

Albert Einstein became a charter member of the American Federation of

Teachers, local number 552, at Princeton University in 1938. Asked why he

joined the AFT, Einstein commented: *"I consider it important, indeed*

urgently necessary, for intellectual workers to get together, both to protect their own

economic status and, also, generally speaking, to secure their influence in the political field."



Education International is a world-wide trade union organisation of education personnel, whose **29** million members represent all sectors of education from pre-school to university in **349** national trade unions and associations in **165** countries and territories.

colophon

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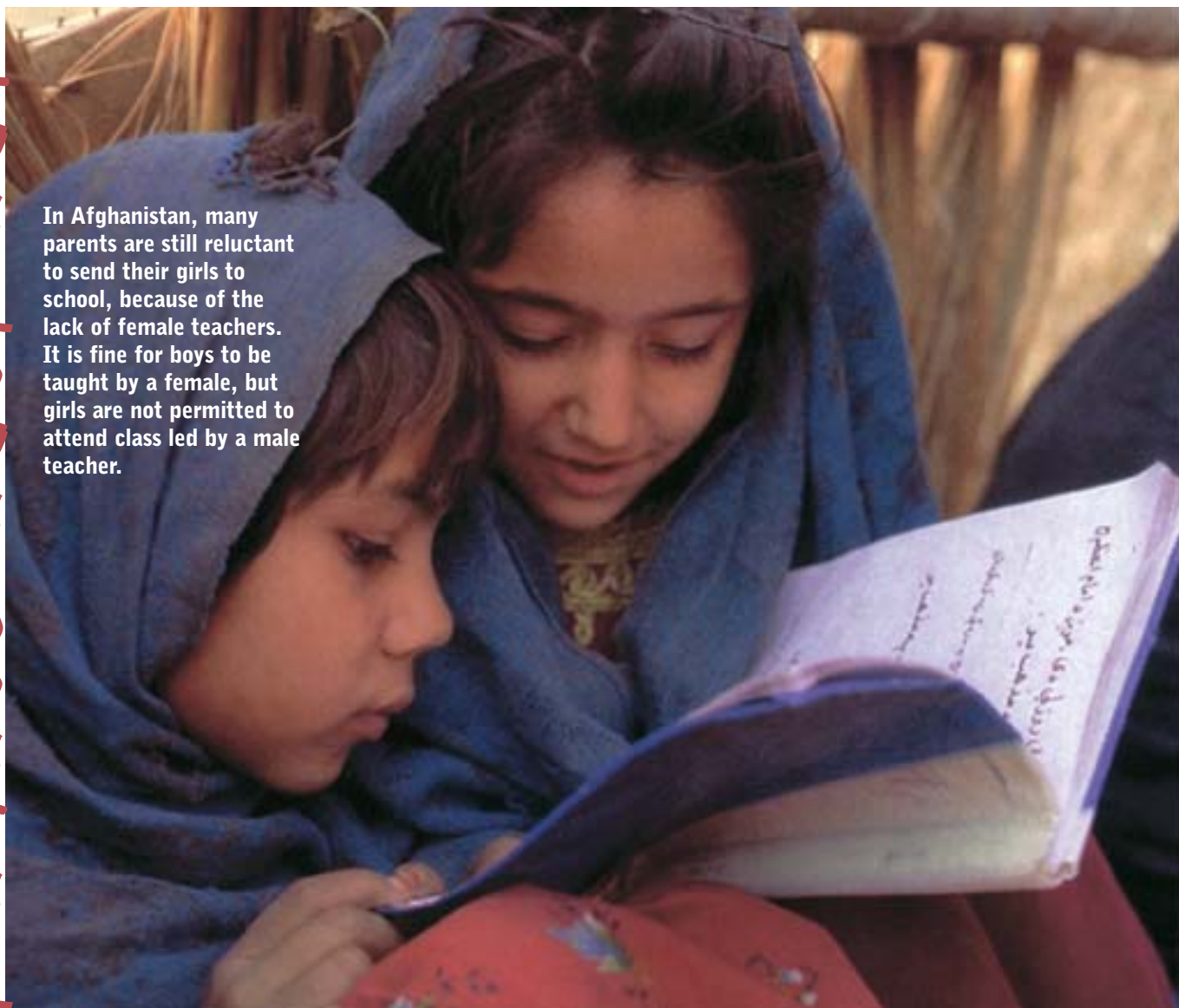
Fred van Leeuwen,
General Secretary
Editor: Dominique Marlet



WORLDS OF EDUCATION



In Afghanistan, many parents are still reluctant to send their girls to school, because of the lack of female teachers. It is fine for boys to be taught by a female, but girls are not permitted to attend class led by a male teacher.



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Review of government action in favour of women

Ten years ago, the governments participating in the 4th United Nations Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) made a commitment to eliminate all legislation discriminating against women. Five years later, in June 2000, a special session of the UN General Assembly evaluated the implementation of the Beijing Action Programme, and UN member states adopted a final document in which they undertook to "review national legislation with a view to removing all discriminatory provisions as soon as possible, preferably by 2005". However, as the deadline draws near, a number of laws that are explicitly discriminatory against women are still in force

in many countries.

EI is participating in the Beijing+10 review and will be present at the evaluation conference which will take place in New York in March 2005, on the occasion of the 49th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

Apart from contributing to the Beijing+10 review which, unfortunately, can only be but negative, EI and its affiliates should also ensure that the evaluation does not provide an opportunity for an unholy alliance of neo-conservative governments to dilute the Beijing commitments.

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Teachers have the strongest influence

Several international reports have just been released that can be used by teachers' unions to support their claims when dealing with governments.

Three international reports have just been published. The most recent is the PISA 2003 report, published by the OECD (the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) on 6 December. This document is more a comparison between the academic performances of teenagers in 41 countries than an actual study on education. Another OECD report, *"Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers"*, published in November, deals with the problem of teacher shortages in industrialised countries. The third study is the annual Education For All Global Monitoring Report. This year's issue discusses the quality of education and includes relevant recommendations on the importance of offering teachers decent wages and working conditions. All three studies have one thing in common: they all put teachers at the heart of the educational process. The EFA 2005 report states that teachers have the strongest influence on learning.

In fact, the EFA report is very positive concerning teachers. It insists on the need for governments to guarantee that teachers have certified professional training before they start work and to create conditions allowing them to enjoy continued training throughout their careers, to provide them with good working conditions and salaries that are in line with their qualifications.

