

Education International Calendar

Once again EI has published a colourful wall calendar with photos of teachers and children at work and play around the world. Affiliates will receive some calendars in a regular mailing, but for those who wish to order additional copies please write to: info@ei-ie.org



EDUCATION INTERNATIONALE
INTERNACIONAL DE LA EDUCACIÓN
BILDUNGSINTERNATIONALE

★ L'ÉDUCATION EST LA CLÉ DU DÉVELOPPEMENT
LA EDUCACIÓN ES LA CLAVE PARA EL DESARROLLO
BILDUNG IST DER SCHLÜSSEL ZUR ENTWICKLUNG

January
janvier
Enero
Januar



May
mai
Mayo
Mai



September
septembre
Septiembre
September



February
février
Febrero
Februar



June
juin
Junio
Juni



October
octobre
Octubre
Oktober



March
mars
Marzo
März



July
juillet
Julio
Juli



November
novembre
Noviembre
November



April
avril
Abril
April



August
Août
Agosto
August



December
décembre
Diciembre
Dezember



Worlds of Education is published by Education International, the global union federation representing 30 million teachers, professors and education workers from pre-school to university in more than 160 countries around the globe. To learn more about EI, go to: www.ei-ie.org

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Printed on 21 December 2006.

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January-February 2007



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Special report:

TEACHERS AGAINST CHILD LABOUR

A time to renew commitment

2007 promises to be a busy and productive year for the international teacher trade union movement.

Highest on our agenda here at Education International will be the 5th World Congress taking place in July in Berlin. Until then, we activists and staff of the EI secretariat will be working flat out to ensure it's the best Congress yet.



However, even as we prepare for Congress, we will not be setting aside the other important work we do on a wide range of issues affecting schools, teachers and children the world over.

In this edition of Worlds of Education we focus on child labour, a form of child abuse that tragically exists in all parts of the world. In the carpet factories and sweat shops, in fields and mines, in homes and brothels and on the streets – more than 200 million children are suffering theft of their childhood and a life of hard labour from a young age. It's one of the most massive human rights violations in the world, and it is not confined to the global south.

As an organization that is fundamentally concerned with the protection of children and the creation of societies in which every child's rights are respected, EI is committed to helping prevent and ultimately eliminate the scourge of child labour.

Indeed it's the responsibility of each and every one of us to do our part to end child abuse and exploitation wherever it takes place – in our schools, communities and countries.

*Fred van Leeuwen
General Secretary*

> Special report

Childhood is for scho



Garbage dump near Manila, Philippines
(Cover photo: match factory in India)

© ILO

There are mountains of garbage, as far as the eye can see. Vultures circle overhead. The heat is oppressive. Dust chokes the lungs. Above all, a powerful stench pervades the scene.

All around, filthy children fight among themselves for bits of plastic, cardboard, or glass that could be recycled or sold for a few cents. Their mothers, often with another baby at the breast, struggle to keep them safe. But the big garbage trucks wheel in at high speed, with no regard for the little garbage pickers who could be hit or even killed under their big tires.

This was the hellish reality Donatella Montaldo witnessed at a dump site outside of Guatemala City, where she worked for more than a year to help families get their children into school.

"That dump site was like a whole horrible universe to itself," she recalls. "It was surreal. You really wouldn't want to believe it exists."

But, tragically, it does exist – not only in Guatemala but in many other cities around the

world, says Montaldo, who now works on Education International's renewed campaign against child labour.

The hidden nature of much child labour means accurate figures can be hard to obtain, but the International Labour Organization estimates that worldwide there are 218 million child labourers and 100 million employed adolescents.

"Some categories of child workers are considered most vulnerable, especially domestic workers, youth in the informal or 'black' economy, children in debt bondage and modern forms of slavery, such as human trafficking."

In 2006 the ILO released its Global Report on child labour. This report reveals that millions of children endure systemic violence in their workplaces, ranging from physical or verbal abuse to sexual harassment, rape and even murder.

Some categories of child workers are considered most vulnerable, especially domestic workers, youth in the informal or 'black' economy, children in

debt bondage and modern forms of slavery, such as human trafficking. Those children engaged in hazardous work, such as in mines, plantations, glass factories, or dump sites must endure lax or non-existent health and safety regulations.

The report recommended a comprehensive programme of measures to tackle the under-

lying economic and cultural causes of child labour and to promote education and alternate livelihoods, as well as social mobilization to change attitudes about violence against children in the workplace.

The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), the largest single operational programme of the ILO, spent more than \$70

ol and play, not work



Brick making, near Phnom Penh, Cambodia

© ILO

million on projects in 86 countries last year.

Clearly, education is a fundamental tool in the global struggle against the scourge of child labour. That is why the ILO invited Education International to participate in the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All. EI views this linkage between child labour and EFA as an essential step forward. After all, without access to quality education for all, what hope do child labourers have of a better future?

Other partners in the new task force are UNESCO, UNICEF, the UNDP, the World Bank, and the Global March Against Child Labour. Together they aim to strengthen worldwide cooperation on the issue, and to mainstream efforts against child labour into national education plans.

The impact of the AIDS pandemic must also be factored

into the strategic plan. By the end of 2005, more than 15 million children had been orphaned by AIDS. Without parents to care for them, these children are at high risk of dropping out of school in order to survive and care for younger siblings. Tens of thousands of teachers, especially in Africa, have also died in the pandemic, thus further reducing the capacity of public education systems to respond.

So, in the context of Education for All and the AIDS prevention work, EI has two key strategies to tackle child labour: prevention and monitoring. Preventing child labour by keeping children in school is more difficult than it may seem. But teachers' unions in a number of countries have mounted effective programs that can serve as models.

