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RACISM



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MANILA, Philippines – Fellow teacher trade unionists defend Fidel Fababier, secretary-general of ASSERT, as national police break up a peaceful demonstration to mark World Teachers' Day. The union launched a formal complaint about police brutality.

Repression and celebration

By Nancy Knickerbocker

On the streets of Manila, Philippine National Police officers used brute force to break up a peaceful demonstration by teachers, including severely beating Fidel Fababier, a leader of ASSERT, one of EI's member organisations.

"The government, which for the longest time has been neglecting the teachers' calls for decent salary and dignified living, ironically gave us punches and truncheon blows as gifts on this very special day for us," said Benjo Basas, chairperson of the Teachers' Dignity Coalition. "If our police believe that it is all right to beat the professional teachers in front of the national TV, how much more [would they do] on others?"

In Bogotá, teachers mourned the deaths of four colleagues who were murdered in September, the latest casualties in Colombia's ongoing war on trade unionists.

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Marathon for education:
Georgian teachers ran through
15 towns and cities on the way
to the capital to raise aware-
ness of their concerns.

their trade unions in Ethiopia and around the world.

In Algeria, teachers marked the 10th anniversary of the assassination during the civil war of 11 female teachers.

In Sri Lanka, black flags flew over schools as teachers declared a day of mourning to protest their many grievances that have not been addressed.

In Afghanistan, UNICEF launched a program to train 16,000 female teachers in an effort to get more girls back into school. Under the Taliban women were forbidden to teach and, even since their defeat, teachers continue to face pervasive violence and repression.

Teachers around the globe marked 5 October by doing what they do best – educating themselves and others about the reality in their

schools, hoping that knowledge will create the political will to take action. They held conferences, seminars, meetings and news conferences to highlight under-funding, poor working conditions, lack of teaching resources, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate training, and the urgent need to recruit a new generation of highly qualified young people into the teaching profession.

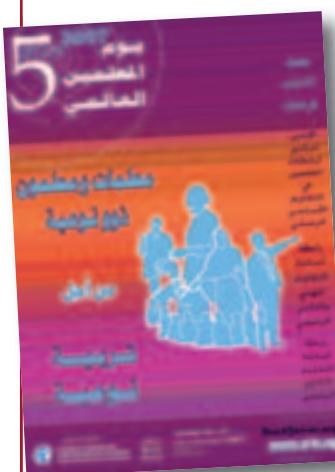
Teacher trade unions all over the world demanded that the professional voices of their members be heard, and their experience and expertise be valued. In country after country, teachers protested education laws or reforms that governments have imposed arbitrarily or without consultation.

Lithuanian teachers went on strike for an hour and a half, demanding the 20% salary

increase that had been promised by the government and adoption of a new statute for the teaching profession.

In France, the unions accused the government of being in violation of the ILO/UNESCO Recommendations concerning the status of teachers and of higher education personnel. About 6,000 teaching positions were cut this year and 11,000 more are slated to be cut next year.

In Burkina Faso, teachers called on their government to ratify the two Recommendations. At a news conference they denounced how conditions of life and work have declined due to policies imposed by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Today their classrooms have as many as 130 students, and they need at least 2,000 more secondary school teachers.



In London, the National Union of Teachers hosted an event with Amnesty International to demand justice for Colombia and to raise awareness of human rights violations against teachers and

on World Teachers' Day

In the Democratic Republic of Congo teachers launched a strong campaign on the need for increased education funding. They also invited parents and members of the public to come into the schools and see for themselves the working and learning conditions for teachers and students.

Thousands of teachers in Portugal staged a large de-

monstration to back their campaign to revoke the statute on teaching. It was followed by a musical concert featuring dozens of artists.

The immense creativity of teachers came to the fore in other countries as well, with many cultural and sporting events designed to draw attention to their cause of quality public education for all.

In the Caribbean, for example, World Teachers' Day is celebrated with festivities, religious services, radio broadcasts and conferences.