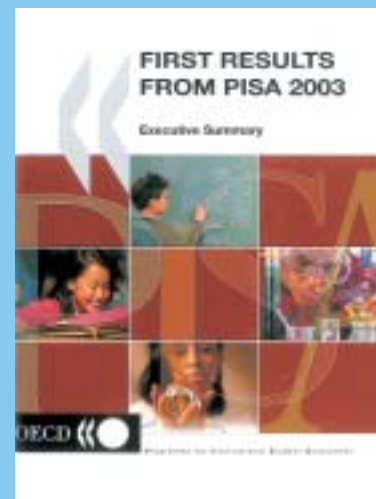
The report notes that the countries having achieved the best learning-level outcomes had invested the largest sums with the greatest regularity in the teaching profession. But the report also highlights that in many countries, improved access to schools has not been coupled with an equivalent increase in resources and infrastructure.

On the issue of teachers' salaries, status and motivation, the EFA report underlines the contradiction between the desperate need for teachers and the profession's lack of appeal. The EFA report gives among others

the example of Sierra Leone, where community teachers have to survive on a salary of less than 50 dollars a month.

Concerning the funding of education, the EFA report is also a good ally. Recalling the threshold of 6% of GNP for education, it condemns the donor community, which has not really put into practice the declaration made in Dakar in 2000. The report criticises for instance the World Bank which, in its figures, tends to mix up loans and investments for education. The report also notes that the European Union has not really increased its funding for education development in spite of it having adopted a Resolution in 2003 calling for EU funding for basic education to be doubled.

The OECD's PISA 2003 study, published in December 2004, is the kind of comparative tool that the media love and governments fear. EI issued a declaration calling for the greatest caution regarding the conclusions to be drawn from this type



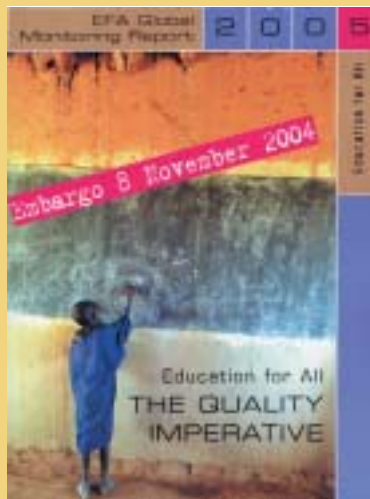
OECD/PISA

➤ OECD's PISA report Learning for Tomorrow's World provides a set of comparisons of pupils results in several categories in 41 countries. It measures first, the overall performance of education systems, then the equity of distribution of results among schools and students in countries, consistency across the schools, gender disparities and foundations for life-long learning. EI warned that the latest PISA report illustrates the risks associated with over-reliance on simplistic interpretation of test outcomes in drawing conclusions about the performance of education systems.

Calendar

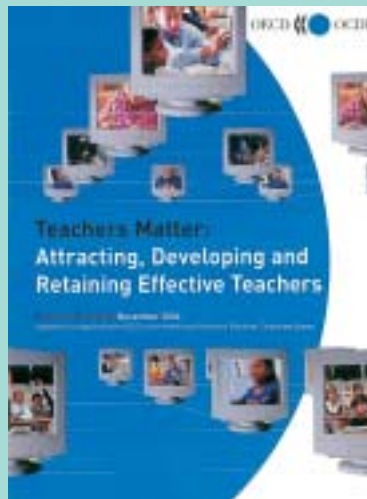
Global Union Federations' Annual Conference – Geneva, Switzerland	11-12 January
ETUCE Hearing "Europe needs teachers" – Brussels	17 January
World Economic Forum – Davos, Switzerland	26-30 January
World Social Forum – Porto Alegre, Brazil	26-31 January
EI Officers Meeting – Washington	9-10 February
43rd UN Session for Social Development – New York	9-18 February
EI Pan European Steering Committee on Higher Education and Research – Brussels	9-11 February
EI Pan-European Round Table on Teacher Education – Dublin, Ireland	20-21 February
49th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women and Beijing+10 – New York	28 Feb-11 March
EI/ETUCE Pan-European Bureau – Brussels	14 March
25th EI Executive Board Meeting – Brussels	12-14 April
4th Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues – New York	16-27 May
TUAC Working Group on Education, Training and Employment Policy – Paris	24-25 May
93rd Session of the ILO Conference – Geneva	31 May-16 June

on learning



EFA

➤ **The Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2005**, assesses where the world stands on its commitment to provide a basic education to all children, youth and adults by 2015. Developed by an independent team and published by UNESCO, the report is an authoritative reference that aims to inform, influence and sustain genuine commitment towards education for all. The report provides a detailed analysis of factors influencing the quality of education, including financial and material resources for schools, the number of teachers and their training, core subjects, pedagogy, language, the amount of actual learning time, facilities and leadership. An Education Development Index measures the overall progress of 127 countries towards the EFA goals. EI chairs on the editorial board of the EFA Monitoring Report.



OECD

➤ ➤ In April 2002 the OECD Education Committee launched a major two-year study on teacher policy issues in 25 countries: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers. This was a collaborative project to assist governments design and implement teacher policies to improve teaching and learning in schools. EI was able to comment the draft text. Some of EI's input was taken into account in the study **OECD's Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers**.

Quality is reflected by a range of indicators including government spending on education, pupil/teacher ratios, teacher qualifications, test scores and length of time pupils spend in school. Public expenditure on education represent a higher proportion of GDP in rich countries that have already achieved EFA goals (regional median: 5.52% in North America and Western Europe) than in poorer countries that need to sharply expand under-resourced school systems (regional medians: 3.3% in Sub-Saharan Africa, 3.9% in East Asia and the Pacific). EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005. p.21

teristics of schools. Here, teachers get a chance to express themselves. They deplore the pupils' growing problem with discipline. The study recognises the difficult conditions in which teaching takes place, mentioning pupil absenteeism, lack of discipline and disruptive behaviour.

A second OECD report specifically deals with the shortage of teachers: *"Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers"*. EI agrees with the report's conclusions whereby teacher shortages are not only a question of quantity but also of quality. The OECD report suggests solutions, but without budgetary indications. As is often the case, the OECD implicitly assumes that public budgets cannot be increased or run the risk of being further reduced.

Among the OECD's recommendations, the terms dialogue, consultation and teacher involvement recur often. EI would have preferred that the more explicit expression *"teachers and their representative organisations"* be used more often (only three times in a 230-page report).

To conclude, the three reports acknowledge that teachers are at the heart of the learning process and that, as such, they should be listened to, respected and appreciated.

of research, which are bound to be simplistic. EI's main criticism: the tests carried out are independent from the school curricula taught in the 41 countries, and above all, they only evaluate certain theoretical subjects, reducing education to learning mathematics, reading and writing.

