



# EXECUTIVE BOARD RESOLUTION ON PROTECTING REFUGEE CHILDREN FROM SYRIA AND IRAQ

**The Executive Board of Education International, meeting in Brussels, from 21 – 23 October:**

**Notes with concern, that:**

- a) The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) reports that the number of refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced people worldwide has, for the first time in the post-World War II era, exceeded 50 million people, and that more than 32,000 people were forced to flee every day last year;
- b) children, the most vulnerable group in times of conflict and displacement, now make up more than half of the world's refugees;
- c) the situation in the Middle East, with the crises in Syria and Iraq, is particularly grave and that the UNCHR estimates that every minute another child is forced to flee his or her country in the region;
- d) UNCHR has registered over 3.2 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt and that this has an enormous impact on the economies and societies of the receiving countries;
- e) that only one in two Syrian refugee children in the neighbouring countries is receiving education and that refugee children are at increased risk of child labour and recruitment, and more vulnerable to violence, including sexual and gender-based violence;

**Considering that**

- f) education is a basic human right for all children and should be seen as a priority emergency response in order to save lives, protect children and enhance self-reliance;
- g) education unions are well placed to engage in country participatory and consultative processes and to develop inclusive frameworks to ensure that the human rights of all children, including their right to education, is respected;

**Commends**

- h) EI affiliates in Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq for their engagement in demanding and developing education services for refugee children in their countries;

**The Education International Executive Board**

**Demands that:**

- (i) governments, intergovernmental organisations and the international community generally increase their support for refugee and internally displaced children, and ensure their right to education;
- (ii) education services and facilities are provided for all refugee children which are relevant, safe and secure;



- (iii) education unions in the concerned countries are consulted on plans and programs for education of refugee children and on the potential impact such emergency plans could have on existing education systems.