Use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in Education

1. **Modern developments in** information and communication technologies (ICT) provide exciting possibilities to enhance the quality of education. Interactive education software, open access digital libraries, and cheaper and more intuitive technology may facilitate new forms of interaction between students, teachers, education employees and the community and enhance the quality of education by making it more accessible.

2. **Education may be enriched** by integrating such technologies into traditional educational activities. However, it must be recognised that ITC may never displace the relationship between teacher and learner which is crucial to the learning and development process.

3. **ICT has the capacity to enhance** the learning process and facilitate communications within education institutions and between educators and learners but it must be used in education institutions under the supervision of qualified well-trained professionals with the expertise in pedagogy and in education to ensure that its impact does not damage or undermine the learning process or the development of learners.

4. **Education unions should**
   (i) support the use of ICT as an integral part of the provision of quality education for all. They should advocate for the use of ICT in education as a key modern aid to teaching and learning;
   (ii) advocate for free access for all teachers and learners, support professionals and administrators in education, to high quality dedicated ICT;
   (iii) insist that ICT in education is appropriate to the learning requirements in the curriculum in each subject, is supportive of the work of teachers and learners, and of administrative and professional staff in education;
   (iv) insist that educators are consulted about the introduction of ICT into education institutions and involved in the design and development of appropriate ICT for education purposes;
   (v) monitor the implementation of any agreements entered into by governments, national education or school authorities for the provision of ICT by commercial companies.

5. **Governments and national education authorities should**
    (i)   develop national plans for the use and promotion of ICT in education in consultation with education unions and education community interests and others with relevant expertise;
    (ii)   allocate the necessary funds to develop appropriate ICT for schools and education institutions and ensure that the outcome of such development work is available freely to all;
    (iii)   allocate the necessary funds to ensure that every education institution has access to high quality ITC, both hardware and software, irrespective of where it is situated;
    (iv)   allocate the necessary funds to provide continuous professional development in the use of ICT for teachers and other education professionals;
    (v)   ensure that high quality internet access is available to all schools and education institutions.

6. **Where commercial ICT companies** are engaged by Governments or national education or school authorities to contribute to the provision of ICT in education or become voluntarily involved in such provision, that engagement should be subject to agreements which
    (i)   recognise the professional integrity and independence of the education institutions and personnel who are affected:
    (ii)   ensure that the primary purpose of the engagement is to provide support for teaching and learning;
    (iii)   ensure that consultative processes with professional education staff are an essential element in the development of the software and hardware provided;
    (iv)   include provision for monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of any such agreements which include professional education staff.