



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

First session of the Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Parliamentarians for Education

FLACPED I

4-5 May 2010 – Santiago de Chile

Report

The first Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Parliamentarians for Education (FLACPED), organized by UNESCO, was opened in Santiago, Chile, on 4 May 2010. The ceremony was attended by guests including the honourable parliamentarians of the region and by officials from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations system in Chile.

The opening addresses were delivered by the Assistant Director-General for External Relations and Cooperation and Representative of the UNESCO Director-General, Mr. Ahmed Sayyad, and by Mr. Jorge Pizarro, President of the Senate of the Republic of Chile and President of the Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO).

After the Forum's opening ceremony, the members of its Executive Bureau were elected, as follows:

- President: Mexico
- Vice-President 1: El Salvador
- Vice-President 2: Jamaica
- Rapporteur: Paraguay

The representative of UNESCO's Sector for External Relations and Cooperation then outlined the Organization's global initiatives to promote partnerships with parliamentarians, objectives, policies, strategies and expected outcomes. Successful experiences in the area of cooperation between parliamentarians and UNESCO were also outlined, such as the case of the Standing Parliamentary Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO, within the Romanian Parliament.

They were followed by statements on the situation of education at the global and regional levels, reporting on the progress and achievements made by all Member States of UNESCO with regard to the Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals. Parliamentarians were also informed of educational initiatives promoted by PARLATINO in cooperation with UNESCO, an analysis conducted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) poverty-reduction strategies through education, a UNICEF assessment of access to quality basic education and the way in which the definitions of "basic" and "quality" are understood according to the situation in the various countries.

On 5 May, the parliamentary representatives adopted the FLACPED Statutes.

Participants discussed the above-mentioned issues throughout the day and the matters on which they voiced the greatest concern may be summarized as follows:

1. the role of the public sector as guarantor of the right to quality education for all; the role of the private sector in education and its relations with the public sector; public and private sector education and Member States' commitments to achieving the

education for all goals; the level of coordination that is required and the standards that should be considered;

2. the quality of education, particularly – though not only – at the secondary level, and its link to the world of work; the promotion of technical and vocational education (TVET) and its role in the development of life skills and abilities; curriculum design methods that build bridges for young people to pursue lifelong learning, secure decent employment and learn to live together;
3. the importance of educational content and the need for reform in that area;
4. strengthening of the teaching profession and of educational strategies for effective learning; means of improving relations between governments (ministries and parliamentarians) and teachers' unions and of working together;
5. investment in education, that is investing not only more, but also more effectively, and establishing accountability mechanisms;
6. proposed comparative study of legislation, taking the region's successful experiments into account;
7. early childhood education and care, the importance of this level of education to raising the quality and sustainability of learning at all levels, and the need to strengthen national policies in this area;
8. emergency education and the role of UNESCO, governments and parliamentarians; UNESCO and its conflict and natural disaster preparedness and response plans designed to preserve education-for-all achievements in all circumstances;
9. the challenges of including the private sector in higher education provision;
10. training geared to children's natural inclinations;
11. causes and consequences of school violence.

One expected outcome of the meeting is that on returning to their respective parliaments, parliamentarians will promote legislation consistent with the issues listed above. With regard to emergencies, for instance, they could consider national legislation enabling the education system to deal with natural disasters and respond appropriately. They could also consider strengthening existing legislation to promote quality education for all, among other matters.

The Statutes of the Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Parliamentarians for Education (FLACPED) were adopted today by all Forum participants.

The parliamentarians participating in the first Forum elected the following Members of the Executive Bureau of the Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Parliamentarians for Education (FLACPED):

- President: Mexico
- Vice-President: Ecuador
- Vice-President: Jamaica
- Vice-President: Nicaragua

5 May 2010.



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Declaration

We, Latin-American and Caribbean Parliamentarians, founding members of the Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Parliamentarians for Education, met in Santiago de Chile on the 4th and 5th May 2010 at the invitation of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO):

Convinced of the importance of the achievement of Education for All (EFA) as a basic and enabling human right; as an essential condition for economic growth, poverty reduction and for inclusive and sustainable human development;

Recognising the intrinsic link and mutually reinforcing interrelationship between education and the other internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) relating to poverty and hunger eradication, gender equality and empowerment of women, reduction of child mortality, improvement of maternal health, fighting HIV/AIDS and disease and ensuring environmental sustainability;

Acknowledging that the primary role of the members of the Forum of Latin-American and Caribbean Parliamentarians for Education is to defend the right to education and contribute to the attainment of the six EFA goals by 2015; supporting the development of the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean – PRELAC, led by UNESCO through its Regional bureau of Education in Santiago, Chile;

Considering the significant progress accomplished in expanding access to primary education in the Latin-American and Caribbean region and nonetheless the entrenched inequalities and associated challenges to governance that jeopardise the timely achievement of the six EFA goals, on the other hand;