On the issue of budgets for education the OECD's PISA report says that high spending is not necessarily the key to success, giving as examples the Czech Republic, Finland, Japan and the Netherlands, who did better than average, while the United States, with a larger budget, had lower results than average.

"We can agree on the fact that spending is not a determining factor but rather a necessary condition for the sustainable development of education", commented EI General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen.

The PISA report contains an interesting section on the charac-

EDUCATION FOR ALL

Some laws jeopardize children's rights

A report released by UNESCO's International Bureau of Education (IBE) shows that education is not compulsory in 25 countries of the world, 31 countries do not have a legal age to start work and 37 do not provide a minimum age to get married. *"If the minimum ages are inconsistent or illogical, the first consequence is that the children can be exploited", says the report. "Their right to education is threatened by child labour, early marriages and prison sentences".*

The IBE surveyed the legislation of 158 countries on the rights of the children and the right to education. The report stresses that, where they exist, the legal age to marry, work, leave school or to be criminally responsible varies from 7 to 18 years in the world.

The report found that there is no compulsory education in at least 25 countries, of which 10 are in sub-Saharan Africa, 6 in East Asia and the Pacific, 4 in the Arab States, 3 in South and West Asia, and 2 in Latin America and the Caribbean.

These legal voids contradict the Universal Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was ratified by all UN Member States, except for the United States and Somalia.

"In the same country," says Angela Melchiorre, children's rights expert and author of the report, "it is not rare to find that children are legally obliged to be in school until 14 or 15 years old but a different law allows them to work at an earlier age or to be married at the age of 12 or to be criminally responsible from the age of seven."

Six countries (Cambodia, Luxemburg, Mauritania, Mexico, Poland and Togo) do not provide a legal age for penal responsibility and in 40 others, including Australia, United Kingdom and of many ex-British colonies, the minimum age is fixed at 7 years.

In some countries, boys and girls lose their statute as a child as soon as they are married, whereas marriage is sometimes authorised at a very young age.

"At What Age ... are Children Employed, Married and Taken to Court" published by UNESCO's International Bureau of Education (IBE) and the Right to Education Project, a human rights research initiative.
www.right-to-education.org

"Educated girls who grow up to be educated women can be more productive in agriculture and in their own communities. If we want to change the world, and we all do, there is one way to do that: educate girls."

Catherine Bertini,
winner of the 2003
World Food Prize

103.5 million

The number of out-of-school children of primary school age dropped from 106.9 million in 1998 to 103.5 million in 2001. Girls account for 57% of this group (more than 60% in the Arab States and in South and West Asia).

The quality of learning quality of teachers

Teachers in most countries would strongly agree that the quality of education has to be improved. EI released a policy paper outlining the key role that teachers play in providing quality education.

A lot of children leave school without the basic skills to read and write. This appalling fact is not only relevant in developing countries, an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development report claims that more than 20% of adults in some of the richest countries in the world are unable to read or write except at the most elementary level.

Quality Awareness

All studies acknowledge that teachers are the strongest influence on quality learning. However of general importance for teachers' ability to improve the quality of education is the ability to reflect on their own teaching, critically examine the methods used and to look for alternative ways of teaching. To create an increased "quality awareness" among teachers and help teachers to improve their teaching methodology and skills may be of crucial importance to improve quality in education. One major way of doing this is to systematically evaluate their own teaching and its results. In some countries the main focus seems to be to evaluate the whole educational system, while in other countries the emphasis seems to be on individual schools or even individuals.

There are several risks in relation to present developments in the area of evaluation. One main risk is that it focuses too much on easily measurable school achievement, without taking into consideration the complexity of the reality in schools. In relation to this, there is also a risk that teachers will be side-stepped in the evaluation process and may only become objects of the process.

Regarding quality audits, EI warns that quality is sometimes discussed in terms where the students are described as customers and education as a product sold on a market. In discussions among teachers and within their organisations there is a strong view that education is a unique activity and that the relation between a student and a teacher can not be reduced to a relation between a customer and a salesman. A look at history shows that famous teachers in the past never regarded themselves as salesmen selling a product to a customer. Socrates certainly did not think about himself as selling education to his disciples, instead he regarded his teaching as a unique exchange between teacher and student contributing to the development of both. Quality education should not be regarded as a process of

EDUCATION FOR ALL

depends on the

A GOOD TEACHER IS ...

In 1996, the National Union of Teachers released a study which included the following description of a good teacher by a Scottish student in grade 2/3: *"is very clever, doesn't shout, helps you every day, is not bossy, has faith in you, is funny, is patient, is good at work, tells you clearly what to do, helps you with mistakes, marks your work, helps you to read, helps you with spelling and has got courage."*

consumption, but as a process of interaction between teachers and students.

The professional freedom of the teacher is of crucial importance in developing quality in education. Professional freedom does not mean that the teacher can do whatever he or she likes, but that the teacher, who knows the students, is the

There must be a public responsibility to ensure all citizens the right to receive quality education. Such an important matter cannot be left to individuals, private companies or to the market. To create quality education it is necessary to establish a good practice and to meet demands at all levels (the classroom, the school/in-

Education is a human right. More than half a century ago, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights established that everyone has the right to education. The fact that millions are still deprived of it should fill us all with shame.

Kofi Annan, United Nations General Secretary

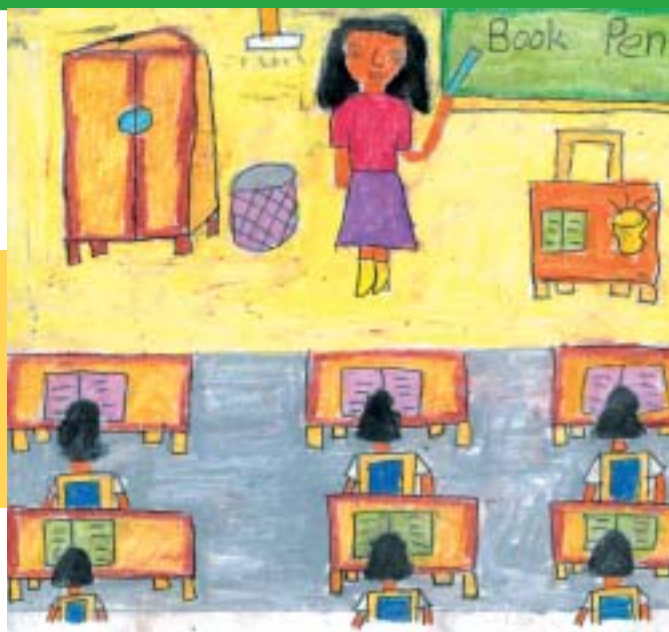
person best equipped to decide which methods to use in order to create an optimal learning situation.