In Morocco, the Syndicat National de l'Enseignement (SNE-FDT) carried out a child



Girls working in a stone quarry, Nepal

© ILO

labour prevention initiative in five schools in the city of Fez, targetting 3,000 children and their families. The union built good cooperative relations with the Ministry of Education, municipalities and local NGOs. The result? An amazing 90 percent decline in the drop-out rate from the five schools. These excellent outcomes have sparked additional plans to continue and expand the initiative.

In Albania, the Trade Union Federation of Education and Science (FSASH-TUFESA) and the Independent Trade Union of Education of Albania (SPASH-ITUEA) have cooperated on a range of initiatives against child labour: capacity-building and training for members, lobbying and advocacy,

publishing materials, programs with teachers and working children. They also organized a regional seminar which brought together more than 10 unions from countries in the region.

EI's other main thrust in 2007 will be to expand monitoring of child labour across the globe. A child labour mapping exercise now underway will give activists a clear picture of the sectors or forms of child labour in various jurisdictions, and the efforts teachers' unions are making to support children to stay in school.

For more information :
ilo.org and globalmarch.org



Canada: ILO condemns BC Liberals again

The International Labour Organization has once again found the government of British Columbia, Canada's western province, in contravention of international labour law by interfering in negotiations and undermining teachers' collective bargaining.

The most recent ruling is the fourth in a series that condemn the BC government's treatment of bargaining rights. The ILO states the government's actions "can only, in the long term, prejudice and destabilize the labour relations climate."

The ruling stems from a contract dispute in autumn 2005, when for the second time the government imposed a contract through legislation. In response, the province's 40,000 public elementary and secondary school teachers walked out on a two-week strike, during which they enjoyed overwhelming solidarity from parents and the public.

The public support was remarkable considering that the strike had been deemed illegal by the provincial Supreme Court because it was in defiance of the Liberals' essential service law for schools. This was another piece of legislation the ILO said ought to be repealed because under international law education is not considered an essential service like police, fire or health services.

The ILO said it "deeply regrets" the government's "continuing interference in collective bargaining through legislation aimed at stripping the BCTF of its collective bargaining rights." In addition, the ILO took the unusual step of offering technical assistance to the BC government in an effort to address its ongoing pattern of labour rights violations.

In fact the government of Premier Gordon Campbell has shown itself to be so openly derisive of accepted labour standards that a prominent law professor at the University

of British Columbia was inspired to write a commentary for the province's largest daily newspaper. In it, Prof. Joel Bakan questioned just who are the real lawbreakers. He wrote:

"The hypocrisy is astounding as the laws that made this strike illegal are themselves likely illegal, and the government that created them a recidivist lawbreaker."

Jinny Sims, President of the BC Teachers' Federation, said the ruling shows "another example of the Liberal government in British Columbia thumbing its nose at international laws to which Canada is a signatory. It's time this government was held accountable for its flagrant violations of the laws by which we all abide."

Ken Georgetti, President of the Canadian Labour Congress, agreed: "The Canadian government has to take steps to guarantee the enforcement in Canada of internationally recognized labour rights. Working women and men, across this



country, view with alarm the continuous infringements by provincial and federal governments of these conventions that they have signed and ratified."

The BCTF began challenging the Liberal government through the United Nations when it became evident the government was in violation of international labour laws. In every case to date, the government has been condemned for its legislative actions, yet ignores all directives to cease and desist.

For the full ILO ruling on the case, go to:
bctf.ca

Bostwana: Unfair dismissal of trade union leader is reversed

The president of the Botswana Teachers' Union has been reinstated in his teaching post, after EI and BTU members protested his unfair dismissal.

Japhta Radibe, who serves as President of EI's affiliate in Botswana, was officially informed on 24 October that he was being "retired" from the teaching service, effective immediately. Radibe is only 45 years of age.

EI and SATO immediately protested to the Botswana authorities that this was a clear case of victimization for union activities. EI Regional Coordinator Richard Etonu visited Botswana to assure the BTU of EI's support. Hundreds of BTU members took to the streets to protest the unfair dismissal of their trade union leader, and the story received intense coverage in the Botswana press.

"Mr. Radibe seems to be going through turmoil because of his

unwavering advocacy on social issues and teachers' welfare. This leads us to believe that his dismissal is a deliberate act to destabilize the activities of the BTU and therefore is not only a violation of Mr Radibe's freedom of expression, but also is a violation of freedom of association," said EI's protest letter.

On 7 November, EI learned that Radibe has been reinstated in his classroom at the Sedibeka Community Junior Secondary School. EI and member organi-



BTU President, Japhta Radibe

sations extend their congratulations and support to the reinstated union leader, and to the members of the BTU.



Teacher trade unionists protest Japanese government's proposed revision to the law on education. From left to right: **Hirokazu Oouchi**, assistant professor at Matsuyama University; **Fred van Leeuwen**, General Secretary of EI; **Yasuo Morikoshi**, President of the Japan Teachers' Union; and **Kyoko Ueda**, President of the Retired Women Teachers' Association.

Japan: Teachers resist compulsory patriotism in classrooms

The Japan Teachers' Union is fighting to preserve teachers' rights and professional autonomy in the face of government legislation designed to compel teaching of an extreme form of patriotism and nationalism.

The teachers' union and other civil society groups are mounting strong opposition to the government's proposed changes to the Fundamental Law of Education. Passed in 1947 during the Allied occupation of post-war Japan, government critics say the law does not reflect traditional Japanese values. However, teachers are convinced that the proposed changes would inculcate a narrow view of nationalism and force them to promote patriotism in the classroom.

