

45th SESSION (1996) - DECLARATION

We, the Ministers of Education, meeting at the forty-fifth session of the International Conference on Education:

- **concerned** about the need to develop understanding and new, more active and just forms of solidarity between individuals, peoples and generations;
- **taking into account** the profound social, economic, political and cultural changes that our societies are undergoing, and the highly precarious situation prevailing in many countries with regard to poverty, health and nutrition, which makes the development, adaptation and transformation of education systems an urgent priority;
- **recognizing** the importance that the contribution of teachers brings to the renewal of education through their ideas, methods and practices;
- **convinced** that teachers are key actors in educational change which must take place as much within the school and classroom at all levels and in all types, and through all channels of schooling, as within the education system as a whole;
- **aware** that the accelerated pace of change means that teachers must be capable not only of helping and guiding learners to assimilate knowledge but also to become aware of their identity and be tolerant, open to others and to other cultures, capable of pursuing their learning throughout life, so enabling them to face the future with confidence;
- **aware** that the spread of new technologies is bound to change the conditions of the teaching profession and the nature of the teacher-learner relationship;
- **noting** the terms of existing international conventions which are applicable to teachers, and in particular of instruments concerned with basic human rights such as the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948, the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949, the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951, adopted by the General Conference of the International Labour Organization, and the Convention Against Discrimination in Education, 1960, adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;
- **recalling** the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers and the reports of the joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on its application, Recommendation No. 69 adopted in 1975 by the thirty-fifth session of the International Conference on Education on the changing role of the teacher and its influence on preparation for the profession and on in-service training, as well as the Declaration of the forty-fourth session of the ICE(1994), which called for priority to be given to the training of educational personnel oriented 'notably towards professional ethics, civic and moral education, cultural diversity, national codes and internationally recognized standards of human rights and fundamental freedoms';

Declare ourselves determined:

- 1. to ensure the active participation of teachers and all educational partners in

the processes of changing education systems according to the forms of consultation and co-ordination appropriate to the socio-economic, political and cultural contexts of their societies,

- 2. to develop and implement integrated policies designed to recruit and retain in the teaching profession motivated and able individuals of both genders; to reform pre-service and in-service education in order that they shall serve the new challenges facing education; to adopt measures encouraging educational innovations; to strengthen professional autonomy and sense of responsibility of teachers; and to improve their status and their working conditions,
- 3. to place these integrated policies within the framework of strategies intended to ensure relevance of and equity of access to high-quality education, to promote lifelong learning and to make the school one of the main tools in achieving social cohesion and in training for democratic values and the culture of peace,
- 4. to develop, at the national, regional and international levels, all forms of support, particularly with teachers who are working in difficult situations, such as those of extreme poverty, armed conflict, social exclusion or in remote areas,
- 5. to call upon all the partners, such as teachers and their associations, learners themselves, moral and spiritual authorities, families, businesses, the media, intellectuals, artists and scientists to commit themselves to the development of a school envisaged as an active centre for learning and moral, spiritual, civic and vocational education, to be continually adapted to a changing world,
- 6. to be inspired in our action by the recommendations accompanying this Declaration that we are adopting in Geneva on 5 October 1996, International Teachers' Day.