Aware of the threat of a reversal of the gains of the last decade, as a consequence of global challenges, including the impact of the global economic downturn;

Persuaded that in the current context, parliaments should remain committed to the attainment of educational goals, defend human development gains, and prioritize counter-cyclical investment in education that protect the poorest and most vulnerable groups in light of the Addis Ababa Declaration adopted at the Ninth Meeting of the High-Level Group on EFA;

Reaffirming our commitment to the internationally agreed education goals and in particular to the realisation of the six EFA goals by 2015, and recalling our following previous commitments as embodied in:

- The Dakar Framework for Action, World Education Forum, 2000,
- The Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean - PRELAC
- The Millennium Declaration, UN Millennium Summit, 2000.

The FLACPED is committed to promote information that contributes to raise awareness on the effects of climate change, teach on environmental and biodiversity conservation; and recovery of traditional knowledge:

Welcoming the joint endeavours of UNESCO and the FLACPED, as well as other EFA partners in the region, to address the challenges of realising the EFA goals in Latin-American and Caribbean region and the associated efforts to enhance cooperation in education at inter-parliamentary level

With a view to ensuring the achievement of the six EFA goals by 2015, we pledge to:

1. Uphold our commitments to provide political support to EFA and the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC) and facilitate the mobilization of adequate and effective financing for its achievement by 2015.
2. Contribute to the development of the PRELAC agenda and the recommendations made by the Ministers of Education of the PRELAC Intergovernmental Committee that monitors it, aiming to achieve synergies with the various efforts that countries are already carrying out and support the design and implementation of necessary initiatives to continue progress within the framework of this regional agreement led by the Regional Bureau of Education of UNESCO in LAC.
3. Defend the right to education, and promote legislation that ensures **compulsory, free, basic education; universal access, permanence and completion of primary and secondary education of quality and relevance;**
4. Support the assurance of finance in relation to **gender equality** in educational access and achievement, as special needs education for those who require it;
5. Improve the environment for **quality teaching and learning**, by ensuring the elaboration and implementation of appropriate teacher policies, as well as monitoring learning outcomes;
6. Strengthen our efforts to combat and eradicate illiteracy through increased funding of **literacy** programmes, adult education initiatives; stronger partnerships with non-formal education providers, more effective programme delivery, and the promotion of literate environments;
7. Adopt **inter sectoral policies** and generate **legislative proposals to eliminate barriers**, within and outside the education sector, that keep children out of school, including poverty, child labour, malnutrition, all kinds of discrimination, ill health and disability; and special educational needs;
8. Ensure that national education plans and strategies address **national priorities** and needs comprehensively, and that they are aligned with wider **poverty reduction** strategies that link education to other areas such as socio-economic development, health, nutrition and the environment;
9. Foster public policies that result in more budgetary resources destined at **reducing inequalities** in education, by facilitating an equal access to early childhood care and education, and by setting "equity targets"; supporting strategies that conduct **gender equality** in educational access and achievement. All this, in response to appropriate monitoring of public investment to ensure accountability;

10. Encourage initiatives to address learning needs of young people and adults through the affordable provision of **post primary learning opportunities**, second chance strategies, including secondary education and skills development programmes as well as **life long learning**.
11. Support the development of targeted **social programmes** aimed at protecting the educational progress of the last decade and providing adequate support to the most vulnerable, disadvantaged, social groups which are vulnerable to the impact of the global economic crisis.
12. Enhance **inter-parliamentary cooperation** between our countries, and strengthen our collaboration with the UN agencies, including the five multilateral organizations that convened the World Education Forum (UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, and the World Bank), regional partners, multi-and bi-lateral donors, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector in Latin-American and Caribbean region;
13. Recognizing the role of citizens in the maintenance of public policies, and create the spaces for participation in the construction of such policies;

In view of our duties and obligations,

We affirm to pursue the above vision and strategies with renewed vigour and commitment by pledging our complete and strong endorsement to the present Declaration, which gives foundation the Forum of Latin-American and Caribbean Parliamentarians for Education.

The present Declaration is adopted on May 5th 2010 in Santiago de Chile.



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STATUTES

PREAMBULE

We, Parliamentarians of Latin America and Caribbean, representing 23 countries, meeting at Santiago de Chile, from May 4 to 5, 2010.

Decided to create the Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Parliamentarians for Education and, for this purpose, approve the Statutes.

