

Education in Crisis Seminar Report

18-19 October 2012, Brussels, Belgium

Day 1: Thursday, 18 October

Welcome and Introduction

EI President and AEU General Secretary, **Susan Hopgood**, outlined the current crisis in education faced by students, parents, communities and teacher unions around the world, during her commencement speech. She spoke of government policies focused on austerity in the context of the current global economic crisis, the dismantling of core labour rights, the introduction of cost cutting measures such as the reduction of salaries and benefits. Alongside the cuts to education, private sector interests are pushing private management practices, including vouchers, performance pay and high stakes testing, which are having detrimental impacts on the right to education for all. The crisis is also having an impact on low-income countries as development aid for basic education decreasing at the same time as it is increasing for public-private partnerships. Hopgood stressed the importance of not only taking stock of these developments, but the need to strategize about the actions of teacher unions as response to the effects of the crisis.

Keynote speech:

Deborah Meier, Steinhart School of Education, New York, U.S.

Meier began with a speech detailing how she has crafted her passion for the teaching profession over the years. Meier addressed the fact that school curricula should be more focused around democracy, as opposed to standardized test scores. Meier argued on behalf of the importance of every child's unique learning capacities, and asserted that, *"schools are there to hone our capacity to be sceptically curious and empathetic...We don't need to 'learn how to learn'—The question facing us is how in face of the real world can we nourish rather than discourage our students' special talents."*

Meier returned to the fact that we as educators needed to acknowledge what students actually learn in schools about the fragility and importance of democracy, and how to harness it to its full capacity; and furthermore Meier questioned whether these students, the generation of tomorrow, thus had access to democracy, or whether democracy was reserved for the few capable of paying enough to learn about it. Meier then went on to explain how both the economic crisis and now austerity are impeding the learning process for many students today. Meier insisted that EI and its affiliates need to return to the idea of democracy for all, by all; EI and its affiliates need to cast-aside what Meier coined as "long-distance democracy". Meier stated that, *"the idea of directing schools towards teaching democracy is feared by many—possibly the majority...We can create "systems" that support democracy or ones that crush it, and all the in-betweens, but it starts with the "idea" of community, made up of individuals, of face-to-face relationships, of directly experiencing what trust and distrust are like...It cannot be learned "second-hand."*

Meier added that currently *"democracy is not working it is because we don't have enough of it."* Meier explained that everyone needs to re-examine their education and their learning process; that it is never-ending and EI and its affiliates can still endeavour to be the purveyors of change. Meier claimed that teachers should stop teaching for the test; that they should challenge their students to grow individually—to teach democracy by teaching democratically. Meier explained that until changes were made and until EI and its affiliates could strip down to the basics of democracy and trust each other as individuals—parents trusting teachers, teachers trusting school boards, and so

on—that people would never reach their full potentials as members of the human race. Meier concluded with the thought that, *“we have decisions to make. The future has not yet happened.”*

Discussion: Deborah Meier and John Bangs, Senior Consultant, EI

Restoring teachers’ autonomy: Unionists must advocate for democracy in the classroom

During the Q&A between **Deborah Meier** and **John Bangs (Senior Consultant, EI)**, Deborah Meier advocated that the Chicago teacher’s strike [on 9 September 2012] was a glimpse of the teaching profession reinventing itself via the efforts of strong unionism.

Patrick Roach (NASUWT, UK) responded, referencing the Chicago Teachers’ Union strike, by asserting that the crisis has forced teachers to respond to their worsening conditions, whereas before the crisis there was little being done about the issues that hindered teachers.

Jose Campos Trujillo (FECCOO, Spain) added that school board leaders, teachers, unionists, and government ministers needed to form a social pact in order to take hold of the social and political arenas wherein EI and its affiliates can enact positive change.

Dennis Van Roekel (NEA, US) addressed Deborah Meier with an inquiry into what she foresees preparation to be for teachers to be considered adequate and qualified to teach democratically.

Deborah Meier replied that EI and its affiliates should do away with recent approaches to that question; to part-time temporary teachers and teacher assessments based on standardized test scores. She argued that teachers need to be taught by other teachers, by unions and peers, what democracy is and thus how to implement it in their teaching methods to imprint on students the recipe to be democratic individuals.