JTU President Yasuo Morikoshi has warned that the bill, which was expected to pass the Upper House on 15 December, will also infringe upon teachers' rights to freedom of thought and expression, as well as their professional autonomy. Morikoshi also stressed that the bill has been rushed through in an undemo-

cratic manner and that, according to polls, only four percent of Japanese citizens support it.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who leads a conservative coalition, has put revision of the Fundamental Law on Education high on his agenda in order to pave the way for revision of the Constitution of Japan. If there is a constitutional referendum all public servants, including teachers, will be prohibited from commenting on it. Teachers will thus be denied their rights as citizens to participate in democratic debate about the future of their country.

The JTU has mounted a nationwide campaign against the legislation, including an extraordinary assembly followed by a protest demonstration through the center of Tokyo. Thousands of teachers from all over the country demonstrated their anger over the substance of the bill and over not having been consulted on the revision.

EI General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen, who attended the rally, said that education should be built on universal values of understanding and tolerance, and that there should be no

place in schools for imposed nationalism and patriotism. He also criticized the Japanese government for "systematic rejection of dialogue" with the teachers.

"The refusal of the public authorities to consult with the education unions and to apply core labour standards in the public sector has undermined the positive perception many people may have of Japan as an economically strong, robust democratic society that takes its responsibility in the international institutions," van Leeuwen said.

He also noted that the debate about revision of the Fundamental Law on Education is really a debate about Japan's place in the modern world:

"The discussion should be seen together with the long-running debate over the contents of history books in Japanese schools, and the refusal of Japan to recognize, at the state and corporate level, the issue of forced labour during World War II".

"To present these issues in terms of national patriotism

versus national humiliation is wrong. And it is rendering a disservice to the younger generation. Accuracy of the historical record is vitally important so that we can all learn from the lessons of the past, and so the citizens of democracies can set a more constructive course for the future," van Leeuwen said.

Teachers in Japan are concerned that the controversy over revision of the education law is distracting attention from other significant problems in Japan's school system, which is still oriented towards competition and discipline. Bullying in schools is considered one of Japan's most urgent problems.

Even worse, many believe there is a link between the extremely high demands placed on students and the extraordinarily high rate of suicide among children aged 10-17. In 2005, 608 Japanese students took their own lives. For many years, the JTU has been pleading with the authorities for measures against the prevalent problem of societal alienation of children due to *Kokoro-no-are*, or extreme emotional and mental stress.

Australia: Trade unions unite against radical right labour law

Teachers joined more than 100,000 people from all sectors across Australia on 30 November in a national day of protest against radical industrial relations reforms imposed by the government of Prime Minister John Howard.

Three EI affiliates – the Australian Education Union, the Independent Education Union of Australia and the National Tertiary Education Union – joined rallies to protest against legislation that unfairly curtails workers' rights, erodes job security and reduces access to unions.

The reforms also weaken the powers of the independent Industrial Relations Commission, remove the right to unfair dismissal protection, and

impose the so-called Australian Workplace Agreements that cut take-home pay and reduce minimum standards.

AEU Federal President Pat Byrne said members are deeply concerned:

"Education workers across the country are opposed to these unfair and divisive laws. Already we are seeing hard-won conditions being stripped away as more and more employers use these provisions," she said.

"Teachers are gravely concerned at the impacts these laws will have on young people who are often most vulnerable when they first enter the work force."

Byrne described Howard's scheme of Australian Work-



© AEU

place Agreements, or AWAs, as being designed to divide people at work and reduce their ability to get a fair deal, while taking away their right to basic conditions like meal breaks, holiday pay and long service leave.

"Teachers and education workers across Australia are defending the future workplace rights of our students – the next generation of workers," said Byrne.

Oaxaca: Teachers abducted from classrooms

Teachers throughout the Americas are organizing in solidarity with colleagues in Oaxaca, in southern Mexico, who continue to be targets of repressive measures by state and federal authorities since they began a strike in May 2005.

The teachers' strike grew to embrace hundreds of thousands of citizens who organized themselves into the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca, or APPO, as it is known. As well as improvements to education and other public services, their demands include the dismissal of Ulises Ruis Ortiz, governor of the state of Oaxaca, who is widely accused of corruption and despotism.

Since the uprising began, 20 people have died, including teachers and their family members, another 50 are missing or "disappeared," and 250 more are in prison, among whom an estimated 80% are teachers, according to the Independent Press Service. Those responsible for the rights violations remain at large.

Members of the Tri-National Coalition in Defence of Public Education, a network of Canadian, American and Mexican teachers and academics, planned to join Central American trade unionists in Mexico City in mid-December to participate in an urgent mission to Oaxaca. Other coalition

members are meeting in Vancouver this month to develop their campaign of support in 2007.

Antonio Garcia Sanchez of the Mexican section of the Tri-National Coalition is also a representative of Section 22, the Oaxaca state local of the teachers' union. In an email sent on 12 December, he said that both branches of the police continued applying "Operativo Juárez," an operation that included arbitrary detentions, searches of homes, persecution, harassment and jailing of teachers and APPO leaders.

"And what is even worse," Garcia wrote, "during school

hours they are entering primary and secondary schools and even kindergartens to capture teachers who actively participated in the struggle. First they did this in Oaxaca City, later in the central valleys, and as of yesterday they began raiding the schools in other regions of the state."