In Georgia, 300 teachers and students ran a marathon through 15 towns and cities leading to the capital, raising awareness and support all along the way.

In Ghana, the woman judged to be the overall national

best teacher won a four-bedroom house and the two runners-up each won a car.

In Argentina, top teachers were also honoured with prizes and a conference was held in Buenos Aires on Gender, Education and Teacher Trade Unionism.



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El warns of teacher shortage

Excerpts from a speech by Thulas Nxesi, President, Education International

Thank you teachers." It's an old slogan, but one that is appropriate for today, World Teachers' Day. October 5 is the annual day proclaimed by UNESCO to celebrate the work of the 55 million teachers around the world who dedicate themselves to the intellectual and social development of the next generation.

Despite the worldwide recognition of the need to invest financial and human resources to achieve free, quality public education for all by 2015, at least 70 million children are not in school and are denied their fundamental right to learn. A further 200 million children are involved in child labour, often under harsh or abusive conditions.

Beyond simply getting children into classrooms, we must bring class sizes down from 80 or more students per

teacher to an acceptable level of 40. So far, not enough efforts are being made to recruit young people into the teaching profession and to expand the capacity of teacher training colleges to meet the demand.

Without proper training there is simply no way we can provide the high quality educational program we want to deliver, and to which all students are entitled.

That's why the theme of World Teachers' Day this year focuses on the link between teachers' working conditions and students' learning conditions.

Teachers of the world are united in their demands for living wages; equal pay and rights for women; safe and healthy learning environments, appropriate class sizes and adequate classroom resources; professional development opportunities; involvement in education



©UNESCO

El President Thulas Nxesi spoke at an event held at UNESCO headquarters to mark World Teachers' Day.

policy-making; and collective bargaining rights.

Teachers around the globe do their best every day to teach and train the children and young people to be able to contribute their best to their communities and their countries. We are appealing to politicians, policy makers, parents and all concerned citizens to demand that gov-

ernments implement the ILO/UNESCO Recommendations and make the public investments necessary to enable us do our important job properly and professionally.

Please, work with us to help attain the Millennium Goals and make the dream of Education for All become a reality!



Advancing the global education agenda

At every World Congress, the General Secretary reports on EI's progress towards the goals mandated by member organisations. Here are some excerpts from Fred van Leeuwen's wide-ranging keynote speech in Berlin.

The global environment

II Globalization has forced governments to recognize the importance of education; it is on the lips of every political leader; it is reaffirmed in every summit communiqué. But globalization of the economy has been accompanied by paralysis in global governance.

Democracy is enjoyed by more people than ever before, but human and trade union rights are still being violated. More countries are on the path to development, but social injustice and inequality are increasing dramatically....

Imagine if the resources poured into the Iraq war over the last five years had been used instead to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals!

Millennium development goals

... Some progress has been made, but the overall picture is grim. Poverty is not declining. Equality is a distant dream. The gap between rich and poor continues to widen. Only five countries meet the targets set by the UN to spend 0.7 % of their GDP for development cooperation: Denmark, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. What about the G8 countries? They produce glowing statements full of promises at their annual summits. But they fail to act....

Quality education for all

We insist that universal primary education be achieved through quality public educa-

tion.... But the alarming news from UNESCO is that unless drastic measures are undertaken, we should expect a shortage of 18 million primary school teachers by 2015: 5 million in the industrial economies and 13 million in low income countries. This will further increase the pressure on governments to loosen quality standards.

A teacher shortage on this scale could not only become the most serious challenge our profession has ever faced. It could also pose a serious threat to the survival of our public school systems worldwide. Teachers will be induced to move from low to medium to high income countries, and within countries from public to private....

It is of utmost importance that all EI member organizations allow contract teachers, including unqualified teachers, to become union members. Excluding these teachers is wrong and unwise. We must organize them and help them to become qualified colleagues able to join the profession....

