare of teachers and educational employees;
7. Deplores the growing number of infringements on trade union rights, and the failure to provide equal trade union rights for teachers and other public employees.

The Congress determines EI policy on trade union rights as follows:

8. All workers, women as well as men, shall have the right to establish or join a trade union without previous authorisation;
9. Unions shall draw up a constitution and by-laws and elect their representatives in full freedom;
10. Unions shall acquire legal status, have their independence respected, while preserving the right of union members to ensure that their union is functioning democratically;
11. Unions shall have the right to organise their activities and administer their funds in accordance with their rules and without interference;
12. Unions shall formulate their own policies and programmes in all areas that are of concern to their members;
13. Unions shall have the right to collect dues, according to their rules, including by check-off;
14. Unions may establish or join federations or confederations or international organisations in accordance with the constitution and by-laws of the organisations concerned;
15. Elected or appointed representatives of unions must be protected by law against unfair dismissal, arbitrary detention or other negative actions by governments or employers as a result of authorised trade union activity;
16. Union representatives shall be provided with time off work to perform union duties without loss of earnings, benefits or acquired rights; the parameters for such union leave shall be the result of negotiations between the union and the employer;
17. Union representatives shall be provided with access to the workplace to undertake their trade union duties;
18. Unions shall have the right to distribute pamphlets, information, publications and other documents relating to the union in the workplace;
19. Unions shall have the right to call meetings, under terms negotiated with the employer, during working hours in the workplace;

20. Unions shall have the right to bargain collectively on behalf of their members, whether they are employed full-time or part-time. Unions shall have the right to involve in their collective bargaining the interests of those who are unemployed or are unfit for work or retired;

21. Unions shall have the right to establish, through negotiation, grievance and arbitration procedures, which allow the union to represent an individual or group of workers;

22. Unions must have the right to information considered necessary for the purpose of collective bargaining;

23. Unions shall have the right to undertake industrial action, including strike action;

24. Unions shall have the right to participate in decision making on issues which would affect the working lives or well-being of their members, through procedures established by collective bargaining;

25. The Congress states that the above-mentioned trade union rights also go unreservedly for employees in education and their trade unions, no matter what their status is or whether they are working in public or private education.