

September 10, 2009  
Bratislava, Slovakia

Dear Ronnie,

I have closely followed the debate surrounding the new by-laws. Our organization, and myself personally, would like to see the process finished at the Warsaw meeting in November. Then we could – with full focus and determination – attend to pressing issues since crisis still grips the globe.

We hope for a consensus. There should be no winners or losers in this debate – in spite of sharp contrasts in the positions staked out so far.

I act on my promise made in Warsaw in sending this letter, our organization's response. There will no doubt be further discussion in Dubrovnik resulting in new ideas and changes.

I realize that by then the September 11 deadline and the Bureau meeting will have passed. Nevertheless, the October meeting in Brussels might see a new consensus emerge even if proposals are voiced on the spot.

My opinions and the proposal from our organization stem from the following principles:

1. I recognize that there may be one ETUCE organization in Europe.
2. All European countries – irrespective of EU/EFTA membership – should be represented in the bodies and structures of the new ETUCE so that all are on top of information flow and may campaign on issues which are common to all.
3. It is important that countries do not wade into each others' competences. I agree with Annex A amendments. EU decisions and directives may be subject to discussion held only by countries which they concern. This issue is dealt with in the by-laws, but it receives insubstantial treatment.
4. I uphold *upwards-from-the-bottom* as paramount principle in trade union philosophy. Trade union structures should be in accordance with EI Constitution but should in no way be subject to approval by the EI World Executive Board.
5. In agreement with the view that there should be a clear distinction between the administrative/executive functions of the principal executive officer of the new ETUCE and the political leadership roles of the president and vice-presidents I propose that president and vice-presidents be elected by the ETUCE Conference. Regional director (ETUCE General Secretary) should be installed into office by the

ETUCE Committee – as proposed in my amendment and as opposed to the circulated by-laws.

6. I subscribe to the idea that six vice-presidents are sufficient while it is worth to consider having one vice-president represent higher education and another one represent new EU-member countries that joined the bloc since 2004. These nations have experienced a totalitarian era followed by a unique transition to democracy – a process well grasped by someone who comes from the region. Therefore, my proposal is to have six vice-presidents. One representing higher education, at least one from an EU member state which joined since 2004, at least one from non-EU/EFTA countries, at least two from EU/EFTA countries that joined the EU before 2004. I suggest keeping the men/women ratio as proposed.
7. I propose extending the official languages to include Russian.
8. I propose tightening supervision over dues.
9. I agree with the transitional staffing arrangements.

### Specific proposals for amendments

#### **3. Aims and Objectives**

- (a) To promote and implement the Aims of Education International/(EI) in the European region:***
- (b) To advise the EI Executive Board on policies and activities to be undertaken by EI in the European Region, including the development of responses to proposals and policies which emanate from other international bodies such as OECD or UNESCO..***
- (c) To draw up, develop and maintain positive relationships with organizations in Europe which have similar aims and objectives, including ETUC and PERC/ITUC.***
- (d) To develop and promote policies in relation to the Council of Europe, and any such other European inter-governmental body which addresses issues of concern to education unions.***
- (e) To promote the development of strong independent and democratic education unions throughout the European Region.***

*All ETUCE members shall vote on articles (a) – (e) in accordance with 5.4.*

- (f) To develop and promote policies in relation to European Union (EU) and EFTA matters.*
- (g) To represent member organizations in EU consultative structures and at EU meetings.*
- (h) To respond to proposals, policies and decisions of the EU affecting the members of education unions in Europe.*
- (i) To develop and implement projects and programs designed to further the interests of education unions in the European Region and, especially, in the EU/EFTA countries.*
- (j) To be the social partner for education workers in the EU Social Dialogue process.*

*Note:*

*Only EU/EFTA member countries shall vote on articles (f) – (j) in accordance with 5.4 section (b).*

**Rationale:**

It is essential that countries do not interfere in matters that pertain only to some. This is my reason to split aims/objectives into two groups – one that includes an area common to all and another which pertains to EU/EFTA member organizations.

**6.2. ii)**

*six (6) Vice-Presidents, at least one of whom shall represent higher education sector; at least one of whom shall come from an EU country which joined the bloc since 2004; at least one of whom is from a non- EU/EFTA country; at least two of whom are from an EU/EFTA country which joined the bloc before 2004.*

**Rationale:**

I enlist to the view that six vice-presidents are sufficient while it is worth to consider having one vice-president represent higher education and another one represent new EU-member countries that joined the bloc since 2004. These nations have experienced totalitarianism followed by a unique transition to democracy – a process well grasped by someone who comes from the region. So my proposal is to have six vice-presidents. One representing higher education, at least one from an EU member state which joined the bloc since 2004, at least one from non-EU/EFTA countries, at least two from EU/EFTA countries that joined the EU before 2004. I suggest keeping the men/women ratio as proposed.

## **11.2 Appointment**

*(a) The Regional Director (ETUCE General Secretary) shall be appointed by the EI General Secretary, in accordance with the decision taken by the ETUCE Committee.*

*(b) The selection of the Regional Director (ETUCE General Secretary) shall be carried out by the ETUCE Committee by conducting an election. Same rules apply as in the election of President and Vice-Presidents by the ETUCE Conference.*

### **Rationale:**

In the original provision – 11.2.(b) – only two ETUCE officials, as members of the selection panel, were involved in selecting the regional director. The proposal was then passed to ETUCE Committee for endorsement. We suggest that all ETUCE member countries have a say in proposing a candidate. We find it more democratic and equitable.

**Article (c) is dropped.**

### **Rationale:**

It is inadmissible that the EI Executive Board should decide the appointment of the regional director of ETUCE since it includes persons who have no power to make such appointment – by making such appointments they would abrogate the very foundations of trade union philosophy *upwards-from-the-bottom*.

## **13. Official languages**

I propose to make the following change:

***The Official Languages of ETUCE shall be English, French, Spanish, German and Russian. Translation into English, French and Russian will be provided normally at ETUCE activities. Translation into Spanish, German or other European languages may be provided at conferences and meetings should the financial resources permit.***

**Rationale:**

The ratio of members in the various structures who are able to communicate in English and French is around two thirds followed by Russian with about one third, including those who understand it but do not speak it fluently. Participants for whom it is not made possible to listen to discussions in a language they understand are in an unequal position to others. We think it important that no large group is discriminated against in debate.

**12. Finances**

Add the following article (f) to the existing provision:

***(f) They shall check the proper amount of dues to be paid to ETUCE by a member organization if previous audit shows that payment of a given organization was not made in accordance with the By-Laws.***

**Rationale:**

Our organization recognizes a degree of solidarity in membership dues payments. On the other hand, one needs to acknowledge that many countries do not keep to the provisions set out in the By-Laws. Therefore, we maintain that the By-Laws should anchor measured oversight in dues payments.

I endorse the attached transitional staffing arrangements articles (i) and (j).

Sincerely,

Jan Gasperan  
President  
OZPSaV Slovakia