RESOLUTION ON THE SOCIETAL ALIENATION OF CHILDREN DUE TO “KOKORO-NO-ARE” (EMOTIONAL & MENTAL STRESS)

The Education International Second World Congress meeting in Washington D.C., U.S.A., from 25 to 29 July 1998:

Notes:

1. The increasing alienation of children from societies due to “Kokoro-no-are” (emotional and mental stress); in particular the increasing incidence in developed countries of teenage suicide, assault and murder of friends and teachers by young people.
2. Bullying, pregnancy amongst young girls and drug abuse continue to plague our societies all of whom are seeking solutions.

Recognises that:

3. Problematic behaviour of children and young people in our societies is often caused by their ill-treatment. There is a lack of respect for their human rights. Many experience violence and abuse. They suffer from stress caused by increasing academic expectations in rigid school structures and the absence of environments where they can recover from mental trauma or simply grow in a safe and relaxed atmosphere.
4. Modern society puts enormous pressure on the amount of time and support available, from within the family and community.

Understands that:

5. Teachers also suffer from enormous stress in these circumstances,
6. Such social environments result in students failing to complete schooling, psychiatric problems among teachers and prevents many students from choosing teaching as a profession;
7. Confirms that there is a need for an exchange of information and discussion among its affiliates which are affected by such problems and for EI headquarters and regional organisations to address these problems as important issues;
8. Urges each affiliate to take action to address these problems through a review of the current education system with a view to ensuring appropriate environments for learning, the provision of health and counselling services and community support for families wherever necessary.