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Resolutions from the regions

Draft Resolution from the African Region

Proposed by: Executive Board
Original language: French

The 6th World Congress of Education International (EI), meeting in Cape Town, South Africa, from 22 to 26 July 2007,

Trade union context

1. Observing that in Africa the trade union organisations in the education sector are essential for democratic development and social progress;
2. Considering that the strength of the trade unions in the education sector is measured by their members in terms of their democratic nature and their strategies for independence and unity in relation to employers, governments, political parties and all external forces;
3. Considering that trade union training and the development of managerial training are in sharp decline within the education trade union organisations or simply do not exist;
4. Considering that the action plans and policies of the trade unions in the education sector must be defined by their members starting from the grassroots and passing through their statutory and regulatory bodies;
5. Considering that the fragmentation of the trade union movement, be it the result of internal policies or political, tribal or ethnic interference or for other reasons, seriously limits the effective expression of the collective interests of teaching personnel;
6. Noting the persistent violation by the majority of African governments of national and international legal instruments for the defence and promotion of trade union rights and particularly the right to collective bargaining and the right of trade union organisations to be involved in defining national education policies.

Working environment

7. Notes that a very large number of teachers and employees in the education sector are not members of trade union organisations;
8. Denounces the repeated damaging interference by forces outside the trade union organisations in their organisation and operation;
9. Underlines the vital importance of trade union training and the development of managerial abilities in favour of trade union organisations;
10. Underlines the essential role to be played by the development of a trade union culture favouring cohesion and the eradication of internal disputes and divisions;
11. Underlines the importance of ensuring that the trade union organisations function in a democratic manner and that membership of trade unions and access to positions of responsibility within them are free of all discrimination, be it based on race, opinion, creed, ethnic or tribal origin, gender or age;

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12. Underlines that the unity of teachers' trade unions at national level strengthens their impact and their effectiveness and promotes the interests of teachers and other education personnel and the education system.

Action

13. Declares its ongoing commitment to the promotion of free, independent and democratic representative trade unions in the education sector whose statutes and programmes are based on adherence to the principles guaranteed in the relevant conventions and declarations of the ILO;
14. Calls upon EI to help its member organisations to develop a constructive internal policy dialogue with a view to encouraging structural unity or unity of action capable of favouring the eradication of divisions and, consequently, the weakness of these organisations within a context of world crises;
15. Urges EI to consider that the development of human and financial capacities to guarantee the strengthening of internal democracy within education trade unions in Africa, along with adoption of the relevant organic texts and compliance with their provisions, constitutes a priority without which the rest of the trade union architecture and trade union objectives would collapse;
16. Urges EI, within the framework of its development cooperation policy, to encourage its affiliates in the OECD countries to establish medium- and long-term programmes in favour of trade union democracy within African trade union organisations;
17. Emphasises the need for a sustained effort on the part of EI and the other development partners so that trade unions in the education sector in Africa work together to ensure that teachers can speak with one and the same voice.