

FOR INFORMATION**39th Executive Board meeting, 30 November-1 December 2011****INDIGENOUS CAUCUS REPORT**

Cape Town, July 19, 2011

Education International
6th World Congress**1. Brief summary**

Darcel Russell, AEU Deputy Federal Secretary and chair of EI Ad Hoc Committee on Indigenous Issues and Related matters welcomed 80 participants from 16 countries and 28 education unions. Many of them shared a similar identity, as Indigenous or Aboriginal teachers, with concerns on Indigenous issues and their rights to education. Non-Indigenous delegates attended the session.

Co-chair introduced key issues regarding the Indigenous agenda. She acknowledged the important recognition of Indigenous Peoples in the last decade, including more interest in Indigenous education and the importance of bilingual and intercultural education. She also summarized the process since EI Congress in Berlin 2007, the establishment of an EI Ad Hoc Committee 2007-2011 on Indigenous education and related matters, and the progress made primarily at the regional level. EI's challenge is how do we shape the public education system to recognize all the diversity of all the peoples of the world, especially cultures that have our earth as our base? How do we create spaces at local, national, regional and global level to move this work forward?

The program was opened by EI Latin American video which introduced and acknowledged how regional work is moving forward, providing a summary of the process and specific meetings (Guatemala 2009, Bolivia 2010). Spaces created by EI-AL were not just about education, but also about rights. EI member organizations have an important role to play.

The inspiring video report was followed by EI-AL preliminary report on Intercultural Multilingual Education in Latin America: case analyses of Guatemala, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia,

Paraguay, Mexico and also included Norway. Dr. Juan Arancibia, from Chile presented the major findings. Full report is available at http://www.ei-ie-al.org/publicaciones/indigenous_web.pdf

Teacher organizations have been late in dealing with Indigenous, bilingual and intercultural education but they are now slowly taking on responsibilities, said Dr. Arancibia. Many national constitutions have explicit recommendations on multi-cultural issues. Indigenous power is being rediscovered along the need to stop the greed for more assets. Indigenous Peoples' knowledge provides an important base, the *good living* which is very different from "living well", understood as an irrational, dehumanizing and consumism. Good living comes from *Sumak Kawsay* (Quechua), or *Suma Qamaña* (Aymara). It is an individual and collective way of thinking and acting of Indigenous Peoples in harmony, respect and balance with nature, humanity and universe. Juan provoked critical thinking, called for more inclusive actions and educational models. He updated the debate on the knowledge of inclusive societies, to deepen real democracy and social justice to build the new and fair society we were ambition for all.

Participants valued the contribution, that new paradigm and continuing discussions. The Caucus succeeded in exchanging good practices and promoting the participation of Indigenous educators. Participants only regret was lack of arrangement for proper coffee break.

The **major recommended action** of the Caucus was that EI establish a Steering Committee on Indigenous Issues to frame and develop a comprehensive policy and action plan, based on consensual reorganization of priorities EI Report 2007-2011, and also guidance networking. The issue of Indigenous representation and experts in the field were stressed. The holistic nature of Indigenous education needs to liaise with different groups and networks on topics such as pedagogy, higher education curricula; research, cooperation and development, EI Committees and Caucuses.

The agreed recommendations will be submitted to the EI Executive Board for further consideration.

2. Inputs from member organizations

Participants shared information about the state of Indigenous education in their countries and unions.

CTF-FCE Canada presented the "Study of the professional knowledge and experience of Aboriginal teachers in Canadian public schools" (2010), a research report which interviewed 59 teachers from across Canada. The key findings are similar to Latin America: to honor Aboriginal knowledge, recruit and retain teachers, to include Aboriginal allies. Ministries of education need to encourage access to Aboriginal curriculum, and there is need to establish partnerships between Aboriginal communities and education partners in teaching. We need to ensure that Aboriginal teachers are meaningful participants in consultation regarding policy development and funding education. Study is available at <http://www.ctf-fce.ca/Newsroom/news.aspx?NewsID=1983984679&year=2010>

CTF-FCE also showed the experience of the major student led movement for access local public schools and culturally based education for First Nations children and youth. The funding approach is completely different to other provincial schools; the policy is outdated, unstable and is not based on the actual number of students in the classroom. On average, First Nations schools receive at least \$2,000 Canadian dollars less per child per year which accounts for the lack of learning materials. It takes about 10 years to get a replacement school. Shannen Koostachin of Attawapiskat First Nation who worked tirelessly to try to convince the federal government to give First Nations children a proper education, tragically passed away at the age of 15 years old in 2010, when she was coming back from a school. CTF-FCE members and people from across the country support the action to get this message to Ottawa and are bringing Shannen's dream forward. More at www.shannensdream.ca

DAT Dominica, member of Caribbean Union of Teachers (CUT) reported about workshops organized in their islands and territories to create a bond among the Indigenous Peoples. Teachers in Carib areas for Indigenous students have no special school.

Since the Carib language is no longer used, DAT has been trying to get it back, via the elders. Children are receiving some of their history, dance and culture. Teachers are coming together, also with parents, and are making progress setting up a special Unit working on these matters.

EI Coordinator, North America and Caribbean Region shared her working experience. Who Indigenous Peoples are raised an interesting debate on the issue of segregation and integration at expense of development. It's a complex issue to draw a line given history, culture and current challenges.