Professional and academic freedom for teachers is also of crucial importance in achieving teaching that is independent of any political, economic, ideological or religious influence, in order to preserve young peoples' right to and democratic exercise of critical creativity.

What can governments do to support teachers?

Quality education is not only a responsibility of the teachers.

stitution and the educational system in which classrooms and schools/institutions exist). It is not possible in the long run to establish good teaching in the classroom if schools and the educational system as a whole are functioning badly. Even if individual teachers are able to establish good classroom practice, in spite of badly functioning schools/institutions and non-supportive educational authorities, this can only last for short periods. There are many examples of teachers trying to do their best in spite of lack of support from local and national authorities. Such situations too often end with stress and the burn-out of the teachers. There are also



bound to be problems in a system with an excellent curriculum, but where teachers are not provided with the necessary moral and financial support needed to implement it.

In conclusion, the EI paper suggests that in order to support teachers in their efforts to improve the quality of education, governments and relevant education authorities must:

- provide education and professional development of high quality to teachers;
- provide teachers and schools with the resources necessary to offer quality education;
- see that teachers have a salary comparable with other professions requiring the same level of qualifications and responsibility; and
- ensure that teachers receive the moral recognition appropriate to their level of qualifications and responsibilities.

"Quality Education: the teachers' key role" is the 14th working paper released by EI on its website. This 20-page document has been prepared for the IBE's International Conference of Education. The purpose of this paper is to examine the key role that teachers play in providing quality education. The paper will start with a short discussion in section 2 on how to define quality and will then discuss briefly in section 3 why we have experienced such an emphasis on quality in education in the recent years. Section 4 focuses on what can be described as a good teacher and section 5 on what teachers can do to improve quality in education. Section 6 will discuss what governments and education authorities can do to support teachers in their efforts to improve quality. Section 7 discusses what teacher unions can do to improve quality in education. Section 8 will then try to summarise the whole discussion.

www.ei-ie.org/publications

EI ACTIVITIES

Teachers' Parliament

EI organised a Teachers' Parliament in November in Brasilia, which called on the public authorities to fulfil their responsibility to fund education services properly and to ensure quality training for teachers.

The Teacher's Parliament was organised in Brasilia on 6-7 November at the invitation of EI, its Brazilian affiliate, CNTE, and UNESCO. Some fifty representatives of EI affiliated teachers' unions took part. The Teachers' Parliament adopted a declaration which was presented to the High-Level Group on Education For All.

The Declaration of the Teachers' Parliament states that, according to research studies, "teacher effectiveness is the single biggest factor influencing educational gains and achievements". Based on this observation, the teachers brought together by EI in the Parliament drew up a series of recommendations for governments concerning teacher

training criteria, conditions of employment, the financing of education and the administration of schools. The recommendations, if implemented, would guarantee that "every child is educated by highly qualified teachers and attends schools that are effectively managed to ensure maximum learning".

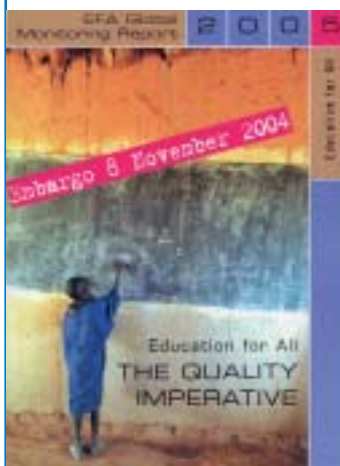
In order to enhance the quality of teaching, the Parliament called upon governments to ensure that all teachers are professionally trained and certified before entering the classroom to teach, and receive quality in-service training throughout their professional careers.

The Teachers' Parliament endorsed the recommendation made last year by the Children's Parliament, that there should be at least one teacher in each school for every thirty children.

The Declaration was very favourably received by the High-Level Group on EFA (HLG) which was meeting on the same dates on the theme of the quality of education. Moreover, the final declaration of the HLG integrated certain elements of the Declaration of the Teachers' Parliament.



Change must be accelerated to achieve EFA goals



The pace of change is "insufficient" to achieve Education For All by the target date of 2015, concluded the High-Level Group on Education For All, which met in Brasilia from 8 to 10 November. In a communiqué adopted by the meeting, partici-

pants recognised that substantial progress had been made and that there had been an upturn in bilateral aid to education. They stressed, however, that "the pace of change is insufficient to achieve the set goals." The goal of ensuring that there is an equal number of girls to boys in primary and secondary education by 2005 had not been met, they said.

The High-Level Group communiqué emphasised that "urgent steps must be taken to address the particular needs of the excluded and marginalised, the poor, the increasing population of orphans and other vulnerable groups, children with disability, and of girls and women who constitute the majority of the out-of-school and illiterate populations." The regions in most urgent need are sub-

Saharan Africa, South and West Asia and the Arab States.

The participants outlined a number of key measures that governments "must take in the core areas of EFA, namely, girls education, teachers and resources. These measures notably include the abolition of school fees and the reduction of other costs of education to poor children, particularly girls. They also include the improvement of "the status, working conditions, career perspectives and professional development opportunities for teachers".

In response to the estimated shortfall of \$5.6 billion needed annually to achieve the goal of universal primary education by 2015, the High-Level Group urged donor countries and funding agencies to: "strive to increase Official

Development Assistance and other resources (...) and deepen debt and debt service relief to unlock resources for basic education in the countries that have shown accountability and transparency on education policy and domestic resource mobilisation."

The EFA High Level Group brings together some 30 participants from four constituencies: Ministers of Education from developing countries, Ministers of Cooperation from developed countries, heads of 5 UN agencies and representatives of the Civil Society. EI Founding President Mary Hatwood Futrell represented EI at this fourth HLG. Only 6 Civil Society organisations are part of that group, most of which are also members of the Global Campaign for Education. EI's representation is a recognition of the teacher union movement's involvement in the EFA process.

ICFTU: globalising solidarity - building a global union movement for the future



A central issue in the debate will be the unification of the international labour movement to create a new international trade union organisation which would bring together the ICFTU and the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) as well as democratic trade union centres which belong to neither of the two organisations.

EI President, Thulas Nxesi, and General Secretary, Fred van Leeuwen, will join the 700 ICFTU delegates gathering in Japan for the 18th World Congress of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).

"We need to internationalise trade union activities much more effectively, bringing national and international action much closer together, if we are to succeed in changing the course of globalisation," said the ICFTU General Secretary Guy Ryder when addressing the EI Congress in July 2004.