Solidarity

... We will never forget the tsunami hitting Indonesia, Sri Lanka and other nations around the Indian Ocean taking the lives of more than 2,000 of our colleagues. The meaning of solidarity became very real when member unions, schools, teachers, students around the world contributed so generously to help bring relief.



... No man-made disaster ranks higher than the Beslan school hostage crisis in September 2004 that ended with 334 people killed, including 186 children and 18 teachers. Again with your help we were able to establish a trust fund for the education of the children of colleagues who were killed.

... The Board proposes that in the coming four years we invest 1 million Euros in trade union training and professional development for our members and future members in the countries in the Middle

East, with emphasis on Palestine, Israel and their immediate neighbours. This is all clearly focused on helping the peace process.

... We have welcomed two Lebanese organizations as members of EI. We had a first meeting last summer in the ravaged city of Beirut. Twenty-five Lebanese and four Israeli teachers lost their lives in last year's war.... Throughout the conflict we were in close contact with our Israeli, Palestine and Lebanese member organizations and tried to help them all.



...Teachers everywhere — including our colleagues in Israel, Palestine and Lebanon, in Iraq and Afghanistan — want to build for the future, educating children and young people in a spirit of hope, not despair.

Defending democracy, human and trade union rights

...This week we will launch our triennial **Barometer of Human and Trade Union Rights** showing the sorry state of international human and trade union rights in many countries. One of the alarming findings is the increase in human trafficking and violence against women. In 2006 alone EI intervened with national authorities in 40 countries who were infringing core labour standards or worse. Harassment and detention of education union activists, the refusal to comply with ILO conventions 87 and 98 — it is becoming the daily practice. In the past three years we made more requests for interventions to the International Labour Organization than ever before.

There were the notorious offenders: Colombia ... Ethiopia ... There were new offenders as well, Iran being one of them.

We are currently witnessing the re-birth of a teachers' trade union movement in [Iran]. There were demonstrations, there was a violent response by the government, and there were ar-

rests, and people disappeared: A familiar sequence of events in Iran when democracy tries to raise its head. I am very happy that a representative of the Iranian teachers' organizations is with us at this Congress. I want our colleagues in Iran to know that we are with them, all the way, until they have achieved all of their legitimate rights, to begin with ensuring the safety and security of our Iranian colleague when he returns to his country later this week.

Free trade unionism is one of the vital institutions of democracy. Yet, trade union rights have also been under attack in democratic countries, with social dialogue usually being the first casualty. Governments of several OECD countries, from Western Europe, some Canadian provinces, a number of US states, Japan and Korea and — let us not forget Mr. Howard's Australia — have argued that they have to adopt neo-liberal policies to ensure competitiveness in the global economy. Accepting such arguments is to participate in a race to the bottom....

The teachers' voice in the global community

...We must make sure that our voice cannot be ignored, by developing our professionalism, and through building our expertise and our research capacity.

One practical example is our work on the OECD Programme

for International Student Assessment, PISA. Sixty-seven countries participated last year, and when the 2006 report is released next December, we expect front-page headlines again around the world. We are critical of some aspects of PISA and especially of the way it is used by politicians. But the impact of PISA is undeniable, and it has produced strong evidence to support our view that good public education systems provide quality and equality of opportunity....

At the WTO we have carried forward the mandate from Porte Alegre on GATS. We have succeeded in raising awareness of the risks inherent in governments signing away their responsibility to provide public education, under the guise of free trade. For the moment, the Doha round of trade talks is stalled because of agriculture, and GATS has been put on the back-burner. But the pressures for commercialization of education are powerful and growing, especially in higher education. Vocational education is not far behind. This battle is far from over....

We have underlined previously the importance of linking the global with the local. One area of EI where we succeed in doing that is our ongoing action on the status of women. EI participates actively each year in the UN Commission on the Status of Women, and in work with the ITUC and the other global unions, then carries that work out to the regions through our women's networks....

Membership and unity

Between 2004 and 2007 our total membership grew from 26 to 29.6 million in 383 organ-

izations in 169 countries, an increase of 3.6 million....