According to a report by the Mexican League for the Defence of Human Rights, Oaxaca has become a police state, and irregular armed groups are acting with complete impunity. With 150 of the country's 250 poorest municipalities, Oaxaca is one of the most impoverished states of Mexico.

Iraqi academics at grave risk

On 14 November 2006 paramilitary gunmen uniformed as Iraqi National Police commandos raided a Ministry of Education building in Baghdad. Arriving without warning, they swiftly arrested roughly 100 members of staff whose names were on their list, along with others.

In broad daylight, the paramilitaries handcuffed and blindfolded aging academics, younger professors, secretaries, parents and visitors alike. Then they drove off with the detainees to a clandestine prison, where some suffered bone-breaking torture and an unknown number were killed, according to witnesses.

Why were these teachers and intellectuals targeted in such a brutal way? What does their experience mean for academic freedom in Iraq? Tragically this harrowing incident is only the latest in an escalating pattern of violence against Iraqi academics.

Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki declared that it was not a case of terrorism, but a dispute between “militias.” Within days, the government said all detainees had been released after a series of dramatic police raids. Several senior police officers were reportedly arrested for questioning over possible complicity. The Education Ministry also insisted that both Sunnis and Shiites were among those illegally detained.

In a letter to officials, EI General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen informed the government of Iraq that Education International will contact the United Nations Special Rapporteur of the

Commission on Human Rights on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions to request that the growing violence against academics and teachers in Iraq be investigated.

Hundreds of academics have been killed in Iraq since the U.S.-led invasion and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein’s regime in March 2003. The Iraqi Minister of Education has stated that 296 members of education staff were killed in 2005 alone. According to the UN Office for Humanitarian Affairs, 180 teachers have been killed since February 2006, and up to 100 have been kidnapped.

“In broad daylight, the paramilitaries handcuffed and blindfolded aging academics, younger professors, secretaries, parents and visitors alike.”

In his letter van Leeuwen pointed out these devastating facts and added: “Not only do abductions of teachers constitute serious violations of the right to live and work in a secure environment, but of the right to life itself. Education International does not only refer to the recent mass kidnapping in the Ministry of Higher Education’s scientific research directorate. Abduction and murder ravage families and put at stake the future of Iraq. The killings of



teachers and closures of schools punish the young people and do not give a message of optimism and hope.”

Because education is so critical to the future of the country, van Leeuwen warned that the dramatic escalation of violence is prompting a mass exodus of academics and teachers. More than 3,250 teachers

“Educational institutions and teachers should be supported and given the resources to promote peace and tolerance through education, rather than being targets of violence,” van Leeuwen urged.

EI is not alone in its concern for the safety of Iraqi academics. The Brussels Tribunal, a network of human rights activists, has

“Educational institutions and teachers should be supported and given the resources to promote peace and tolerance through education, rather than being targets of violence.”

have fled Iraq to date. “The resulting massive brain drain of teachers is a catastrophe which affects the reconstruction and nation-building process significantly, and will continue to do so for years to come,” he said.

The violence against education institutions and teachers has also prompted a sharp decline in school attendance. According to recent statistics from the Ministry of Education, only about 30 percent of Iraq’s 3.5 million school-aged children are currently attending classes, compared to 75 percent in the previous school year.

launched an urgent appeal to save Iraqi academics. Among the more than 10,000 names on their petition are two former UN Assistant Secretaries-General, eminent academics including Noam Chomsky and Howard Zinn, writers such as Eduardo Galeano and Nobel laureates Dario Fo, José Saramago, J.M. Coetzee and Harold Pinter.

For more information, visit:
brusseltribunal.org



EI awards the Mary Hatwood Futrell Scholarship to three outstanding students

For the second consecutive year, Education International awards the Mary Hatwood Futrell Scholarship to three outstanding students at the George Washington University's Graduate School of Education and Human Development.

The scholarship was created during EI's 4th World Congress in 2004 in the name of Mary Hatwood Futrell, EI's founding President and Dean of the GSE-HD. It is awarded each academic year to three outstanding students who have demonstrated a motivation to be a change agent in the world's educational landscape and to



Gihea Gallagher



Laura Bailey



Aliya Bhimani

strive for equality and equity in education, both during their tenure at university and beyond.

For the academic year of 2006-2007, the recipients of the scholarships are:

> **Gihea Gallagher**, School Counseling

> **Laura Bailey**, Elementary Education

> **Aliya Bhimani**, Higher Education Administration

EI congratulates the recipients and wishes them all the best in their studies and efforts to contribute to education around the world.

Smith of EIS Scotland elected to top post



Ronnie Smith, the new Pan-European and ETUCE President

Ronnie Smith of the Educational Institute of Scotland has been elected EI Pan-European and ETUCE President for 2006-2009.

As General Secretary of the EIS, Smith serves more than 57,000 teachers across Scotland at every level of the education system – nursery, primary and secondary school, as well as vocational and higher education.

A graduate of the University of Aberdeen, Smith taught Latin and Social Studies for 15 years, during which time he was an active union member. He was appointed Assistant General Secretary of EIS in 1988, and

General Secretary in 1995.

Smith has maintained the EIS's long history of involvement in the international teachers' movement and in development cooperation.

"I believe it is important for our unions to look outwards, beyond our national boundaries, and to acknowledge the importance of the European dimension in advancing the cause of education and of our members," he said.

"We need an active EI Europe, drawing from the strength of EI, and we need an effective ETUCE to work together effectively for our common aims," Smith added.