Mugwena Maluleke (SADTU, South Africa) responded with: *“Since the beginning of time man has been called upon to meet different crises and to come up with solutions...Teachers have the powers to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. We need to give them that opportunity.”*

Gerald Craughwell (TUI, Ireland) pointed out that students’ creativity is being stifled; in its place conformity is being taught. Craughwell reaffirmed Deborah Meier’s earlier point that teachers need to return to the core principals of unionism so that they may educate each other to celebrate democracy and individuality in the classrooms.

Eva-Lis Sirén (Läraryförbundet, Sweden) suggested that unionists needed to address the issue of how to make politicians listen to the demands of teacher unions. Sirén advocated that the heart of democracy lies in how EI and its affiliates combat and overcome differences together as human beings.

John Bangs closed the discussion by commenting that: *“Schools are the seedbeds of democracy... I’ve always believed in optimism of the will and pessimism of the intellect.”*

First Round Table Discussion: Funding Public Services in the Future: Who will benefit and who will pay?

Moderator: Dennis Van Roekel, President, NEA, U.S.

Panellists: Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, ITUC; Peter Waldorff, General Secretary, PSI; David Robinson, Special Advisor, EI; and, Jim Baker, Coordinator, CGU

Public solidarity essential to the pursuit of equal access to public services for all

During the first Round Table Discussion, **Dennis Van Roekel** opened with the thought: “If we cheat the younger generations because of the economic crisis, what will the real long-term cost be...In the words of U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, ‘Progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much, but whether we provide enough for those who have too little.’” Van Roekel said that the economic crisis has generated a blame game and that the focus needs to be shifted to those who benefit from public services—we must all pay because we all benefit, and should benefit equally.

Sharan Burrow then went on to talk about how the “*worst generational tragedy of the 200 million people that are currently unable to find employment*” has generated an aura of desperation around the world. Burrow said that this desperation is impeding upon solidarity; that societies needed to stop pitting people against people, and unionize together.

Taking control of the market for a greater public investment in public services and education

David Robinson argued that governments still have funds available, and that they therefore should not excuse themselves from paying for public health care and education; in fact, it is absolutely essential that they do or they will never escape the financial holes that they have dug for themselves. Robinson said that instead of resorting to the austerities that have pulled so many societies backwards, that societies need to implement financial transaction taxes (FTTs) and close tax loopholes as a means to generate financial resources to be invested in public services.

Peter Waldorff picked up the discussion from there, adding that EI and its affiliates are letting the World Bank and the IMF educate the teachers and students of today. Waldorff added that many governments are heading in wrong directions—they are implementing austerities to enforce their conservative agendas that are leading to growing societal inequalities. Waldorff asserted that EI and its affiliates need to fight for unions’ collective-bargaining rights in an effort to combat these inequalities in societies today.

Jim Baker asserted that citizens needed to take control of the market that they have shaped their societies around and remember that they do have a vote when it comes to making the decisions that govern their countries. Baker closed by saying that people need to focus on being a part of the decisions that will shape society for future generations; that EI and its affiliates have to “*get back to the basics of democracy and why we care.*”

Dennis van Roekel directed the question to the participants of how much public interest is considered in the investments being made in public schools.

Senen Niño (FECODE, Colombia) argued that those states that still push neo-liberal reforms and IMF backed policies are un-democratic, and that the trade union movement is the last bastion that must stand against those types of agendas.

Abdulai Brima Koroma (SLTU, Sierra Leone) asserted that governments should fund public education and that every state should pay taxes so that can be possible.

Jim Baker pointed out that the discussions here concerning taxes and democracy and the importance of education cannot be forgotten after the crisis is over; that it is this determination that will stave off future crises.

Sharan Burrow commented that ratings agencies are responsible for a great deal of tax injustice and that citizens should actively question whether the money that is taxed is honestly redistributed into public services.

David Robinson closed with the suggestion that EI and its affiliates should concentrate on convincing finance and education ministers that *“Education can be a great equalizer if it is adequately funded and if we nurture creativity and talent.”*

Second Round Table Discussion: Strategies for exiting the crisis and policies for future economic growth

Moderator: Roland Schneider, Senior Policy Advisor, TUAC

Panellists: Martin Rømer, Director, ETUCE; Angelo Gavrielatos, President, AEU, Australia; Stella Maldonado General Secretary, CTERA, Argentina; and, Janka Takeva, President, SEB, Bulgaria