With a total of 67 million teachers around the globe, we now represent 45 % of them. Where would that other 55% — or 37 million — be hiding? Fifteen million are in China and another four million are members of organizations not yet affiliated with EI. But the remaining 18 million are colleagues in your own countries who have not yet been persuaded to join the union....



In conclusion

Colleagues ...the challenges we face today in education, and more broadly for social justice and equity, are greater than at any time since the public school was first established as the basis for universal education.

We should be proud that we have been able to build Education International as a strong united Global Union, able to play an important role in the global movement for social justice.

Our mobilization to build awareness of the need for quality education for all, and recognition that quality education for all is the basis for social justice in our communities, has been one of our greatest successes. Turning awareness into action remains the major challenge before us.



German President salutes teachers

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Horst Köhler.

"The goal of quality Education For All is something I hold very dear to my heart. I will do everything I can to defend it in my country and wherever possible."

This is the pledge made by Horst Köhler, the federal president of Germany, to 1,700 teachers and education workers who came from around the world to attend the opening ceremony of the 5th World Congress of Education International.

Köhler said his own life illustrates very well the difference that access to a good education can make. As the second youngest of eight children in a refugee family, young Köhler might not have expected to study, let alone to grow up to become the President of Germany. But thanks to a special and caring teacher who

helped him, he was able to pursue his education and build a distinguished career.

"I was lucky to meet such a good teacher. But a good education should not be a question of luck. It is a human right," Köhler asserted.

The German President also acknowledged that teachers carry an enormous responsibility. "We expect a lot of them because we entrust them what is most precious to us – our children."

For that reason, societies should be concerned to provide teachers with good working conditions, and not only in

terms of salaries. Class size, professional support, and improved recognition of the value of teachers' work are also important, he said.

President Köhler described hardworking, committed teachers as "the heroes of everyday life," whose contributions should be recognised.

The audience gave President Köhler a standing ovation at the end of his address, a vote of confidence in his message from representatives of teacher unions in 170 countries and territories on all continents.

Knowledge which is not built on the respect of human rights is knowledge of poor quality

by Vernor Muñoz Villalobos, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education

Ihe right to quality education requires that the learning process and the school environment aim at building knowledge into a society with human dignity, diversity, peace and cooperation.

Quality is not just a criteria to measure efficiency.

Since there are certain values that motivate learning and which are necessary to provide quality education, it is essential to define the needs of students and teachers, as well as the adjustments that can be made to improve the inadequacies in the schooling and political systems.

Exercising a democratic citizenship is not subject to the instructions laid out by the school supervisor, but to the

class environment and the school community, where the students can express their ideas, value their freedom to think independently and respect others' opinion. The right to education involves exercising this freedom.

We should therefore work even harder to overstep the concept of education as a mere business or mechanism for uniformity, because satisfying the needs of employers is not the main role of teachers.

The principle of (human capital) accumulation, which constitutes the premise of neoliberalism, opposes to the principle of survival and even more to the dignity of life.

Greed and consumerism lead our world to poverty and degradation, by turning every-

thing it touches into a commodity. We have been made to believe that pollution and deforestation are the sense of progress and development.

Schools should raise ecological awareness and bring harmony between people and the environment. They should be no longer an instrument of vertical socialisation, but a space of convergence and empowerment of human rights and responsibilities. We will have to imagine this new space by assimilating our challenges and breaking the patriarchal structures in order to build a human rights culture.

Certainly, life is learning. But only the human being is forced to learn how to learn. Creative imagination is what most defines human essence, and that is why I believe we



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should expect better times. I know deeply in me that among so much uncertainty and pain, we shall be able to build a new history, where everyone will have their word. These words shall be taught by you, teachers. You are the ones who can feed freedom to this hungry world.

Thank you for being indispensable. Thank you for believing that another world is possible. Thank you for being here.

Time for action on girls' education

New policies and normative standards on girls' education are not what is most needed; what is urgently needed is implementation of the commitments already made and reiterated many times over the past few decades."

