RESOLUTION ON THE INFORMATION REVOLUTION AND EDUCATION


1. **Notes** that the recent introduction of new information technologies in the majority of our societies has considerably modified every system of production, communication, management and learning, as the organisation of these same societies was equally modified by the introduction of printing in an earlier era and more recently by television;

2. **Notes** that despite the fact that information and computer technologies have reduced the number of jobs world-wide, the qualifications for more and more jobs, including those in the developing countries, demand knowledge of the new information technologies. Those who lack these credentials are the first casualties of unemployment and will be the victims of situations of exclusion in the future;

3. **Notes** that all political decision makers make the use of these new information technologies by children and young people in the course of their studies within schools an important axis of their education policies;

4. **Notes** the emerging view that the new information technologies are a means of rapid and increasingly inexpensive access to a larger range of knowledge than the traditional education system allows;

5. **Notes** that many of the world’s children (40%) are living in homes without electricity and do not have access to the new technologies;

6. **Notes** that certain private investors do not disguise their intentions, within the framework of the deregulation of policies on investment, to open virtual education enterprises which will be accessible through the Internet; these enterprises are offering training modules for payment, guaranteeing the issuing of certificates or diplomas as testimonials of the teaching received;

7. **Notes** that new information technologies, if they are used widely and effectively, can help to develop learning and teaching methods. This has significant implications for teacher education and for the need to provide on-going, high quality support to enhance teachers’ technical and pedagogical skills;

8. **Notes** that the new information technologies open up new ways for individuals to learn independently of education institutions, which has profound implications for teaching, education systems and society.

The Second World Congress of Education International:

9. **Considers** that although new information technologies may facilitate professional and social life, break isolation, facilitate personal exchanges, and reduce the burden of work, they may also undermine social solidarity, community, full employment and democratic citizenship, and may de-professionalise teaching.

10. **Recognises** that the rapid and profound changes due to the new information technologies may arouse feelings of insecurity, scepticism or even refusal on the part of those who do not have them in their grasp, including the teaching profession;

11. **Recognises** that, in a limited number of industrialised countries, efforts have been made to provide school establishments with computers linked to the Internet, but that those in the developing countries clearly run up against the greatest difficulties in obtaining materials of this kind, and that as a result, the unequal access to the new technologies will only increase the gap that already exists between the resources allocated to public education in the industrialised countries and in the developing countries; as well as inside of the country;

12. **Recalls** that education is more than an act of transmitting simple facts, even with the new
information technologies, and that genuine education implies the deployment of knowledge, attitudes and values that requires the presence of properly qualified teachers;

13. **Considers** that virtual schools or universities should be licensed and monitored for quality within a public framework of regulation; the development of private and selective teaching, orientated towards specific training courses related to the interests of the investors is not an acceptable educational guarantee, and a renewed public education service that is free of charge and open to all is certainly the best way to oppose these new kinds of school establishments.

The Second World Congress of Education International:

14. **Calls** upon the Executive Board and the Secretariat to carry out a study of the pedagogical advantages and disadvantages that could arise from the use of the new information technologies by pupils and students, and in particular the use of Internet;

15. **Calls** upon the Executive Board and the Secretariat to join with UNESCO, and then with the World Bank, in examining the conditions for the development and production of educational materials for teacher training using the new information technologies (CD ROM, Internet site), as well as the use of more traditional methods (audio cassettes) for developing countries;

16. **Calls** upon all public authorities in consultation with teachers’ organisations to take the necessary steps to provide schools, teachers and students with modern computer facilities and access to the Internet;

17. **Calls** upon the public authorities of education to see that computer work-stations in schools are properly designed, taking all relevant ergonomic information into consideration. Schools should be models in this respect and set a good example;

18. **Calls** upon the Executive Board and the Secretariat to discuss with UNESCO how to find methods to control the content of Internet websites in order to avoid racist, xenophobic and sexist propaganda and how to restrict within schools access to Internet sites which diffuse religious and political propaganda directed at children and young people;

19. **Calls** upon its member organisations to examine the existence of virtual educational establishments, to study their mode of operation, the types of qualifications proposed, and the costs to each student of participating in these programmes. The EI Secretariat should collect all this information and disseminate it within the organisation.