The different crises in education around the globe and union responses

During the second Round Table Discussion, **Martin Rømer** focused on the current debt crisis situation in Europe. Rømer stated that the European crisis wasn't created by Europe alone, but rather through the bail outs of European banks; the financial crisis has turned into a sovereign crisis. The situation is severe in many countries: Spain yield on bonds is very high. The “Troika” of the European Central Bank, European Commission, and the European Monetary Fund has been pushing for austerity in Europe. Rømer also discussed Greece's role in the debt crisis, and the fact that the IMF has estimated that by 2020 Greece will still be at a debt level of 120 per cent. Rømer argued that political unions needed to be established between countries and that governments needed to be punished for defaulting on their promises. Rømer closed by affirming the previous points made about taxation as a means to stimulate the economy as well as the need for the adoption of a new framework for the allocation of structural funds so that they may be directed to the correct places.

Angelo Gavrielatos discussed the recent success of Australian education unions in their mobilization of the “I give a Gonski” campaign, which pushed for 5 million more Australian Dollars to go towards education. Gavrielatos recognized the fact that Australia hasn't been impacted as negatively as Spain, Italy or Greece has. Gavrielatos also highlighted the fact that there has been a growing privatization of education in Australia, and that there is huge inequity within the system; huge achievement gaps are huge between economically advantaged and disadvantaged children, particularly for aboriginal children.

Stella Maldonado talked about the progression of the education system in Argentina, and how Argentinians overcame a period of financial crisis during the 1980s. Maldonado detailed the high and low points for Argentinian unionists during periods of dictatorships and during social movements. Maldonado closed by celebrating the newly elected President and Education Minister in their recent

developments wherein the education allocation was increased to 6.5 per cent, school facilities have been built and the quality of teacher training is improving.

Janka Takeva directed the focus to Eastern Europe, particularly to Latvia, Romania and Bulgaria. She attested to the fact that Eastern Europe has been the target of a great deal of austerities that have severely limited education budgets, frozen or reduced teachers' salaries, and negatively impacted learning environments and working conditions. Takeva outlined the fact that inequality between the Eastern European countries has grown out of the economic crisis and the recent austerities that have been implemented. Takeva noted that the effects have devastated not only the teaching profession, but also whole societies due to the growing migration of civilians in search of better living conditions, jobs and wages.

Juçara Maria Dutra Vieira (CNTE, Brazil) responded by commenting that Brazil could be a point of reference for the rest of the world due to the success of the Brazilian unions in securing 5.6 per cent of the GDP, up from 3.6 per cent, for education on the way to their 10 per cent goal.

Abdelaziz Iouy (SNE-FDT, Morocco) shifted the focus to African countries by insisting that the impact of the economic crisis took a different form in developing countries, especially in those which do not participate in democracy.

Roland Schneider closed with a comment about finding more convincing ways for exiting the crisis, and naming a paradigm shift in economic policies. He pointed out that "*austerians*" needed to stop digging themselves deeper into holes.

Day 2: Friday, 19 October

Welcome and Introduction

El General Secretary **Fred van Leeuwen** introduced to the first key note speaker Carol Bellamy. In his introduction, Van Leeuwen raised the point that the *“teaching profession is not just sitting at the table, but also advocating governments to pressure governments to stick to what they promised.”*

Keynote speaker Carol Bellamy, Chair of the Global Partnership for Education

Carol Bellamy’s speech addressed the importance of achieving the EFA goals and the MDGs by 2015. She acknowledged the progress that has been made, for example the number of children out of primary school in sub-Saharan Africa has been cut down by at least a third since 2000; the point remains, however, that there are still 21 million children out of primary school, and girls still represent the majority of those children. Bellamy stated, *“Yes, more students have been enrolled at the primary level, but it doesn’t stop there—we must not lose momentum.”*

The point was raised that education might be losing its place on the global stage. Development aid and education funding levels are dropping around world; there is a creeping complacency about the importance of education. Bellamy suggested that quality needs to be considered more carefully when striving to achieve the EFA goals and MDGs: *“Quality is what keeps a child in the classroom, giving them the education they need to thrive and prosper in later life.”* Cuts in aid for education and in education budgets are creating a disastrous situation for not only the generation of tomorrow, but also that of today; in many countries that are currently plagued by conflict, education is the only positive force that many have to combat these conditions.

Too many teachers are undervalued in their profession. Bellamy made the point that too many teachers are currently living below the poverty line, and that those teachers are finding themselves increasingly faced with more students and less materials with which to teach them. The profession is beyond the issue of being unattractive in some countries, and consequently teacher shortages are growing.