With this plea, Carolyn Hannan concluded her much-applauded keynote speech to members of EI's Women's Caucus in Berlin.

Hannan, the Director of the UN Division for the Advancement of Women, focused her presentation on the last priority theme of the annual United Nations meeting: the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child.

A theme throughout was the

critical importance of education in empowering women and girls. "Extensive evidence shows that educated women become more effective agents of change, able to improve both their own well-being and the welfare of their families," Hannan said.

Hannan deplored that access to education is not automatically empowering for girls.

"Societal attitudes, particularly those which question the value of education for girls, can significantly detract from the empowering potential of education. Advocacy efforts must be focused on families, communities and leadership at all levels, including in informal institutions. Both mothers and fathers

should be actively engaged in supporting education for girls," she explained.

Hannan said that effective measures to increase girls' enrollment include improving security, providing adequate sanitation facilities in the school, providing schools in local communities, and promoting a more equitable division of household tasks among girls and boys.

She urged that education be translated into opportunities for girls, in employment and other areas. "The efforts made in the educational system must then be backed by measures in the labour market to motivate and back-up the shifts in subject specializations at school," she said. Girls



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Carolyn Hannan

should be encouraged to pursue disciplines traditionally dominated by men, such as engineering, science and technology, and boys to choose social sciences, humanities and languages.

She also raised "the importance of the gender mainstreaming strategy because of the continued tendency to see attention to women and girls in many areas as a special interest issue rather than as a central concern."



Congress resolutions tackle urgent issues

As at every Congress, delegates raised issues of vital concern to educators in all parts of the world. Among them were resolutions on:

The Philippines: The urgent resolution deplores the fact that since 2001 more than 1000 activists fighting for the rights of poor and repressed Filipinos have been assassinated. It calls for an end to extrajudicial killings and involuntary disappearances, investigations and prosecutions of those responsible, and respect for human rights and civil liberties.

Colombia: Delegates passed an urgent resolution in defense of the Federation Colombiana de Educadores (FECODE) and teachers persecuted for trade union activity. The resolution applauds FECODE's contribution to the development of Colombian civil society and public education for all,

despite government repression. Delegates stated they were appalled that Colombia continues to be the most dangerous country in the world for trade union activists. They committed to campaign for the release from prison of Raquel Castro and other teacher trade unionists unfairly imprisoned.

Oaxaca, Mexico: The urgent resolution notes that for a year now, acute conflict between government and teachers and the social movement has resulted in harsh repression, imprisonment and deaths. It demands the release of all detainees, an investigation into all assassinations and prosecution of those responsible. It also lays out a demand for national and state governments begin negotiations with Section 22 of SNTE Oaxaca to find solutions.

Ethiopia: The urgent resolution protests the court ruling

against the authentic Ethiopian Teachers' Association (ETA) which could result in all assets of the union being transferred to the government-supported ETA without a proper examination of the facts of the case. It also condemns the forced disappearance of Tilahun Ayalew and the continuing imprisonment of Anteneh Getinet, Meqcha Mengistu and Woldie Dana. It also calls for release of these teacher trade unionists.

Peru: The urgent resolution notes that new legislation which impacts on teachers, especially in terms of evaluation, did not include dialogue with education unions, and protests resulted in violent physical repression. It also demanded release of all detainees, that charges against them be dropped, and that the Law that Regulates the Public Educator be suspended pending dia-

logue with SUTEP.

France: The urgent resolution on the situation in the French higher education sector demands fundamental change and better financing of higher education and research. It also calls for broad debate and opposes passage of the "Universities Freedom and Autonomy" bill.

Iraq: Congress also passed a resolution of support for Iraqi workers. Delegates expressed their opposition to the war in Iraq and called on the US government to seek a diplomatic settlement and the building of a democratic society. They also resolved to support the efforts of Iraqi teachers and other workers to form independent labour unions, in particular, the Iraqi Teachers Union (ITU) in seeking to establish a free, independent, non-political, non-sectarian and democratic teachers' trade union.