The ICFTU Congress will have to adopt structural changes including unification and reform of the ICFTU's working methods. In the main resolution, the Congress recognises the important role of the

partnership of the ICFTU, the Global Union Federations and TUAC, and calls for the intensification of this relationship. Cooperation between the Global Unions partner organisations should be extended and deepened in international trade union organising, campaigning, mobilising and advocacy activities. The establishment of a Global Unions' Council to develop the work of the Global Unions partnership will also be discussed. This move is favoured by EI and its partner organisation, PSI, which represents public service unions.



Teachers' representative Sharan Burrow from Australia will become the ICFTU's next President. Sharan, who was an EI Vice-President and on the EI Executive Board when she was President of the Australian Education Union, was nominated for the Presidency in her capacity as President of the national trade union centre of the Australian Council of Trade Unions.



Women and AIDS

More than 40 million people in the world are HIV positive. The rate of infection among young women is increasing at an alarming rate. Women and HIV/AIDS was the theme of the UNAIDS Campaign on the occasion of the 2004 World Aids Day on 1 December.

EI attaches particular importance to ensuring access to education for girls and women to enable them to acquire the necessary knowledge to prevent HIV. On the occasion of the 2004 World Aids Day, EI reiterated its

message that **Education is Prevention** and that teachers play an absolutely vital role in combating AIDS.

The EI World Congress last July, concerned by the increasing number of women affected by the AIDS pandemic, adopted a resolution on **gender and HIV/AIDS**. The resolution calls on governments to ensure that women and girls have equal access to high-quality public education; to implement educational policies, including sexual education and HIV prevention programmes, and to guarantee access to suitable care and treatment for women and girls who are HIV positive or have AIDS.



EI also called on trade unions in the education sector to defend the right to work and the trade union rights of teachers and education workers who are HIV positive or suffer from AIDS. EI also called on all trade unions in the education sector to guarantee, on the basis of the fundamental right to education, that no child, affected by the AIDS pandemic, is refused access to education.

World Economic Forum 2005

The EI General Secretary, Fred van Leeuwen, will participate in the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum to be held in Davos from 26-30 January 2005. The theme "Taking Responsibility for Tough Choices" is one of the most challenging in recent years. The WEF is an independent international organisation which provides a forum for decision-makers, political leaders, businessmen, leaders from NGOs, civil society and trade unions to meet and discuss global issues. Issues on the agenda will include sustaining the global economy, HIV/AIDS, poverty, global security and regional stability, climate change, global citizenship, etc. Since 2002, the General Secretaries of the Global Unions Federations, including EI and PSI, are invited to the Forum to have face-to-face meetings with some of the world's decision makers.

www.weforum.org



TEACHERS' RIGHTS

Turkey: a new threat hangs over Egitim-Sen

The relief of Egitim-Sen, the Turkish teacher's union, following the judgement of the Turkish Supreme Court, which ruled on 15 September that the trade union had not infringed the constitution, was short-lived: the Public Prosecutor's Department is seeking to have the ruling quashed. The trade union is once again threatened with dissolution!



In Turkey, the right of minorities to teach and learn in their mother tongue is seriously restricted. Article 42 of the Turkish Constitution stipulates that *"No-one may be deprived of the right to learn and the right to education"*, but limits the right to learn by adding *"no language other than Turkish shall be taught as the mother tongue to Turkish citizens in all training institutes and education establishments"*.

Last June, the Ankara Public Prosecutor's Department had instituted proceedings against the trade union Egitim-Sen, because the trade union defends the right to education in the citizen's mother tongue and respects the rights of minorities in Turkey, a mul-

tilingual and multicultural country. At that time EI had issued a call for urgent action to its affiliates and lodged a complaint with the International Labour Organisation. The result of that complaint is not yet known. Numerous affiliates have made representations to the Turkish authorities and the European Union.

On 15 September last, the Supreme Court of Turkey had ruled in favour of the EI affiliate, considering that the union's by-laws (in favour of the right to education in the mother tongue) did not infringe the Turkish Constitution. Today, the Ankara Public Prosecutor's Department refuses to accept the decision of the Turkish Courts and is seeking to have the ruling overturned. The date of the hearing will be decided in the next few weeks. In any event, EI has issued a second

call for urgent action.

European context

In July 2004, a new law on trade union freedom was adopted by the Parliament. That law should reduce significantly the possibilities for the State to interfere in trade union activities. However, it has not been implemented because of a Presidential veto.

The procedure concerning Turkey's accession to the European Union is currently being discussed and this affair threatens to tarnish Turkey's image in the area of human rights.

Ibero-American Summit: "Educate to Advance"

The official theme of the 14th Ibero-American Summit (19-20 November, San José, Costa Rica), "Educate to Advance", has not kept its promises. Caught up in international events, the summit, that brought together 21 countries (19 Latin American countries plus Spain and Portugal), did not really lay down the groundwork for concrete actions to promote education.

According to ECLAC, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the subcontinent is the most "egalitarian" region on Earth. Also, investments per pupil are less than half the average inves-

ted in primary and secondary education in developed countries. The issue of converting States' foreign debts into funds for education was discussed (see also the CNTE initiative on page 11).

The Declaration made by the Heads of State does acknowledge that education is a universal human right and recognises the State's responsibility. It also underlines that funding education is a priority, and the Heads of State are committed to finding new resources to guarantee an equitable quality education for all, but without any real concrete focus.

Working on the principle that education is the responsibility of everybody, Article 12 of the Declaration calls for the pursuit of alliances between the State, teachers – and their unions? The Declaration does not mention either the unions or civil society to improve the quality of education.

The Declaration also insists on the importance of focussing attention on the education of the most vulnerable groups (indigenous people, migrants, the handicapped) and on eradicating child labour.

El Protests

Iran

El protested about the arrest in July of a group of teachers who were holding a peaceful demonstration in front of the Iranian Parliament. They were protesting against delay and discrimination in the payment of teachers' wages and benefits. El also complained about the detention of two leaders of the teachers' union, Mahmoud Beheshi Langarudi and Ali-Asghar Zati, on 12 July 2004, and the fact that they have been intimidated while detained.

Sierra Leone

El strongly condemned the brutal murder on 29 September in

Sierra Leone of Fanny Ann Eddy, founder of the Sierra Leone Lesbian and Gay Association (SLLGA). Eddy was found dead while she was working alone in the SLLGA office the previous night. Her assailant or assailants apparently broke into the premises. She was raped repeatedly, stabbed and her neck was broken, according to Human Rights Watch.

During the 60th Session UN Commission on Human Rights, Fanny Ann had called the Sierra Leone government and the United Nations' attention about the dangers vulnerable groups and individuals face throughout Africa.

El requested the President of

Sierra Leone that the safety of gay and lesbians be guaranteed.

