



RESOLUTION ON ENABLING RETIRED PERSONNEL TO LIVE WITH DIGNITY

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

1. **Recalls** that the social struggles waged by workers, including teachers and education workers in particular have enabled them, in many countries, to retire from work between the ages of 55 and 65 in most cases, and to benefit from a lifetime retirement pension.
2. **Recalls** that these pension schemes are mostly financed through contributions based on the salary paid by the employer to the employee and that therefore this financing constitutes de facto a deferred payment that is part of the salary.
3. **Recalls** that the availability of funds for the payment of pensions is based on an income redistribution scheme or a capitalisation scheme or, alternatively, a mixed scheme.

Congress, furthermore,

4. **Reaffirms** the fundamental right to an adequate retirement pension, which should be available to all workers including, in particular, education workers, so as to enable them to live with dignity.
5. **Notes** that redistribution-based pension schemes, which in fact use the contributions paid by active workers to pay the pensions of retired workers, are today facing a grave crisis in industrialised countries as a result of a drop in the number of contributing workers, which in turn is due to persistently high unemployment levels and the development of an informal sector.
6. **Notes** that several industrialised countries have engaged in reforms of their pension scheme – not without giving rise to serious social conflicts – with the aim of extending the duration of the required contribution periods, increasing the amount of the contributions payable and reducing the amount of the pensions.
7. **Notes**, furthermore, that in recent years capital-based pension schemes, which depend on the returns on investments made with the contributions paid by active workers, have been negatively impacted by a – sometimes spectacular – drop in the value of stocks and shares.
8. **Notes** that as a result of the collapse in the value of stocks and shares, many workers have found themselves destitute or are only receiving much smaller pensions and have therefore become financially dependent on others.
9. **Asserts** that it is unacceptable that:
 - Education sector workers are forced to continue working until their old age in a context of deteriorating working conditions, all the more since governments are not operating the reforms needed to make work less tiresome.
 - Retired personnel must cope with a lower standard of living than that of active personnel
 - Workers with the shortest careers, particularly women, casual workers and the unemployed, be the main victims of business reforms.
 - Optional retirement insurance systems are developing to the detriment of obligatory, public,



- solidarity-based systems, thereby leading to greater inequality.
- Personal savings is again becoming the primary means of preparing one's retirement, and solidarity is withering away to make room for egoism.

The Fourth World Congress of Education International therefore

10. **Calls on the Executive Board** to give all the necessary attention to the issue of workers' pensions in the education sector, to raise this issue with the appropriate bodies of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and to seek consultations with appropriate entities to promote pension reform policies that support the interests of teachers and education workers.
11. **Calls on the Executive Board** to gather information about the EI affiliates' training for members who serve on pension or retirement system boards, and to research and disseminate case studies on how affiliates have protected the retirement interests of their membership.
12. **Calls on the Executive Board** to conduct appropriate studies on the different pension policies currently implemented in the education sector as well as on the reforms undertaken in this area in recent years.
13. **Invites member organisations** to exercise the greatest vigilance with regard to pension provisions in the social policies pursued in their respective countries, and to struggle against backward policies which are disastrous for public education services.
14. **Calls on member organisations** to demand full application of human rights to retired personnel, particularly as they become dependent, which implies that an adequate number of public health workers be given high-quality initial and further training.
15. **Invites member organisations** to involve retired education workers notably making space available to them in the organisations.