RESOLUTION ON EDUCATION FOR GLOBAL PROGRESS

The Fourth World Congress of Education International (EI), held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, from 22 to 26 July 2004:

1. **Recalls** that, historically, the promotion of education since the 19th century has – in spite of all shortcomings – powerfully contributed to economic, social and cultural development and has enabled recognition of certain values such as democracy, human and trade union rights, international understanding and peace.

2. **Recalls** that the genuine trade union movement, to which Education International is proud to belong, has always campaigned for governments to give a high degree of priority to education in their investment policies, as part of a system of public services open to all citizens.

3. **Considers** that the current economic, social and cultural international environment has changed profoundly in comparison with the conditions prevalent in the middle of the last century, but nevertheless education continues to be a remarkably effective tool to promote the principles and values upheld by the trade union movement.

4. **Agrees** that in the presence of poverty, peace and progress cannot be resolved and that to reduce poverty requires educating the people in order to facilitate their involvement in decisions and policies which impact their lives.

5. **Notes**, however, that the challenges faced by education have become more numerous and complex. In particular the greater expectations of students, families and workers, and the pressures of globalisation and internationalisation, place far greater demands on public education systems than in the past.

The Fourth World Congress of Education International, furthermore:

6. **Affirms** that free education, placed under the authority of national governments, is an important means of combating poverty, hardship and inequality in the developing countries as well as in industrialised countries and that, to this end, Education For All (EFA) and the rights of young people and adults to genuine initial and continuous training, must be accorded a degree of priority commensurate with existing needs.

7. **Asserts** that secondary education, higher education and research contribute to global progress and must be developed while taking into account the fact that quality education for all young people and scientific progress constitute a preoccupation and a necessity throughout the world.

8. **Requests** that public education budgets be assigned at least 6% of Gross National Product (GNP), in accordance with the recommendations made by the international community.

9. **Reaffirms** that development requires the reduction of poverty, human suffering, exploitation, and violation of human rights and the relaunching of democracy and literacy.

10. **Affirms** that, in the context of the integration of the new ICTs in the economy, making the most of human resources is today a strategic challenge which the public education service must meet.
11. **Requests** that the reforms required in curricula and teaching methods, guaranteeing the pedagogical freedom of the teacher in conformity with the 1966 joint ILO/UNESCO Recommendation, be discussed with all the stakeholders involved in the education sector, including teachers’ unions, and that the contents of initial and further education be adapted accordingly.

12. **Requests** that public education authorities put in place structures to cater for young migrants so as to enable these youths to become well integrated in the school system and later in the world of work, thus preventing marginalisation problems which are conducive to violent forms of behaviour and to a receptive attitude to the aggressive proselytism of certain cultural and religious groups.

13. **Notes**, furthermore, that our societies are characterised by a great diversity of information and communication media, but these are owned by a small number of media corporations which increasingly disseminate almost identical information and standardised views reflecting the official editorial line of these corporations.

14. **Requests** that, in this context of greater standardisation of information, public education systems foster a non-conformist attitude and the capacity for critical analysis, particularly with regard to social problems.

15. **Notes** that democracy, which has been a favourable political environment for economic, social and cultural progress, is today still limited to a minority of countries in the world and that democratic political and social practices are far from having been recognised in certain countries, in spite of the fact that these practices provide a framework that respects individual and collective rights and promotes innovation and accountability.

**The Fourth World Congress of Education International:**

16. **Urges** Education International to make an organisational commitment to contributing to the achievements of the UN Millennium Development Goals with a focus on the quality of development and to establish MDG desks in the Secretariat.

17. **Mandates** the Executive Board to launch appropriate initiatives to raise the awareness of the general public, policymakers and international financial institutions about the major role of education in promoting global progress.

18. **Mandates** all member organisations to take into account, in their work programmes, the decisive role of education in achieving social progress.