Teachers foster values

On the final day of the Luxembourg conference, UNSA Education (France) brought forward an urgent resolution denouncing "the rise of xenophobic, racist, homophobic and anti-Semitic trends in many European countries." It expressed concern about the election of "extreme right-wing advocates, who are now attempting to influence government policies through themes that are dangerous for democracy." And it affirmed: "Teachers foster values such as equality, solidarity and brotherhood. These values are in opposition to hatred, exclusion and racism." The resolution passed unanimously.

Teachers in Europe: Mobility and qualifications, recruitment, retention and remuneration



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This was the theme of the first joint EI Pan-European Conference and ETUCE General Assembly held 4-6 December 2006 in Luxembourg.

Christoph Heise of GEW, Germany, and EI Pan-European Vice-President, welcomed 250 participants to the conference, and introduced EI President Thulas Nxesi by recalling their first meeting in South Africa and the vital role that teachers and SADTU played in ending apartheid.

Nxesi offered delegates a thoughtful keynote address, placing in a global context the European work on resistance to the GATS, advocacy for enhanced early childhood education, support for global campaigns, promoting quality teacher training programs, and defense of human and trade union rights and gender equality.

On the future of public education and teacher trade union-

ism, Nxesi discussed two opposing approaches: the "human capital view of education" so dominant among the powerful in government, the OECD and the corporate world, and the "social democracy vision" of education as a social-cultural process in which alternatives to the dominant ideology are not only possible, but embraced.

"Teachers' unions have a key role to play in defining the kind of education we need for the kind of society we want," Nxesi said. "Despite the difficulty of communicating an alternative to the narrow, neo-liberal approach, it is well worth going down a path that is different."

John Bangs of NUT, introducing the theme, pronounced the speech "the best I've heard in a long while," and said he especially liked the focus on the early years and the importance of professional quality teachers for the very young as well. Bangs said there's a high need for high status teachers. "A society that doesn't respect its teachers will not invest in education."

Haldis Holst of UEN, Norway, also introducing the theme, made the same central assertion: Teachers should be valued, respected and invested in, and they must be given good salaries and time to do their jobs well.

She pointed out a negative trend experienced across Europe: teachers are being questioned more, and compelled to work within a hyper-competitive context of league tables, high-stakes testing and constant complaints about why students aren't performing better.

Holst emphasized the fundamental need for adequate funding to provide quality education across Europe. Building a society of life-long learners "needs time, effort and sufficient funding," she said.

The unions must be seen as the legitimate teachers' voice. "We are the teachers, and we have the professional knowledge," Holst.

She urged teachers to speak up, in their communities and in the media, so that the authentic "voice of the teaching profession is heard in a way that cannot be ignored."

The conference unanimously adopted a coordinated Action Programme presented by the outgoing Bureau. The ambitious programme provides for better coordination of a range of policy development and implementation activities over the next three years. The conference also authorized the oncoming committee to initiate a review of the Pan-European structure after its first term of operation.

Ronnie Smith, General Secretary of the Education Institute of Scotland, was elected the organization's new president. (See sidebar.) Smith committed himself to implementation of the Action Programme and to enhance further cooperation between EI Europe and ETUCE.

The newly-elected vice-presidents for 2006 to 2009 are:

- **Paul Bennett**, UCU, UK
- **Odile Cordelier**, SNES, France
- **Kounka Damianova**, SEB, Bulgaria
- **Jörgen Lindholm**, Lärarförbundet, Sweden
- **Galina Merkoulouva**, ESEUR, Russia
- **Ulrich Thöne**, GEW, Germany

The ETUCE Executive Board re-appointed Martin Rømer as General Secretary of ETUCE, also for a further three-year term.

Delegates also offered enthusiastic support for resolutions proposed by colleagues from Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary and Romania – countries where teachers are struggling to achieve better salaries and working conditions. The conference recognized the many obstacles faced by teacher trade unionists fighting for their members in hostile political and economic climates.



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Thulas Nxesi

Greece: Teachers mobilize to defend public



Greek teachers demonstrate on the 6th week of strike

©DOE

Teachers throughout Greece maintained a spirited campaign of strikes, marches and demonstrations over an extended period this autumn, and vow to continue their high level of activism into 2007.

Members of the Greek Primary Teachers' Federation (DOE) went out on strike on 18 September 2006 and stayed out for six weeks until 27 October. Throughout that time, the DOE members were not alone – far from it, in fact! So strong was public support for their actions that the primary teachers experienced active solidarity from secondary teachers, professors, students, parents, workers and the general public across Greek society.

Thousands of colleagues in the Federation of Secondary Teachers of Greece joined them on the picket lines for 12 days. The Hellenic Federation of University Teachers' Associations took to the streets in one-day strikes on a weekly basis. Students at more than 1,000 secondary schools staged sit-ins for more than three weeks. University students mobilized in strong support as



Greek police tire tear gas at striking teachers

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“While the teachers were out to back their salary demands, they also aimed to improve the quality of education they can provide for their students.”

well. Civil servants declared work stoppages in solidarity with the teachers, as did the Greek Confederation of Labour.

On World Teachers' Day, October 5, more than 20,000 teachers and supporters mobilized in Athens for a rally and an outdoor concert. Demonstrations also took place in Thessaloniki and other cities, in a series of the largest-ever political protests in a number of years.

The teachers' demands mainly result from a lack of public investment in the education system.

Their primary demand is for an immediate increase in the national education budget to bring it up to 5 % of GDP, as earlier promised by Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis. At present the government only devotes 3.5 % of GDP to education – the lowest of all 25 na-

tions in the European Union. And, although the government made a commitment to annual increases in education funding, the percentage in this year's budget is actually reduced.

