RESOLUTION ON RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED TEACHERS

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

1. **Recalls** that the demand for teachers is a function of the number of children in need of schooling, but it also depends on the teacher/pupil ratio, the duration of education and the objectives of education.

2. **Recalls**, furthermore, that the supply of teachers depends not only on the number of publicly financed teaching posts, but also on the attractiveness of teaching posts, which determines the number and quality of applicants and the ability to retain teachers in the posts concerned.

3. **Recalls** that implementing the objectives of Education for All (EFA) will require, in the developing countries, the recruitment of some 30 million new teachers whose professional profile, career and training should be given careful consideration.

4. **Recalls** that, in industrialised countries the phenomenon of the shortage of qualified teachers can be observed. At the same time, the lack of attractiveness of the teaching profession and/or certain branches of education in several North American and European countries has already led some countries to “import” teachers from developing countries, and this in turn is exerting a downward pull on the living standards and working conditions of local teachers.

5. **Recalls** that teacher scarcity and/or the practice of resorting to insufficiently qualified teachers have serious repercussions for the quality of teaching, which is a key issue in the context of globalisation and the political battle to uphold the public education service.

6. **Recalls** that teacher education is recognised as an important element of education policy in most higher education systems and a key to the development of the teaching profession and primary and secondary education systems. In this context to resort widely to the use of “voluntary teachers” or “community teachers” does nothing to ensure the necessary level of quality in education.

7. **Notes** that HIV/AIDS leads to reduced life expectancy with a consequent devastating impact on teacher supply in some parts of the world.

**Congress**

8. **Requests** the Executive Board to:
   - Facilitate research into the country specific factors driving the HIV/AIDS epidemic and best practice in combating the disease and changing behaviour – especially in the education sector
   - Develop strategies to enhance the role of EI in the regions in supporting efforts of teacher unions to combat the pandemic
   - Disseminate information and materials on best practice around advocacy, awareness, rights of those living with HIV, treatment, care and support strategies.
• Investigate and take up the challenge of Aids orphans, child headed households and vulnerable children in general – and means of training teachers to deal with this
• Develop strategies and policies on the roles and rights of educators in the school with regard to HIV/AIDS.

9. **Requests** the Executive Board, in view of the teacher scarcity experienced in the developing countries, where pressing needs may necessitate the accelerated training of teachers, to reflect – in close cooperation with EI's member unions – on the conditions under which such practices might be acceptable.

10. **Considers** that makeshift solutions may be taken to address situations of urgency, especially in connection with achieving Education For All, provided they have been discussed and agreed on by ministries of education, teaching unions and, if relevant, international funding agencies.

11. **Considers** nevertheless that the use of fixed-term contracts of employment for teachers in place of contracts based on collective agreements must be rejected.

12. **Considers** also that performance assessment of teachers, which must in no way lead to the individualisation of salaries, is entirely acceptable provided the type of and arrangements for assessment are laid down in collective agreements between the social partners.

13. **Suggests**, as a contribution to the debate on this issue, that such practices should be implemented only on condition that full training be provided for a certain proportion (to be determined on a national basis) of the new teachers so as to ensure the existence of a body of teachers sufficiently skilled to orient and guide the teaching profession as a whole.

14. **Proposes**, furthermore, that students admitted to fast-track training programmes be chosen according to the same criteria as those receiving standard training or even according to more rigorous criteria, so as to ensure that such students will be able to complete their education at a later stage.

15. **Proposes**, lastly, that special provisions and facilitating measures, including additional periods of study leave with full pay, be accorded to teachers who have received accelerated training, so as to enable them to complete their qualifications on an in-service basis.

16. **Instructs** the Executive Board to take appropriate initiatives at international level, in particular with intergovernmental organisations like UNESCO, ILO, the OECD and the World Bank, to attract, train and retain the most highly-motivated young people in teaching.

17. **Calls** on the member organisations to engage the necessary consultations with their sponsoring departments to promote national efforts to develop the viability and quality of domestic teacher education and to assure that the recruitment and training of young teachers recognised as core components of public education systems. Making the profession attractive requires that the status of teachers be improved and that its value be reasserted. This implies better working conditions, higher salaries and high-quality initial training.