Considering that Education is a fundamental and essential human right and a public right, which should be promoted at the constitutional level, guaranteed to each individual in an equal manner and effectively implemented by our education policies,

Noting the low schooling and literacy rates in our countries and the particularly serious situation of discrimination and access for reasons of gender, ethnicity, disability and others;

Convinced of the central role and responsibility of the **Parliaments of Latin America and Caribbean which should devote themselves to finding and implementing suitable solutions** within a harmonized framework to effectively fight against ignorance, illiteracy and poverty while, at the same time, continuing to fulfil their mission to legislate and to supervise the Executive, and in favour of increasing the years of compulsory schooling for all,

Resolved to undertake relevant actions in line with the resolutions of international conferences and in congruence with the Durban Statement of Commitments which stipulates:

“We resolve to involve the entire civil society, as well as non governmental organizations, the private sector, media organizations, parliamentarians, other ministries, religious organizations, teachers and parents advisory organizations in the planning and execution of programmes and in the mobilization of resources, both financial and human, to that end. The furtherance of decentralization and greater sharing of responsibilities are helpful measures in this regard”.

Decide to create the Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Parliamentarians for Education and, to that effect, adopt these statutes.

CHAPTER I – GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1: Nomenclature

There is established an organization named Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Parliamentarians for Education (FLACPED). In the States whose National Parliaments are Members of the Forum, FLACPED enjoys the highest legal capacity recognized according to the constitutions of Member States and by national legislations.

Article 2: Definitions

For the purpose of the implementation of these Statutes, the following definitions shall have effect:

- Latin American and Caribbean : any Parliamentarian of the Latin-American and Caribbean countries,
- Member : any Parliament that acceded to the Forum,
- Parliamentarian: any person or group of persons elected or appointed to a national legislative body acting in a national Parliament, a Senate, a Federal Chamber or any other national legislative body,
- Education Parliamentary Committee: any Parliamentary Committee set up by a National Parliament to deal with matters relating to education or any similar Parliamentary organization accepted by the General Assembly of FLACPED.

Article 3: Headquarters

The headquarters of the Forum shall be located within the section for UNESCO Clubs and New Partnerships, Division of Relations with Organizations and New Partnerships, sector for External Relations and cooperation of UNESCO in Paris.

It may be transferred to any other place following a decision by the General Assembly of FLACPED.

In case of emergency, the decision to transfer may be taken by the Bureau. It will, however, need to be validated at the next session of the General Assembly of FLACPED.

Article 4: Emblem and Official Seal

The emblem and the official seal shall be adopted by the General Assembly of FLACPED on a proposal from the Bureau.

Article 5: General Objectives

The Forum's mission is to:

- i. Promoting Education for peace, in order to help in the emergence of democratic, pluralistic and friendly societies where Human Rights are respected;
- ii. Facilitate functioning of a Parliamentary Committee for Education;
- iii. Establish in any other national or international parliamentary organization a structure for exchange and encounter between parliamentarians with aim to sensitize them on educational issues and to facilitate the coordination of their activities;
- iv. Engage in capacity strengthening of Parliamentarians, on issues of education; including advocacy, resource allocation and mobilization at both national and international levels;
- v. Develop effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that ensures periodic assessment of EFA National Action Plans and Zero Illiteracy;

- vi. Ensure relevant legislation that enshrines in the National Constitution education as a basic human right;
- vii. Create and facilitate mechanisms for mediation in resolving education problems
- viii. Facilitate the exchange of information on educational issues;
- ix. Promote that all national Parliaments incorporate in their constitutions and legislations, regulations oriented to ensure free, compulsory and quality basic education by the State; and regulations that promote the progressive introduction of initial and secondary education based in the same principles, including the protection of mothers in pre-natal stage with a view to provide their educational needs;
- x. Foster genuine partnerships with civil society organizations, teachers and teacher unions, parents associations, NGOs, Community based organizations, private sector, including international development organizations.

**Article 6: Specific Objectives
Education for All and Zero Illiteracy**

The Forum shall be particularly committed to (contribute to):

- i. Fighting (to eradicate/against) illiteracy and reduce poverty, in order to break the cause and effect relationship between these two phenomena ;
- ii. Promoting Education for all, particularly for women and girls, in order(to be corrected as in preamble) to erase the discrimination of which they are victims ;
- iii. Promoting the development of human resources and to ensure financial resources so as to provide basic education to minorities, indigenous communities, the poor, refugees, the disabled, people living in areas of conflict or war and imprisoned people ;
- iv. Helping, through education, to combat diseases, such as HIV/Aids, tuberculosis and malaria that could be an impediment to Education for All;
- v. Facilitating our people to access and utilize the new Information and Communication technologies, as well as technical and vocational education and productive projects;
- vi. Creating conditions required to further research, dissemination of technology and educational innovation in the various fields of Education;
- vii. Promote responsibility of parents, families and society in the education process,
- viii. Foster the exchange of successful educational experiences between countries of the region;

Article 7: Accession

Members of the Forum are the National Parliaments that concur with the spirit of articles 5 and 6.

Article 8: Representation

Each National Parliament shall be represented at the Forum by its Education Parliamentary Committee.