Facing the most serious underfunding of education in the EU, it's no surprise to learn that primary teachers in Greece are seriously underpaid. The union is demanding an immediate increase of their minimum wage from 1,050 Euros to 1,400 Euros for a beginning teacher. The government has so far refused to increase their minimum wage by more than 105 euros over three years.

education

While the teachers were out to back their salary demands, they also aimed to improve the quality of education they can provide for their students. Other demands include:

➤ Enhanced support for public education

➤ Opposition to commercialization and privatization of education

➤ Adequate training of teachers

➤ Educational freedom and democracy in schools

➤ No private universities

Concert in support of teachers' demands on World Teachers' Day



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➤ No to the proposed revision of the Constitution

EI sent a message to Athens that governments need to ac-

cept that the teaching profession is not a voluntary enterprise.

Croatia: Teachers win much-needed salary increase

When 90% of the national teaching force walks off the job, they tend to get the attention of the government.

That's what happened when about 50,000 elementary and secondary teachers and university professors went on strike across Croatia from 22-25 November 2006. The brief strike resulted in a resounding victory for the teachers and their unions.

The government and three EI member organisations signed collective agreements guaranteeing a 6% pay rise every year for the next three years, a 2% bonus as of 1 August 2006, and additional bonuses over the next six years to catch up with wages in the economic sector.

Vilim Ribic of the Independent Union of Research and Higher Education Employees of Croatia (IURHEEC) said the teachers'

unions had achieved their goal, and he was also pleased they were able to bargain language guaranteeing that teachers' basic salaries will continue to grow after 2009.

Currently, a teacher in Croatia earns an average monthly wage of 3,500 kuna, equivalent to about € 480, or US\$ 610. That is 15% below the average salary for public servants and 20% below the average for private sector workers

with similar responsibilities.

EI congratulates Croatian teachers and welcomes the willingness of government to enter into negotiations. Indeed, Prime Minister Ivo Sanader publicly highlighted the importance of the teacher collective agreements in terms of his government's efforts to build a knowledge society in Croatia.

Honduras: Teachers' struggle achieves much

Honduran teachers are creating positive change through their recent struggles.

It has not been easy to obtain such results, but they've been going strong since 1 August last year. That's when 70,000 teachers from every department of Honduras gathered in the capital of Tegucigalpa to demand the full implementation of the Statute on Teaching Personnel. Originally passed in 1996, full implementation of the statute would include a raise of teachers' hourly wages by an average of 24 lempiras per hour, a raise that has been owing to them since 1997.

Unfortunately, demonstrating teachers were physically assaulted by security forces and 28 were severely injured. President Manuel Zelaya agreed that the teachers' demands were justified, but said he did not agree with their protest methods.

However, through later negotiations, the teachers won agreement from the government to implement most of the 17 points listed in the Statute on Teaching Personnel. In addition, government agreed to financial benefits for

qualified teachers who accept transfers to rural and disadvantaged areas.

Education International has three member organisations in Honduras: the Colegio Profesional "Superación Magisterial" Hondureño (COLPROSUMAH), the Colegio de Profesores de Educación Media de Honduras (COPEMH), and the Colegio Profesional "Unión Magisterial" (COPRUMH).

Another positive development took place in October 2006, when EI held a three-day semi-

nar on implementing the EFAIDS programme linking Education For All and HIV/AIDS Prevention in Honduras. The response from all three teacher unions was overwhelmingly positive, and a joint committee has quickly established good working relationships to move the project forward.

For more information, please visit our EFAIDS site:
ei-ie.org/efaid/



Teachers educate for life

On 1 December 2006 teachers everywhere commemorated World AIDS Day along with masses of people living with HIV and AIDS, as well as students, parents, and other concerned citizens.

the struggle against the devastating pandemic. They lit candles in memoriam for those killed by the disease, and in hope for those living with the virus.

In **Argentina**, the Confederation of Argentine Teachers (CTERA) and its partners offered free information, advice and condoms, as well as voluntary confidential HIV tests.

In **Niger**, the Union of Teachers (SNEN) organised special ceremonies and a presentation of short plays by secondary school students.

The **Swaziland** National Association of Teachers (SNAT) organised a prevention campaign and march. Teachers also burned

candles with red ribbons over 10 days in remembrance of all those touched by HIV and AIDS and to symbolise hope.

The **Uganda** National Teachers Union (UNATU) participated in a national commemoration and also ran a news supplement in the Weekly Observer newspaper.

The **Ethiopian** Teachers' Association (ETA) hosted a special ceremony for members of parliament, activists, teachers, students, parents, and persons living with HIV. They also held a panel discussion on mainstreaming HIV/AIDS education in schools.

In **Belgium**, EI staff distributed educational materials at an event sponsored by the European Commission called



AIDS: Remember Me? The event aimed to remind people that AIDS has not gone away, and to ring alarm bells that there is a serious lack of knowledge about the transmission of HIV among European citizens.

EI was represented at the World AIDS Day March in Brussels and at a Belgian Labour Federation seminar. EI's Campaigns Unit also organised a special World AIDS Day event for staff.



©CTERA

Around the world, people wore the red ribbons that have become the universal symbol of



©EC

HIV+ teachers need support from their unions

Besides their many physical problems, those living with HIV face a deep psychological stigma as well. For teachers, who are expected to serve as role models, the issue can be even more serious.

On World AIDS Day, key organizations came together to discuss ways to support the needs of teachers who are living with HIV in Eastern and Southern Africa. EI, UNESCO, WHO and

the Education Development Centre organised a consultation from 30 November to 1 December 2006 in Nairobi, Kenya brought together key stakeholders, including HIV-positive teacher groups, ministries of education and teacher unions from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The consultation concluded that HIV positive teachers have a prominent role to play in

shaping the education sector response to HIV and AIDS.