Colombia

El and the international trade union movement condemned the expulsion of four international union representatives from Colombia on 30 October. It is understood that the government has drawn up a list of trade union representatives banned from entering the country, and that this list includes persons who took part in an international solidarity mission to Colombia to press the Uribe government to bring an end to the killing of Colombian trade unionists and the other

means of anti-union repression which are rife in the country. The four Global Union Federations (GUFs) representatives were due to attend a yearly co-ordination meeting, when they were detained upon arrival, then denied entry into the country.

On 5 November a GUF delegation visited the Colombian embassy in Brussels. For several years El has been working with its Colombian affiliate FECODE to protect persecuted teachers and their families. A current project aims to train teachers on how to use both national and international mechanisms for the defense of human rights.



In Italy, a strike of teachers and technical staff mobilised more than 80% of schools last November. The employees and their trade unions were protesting against the proposed 2005 budget of Silvio Berlusconi's government which could result in the loss of 14,000 jobs, and possibly as many as 20,000 jobs, including administrative staff.

The CGIL, CISL and UIL trade unions demonstrated in the streets of Rome accompanied

by numerous children and parents.

Other than the problem of employment, teachers are demanding an 8% salary increase and



► Enrico Panini, leader of CGIL-Scuola

Protest in Italy

are protesting against the delays in negotiations with the State, since their agreement on pay has not been reviewed since June 2003.

The trade unions also deplore a reform of school hours which has resulted in a reduction in the number of school hours in primary schools, by making it optional for pupils to attend school in the afternoon. Teachers' unions see that as a blow to the public education systems and a sop to better-off families which are in a position to pay for access in to extra-curricular educational activities.

Unions Win

The Dutch trade union centre FNV of which the teachers union Aob is a member, reached an agreement with the government in November on the early retirement scheme. The Christian Democrat government of Peter Balkenende had broken talks with the trade unions in May 2004 because of their refusal of the proposed retirement plans.

In Romania, an agreement was reached between the government and three of El's four affiliates. The agreement secures a 27.69% pay increase for teachers starting 1 October. The agreement also resolved the pay problem for some of the other education employees such as accountants and administrators.

Regional meeting in the Caribbean



Teachers from across the Caribbean region were joined by delegates from fellow EI affiliates in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom as they met for the Caribbean Union of Teachers' (CUT) Executive Board meeting in Barbados from 1-2 December.

Participants discussed, among other issues, the implications of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) for teachers. Prior to the meeting, workshops were held on collective bargaining and information technology, organised by EI's North America and Caribbean regional Coordinator Virginia Albert.

The consequences of the recent hurricanes which destroyed thousands of schools, houses and buildings in the region were also high on the agenda.

Please also visit CUT's website: <http://www.caribbeanteachers.com>

USA: Educators Hope to Find 'Common Ground' with new Education Secretary

The National Education Association President Reg Weaver said he's hopeful that Margaret Spellings - President Bush's nominee for Education Secretary - understands the vital roles teachers play in improving student achievement, and will work with us to make public schools great for every child.

"This is a great opportunity for the Administration to change the tone of its discourse with the education community, particularly the 2.7 million members of the National Education Association who are in schools all over this nation."

On February 23, 2004, at a White House meeting with the nation's governors, Education Secretary Rod Paige criticised the NEA for opposing the 'No Child Left Behind' education reforms, calling the NEA a "terrorist organisation." NEA stated that "It is a revolting attack on America's teachers to suggest that it is an act of terrorism to

disagree with President Bush and to be outspoken advocates for students and teachers."

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Solidarity with Beslan



*The boy that appeared on the cover of most magazines worldwide is **Gheorgy Iljin**. Aged eight, he was a second-form pupil at school N1. His father, 46, works at a Beslan building maintenance agency and his mother, 44, is a doctor in the local hospital. He has a sister, 18, and brother, 17. All family members are safe and well.*

Gheorgy has been in a Moscow hospital with wounds to his left knee and right kidney from an exploding mine. The kidney is to be operated on next April. As indicated by the now famous photograph, he also suffered from a degree of nervous shock.

More than 35 EI member organisations contributed to the Solidarity Trust opened to finance the education of children of the teachers who died in the school N°1 of Beslan in September 2004.

The largest contributions came from the Scandinavian countries particularly DLF and UtdanningsForbundet, from North America from the Canadian Federation of Teachers, the NEA and the AFT and from Europe.

Organisations having less financial means, like the Mongolian Union of Teachers or the unions from Bosnia Herzegovina, also contributed financially to the fund.

Money collected so far, including the direct contribution of EI, has almost reached the ceiling of the 130,000 Euros target which should cover the school fees of the 35 children aged 6 to 18 years who have lost a relative who taught in the school of Beslan.



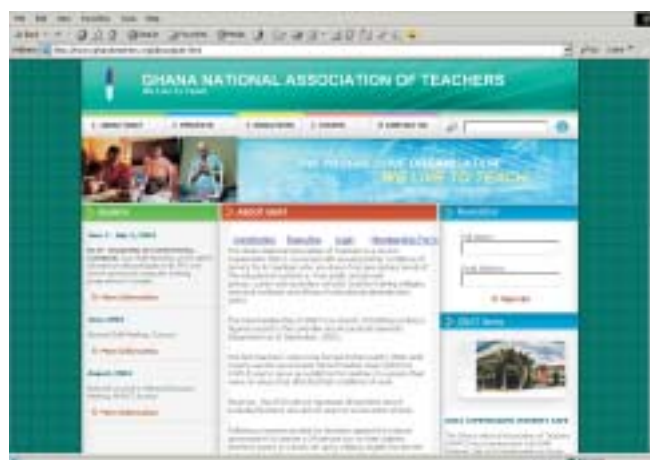
World Social Forum 2005

EI will participate in the next World Social Forum, to be held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, from 26-31 January 2005. The EI delegation will be headed by its President, Thulas Nxesi from SADTU South Africa. As the event grows ever bigger, we would like EI affiliates to inform the headquarters if they intend to attend the Forum. headoffice@ei-ie.org

GNAT website

The Ghana National Association of Teachers has just launched its new official website! Log onto www.ghanateachers.org and discover the new online presence of GNAT. Whether you are looking for information on the EI Ghanaian affiliate or you wish to communicate with colleagues there, the website allows you to sign up for their electronic newsletter, look up information on past and upcoming events, as

well as get to know more about the union, its officials and its activities. However, the site is not GNAT's only advancement in integrating technology in serving its members, it has recently installed a cyber café with 10 computers at its Accra headquarters.