Set them free!

EI has launched a postcard campaign to call attention to the plight of teacher trade unionists imprisoned or otherwise facing violations of their human and trade union rights. Thousands of the cards were sent to the governments of Colombia, Ethiopia, Botswana, and Guatemala.

An urgent resolution at Congress focused on the appalling state of trade union rights in Colombia, the most dangerous place in the world to be a trade unionist. It applauded the Federacion Colombiana de Educadores (FECODE) for its contribution to the development of Colombian civil society and public Education For All despite the severe repression by government.

EI activists were therefore delighted that Colombian



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Colombian teacher trade unionists Samuel Morales and Raquel Castro were honoured with the Mary Hatwood-Futrell Human and Trade Union Rights award. Neither one could be present to accept the award: the government of Colombia denied Morales an exit visa and Castro was still in prison. Happily, she has since been released.

teacher Raquel Castro was finally freed from the political prisoners' wing of the Bogota Women's Prison on 2 August. One of the co-recipients of this year's Human and Trade

Union Rights Award, Castro was honoured, together with Samuel Morales, for their dedication to their union, their students and their communities. The two leaders of the Arauca Teachers' Union were arrested by the Colombian army on 5 August 2004 following a military operation during which they witnessed the assassination of three trade union colleagues.

In the case of Ethiopia, the cards were backed up with an urgent resolution condemning the continuing imprisonment of Anteneh Getanet, Meqcha Mengistu and Woldie Dana, and calling for their release. It also condemns the forced disappearance of Tilahun Ayalew.

The post card campaign also highlighted the case of Japhta Radibe, president of the Botswana Teachers' Union,



Solidarity works! At Congress, EI launched a postcard campaign to increase pressure on governments that are violating the human and trade union rights of teachers and education workers.

and a well-known defender of human and trade union rights in his country. At age 46, Radibe was arbitrarily 'retired' from his teaching position in clear violation of his professional and labour rights.

A challenge to all educators around the world

"I see this award as a challenge addressed to all educators around the world, and I take this opportunity to renew my commitment to fight against ignorance and illiteracy and to struggle even harder to improve the quality of education."

With these words Ernestine Akouavi Akakpo-Gbofu, a pre-school teacher from Togo who received the EI Albert Shanker Education Award 2007, began an emotional speech of thanks for the distinction during EI's 5th World Congress in Berlin.

First, she thanked EI and all Executive Board Members, who wanted to improve the quality of education through the Albert Shanker Award, as

well as the Education Unions' Federation of Burkina Faso (FESEB), which nominated her.

The EI award once more honoured an outstanding teacher, who emphasized her commitment to the Education For All goals throughout her speech.

"Please allow me in this very moment to direct my thoughts towards all children in the world who do not have access to education, and to

wards all pre-school institutions in my country with whom I struggle everyday to allow thousands of children to get pre-school education and thus have access to primary education, which is the foundation of the whole education system," she said.

As for the educational games she developed with children and that greatly contributed to her receiving the award, Akakpo-Gbofu reminded her audience that, like all pre-



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school teachers in her country, she creates and manufactures herself her own teaching tools with local and recycled materials, out of pure necessity, simply because the authorities can not provide them.

She finally urged "all EI activists to commit themselves to fight at all levels to develop all capacities of the children, and to give them the best chances of having successful lives."

Delegates elected a new Executive Board to lead EI until the 6th World Congress, to be held in Africa in 2011.

