**STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION OF THE TEACHERS**

**FROM THE SCHOOLS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES IN LITHUANIA**

***adopted at the CEE Round Table in Kiev, 16 September 2011***

Taking into consideration that the legislative system in any country should, on the one hand, preserve the ethnic identity of national minorities, their culture and mother tongue and, on the other, properly integrate the schools of national minorities into the general framework of state educational system;

Taking into consideration the possible negative impact of the implementation of the new Law on Education (1 July, 2011) on teacher’s working conditions and therefore underlining the importance of social dialogue while implementing the provisions of the new legislation on Education;

Being aware that after the adoption of the new Law on Education, validated on 1 July, aside from the compulsory Lithuanian language lessons, the language of instruction during classes dealing with history, geography, global affairs and formation of civic attitudes will be Lithuanian and students from Lithuanian and national minority schools are to take the Lithuanian language examination upon secondary school graduation at the same level already in 2013.

The participants of the CEE Round Table (Kiev, 16 September 2011) wish to express their concern about too short a time being given for the implementations of the new Law on Education. Two years is not enough for children from national minorities to achieve the same level of the language as pupils from Lithuanian schools who learn the Lithuanian language for 12 years. We do worry about the quality of education and about teachers, who in connection with the new regulations may lose their jobs or whose employment conditions may deteriorate significantly.

The participants resolve:

1. To ask the Lithuanian Government to establish the 5-7 years transitional period for implementation of the amendments of the Law on Education, related to national minorities.
2. To ask the Ministry of Education and Science to organise intensive high quality Lithuanian language courses for teachers from the national minority schools to improve their qualifications and language skills in order to ensure that the quality of teaching will not deteriorate and that teachers will not lose their jobs due to insufficient language knowledge.
3. To ask the Lithuanian Government to include the representatives of social partners to a newly established Intergovernmental Working Group on national minorities’ issues. This could significantly contribute to finding optimal solutions which would protect the well-being of pupils and teachers in minority schools.