There has been a significant amount of progress made, however, in countries such as Ethiopia, Zambia or Uganda, which has, for example, introduced tax refunds for registered businesses that import education materials. Ban Ki-moon, the UN’s new Secretary General, has also pushed education to the forefront. Bellamy reinforced Moon’s three issues of importance when it comes to Education First as a means of reenergizing the struggle to keep education a top priority for all societies around the world: first, put every child in school; second, improve the quality of learning; third, foster global citizenship. The myth of there not being enough money for education must dissipate.

Carol Bellamy closed in the words of Ban Ki-moon: *“Education must fully assume its central role in helping people to forge more just, peaceful, tolerant, and inclusive societies. It must give people the understanding, skills and values they need to cooperate in resolving the interconnected challenges of the twenty-first century”.*

Q&A: Carol Bellamy and Monique Fouilhoux, Chair, Global Campaign for Education

Social dialogue at the local level will facilitate awareness about the importance of education

During the Q&A between **Carol Bellamy** and **Monique Fouilhoux (Chair, GPE)**, Fouilhoux asked Bellamy what organizations, NGOs, unions and teachers as individuals can do to raise awareness about maintaining the momentum in promoting the importance of adequate funding for education across the globe. Bellamy responded with the fact that the numbers of mobilization are not as important as international dialogue; and dialogue at the local level is critical.

David Edwards (EI) commented on Education First, and asked how the GPE is taking steps towards ensuring that young people are provided with tools and skills to access and engage democracy, and thus their societies.

Bellamy stated that teachers have been the focus of the GPE more recently. The question of whether or not youth is attaining the level of education that would prepare them to engage democracy is difficult because there's no current way to measure that level. The ability to measure this kind of result is still in its infancy, and this is something the GPE is interested in developing.

Fouilhoux urged the participants to carry this dialogue to their local levels in an effort to prevent a growing complacency about education.

Patrick Roach said that teachers as individuals also must occupy a space larger than their class rooms, calling for increased social dialogue at the local level.

Are private sector investments in education leading to the privatization of education?

Fred van Leeuwen asked Bellamy what the input of the private sector is today in the EFA movement, and if governments may have less influence on what is happening in education; if that was good for democracy.

Carol Bellamy responded that education is a public good and it therefore should be engaged by all actors to ensure adequate funding. In countries like Haiti, for example, education is funded predominantly by the private sector; rearranging governments is not something we should necessarily focus all of our efforts on, rather we should promote dialogue between the public and private, so that they may work together in some cases to provide sufficient funding for quality education.

Deborah Meier raised the issue that the funding and interest from the private sector is not something that the GPE, EI or anyone else should not be concerned about. Too often the private interest in education lies in deciding the policies that govern it and that this is distracting from democracy in public schools.

Global tax justice can provide the necessary funding for education and other public services

Roger Ferrari (SNES-FSU, France) commented that the real issues with development aid for African countries in particular is that donor countries cannot be sure that their contributions are going towards important initiatives like funding education. Ferrari suggested that international Financial Transaction Taxes on exports from those countries like Congo might generate more honest income that can be redirected towards development aid for education.

David Archer highlighted the importance of having scrutiny when reviewing governments' budgets vs. governments' actions; perhaps those governments which are not honestly allocating funds should be exposed. Archer also argued for the focus to be centred on international financial transaction taxes as opposed to domestic value added taxes as a more equitable way to stimulate economies.

First Round Table Discussion of 19 October: Impact of the economic crisis on education and development.

Moderator: Haldis Holst, Vice President, EI

Panellists: David Archer, Head of Programme Development, ActionAid; Teopista Birungi, General Secretary, UNATU, Uganda; Marième Dansokho, General Secretary, SYPROS, Senegal; and Karen Mundy, Director, OISE CIDEDEC, Canada

Haldis Holst initiated the discussion by pointing out that from 2010-11 development aid decreased in 14 out of 23 OECD countries; the issue was again raised that teachers and unions needed to facilitate better dialogue with their governments and other organizations as a means to combat the cuts in not only development aid, but also to the education sector as a whole.

Karen Mundy discussed the poverty paradox of foreign aid within the context of the global economic crisis; in poorest countries EI and its affiliates have to think about global institutions and development aid differently. Mundy commented that the private sector should eventually be rolled into the public sector; Canadian education unions are currently fighting to see this through in their country.

