



RESOLUTION ON TRANSNATIONAL PROVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The Third World Congress of Education International meeting in Jomtien, Thailand, from 25 to 29 July 2001:

A. Notes:

1. The growth of provision of higher education across national borders, utilizing mainly internet-based technologies, by traditional universities as well as by solely on-line providers;
2. The participation by a number of universities in joint ventures with for-profit corporations and other higher education institutions for the provision of higher education relying on internet-based materials and technologies;
3. Growing concern among higher education personnel, students and the communities they work with regarding the lack of clear and unambiguous information available in relation to governance structures, quality assurance and accreditation procedures, and employment practices within such joint ventures;

B. Believes that:

4. Predominantly on-line higher education providers should be subject to rigorous quality assurance mechanisms to ensure a curriculum developed, taught and under academic control of faculty who have tenure and academic freedom, and this principle should be reflected in international accreditation procedures;
5. It is the responsibility of national governments, international organisations and higher education providers to ensure that the expansion of web-based transnational higher education provision is informed by public interest concerns and objectives, and not solely by profit motives or market forces;

Accordingly, EI should:

6. Encourage higher education trade unions to develop strategies for actively organising members across national boundaries to ensure that the employment rights of personnel employed by transnational providers are protected;
7. In conjunction with higher education unions that have already undertaken significant work in this area, develop guidelines for best practice in relation to the provision of transnational education and actively pursue their endorsement and implementation by UNESCO, the ILO, the World Trade Organisation and international accreditation bodies, such implementation to be pursued in conjunction with EI.
Such guidelines should address, among other issues, governance structures, quality assurance, the importance of culturally relevant content and modes of delivery, accreditation, intellectual property management and academic freedom.

