



## RESOLUTION ON ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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

**Defines** environmentally sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

**Wishes** to tackle environmental issues as a strategic project with a view to strengthening public education and the new role of trade unionism.

1. Whereas Education International understands the interdependence of all countries and recognises that no country can assure its future alone, regardless of its economic strength or level of development;
2. Recognises that it is essential for a global partnership among nations to address effectively environmentally sustainable development;
3. Notes that substantial discussions were held at the Kyoto Conference as well as at the Global Summit in Rio de Janeiro, to prevent environmental destruction on a global scale and to promote the control of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions against global warming, but that the protection of the global environment has since been deadlocked due to the 'economy-first' policies of many governments;
4. Deplores the lack of effective action by governments to address climate change, desertification, de-forestation, unregulated industrialisation, sustainable energy policies, the global effects of pollution and the problems of population growth, especially in developing countries, as a result of the unlimited introduction of market economies;
5. Denounces the dumping of hazardous waste manufactured in industrialised countries in developing countries;
6. Deplores the rise of sea levels due to global warming that is threatening the very existence of island countries which lie at low altitude;
7. Denounces accidents caused by nuclear power plants that could bring irrevocable dangers to humanity and the environment;
8. Recognises equally that environmentally sustainable development requires that all peoples' need for food, shelter, access to clean water, healthcare, education, employment, transport and sanitation are met;
9. Deplores that many people in the world are not informed that global destruction on a global scale is rapidly reaching the limit at which human life can be sustained on this planet;
10. Notes that sustainable action on environmental concerns must take account of broader issues of economic and social development, poverty alleviation, consumption of resources, employment and quality of life;
11. Notes that environmental protection is a function of truly sustainable development and that economic policies that destroy the ecological basis of life cannot succeed in the long term;
12. Acknowledges that a safe and healthy environment for children to grow in, and safe and healthy workplaces for adults, require a healthy natural environment including clean air and water;
13. Recognises that educational personnel, teachers, workers and administrators, as members of EI, an international trade union secretariat associated with the ICFTU, must promote social change by making claims that are the driving force of progress and advocate environmentally sustainable development through education;
14. Notes that any change requires a change in people's knowledge and awareness and that education plays a crucial role in effecting such change;





15. Notes that in order for educators to be able to fulfil their collective role and responsibility, full trade union rights which include the right to organise, to bargain collectively and to full participation are essential;
16. Recognises that education at all levels, including education of union members, is a vital component of sound policy on environmentally sustainable development;
17. Determines that curricula must be developed that will integrate environmentally sustainable development issues into all appropriate fields of study, and that this curriculum will deal with the political, social, moral, environmental and economic implications of sustainable development.
18. Equally recognises that strong legislation which includes inspection and enforcement mechanisms are essential for environmentally sustainable development;
19. Recognises the key role of women, particularly in developing countries, and the need for their involvement in education programmes and policy development at all levels.

**20. The Congress determines that EI shall:**

- work with the ICFTU and other ITSs to raise awareness among members on the issue of environmentally sustainable development;
- prepare an inventory of the best innovative teaching practices in this area and bring it to the attention of all of the affiliates;
- lobby governments to adopt legislation that will promote environmentally sustainable development in the broadest sense that deals with social, economic and environmental issues;
- lobby governments to collect reliable and comparable data, statistics and indicators, methods of assessment, cost-benefit analysis, including the cost of action and the cost of lack of action;
- work with the ILO to promote international core labour standards, ILO standards on occupational health and safety and the work environment, particularly as it refers to education institutions;
- work to promote the inclusion of labour and environmental rights in trade agreements;
- work with UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO to promote environmentally sustainable development;
- support civil organisations engaged in activities for the protection of the global environment and ask member organisations to support such domestic civil organisations;
- promote, through representations to international organisations such as the World Bank, UNESCO, UNDP and the International Monetary Fund, these perspectives on sustainable development and an educational model that will take account of the new scientific, technological, economic and environmental reasons which require a reassessment of the traditional role of educators and trade unions as well as of the meaning of peace and justice;
- develop education and research projects to stimulate debate on the unidirectional model that leads to social exclusion and which underlies the globalisation project currently under way and which ignores and destroys biological and cultural diversity.

**21. The Congress calls on EI member organisations to:**

- lobby governments to ratify ILO Convention 139 on the prevention and control of occupational hazards caused by carcinogens, in particular with regard to the exposure to asbestos;
- lobby governments to ratify ILO conventions 155 and 161 as well as their accompanying recommendations 164 and 171 on occupational health and safety;
- lobby governments to promote environmental education programmes with the help of UNESCO;
- negotiate the terms of participation of education unions in policy development on environmental education and curriculum development on environmentally sustainable development;
- exchange information on education for the protection of the global environment and the development of educational programs with the help of EI;





- ensure that conditions in schools and other education institutions meet the highest environmental standards which ensure that teachers work in healthy conditions and that children learn in optimal conditions;
- include training for members on issues of sustainable development;
- ensure that initial and in-service education for teachers provides high quality programmes for education personnel on issues of environmentally sustainable development;
- ensure that development co-operation programmes organised by EI and its members include modules on environmentally sustainable development;
- check whether protection of the global environment is provided for in their countries and if it is part of teaching materials and curriculum.