Their active engagement particularly in advocacy and the identification of needs and overall design of effective programmes is vital.

The teachers' unions expressed their support for HIV positive teachers and stated that all efforts should be made to provide them with a platform for advocacy and to ensure that their needs are met.

Overall the event represented an important step forward in ensuring the Greater Involvement of People living with HIV and AIDS (GIPA), an internationally recognised approach. The education sector is among the first to adopt this strategy in concrete terms.

For more information, please click here
unesco.org



Ivory Coast: Successful South-South cooperation

By Sylvie Gosme

The teaching profession in Africa has been hit hard by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. One of the most seriously affected countries in French-speaking Africa is Ivory Coast. In 2002, the country's unions joined forces in an HIV/AIDS Prevention Programme (subsequently merged with the Education for All Programme to form EFAIDS) which has been instrumental in combating HIV/AIDS.

On the basis of valuable experience gained over several years, in 2006 Junior Kouamé, who coordinates the programme in Ivory Coast together with Emmanuel Zaddi, travelled to Cameroon and Gabon to help train the local unions there within the framework of the South-South cooperation component of the programme. We met him in Dakar, where he had come to share his expertise with other unions and map out the way ahead in the course of an in-depth discussion on the evaluation and planning of HIV/AIDS projects.

Junior's experience as an activist and civil rights campaigner dates back to his involvement in the student movement when he was still in high school. Later, during his first year as a teacher,

he actively participated in the work of his local union branch, of which he became vice-president.

One of Junior's role models is Nelson Mandela, in whom he admires not only the indefatigable fighter but also the man who knew when it was time to relinquish power – an attitude which, he says, is unfortunately not very widespread among African politicians.

In 2002, Junior joined the EFAIDS Programme, first taking the training and then becoming an instructor himself. Since 2003, he has been project coordinator, a job which gives him much personal satisfaction, as it enables him to establish new contacts and share the enthusiasm of other teacher union activists for the programme.



Junior Kouamé

In fact, in addition to its effectiveness as a training tool, the programme enables teachers to transcend the limitations of an individual union and cooperate with other unions around a common platform. Junior says it's "something we should have started doing a long time ago!" Through joint action, teachers have been able to exert more pressure on the government and have gained wider recogni-

tion for their crucial role in achieving social improvement. Furthermore, their initiatives have been extended to include other sectors and social actors.

Working in other countries has been a very enriching experience for Junior, enabling him to view the EFAIDS Programme and Exercise Book from a different angle. "It is especially interesting," he says, "to find out what other colleagues, other coordinators are doing and have to say."

To take part in this kind of programme as an African trade unionist is clearly an advantage. Across French-speaking Africa, trade unionists are experiencing the same realities, the same forms of "harassment and interference to which unions are subjected here" and which are virtually unknown in Europe. They face the same danger of union fragmentation and loss of membership, which is a paradoxical consequence of the democratisation process begun in the early 1990s, whereby each individual party and each ministry created its own separate union.

South-South cooperation makes it possible to deploy trainers who are in a better position to respond positively to the often unexpected challenges facing those implementing the EFAIDS programme in the region. It also enables more effective implementation, across a variety of countries, of a programme which, in addition to its specific objectives, promotes trade union unity and the emergence of a kind of trade unionism that is proposal-oriented and proactive, as opposed to merely reactive.

Teachers' Exercise Book for HIV Prevention

Developed by the WHO in cooperation with EI and the Education Development Centre, this Exercise Book is based on a participatory approach, which aims not only to provide knowledge and skills but also to promote greater awareness of attitudes to HIV/AIDS and the attendant risks. It comprises specific activities for different age groups (primary schoolchildren, secondary students, adults) and is designed for use as a key tool in prevention training under the EFAIDS Programme.

The EFAIDS Programme

Launched in January 2006, the new EFAIDS Programme is a joint initiative of EI, the World Health Organisation and the Education Development Centre. It combines the efforts undertaken by teachers' unions to promote Education For All (EFA) at national level with their commitment to preventing HIV/AIDS, particularly by taking action in schools. Thus the programme results from the merger of two originally distinct initiatives: the HIV/AIDS Prevention Programme and the EFA Programme.

Currently 25 countries, including seven in French-speaking Africa, are actively involved in the EFAIDS Programme.

For additional information on EFAIDS, please visit ei-ie.org/ef aids

Education is the key to “girl power” against AIDS

At the beginning of the AIDS pandemic, a woman was better off not being highly educated!

In the early years, more highly educated people were more likely to contract AIDS because they “had better economic prospects, which influenced their lifestyle choices such as mobility and number of sexual partners” and “were more likely to live in urban areas where HIV prevalence rates were highest.”

Fortunately, “now, more highly educated girls and women are better able to negotiate safer sex and reduce HIV rates,” for example, by regular use of condoms.

This is the main message contained in *The impact of girls’*

education on HIV and sexual behaviour, the latest report by ActionAid, an NGO partner with EI in the Global Campaign for Education.

Despite the fact that this year marks the 25th anniversary of the first diagnosis of AIDS, the epidemic continues to evolve and is becoming increasingly feminized.

Stephen Lewis, UN Special Envoy to Africa for HIV/AIDS, has said: “The most vulnerable part of the human factor in this raging, all-consuming pandemic of HIV and AIDS in Africa, is the vulnerability of women and girls. Seventy-five percent of the infected 15-24

year-olds in Africa - almost five million – are young women and girls. This is the legacy of gender inequality.”