SUTEP Peru described the situation in the Andean region where Indigenous speak several languages. Ministries are interested and committed. The new elected government brings some hope in moving away from neo-liberal systems and aid that Peru had for years. They proposed new educational restructure with the regional government. SUTEP considers important to build a curriculum to know the kind of pedagogical model, one which challenges threats and neo-liberal proposals.

Costa Rica is multicultural and has a rich Indigenous history. Of the 26 education areas, only one has a leading plan. Unions try to incorporate, to give power to the region. 60 % of the curriculum is national, and 40% is regional responsibility. Success is limited. A pilot plan is set up relating how to incorporating Indigenous Peoples in the process and work towards stronger multicultural reality.

For NEA North Dakota, United States, the main problem of native peoples is student absenteeism in primary and secondary school but once they are at university level there is available substantial aid from the government but native peoples must be able to reach University in order to access it.

FECCOO, Spain made the link of intercultural issues with immigration. Many unions and governments try to develop multiculturalism. The need of a multicultural education system was stressed, also from immigrant stakeholders' perspectives. Concepts are important in designing the curriculum. The union developed specific materials.

UEN, Norway explained local politics and law system. Sami peoples 2% of the population has a good system with a parallel curriculum, Sami university and possibilities for Sami's to study their language, the challenge is that they are few, so everything costs lot, and the economic system has hardly prioritizes areas where they live. Sami peoples have good level in comparison to other European countries.

FTA, Fiji informed about their number of 350,000 inhabitants. Union emphasized the learning of Fijian language. The government only allows this at conversational level. The unions think it should be compulsory. The FTA Institute of indigenous Studies has laid down a research frame work as means of information gathering and to assist young members, and anyone interested in history. The Institute is formed by retired teachers. The FTA encourages Indigenous students to continue to teach Fijian language.

3. Short discussion on priorities and related contributions

To value and promote the work of indigenous teachers

EI Report on best practices has room for improvements given pending regular survey.

The importance to write up the history and activities that education unions do on Indigenous Peoples

Increase awareness of racism and work with others, such as migrants.

Promote ratification of ILO Convention 169 going beyond the current 22 signatory countries.

Africa agreed with all the action plans and highlighted the concrete efforts to increase the members from Indigenous groups and to give them the ability to become part of the decision making processes.

The re-launching of the Indigenous Network is an opportunity – how can we network, and stay in contact with each other, develop more activities and share the knowledge that we have in our unions and also challenges the unions to make specific resolutions.

Create a network of officers from within the unions to see who is working on issues and what has been done.

How do we connect our voices, at local, regional and global level?

We need to get ready for UN process – know what EI is doing, get feedback on actions and activities taken by member organizations and find out national, regional and global opportunities for advocacy.

Meeting was adjourned.



Darcel Russell, AEU Deputy Federal Secretary and chair of EI Ad Hoc Committee on Indigenous



Dr. Juan Arancibia
Consultant EIAL



CTF-FCE Canada showed First Nations children action: Shannen's dream



EIAL presented video report

EI PLANS 2012 – 2015 (as proposed by Caucus)

- 1. *Raise awareness of the status of Indigenous peoples in education, unions and society***
 - a. Encourage linguistic diversity while respecting mother tongue education at all levels;
 - b. Promoting International Mother Languages Days (*21 February*)
 - c. Increase participation of education unions on International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (*August 9*)
 - d. Support the development of initiatives to address the specific needs of Indigenous workers in unions
 - e. Recognise and celebrate cultural diversity in unions and society by promoting and giving visibility to activities such as diversity week and other related initiatives

- 2. *Increase participation of Indigenous representatives in inputs related to Indigenous education***
 - a. Promote email consultations and participation of Indigenous education workers in key events and responses such as UNESCO Global Monitoring Report, the related studies of the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples EMRIP.
 - b. Set up an Indigenous network to exchange and disseminate relevant information and good practices and the Indigenous rights to education
 - c. Encourage Indigenous teachers' inputs and updates to EI website

- 3. *Promote and support solidarity actions, when the need arises.***
 - a. Promote/endorse actions working in cooperation with EI and relevant NGO's
 - b. Collect data on Indigenous Peoples who are refused the right to education

- 4. *Ratify and promote compliance with relevant international instruments and Conventions***
 - a. Seek ratification of ILO Convention 169
 - b. Pursue the implementation of the International convention on the elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, particularly its application to Indigenous issues by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
 - c. Set up specific targets and campaigns working in cooperation with regional offices

- 5. *Encourage EI members to join the Global Union Campaign on Quality Public Services***
 - a. By addressing critical Indigenous issues of education, health, clean water, self-determination and prior consent
 - b. Take into account the specific needs of Indigenous women's issues in education, trade unions and society

- 6. *Advocacy with UN agencies on the protection of Indigenous peoples rights***
 - a. Promote the implementation the UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)
 - b. Participate in the process in the lead up to the World Indigenous Conference 2014
 - c. Contribute with a Global Report on Indigenous Education, highlighting key common issues, good practices and proposals for progress

- 7. *Integrate an holistic approach to address multiple forms of discrimination (women and girls, racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related form of intolerance)***
 - a. Examine the intersection of multiple forms of discrimination with special emphasis on gender-based racial discrimination in order to develop and implement strategies, policies and programs aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in education, unions and society
 - b. Promote the Programme of Action agreed World Conference against Racism (Durban, 2001) and Review WCAR (Geneva 2009)
 - c. Develop specific guidance and tools on how to integrate dimensions such as gender, race/ethnicity, class, and Indigenous issues in rural and urban areas
 - d. Build alliances with other Global Unions and NGO in related initiatives.