President



Thulas Nxesi

Vice-Presidents



Juçara Maria Dutra Vieira



Patrick Gonthier



Susan Hopgood



Reg Weaver



Irene Duncan Adanusa

General Secretary



Fred van Leeuwen

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Africa



Salimata Doumbia
Africa



Maria Teresa Cabrera Ulloa
Latin America



Jorge Pavez Urrutia
Latin America



Marlies Rettig
North America-Caribbean



Ed McElroy
North America-Caribbean



Haldis Holst
Europe

Open Seats



Branimir Strukelj
Europe



Yasuo Morikoshi
Asia-Pacific



Yim Pheng LOK
Asia-Pacific



Jerry Bartlett



Teopista Birungi Mayanja



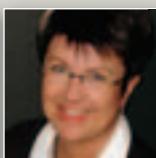
S. Eswaran



Grahame McCulloch



Alain Peliisser



Eva-Lis Preisz



Ulrich Thöne



José Campos Trujillo



José Antonio Zepeda López

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EI honours outstanding activists

As a mark of recognition of the contribution which they have made to the development of EI policies and programmes, the 5th World Congress recognized representatives of affiliated organizations as Distinguished Associates of EI.

Some of the Distinguished Associates of EI:

André Dumont of AOb, Joanne Eide of NEA, Lajla Blom of UEN, and Margaret Axell of Lärarförbundet, with Thulas Nxesi, EI President. Not in the picture: Bob Barker of CTF and Christoph Heise of GEW.

Delegates bid fond farewell



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Mary Hatwood Futrell

organisation, the National Education Association (NEA), where she held various administrative positions. She was later elected as President of the World Confederation of the Organizations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP).

Futrell's firm belief in and constant fight for girls and women's education has gained her recognition all around the world.

Mary Hatwood Futrell is the Founding President of Education International and was President of EI from 1993 to 2004.

Since the dawn of her teaching career, started in 1963, this passionate advocate for quality education and quality teaching was a member of her teacher

Since 1995 the EI Mary Hatwood Futrell Human and Trade Union Rights Award is given at every World Congress to a national or local union leader or activist who has undertaken courageous and exemplary action to defend and promote human and trade union rights. It reminds teach-



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Gaston De La Haye



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Elie Jouen

ers around the world of Futrell's relentless efforts to advocate for a real acknowledgement of the minorities' rights, universal human rights and the respect for diversity.

General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen also paid tribute to

two EI Deputy General Secretaries who will retire from EI shortly: Gaston De la Haye and Elie Jouen. Both were thanked deeply for their longstanding commitment to the international teacher trade union movement and for the immeasurable contributions they have made.

> Poverty Requiem

Thousands sing out against poverty

On 17 October the Poverty Requiem resonated around the globe. In a worldwide marathon of music, people from all walks of life in many time zones sang the same inspirational songs about human suffering and hope for a better life, free of poverty.

At least 42 performances of the requiem were staged in 23 countries including Argentina, Cameroon, England, Ethiopia, Gambia, Germany, India, Kenya, Netherlands, Nigeria, Palestine, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Scotland, Senegal, Suriname, USA, and Zambia.

This massive community arts project was all part of the

Global Campaign Against Poverty, which last year attracted more than 23 million participants and set a Guinness World Record. This year's "Stand Up and Speak Out" campaign is a unique action to mark the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

With dozens of large mixed choirs joining in a global chain of performances, the Poverty Requiem will make a strong statement about the fact that one billion human beings live on less than \$1 a day. The Poverty Requiem is made up of five movements, each one elaborating the different ways in which poverty impacts on people: the suffering, the anger, the mourning,

the humour and the hope.

Music for the Poverty Requiem was written by composer and conductor Peter Maissan, lyrics by Sylvia

Borren, Director of Oxfam Novib.

For more information, visit: www.povertyrequiem.org

Did you know?

- Every **3.6 seconds** another person dies of starvation.
- More than **1 billion** people live on less than \$1 a day.
- About **2.8 billion** people – nearly half the world's population – are living on less than \$2 a day.
- Every year **6 million** children die from malnutrition before their 5th birthday.
- More than **15 million** children have lost one or both parents to AIDS. About 80 per cent of them live in sub-Saharan Africa.
- According to UNESCO, universal primary education would cost **\$11 billion** a year. That's about half what Americans spend on ice cream every year.