Icelandic teachers keep the pressure

According to EI's affiliate in Iceland, the Kennarasamband Íslands, approximately 4500 teachers have been on strike since 20 September. The teachers are asking for higher salaries and better working conditions. Most teachers in the elementary and lower secondary schools in Iceland are employed by the municipalities since 1996. Before that, they were employed by the state. Funding a new agreement seems to be

the main problem facing the municipalities. Negotiations during the strike have repeatedly come to a halt. After six weeks of strike, 93% of the teachers rejected a mediation proposal put forward by the state mediator. After a mediation attempt by the Prime Minister on 11 November there is a possibility that the parliament will step in soon to end the deadlock.

Brazil: Education vs Debt



The Brazilian union of education personnel, CNTE, will launch a national campaign in favour of the conversion of the sums used to reimburse Brazil's external debt into

additional resources for financing education. CNTE says the foreign debt of Brazil is close to 140 billion US dollars. A conversion, even of only 5% of this sum, in cash for education would be welcome in a country where 47 million people are illiterate, where 90% of schools are under-equipped and where 48% of teachers suffer from burn-out.

The CNTE Executive Board decided to go ahead with this landslide campaign on

6 November. This conversion, which is an old claim from the education unions, had already been discussed and approved at international level by EI and by the Confederation of American Teachers (CEA).

The campaign will reach its peak during the national week of defence and promotion of public education, organised each year in April by CNTE. They will request the government to officially endorse the idea of the debt conversion. "This measure, which would contribute to the public education for all effort, would compensate for a historical

injustice. Indeed during decades, the population was never consulted on the need, the relevance, and the use, of the loans secured by the State," stresses **Juçara Dutra Vieira**, President of CNTE and Vice-president of EI.



STATUS OF TEACHERS

Focus on contract teachers

In order to meet the Education For All targets, many developing countries are hiring people without specific skills or qualifications to teach the thousands of children now attending school. Poorly trained, badly paid, deprived of decent working conditions, contract teachers are a reason for concern among teachers' unions and parents' associations in French-speaking Africa.

EI organised a major conference on this issue in cooperation with the ADEA (Association for the Development of Education in Africa), the World Bank and the Ministry of Education of Mali. The conference – held at the end of

ry teachers have done so in order to meet pressing educational needs in a context of limited resources, the conference recognised that this practice poses problems in terms of fairness and the quality of education.

basis of tests.

Furthermore, contract teachers should be offered open-ended contracts including a career plan, promotion opportunities, social protection guarantees, a set of rights and duties in accordance with current legislation, and decent salaries.

The implementation of these measures will require governments to review public expenditure allocations (including those for health, education and defence) and to target expenditure as efficiently as possible. This will give developing countries greater credibility and legitimacy with a view to urging the international community to increase its efforts to ensure the success of the EFA initiative. The international community's commitments to EFA must also be translated into practice by increasing foreign aid to a level commensurate with actual needs.

¹ Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

The generic term “contract teacher” encompasses many different situations, depending on the country. Contract teachers are often called “voluntary” or “community” teachers in Burkina Faso, Senegal and Chad. The worse conditions are those prevalent in Madagascar, where “community teachers” have no employment contracts and are paid on an irregular basis by the parents' associations. Furthermore, they receive no specific training prior to employment as teachers. In Senegal “voluntary educators” are paid by the state and are given a two-year contract upon completion of a six-month training programme. In Mali, contract teachers are hired either by the state or the local community, following a three-month training period.

▶ ADEA Executive Secretary Mamadou N'Doye, EI Deputy General Secretary Elie Jouen, and Malian Education Minister Lamine Traoré.



November 2004 – brought together a number of government ministers and representatives of teachers' unions and parents' associations from 12 countries¹, as well as representatives of development agencies and civil society.

Based on an assessment of the situation, including consideration of significant differences between countries, the conference put forward a number of recommendations concerning the recruitment, training, terms of employment and career prospects of contract teachers. While it is obvious that governments which have recruited volunta-

Participants in the conference agreed that the lack of training among contract teachers, the quality of their performance, and differences in pay levels were issues that deserve special attention.

The institutional actors attending the conference accepted the principle that contract teachers should receive at least six months' initial training, followed by a career development plan including further training programmes and various targeted training supports. A minimum education level requirement will also be established and candidates will be selected on the



CHILD LABOUR

Children's right to education is not negotiable

"Child labour and Education For All are two sides of the same coin", says EI Executive Board Member and General Secretary of the Indian teachers Federation AITF, Eswaran Subramaniam.

Teachers and unions have to ensure that school systems provide quality education. When we succeed in achieving that goal, we in the education sector will contribute tremendously to the eradication of child labour." Eswaran's view is shared by the unions now working in the EI-initiated Education For All programme.

The EI affiliates in India, as well as the EI coordinator, took part in an international conference on child labour (Hyderabad, India, 2-5 November 2004) to discuss the theme of "out of work into school". The conference brought together trade unions, NGOs, donor organisations and politicians. During the conference, the Dutch trade union centre (FNV) held a seminar specifically for trade unions,



providing an opportunity for delegates to exchange their views and experiences on trade union initiatives to help eradicate child labour.

The conference was a good opportunity to take stock of the record of India which has the largest number of child labourers in the world with 60 million children affected. Indeed, despite its economic performance, 400 million people still live below the poverty line in India and poverty is both a consequence and a cause of the widespread use of child labour. Children work as agricultural workers, domestic servants, weavers, rag dealers, diamond

cutters, textile workers, mechanics, and stone breakers and in the process, large numbers are denied the chance of going to school. The caste system, poor application of laws and gender-based discrimination also contribute to child labour in India. Many children are also caught up in servitude resulting from their families' accumulation of debts.

EI has currently a very good programme going on in India on the prevention of drop outs, funded by the FNV. Three EI unions in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka implement a project within the context of the EI/FNV Education For All programme. The unions implement four distinct but coherent activities in this programme: they develop education policies; use them to lobby the government; they implement studies to underpin their advocacy and organise training and awareness raising programmes for leadership and membership.

One of the unions, the Progressive Registered Teachers Union (PRTU) from Andhra Pradesh is now recognised by

➤ EI has currently a very good programme going on with its Indian affiliates on the prevention of drop outs.

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the government and has a well functioning infrastructure. PRTU selected a limited number of districts rather than working all over Andhra Pradesh. They carried out studies in these districts, implemented training and involved grassroots membership and organised publicity (posters) and rallies on the issue of drop out and retention. But most important of all, the union approached the class room teachers directly.

The studies conducted by PRTU show, among other things, that a lot needs to be improved in the curriculum. The union made an analysis of the text books and concluded that in many instances they do not meet the needs of the children. With these conclusions the union made concrete proposals to the Andhra Pradesh Government to bring about change in the curriculum and textbooks. At national level, AITF gave advice to the Federal Government on the curricula.

