



# Statement of the 7<sup>th</sup> International Higher Education and Research Conference of Education International

*Vancouver, 12 September 2010*

Conference notes that EI's higher education membership has grown steadily over the last decade, and that further expansion is likely in the coming period. This growth has been accompanied by a significant increase in the scale and scope of EI's higher education policy programme, campaigns, research and action initiatives. Conference also notes that higher education is, by its nature, the most internationalised component of the education sector.

In combination, these factors have implications for the future organisation and delivery of EI's higher education work. Conference therefore asks EI to consider the introduction of a full-time higher education staff position sometime in 2011 and to develop proposals for a specific ongoing EI international higher education campaign theme and logo which complements and reinforces EI's wider global education campaigns.

Key elements of such an ongoing campaign should include:

- Access to high quality public higher education for all qualified students with adequate public funding
- The implications of the ongoing commercialisation of higher education at national and international levels, including continuing work around GATS and trade in education services
- Academic freedom and trade union rights for higher education personnel
- Governance and accountability, including critical assessment of the OECD's feasibility pilot AHELO programme
- Copyright including defence of and involvement in WIPO
- Diversity and equity in higher education labour forces
- The long-term effects of casualisation on the academic community and the quality of higher education and employment
- The developing threat to the integrity and independence of research, and its role in supporting higher education teaching.

EI should encourage affiliated national unions to undertake research and campaign projects on a joint basis with one another and the EI Secretariat, and give priority to further expanding higher education membership in all regions particularly in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Development and political co-operation should be an important component of higher education membership expansion and should draw on the strengths and experiences of current and prospective EI member organisations in these regions.