Each National Parliament shall have one vote at the General Assembly of FLACPED.

Article 9: Conditions of eligibility for national structures

The Education Parliamentary Committee will be opened to all Parliamentarians without any form of discrimination.

Article 10: Activity report of the national structures

Every National Parliament shall, at the end of each year, forward to the Bureau, through the Secretariat a report on the activities of its Education Parliamentary Committee during the previous year.

CHAPTER II – ORGANISATION AND FUNCTIONING

SECTION 1: REGIONS OF THE FORUM

Article 11: Structuring of the Forum

The Forum is structured by region as follows:

- Caribbean
- Central and North America,
- South America,

SECTION 2: ORGANS OF THE FORUM

Article 12: Nomenclature

The organs of the Forum are:

- A. The General Assembly,
- B. The Bureau, and
- C. The Secretariat.

A – THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 13: Composition

The General Assembly is composed by the representatives of all the National Parliaments of the Latin American and Caribbean region that have paid the accession fees.

Article 14: Frequency and place of meetings

The General Assembly meets every two years. The meeting takes place in any state determined by the Bureau.

Article 15: Role and Powers of the General Assembly

The General Assembly:

- Elects the members of the Bureau;
- Adopts a two year Action Programme on a proposal from the Bureau;
- Approves the accounts and, given the case, approves proper deposition;
- Approves the donations and bequests made to the Forum;
- Asks for audits;
- Takes note of the activity programmes of the Regions/parliamentary Committees; and
- Exercises any other power which is conferred upon it by these Statutes or by the Rules and Regulations or the Financial Regulations.

Article 16: Quorum

The quorum required for any deliberation of the General Assembly shall be at least one-third of the number of Members of the Forum provided that not less than three regions are represented.

Article 17: Majority

The General Assembly takes decisions on the basis of a two-thirds majority of the members present.

Article 18: Activity report and balance sheet

The President of the Bureau shall at the end of each year, forward to the Members of the Forum a report on the activities and the financial situation of the Forum for the previous year.

Article 19: Temporary or permanent replacement of the President

In case of temporary absence, the President shall be temporarily replaced by one of the Vice – Presidents in case he/she is not available on the basis of a predetermined order of precedence. In case of permanent absence, a deputy will be chosen from the vice-presidents

B – THE BUREAU

Article 20: Composition

The Bureau comprises:

- A President,
- Three Vice-Presidents, one per sub region as per Article 11.

Article 21: Election

The President shall be elected by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Bureau.

The Vice Presidents shall be elected by the Regions as per Article 11 and ratified by the General Assembly.

The President and the Vice-Presidents shall be elected for a two-year mandate which is renewable once. This shall be done on a rotational basis.

Article 22: Frequency of meetings

The Bureau shall meet in ordinary session at least once a year.

It may meet in extraordinary session at the request of the President or of two of the Vice–Presidents.

Article 23: Role and powers of the Bureau

- The Bureau ensures the proper functioning of the Forum;
- Supervises the implementation of the Activity Programme;
- Ensures that the Forum is represented at National Parliaments and all International Organizations;
- Adopts the budget after proposal of the Secretary General;
- Takes note of the activity programmes of the Parliamentary Committees;
- Makes proposals, to be approved by the General Assembly. Proposals include;
 - The activity program
 - The amount of membership fees and annual quote.

Article 24: Modalities for decision taking

The decisions of the Bureau are taken by simple majority. In case the votes are equal, the President has a casting vote.

C – THE SECRETARIAT

Article 25: Composition

The section for UNESCO Clubs and New Partnerships, Division of Relations with Organizations and New Partnerships, sector for External Relations and cooperation of UNESCO in Paris will be in charge of the Secretariat.

Article 26: Role of the Secretariat

The Secretariat, under the authority of the Bureau is in charge of:

- The administration of the Forum,
- The execution of the Activity Programmes, and
- Financial management.

SECTION 3 - FINANCING OF THE FORUM

Article 27: Resources of the Forum

The financial resources of the Forum are constituted by:

- Biannual/annual accession fees from each FLACPED Parliament.
- Subsidies from Latin American and Caribbean countries, partners, international organizations, and non governmental organizations, and
- Donations and bequests approved by the General Assembly.

Article 28: Financial Rules and Regulations

Financial rules and regulations will determine the modalities for managing the Forum's resources.

CHAPTER III – FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 29: Coming into force

These statutes come into force on the date of their adoption.

Article 30: Revision of the statutes

The National Parliaments shall submit to the Secretariat any proposal for amendment of these Statutes at least three months prior to the General Assembly.

All amendments must be passed by 2/3 majority of the Members present at the session.

Article 31: Dissolution

The dissolution of the Forum may be pronounced by the General Assembly. In case of dissolution, the entire Forum's property will be bequeathed to Latin American and Caribbean Educational organizations.