David Archer made the point governments should increase education funding in difficult economic times as a means to prevent the private-sector from dominating education systems.

Amadou Boureima Abdul Aziz (SYNAFEN, Niger) suggested that finding a solution cannot be accomplished solely at the trade union level; that yes, there's a role, but international, economic, political, social entities must all intervene in order to remedy the situation of education systems in many countries.

Under-qualified teachers are compromising the quality of education in African countries

Teopista Birungi outlined the contradictory policies that are plaguing many African countries, particularly Uganda. Primary enrolment has tripled, but it has put an enormous stress on the teaching profession; the stress on teachers has caused a serious teacher shortage, and short-term contract teachers are being implemented as a means of addressing that shortage. Birungi stressed the need for teacher unions to work together with civil society; unions should provide leadership within their societies.

Marième Dansokho pointed out that teachers are now teachers by default in Senegal, because often they require no professional qualifications to be considered teachers. As the profession is eroding away, teachers have less and less concern over whether their students are learning, rather they are more concerned with the fact that they cannot eat because they are not paid enough; *"teachers feel unwell in their skins."* Not only is there an issue of contract teachers be under-qualified, but there

are also volunteer teachers that are often not even paid, let alone qualified. These issues at the primary level have inevitably affected secondary and tertiary quality and enrolment levels negatively.

Investing in teachers to challenge inequality

Karen Mundy asserted that schools are the recipients of inequality, not the solutions. Teachers must be educated to be more capable of explaining, facing and this dispelling inequality from their classrooms so that they may produce students who engage their societies in a similar way.

Grahame McCulloch (NTEU, Australia) asked what domestic investment in poor countries means for education and skills.

Odile Cordelier (SNES-FSU, France) posed a question about what some of the ideas were in terms of devising drafting training programs to better qualify teachers in the profession as well as how those programs were to be devised and funded.

Marième Dansokho said that unionists in Senegal are pushing governments to re-open regional teacher training centres to provide teachers with the minimum qualifications that were agreed upon by both teacher unions and the Education Minister; they have been able to get nine months of training as a result from that, but there are still some teachers who don't receive any training.

Teopista Birungi argued that the investments need to go toward teachers at the primary and secondary levels—towards updating their skills, as opposed to higher education, because those students who are unable to pass the first levels will inevitably not carry on to the third. Often times the investments in education in the African countries are going to the wrong places. Birungi said that EI's "Quality Educators Project" is a good initiative towards tackling this issue; teachers with better education are better suited to mobilize.

Plenary Discussion of 19 October: Education in Crisis: Where do EI and its affiliates go from here?

Moderator: David Edwards, Deputy General Secretary, EI

Panellists: Mugwena Maluleke, General Secretary, SADTU, South Africa; Patrick Roach, Deputy General Secretary, NASUWT, U.K.; Eva-Lis Sirén, President, Lärarförbundet, Sweden; and Grahame McCulloch, General Secretary, NTEU, Australia

How can EI mobilize with its affiliates to better promote quality education around the world?

Mugwena Maluleke proposed three solutions about how to proceed: the first solution is to resolve communication at the international level. EI must be able to package the message in terms of relevance, coherence, and timing. The second concerns the debate about whether or not EI and its affiliates want a private sector investment. The third is that EI should assist African countries in developing a campaign that would assist in the institutionalizing of social dialogue. The teachers must be involved in terms of each and every decision that governments make.

Patrick Roach asserted that education was in a state of shock, and that many teacher unions in the U.K. are mobilizing against the privatization of education. He urged the importance of teacher unions being a part of the "big idea;" and that the solutions to be decided should be guided by fundamental

values about what education and public services are for. He said that teachers as individuals also must occupy a space larger than their class rooms, calling for increased social dialogue at the local level.

Eva-Lis Sirén pointed out the need for a positive campaign, built from the bottom-up. Teachers should refuse to be victimized. It is only the national organization that can implement a campaign in the context that EI and its affiliates have. The IMF is beginning to reconsider austerity; this is something teacher unions need to regard as a success as well as platform to expand upon.

