



RESOLUTION ON THE STATUS OF TEACHERS

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

Notes that:

1. Teachers, in providing not only knowledge and qualifications, but also universal ethical principles of social justice, tolerance and peace, play an important role in the economic, social and cultural development of our societies.
2. Teachers share the concerns of parents and youth affected by the socio-economic crisis. However, teachers are facing pressures from governments and employers who want to alter the nature of their responsibilities and statutory qualifications, imposing on them adjustments to the serious economic, social and cultural problems stemming from the globalisation of financial markets.
3. It is of crucial importance to grant the teaching profession a high status not just for the sake of the quality of education, but also for the progress of societies as a whole. Society needs quality education and thus, highly qualified teachers, to ensure social and economic development.
4. The rights as well as the professional freedom of teachers are recognised in the 1966 ILO/ UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Teachers.
5. The right of teachers to freedom of association, to collectively bargain and to undertake industrial actions are recognised in several ILO Recommendations and Conventions, with Conventions No. 87 and 98 being the most important.
6. The low salary of teachers in most countries, the non-payment of salaries for prolonged periods of time in some countries, and the hiring of teachers on fixed-term contracts, create situations of low esteem, demoralisation and even precariousness, all of which have a negative impact on teachers' work as well as their dignity. EI notes that such a policy takes on a particularly acute and inadmissible form in countries where the salaries of teachers and education workers have not been paid for many months.
7. During recent years, the importance of education has been rediscovered. The World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien in 1990 saw government leaders make a global commitment; the UN World Summit for Development in Copenhagen, held in March 1995, stressed the need for a new deal for investment in education. In its policy report "Strategies and priorities", published in August 1996, the World Bank has emphasised the importance of investing in education. The International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century (The Delors Commission) underlined the crucial role that education plays in the construction of the society of the future in its report, published in March 1996.
8. Any education authority, government or intergovernmental organisation that seriously wishes to improve education has to recognise the key role which teachers play in the education process. One of the most important measures that can be taken to improve education is to improve the working conditions of teachers. Good education needs teachers whose high qualifications are socially recognised. In order to recruit qualified young people to the teaching profession and to keep teachers in the teaching profession, there is a need to improve the working conditions of teachers world-wide.

Recommends that:

9. In order to improve the status of all teachers world-wide, education authorities, governments and intergovernmental organisations must ensure that teachers:
 - a) receive the moral and material recognition appropriate to their level of qualifications and





- responsibilities;
- b) have an adequate working environment, including the technology and resources necessary for their teaching as well as real protection in terms of occupational health and safety;
- c) can do their work in adequately equipped school buildings where the students, among other things, have access to a school library and/or on-line services;
- d) have a salary comparable with other professions requiring the same level of qualifications and responsibility, making it possible for them to live with dignity on the salary from their work, and not to be forced to take on a second or third job. It is essential to maintain and reinforce the recruitment of teaching personnel on the basis of permanent employment in tenured positions possessing official status;
- e) be entitled to job security in case of illness and for women on maternity leave;
- f) have the right to form and control their own representative organisations;
- g) have the right, through their organisations, to undertake comprehensive collective bargaining and, where necessary, industrial action;
- h) have the right to be consulted and to participate in the process of formulating educational policies;
- i) receive a good initial teacher education at university level to prepare them for their work as teachers;
- j) receive in-service training and professional development within the profession in order to keep in touch with new findings in their subjects and to obtain continuous support for the improvement of their teaching methods;
- k) be given professional and academic freedom to find the methods and classroom approaches that best meet the democratically decided objectives of the education system, and
- l) have the right to receive a reasonable pension after retirement which will make it possible for retired teachers to live with security and dignity.

EI should:

10. **Further promote** the above-mentioned principles and objectives within intergovernmental organisations such as the ILO and UNESCO in particular, and advocate the ratification and adoption by governments of international legal instruments, which would improve the condition of teachers and education personnel.
11. **Advocate** the application of the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, co-operate with the Joint Committee of Experts (CEART) charged with monitoring its application, and widely disseminate information about the Recommendation.
12. **Advocate** the establishment of a mechanism to monitor the application of the new UNESCO Recommendation on Higher Education Teaching Personnel.
13. **Intervene** with governments so that they take all appropriate measures for the implementation of the Recommendations mentioned above.
14. **Undertake** a comparative study on the conditions of service of teachers.
15. **Request** its affiliates to regularly remind the responsible education authorities that they bear a special responsibility for the development of the quality of education and that they must take appropriate measures in terms of initial and continuing training of personnel and to improve their working conditions.
16. **Provide** member organisations with appropriate fora to discuss questions relating to ways in which the quality of teaching can be improved, including through the development of relations with non-teaching personnel.
17. **Ensure** that public activities, including media events, are organised in as many countries as possible on World Teachers' Day (5 October), focusing on the status of the teaching profession.