The programme is a practical example of the contribution of the education sector to the eradication of child labour. Prevention of 'drop out' and therefore retaining children inside the education system is the best contribution that teachers' unions, schools and teachers can provide to decreasing the numbers of child labourers.



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PUBLICATIONS

Contribute to the EI Solidarity Fund



EI issued a leaflet to encourage its member organisations to contribute to the EI Solidarity Fund. This fund has been established to assist member organisations in emergencies such as natural disasters, famine, war, persecution or other life threatening situations. The assistance provided by the EI Solidarity Fund is used mainly for short-term relief to help ensure

the survival of organisations and their members. In previous years, the EI Solidarity Fund was used, among other things, to rescue Colombian teachers (from FECODE) when their life was under threat; to help Afghan and Liberian teachers organise schools in the refugee camps; to provide institutional support to the Palestinian teacher union and to the teacher unions in East Timor and Iraq; to assist teachers

who had suffered material loss in earthquakes in Algeria, India and Central America.

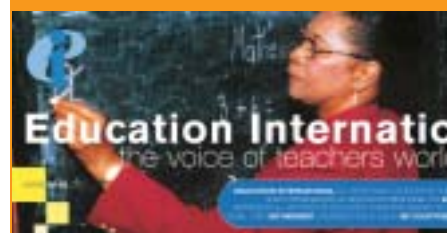
The EI Solidarity Fund is also used to support long-term solidarity projects, requiring ongoing financial support, such as the Beslan Trust Fund, or long term assistance projects in trouble zones like Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Ethiopia.

All member organisations are invited to contribute to the Fund on an annual basis according to their means. These contributions allow EI to react immediately to organise and coordinate in the most efficient and appropriate way the assistance that our colleagues need.

Account No 310-1006170-75
ING BELGIUM, 157 bd Anspach,
1000 Brussels, Belgium

Everything you have always wanted to know about EI

EI has released a new booklet introducing the organisation and its vast field of activity. This booklet, available in many languages, will make it possible for member organisations to help get individuals acquainted with the activities of their international federation.



This attractive informative booklet sets out clearly the objectives of EI, its operating mode, its partnerships, and its ten main domains of activities.

It can be downloaded from the website or ordered direct from the secretariat.

ICFTU A trade union guide to globalisation

The role of trade unions in the globalisation process is the centrepiece of a new ICFTU publication, launched in the run-up to the organisation's 18th World Congress where EI will be represented.

Designed as a guide for trade unionists working at national or international level, the "trade union guide to globalisation" shows how globalisation affects the day-to-day work of all trade unions. It examines how trade

unionists can advocate issues related to workers' rights at the international level, for example in their contacts with international organisations such as the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The book also considers the relationship between trade unions and multinational enterprises, included in a new chap-

ter on the social responsibilities of business.

This guide assesses the impact of globalisation on a variety of issues, such as in the public sector, on HIV-AIDS and on gender issues, citing trade union campaigns on these concerns. Other issues of importance dealt with in the publication include the importance of the fundamental ILO conventions, the emergence of framework agreements between com-

panies and Global Union Federations, and issues related to pension funds.

The overall aim of the book is to encourage practical international solidarity and thereby build a stronger international trade union movement.

To read or download the document, in full or chapter-by-chapter, or to order a copy, click here: >>> www.icftu.org/pubs/globalisation/

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

Carlos Augusto Abicalil a Brazilian trade unionist and Member of Parliament

In this article, Carlos Abicalil, an elected representative of the Brazilian union *Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores em Educação (CNTE)*, focuses on the difficulties involved in establishing a working relationship with an “allied” government and striking a balance between political solidarity and grassroots needs.

Carlos Augusto Abicalil has witnessed the entire transformation of the Brazilian political landscape over the past few decades. As a student, he was active in the underground movement against the military dictatorship in the 1970s. In the 80s and 90s, he contributed to the development and success of CNTE. In 2003 he was elected to Parliament on the list of President Lula’s “Labour Party”, the “Partido dos Trabalhadores”.

Carlos Abicalil, who is a former member of EI’s Executive Board, has a pragmatic approach. He believes that his union must seek to strike a balance between idealism and the realities on the ground. He mistrusts the doctrinist ideology of certain unions in Latin America which, because of their ideological stance, seldom achieve concrete results.

A teachers’ union must be firmly anchored in society, he argues. “Right from the beginning, CNTE positioned itself as a broadly social organisation, not as a corporatist organisation concerned exclusively with the financial interests of its members.” Thus, for example, during the military dictatorship (1964 to 1988), CNTE cooperated closely with other civil society or-

ganisations such as women’s and parents’ associations. The strong social presence of CNTE as an organisation is based on this concept of proximity to the grassroots. The union strives constantly to link the protection of teachers’ interests to the needs of the local population. The strength of CNTE lies in this interaction.

“CNTE also worked closely with the universities,” explains Carlos Abicalil. As a result, many university students and academic staff conducted studies in support of trade union demands – studies which the union had neither the time nor the means to carry out on its own.

“Therefore the organisation already had strong roots in society when the union was officially legalised in 1988. Thanks to this recognition and to its strong presence in society, CNTE was able to establish a permanent consultation process with the government and to put forward a clear platform of demands.” Thus, Carlos proudly recalls that CNTE succeeded in extending compulsory education from 4 to 8 years. Even more importantly, in his view, the defence of the public education system has become a major social issue in Brazil – “an education sys-



tem open to all, not just a privileged class, as was formerly the case in our country.”

Carlos Abicalil shares with many teacher union representatives a concern to emphasise the importance of improving the quality of education in addition to improving access. “The quality of education is in fact a burning issue in Brazil, where many things still need to be improved, particularly in primary education.” As in many other countries, teachers’ salaries are so low in Brazil (an average of \$220 per month) that many qualified teachers opt for a different career. Many schools are therefore forced to hire less qualified and less skilled staff. Furthermore, structural investments in education have long been inadequate: many establishments are in ruins and teaching methods are often obsolete.

As far as collective bargaining is concerned, Carlos Abicalil favours compromise over confrontation. “You can only

achieve results when you are prepared to yield some ground, but this does not always go down well with the grassroots, who expect 100% success,” points out Carlos. The coming to power of the labour party has complicated matters even more. “While members more readily understand the need to reach some sort of compromise with conservative forces,” explains Carlos, “they expect a labour government to meet their demands without setting any conditions.” In 2002, the election of President Lula, a labour party member and former trade unionist, gave rise to enormous expectations.

In this context, CNTE has a strategically difficult task. “We must slalom between (political) solidarity with the government and our freedom as an independent union that upholds the interests of teachers and education workers.” Not a small challenge!