Grahame McCulloch addressed the fact that the crisis has a different face all over the world; the crisis of how to build stronger teacher unions versus the crisis of the teacher shortages, etc. McCulloch explained that there is a huge disconnect between the European Union and the elite decision makers, and that this in of itself a crisis. McCulloch pointed out that EI represents one-sixth of the global trade union movement, which is an enormous position of influence. McCulloch suggested that all unions under the umbrella of EI should focus more on working together to have their messages better heard and understood; EI and its affiliates have to come together with other labour organizations, NGOs, etc. to form alliances that are based on supporting public services, as opposed to being based solely on coalitions. McCulloch disagreed with Deborah Meier in her point about the fact that technology was replacing teachers in school; he suggested that technology is merely another tool which teachers can grow with and utilize in their class rooms.

Odile Cordelier (SNES-FSU, France) urged EI to consider the fundamental values of education and public services, which are currently under threat in several OECD countries, in terms of operation. EI should work to establish more dialogue with organizations like the OECD.

Jens Vraa-Jensen (DM, Denmark) suggested that solutions should be presented as being more positive, and not in defence of a position that draws attention to teachers as being victims. Knowledge is developing, and EI should focus on fighting for a more balanced situation in a society that's based on a market economy, as most societies are currently.

Maria Teresa Cabrera Ulloa (ADP, Dominican Republic) EI and its affiliates must be able to forge extraordinary allies in order to bring in the most diverse forms of mobilization; this is what politicians see and listen to. Cabrera Ulloa echoed the idea that EI and its affiliates needed to have faith and hope in each other, so that they can grow, because growth is power; that power is linked to the capacity to mobilize.

Daniele Di Mitri (OBESSU, Belgium) stated that the core of this debate is to give a general response to the attack on education systems around the world; EI and its affiliates should be able to combine the struggle for free public quality education with the other struggles, such as the struggle for fair and better jobs, or the struggle of the defence of environments. Di Mitri agreed that there is a big alliance between the politicians, banks and the troika, and that they are the ones making the decisions. Di Mitri asked how EI and its affiliates, as well as those not affiliated with EI, could unify in their efforts and demonstrations in defence of quality public education and democracy.

Patrick Roach said that there wasn't a "quick-fix" in terms of ending austerity around the world or better unification and mobilization. Roach stated EI and its affiliates have to be clever about the way to make those arguments, and who to make those arguments with.

Mugwena Maluleke argued against the "Troika" deciding on behalf of the general public, because the public wellbeing is not considered in those decisions. Maluleke stated that teachers must reoccupy the teaching profession; teachers and teacher unions must fight to make the decisions that affect their class rooms.

Grahame McCulloch raised the issue that EI's affiliates need to find a better way to support EI, and that the leaders of EI's affiliate organizations have knowledge of EI, but in the lower positions, there's little consciousness of EI's work. McCulloch stated that EI and its affiliates needed to prompt national leaders to open their minds to EI; this could provide better access to those in lower positions in those organizations that are affiliated with EI; think globally; act locally. EI and its affiliates should also support the interest of wider social layers.

David Edwards closed the session by addressing a more recent success of EI and its Latin American affiliates on the release and subsequent efforts to ensure the safety of Miguel Beltran upon returning to his academic research in Colombia. This is one example of EI engaging the local level and government in dialogue; advocating against the unjust working conditions, treatment, imprisonment, abuse, etc. of teachers at the local level is the first step in ensuring that those practices are eradicated from the global perspective of the teaching profession.

Conclusions

In his closing speech, **Fred van Leeuwen (EI)** reiterated Deborah Meier's words when he stated that trade unions must "preserve the idea and practice of education as a democratic space." Van Leeuwen noted six main ideas that arose from the Seminar: one, EI and its affiliates need to expose the failures of austerity policies around the world as well as promote alternatives to austerity; two, a greater investment in public services like education during a time of financial crisis, unemployment crisis, etc. is necessary to prevent future crises; three, investing in public services is the way to address the global unemployment crisis; four, "*investments in education reduce poverty and inequality, raise overall societal health, and overcome violence and conflict*;" five, EI and its affiliates need to lobby for tax justice, close tax loopholes, and abolish tax havens so that those billions of dollars of revenue can be invested in education and public services; and six, "*protecting labour and collective-bargaining rights is vital to public service workers, and fair labour laws and strong trade unionism promote greater equality and growth*."

Van Leeuwen stated that a World Day of Action was to be observed in September 2013; this will be a time for EI and its affiliates to mobilize, form a new social contract, and reclaim the democratic spaces that education and public services should occupy.