**Minutes from the extra-ordinary Pan-European Conference / ETUCE General Assembly, 22nd November 2010**

1. Introduction and welcome

The President Ronnie Smith (EIS, UK) welcomed the delegates and reminded the participants of the purpose of the extraordinary Pan-European Conference/ ETUCE General Assembly (referred to hereafter as “Conference”) to adopt the revised By-Laws of the Pan-European Structure. The President thanked the organisations for accepting the request to send small delegations and underlined that this Conference marked a decisive step in a long process of revision of the By-Laws. Should the new By-Laws be adopted, the ETUCE would use all its resources and energy to focus on the numerous challenges currently faced by the European teacher trade-union movement in the context of the economic crisis.

The President also introduced and thanked the members who volunteered to act as tellers for the vote: Marilo Reina (FE CCOO, ES), Sheila Nunan (INTO, IE), Dorota Obidniak (ZNP, PL), Helmut Skala (GÖD, AT) and Anders Rusk (OAJ, FI).

2. Rules of Procedures

The President drew attention to the Rules of procedures for the meeting as set out in the related documents distributed to the delegates. The Rules of Procedures were those applied in previous conferences.

3. Report from the Credential Committee

The Report from the Credential Committee was presented by the Treasurer, Walter Dresscher, and accepted by the Conference.

4. Report from Committee/Executive Board

The President introduced the Report from the Executive Committee/Board and outlined the process of the revision of the By-Laws. This process had begun at the Conference of 2006 with the establishment of a working group assigned to come up with a proposal for new By-Laws building on consultations with member organisations. This proposal was rejected by the following Conference in Warsaw in 2009. The process continued afterwards with a new draft being circulated among member organisations. The Bureau integrated some of the member organisations’ suggestions and proposed a new version which was approved by the PE Committee/Executive Board on 15th of June 2010. This proposal was submitted for consideration to the Extra-ordinary Conference on 22 November 2010.

In the event of the adoption of the new By-Laws, a working group would continue to work and make proposals on four specific areas to improve the representation of the European teachers. The President invited the delegates to read the exact remit for this working group in the document “Statement for the information of the Extra-Ordinary Conference/General Assembly”.

5. Presentation of the By-Laws and Transitional Arrangements

EI Deputy General Secretary Charlie Lennon introduced the new By-Laws and underlined the differences between this version and the one that was rejected in 2009. The differences regard essentially the functioning of the Standing Committees, the budget and accounting cycle and the transitional arrangements. He also drew attention to the agreement in relation to the staffing arrangements which had been reached between EI head office and the ETUCE office. He said that, in anticipation of a positive decision by the Conference, discussions were planned between the staff of the offices early in December to try to ensure that the most effective and efficient arrangements for providing services and representation to member organizations were in place for the new organisation.

6. Debate

6.1. Introduction speeches

Jörgen Lindholm (Lärarförbundet, SE) praised the EI and ETUCE Secretariats for their work throughout the process. Mr. Lindholm stated that the integrated structure would improve the work and representation of the European teachers’ trade-union movement, notably its relations with the Council of Europe, the EU institutions and the ETUC. He stressed that those organisations from non-EU member countries would also benefit from the integration. He also underlined that the integration would increase the number of women in the various ETUCE committees. On behalf of the Committee/Executive Board, Mr. Lindholm formally moved the following proposal to a vote by the Conference:

“That this Extra-Ordinary Conference/General Assembly

(i) deletes all of the existing By-Laws/Statutes for the Pan-European Structure which incorporates ETUCE,

(ii) adopts the proposed By-Laws for the new ETUCE, in which the Pan-European Structure and the former ETUCE are integrated into one organization, including the transitional arrangements set out in the Annex to the By-Laws, and,

(iii) endorses the arrangements agreed between EI and ETUCE for the establishment of the ETUCE office as a regional office of EI.”

Kounka Damianova (SEB, BG) seconded Mr. Lindholm’s proposal. She welcomed the compromise reached at the end of a long process and reminded the delegates of the commitment from the Eastern and Central European Countries to a united European organisation. Ms Damianova also stressed that the new structure would enhance the possibilities for action, notably within the recently created European Sectoral Social Dialogue in Education (ESSDE).

6.2. Open floor

François Chaintron (FO, FR) read out a declaration signed by 7 member organisations expressing concerns about the principle and possible outcome of the ESSDE and stated that for this reason his organisation would abstain from the vote on the new By-Laws.

Roger Ferrari (SNES, FR) reminded the participants of the context of economic crisis and called for the ETUCE members to get involved in the ETUC action planned for 15th December 2010. Mr Ferrari also called for the enhancement of the ETUCE cooperation with the European Public Services Union Federation (EPSU) and for more overall action towards the EU institutions and within the ETUC.

Themis Kotsifakis (OLME, EL) regretted that the new By-Laws did not include more political orientations. He stated that the current measures undertaken nationally to reduce public spending were inspired and/or supported by the EU and the International Monetary Fund. He also stressed that public spending on education in Greece has been lowered to less than 3 % of GDP.

Stig Andersen (DLF, DK) welcomed the new By-Laws and stressed that three important elements were reached: the unity and autonomy of the European organisation, the selection of the Regional Director by the Executive Board and the fact that the ETUCE would keep its own Secretariat.

Denis Jouan (SNCS, FR) expressed concerns about the overall EU action, notably in the research area and asked whether the ETUCE had sufficient lobbying capacity in comparison to private interests lobbying groups.

Ryszard Mosakowski (NSZZ "Solidarnosc", PL) asked whether a non-EI member Polish organisation could participate in the ESSDE and if the integration of ETUCE into EI would change anything in relation to the functioning of the ESSDE.

Martin Rømer (ETUCE) answered some of the statements underlining that the context of the economic crisis should not prevent the ETUCE taking appropriate action, notably in relation to the ESSDE. The European Commission will be informed of the change in the EI/ETUCE structure and this will not affect the ESSDE in any way. Martin Rømer also stressed that the ETUCE action is complex and multi-dimensional given the systemic differences between the national realities of teacher trade-unionism.

Jörgen Lindholm (Lärarförbundet, SE) in response to the comments made, thanked the colleagues who had taken the floor for the important, albeit critical, support to the proposed new By-Laws and he particularly thanked all those colleagues who had been involved in a constructive dialogue in order to achieve the broad unity that could now be observed behind the proposal of the Committee/Executive Board.

The President called for a vote on the By-Laws and asked the tellers to verify if the required two-thirds majority in favor of the new By-Laws had been reached or if a roll-call vote would be necessary. The tellers reported that there was no doubt the two-thirds majority had been reached and the new By-Laws were subsequently declared as adopted by the Conference.

The President thanked the participants as well as the ETUCE Secretariat and the interpreters for their work and thereby closed the Conference.