Among the report’s recommendations:

- > All forms of schools fees in primary education should be abolished
- > Policies on how to encourage teenage mothers to return to education
- > Expansion of the Fast Track Initiative
- > Recruitment of millions of new professional teachers to get all the girls into school and to keep them there

> To remove the bottlenecks between completion of primary school and access to secondary school, particularly for girls

And what about the impact of education on HIV vulnerability for young men? The “analysis shows no striking gender differences. The fact that education helps to protect against HIV holds true as much for boys as for girls.”

To read the full report, please visit:
actionaid.org

New international convention adopted

On 13 December 2006 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the 21st Century’s first legally-binding instrument on human rights.

An estimated 10% of the world’s population – roughly 650 million people – are living with a disability and facing the many challenges that entails.

The new Convention protects and promotes their rights and dignity by reaffirming “the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and the need

for persons with disabilities to be guaranteed their full enjoyment without discrimination.”

The Convention does not create any new rights, but it does specifically prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities in all sectors of life. The Convention affirms equality of rights for people with disabilities, the principle of non-discrimination and equal recognition in law, the right to liberty and security, the right to personal mobility and an independent life, and the rights to health, work, education and participation in political and cultural life.

The ILO was closely involved in

preparing the Convention and insisted on the principle of equality of opportunity and treatment and on non-discrimination. These principles are set out in ILO Convention 159 and Recommendation 168 on vocational rehabilitation and employment of people with disabilities, and other ILO Conventions on equal opportunities.

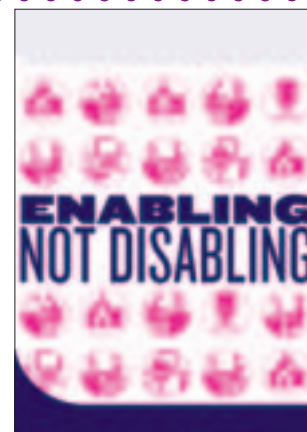
The new Convention recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to work, and stipulates the obligation to protect against them all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, including on the basis of gender. States must ensure that

people with disabilities can freely exercise their trade union rights, must prohibit any employment discrimination and must ensure a work environment that is “open, inclusive and accessible.” Access to vocational training must also be guaranteed.

For more information:
un.org/esa/socdev/enable



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Join up for education rights now!

From 23 to 29 April 2007 teachers around the world will have the opportunity to participate in the Global Action Week. **This year's theme is Education as a Human Right.**

Education is an undeniable and inherent right of all human beings, but it also is a means to an end: it provides children and adults with the knowledge, skills and tools to live in a dignified manner and to fully participate in society.

The 2007 Global Action Week Campaign will be focusing on this theme to help promote the Education for All agenda and its six goals.

This exciting week, organised in partnership with the Johannesburg-based Global Campaign for Education, will allow teachers, parents and concerned citizens to express their creativity through the concept of the "Big Chain Re-Action."

Activities will be centred on the concept of chains of people. Cut-out paper dolls in a chain, human chains around schools, parliamentary or official buildings, chains crossing frontiers – all these can provide powerful symbols of solidarity with others and the importance of each link in the chain.

The concept also provides excellent opportunities for campaign activities that provide good visuals and are low-cost. Thus, the campaign will be feasible both in the North and the South.

EI encourages all its affiliates worldwide to engage in the Global Action Week 2007 campaign in order to continue raising awareness about the goals of Education for All, as well as pressing governments to work towards achieving them.

On 30 January, children from the UK, Spain, Denmark, Ireland, Germany and France will travel to Brussels to meet their MEPs



©Global Campaign for Education

and the European Commission at the European Parliament for the launch of the campaign in Europe.

To learn more about how to participate in the Global Action Week, please go to our website:

ei-ie.org or contact: **global-actionweek@ei-ie.org**

Let's celebrate teacher trade unionists

Do you know an extraordinary teacher trade unionist whose work has inspired you and others? Why not ask your organisation to nominate her or him for one of Education International's awards?

At every World Congress, EI celebrates two eminent colleagues by granting the Albert Shanker Education Award and the Mary Hatwood Futrell Human and Trade Union Rights Award.

Among the highest honours for teachers at the international level, these awards always go to outstanding individuals who have made enormous contributions to the cause of public education, social justice and the defence of human and trade union rights.

For more details on the awards criteria and nomination process, please go to our web site: ei-ie.org/congress5

And don't forget the deadline! Nominations close 22 February 2007.

The awards will be presented at the 5th triennial EI World Congress, which will take place in Berlin from 22 to 26 July 2007. Congress provides a rare opportunity for thousands of teachers representing member organisations from all over the world to meet one another, share the joys and trials of their chosen profes-

sion, discuss the issues affecting their unions, and chart the future course of their global federation.

This year the Congress theme is: **"Educators - Joining Together for Quality Education and Social Justice."**



FEBRUARY 2007

08-09 > Official Seminar of the Bologna Process - Making Bologna a Reality, London, UK

12-14 > Conference for Organizations from OECD Countries, Vancouver, Canada

MARCH 2007

08 > International Women's Day, Worldwide

26 > 28th Executive Board Meeting, Brussels, Belgium

APRIL 2007

01-03 > Global Labour University Annual Conference, Johannesburg, South Africa

23-29 > Global Action Week, Worldwide

MAY 2007

01 > International Workers' Day, Worldwide

29 > Opening 96th Session of the Conference of the ILO, Geneva, Switzerland