Space shuttle turned into a classroom

– by Claude Carroué

For the first time ever, the space shuttle *Endeavour* was turned into a classroom during 14 days outside the Earth's atmosphere. On board was Barbara Morgan, a former elementary school teacher and member of the National Education Association (NEA), one of EI's American affiliates.

After working as a teacher from 1974 to 1998 in Montana and Idaho, Morgan was named to the astronaut corps in January 1998. She became NASA's first Educator Mission Specialist in the Educator Astronaut Project. This project aims to inspire students, honour teachers, and spur interest in mathematics, science, and space exploration.

The first teacher to go into space was Christa McAuliffe, who died in the January 1986 crash of the *Challenger* space shuttle. Morgan and McAuliffe trained together and shared a determination to inspire their students to reach for the stars. After her friend's tragic death, Morgan remained committed to their shared ideals.

Asked which profession she would choose between being an astronaut or a teacher, she answered that both are excellent jobs and they are very similar. "In both you are exploring, you are learning, you are discovering and you are sharing," Morgan said.

This answer comes as no surprise, as both are deeply rooted

in her professional experience.

During *Endeavour*'s mission, Morgan helped operate the robotic arms on the space station and the shuttle, and had responsibility for 6 million basil seeds that were exposed to microgravity in on-board growth chambers. The seeds and a package of teaching materials will be distributed to schools as part of NASA's Engineering Design Challenge that encourages students to develop their own designs for moon- or Mars-based plant growth chambers.

During the mission, Morgan enjoyed answering questions from students in McCall, Idaho,



©NASA

Teacher turned astronaut, Barbara Morgan

who were able to communicate with her via satellite.

The students asked such questions as: Is it hard to eat in microgravity? What is the temperature outside the space station? How do you sleep in space? How do you exercise on the space station?

Morgan says she misses teaching and wants to go back to the classroom when she leaves NASA.

Teachers target homophobia

Teachers and other trade unionists around the world are coming together to strengthen their collective human rights work in the area of LGBT rights. The Spanish teachers' union, F.E.C.C.O.O., has published a booklet entitled "Love and sex are not just one colour," which contains a series of amusing cartoon strips illustrating episodes in the life of a gay teen, who uses humour and good sense to chal-

lenge the stereotypes and homophobia he faces in school. At the second international LGBT forum, jointly sponsored by Education International and Public Services International, the two federations launched "Trade Unionists Together for LGBT Rights," the first international trade union guide to achieving equality for LGBT workers. The publication offers updates on the disturbing increase in homophobia in some parts of the world, in

particular Eastern Europe, where pride parades have been banned and activists attacked by the far right, nationalists and religious extremists. On the other hand, it also highlights the positive effects of international solidarity and effective action by unions representing their LGBT members. For example, 12,000 Polish teachers demonstrated in Warsaw against their government's discrimination against teachers on the grounds of

sexual orientation and political beliefs.

Despite many legislative improvements, institutional homophobia remains common on issues such as pensions, taxation, leave entitlements and harassment. "Trade Unionists Together for LGBT Rights" also includes model contract language for collective bargaining to secure LGBT rights in the workplace.



- Bill, I've heard that you are gay. And I don't have any problem with it.

- Me neither. No problem!

- We don't have any problem with it.

- Me neither.

- I don't have any problem with you being hetero either!

Indigenous rights affirmed at UN

After two decades of negotiations, the United Nations has finally adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. On 13 September 2007, the UN General Assembly voted to adopt the historic declaration with a large majority (143 in favour, 4 against and 11 abstentions).

Vicky Tauli-Corpuz is chairperson of the UN Permanent

Forum on Indigenous Issues. Speaking in an emotional tone filled with joy, she said: "The 13th of September 2007 will be remembered as an international human rights day for the indigenous peoples of the world."

Education International's General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen applauded the move and urged EI member organizations "to renew efforts to achieve quality public educa-



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Congress passes urgent resolution in defense of Australian Aboriginal communities

Australian Prime Minister John Howard's policies have generated tremendous opposition across the trade union movement, particularly in the education sector. Australian teachers at EI's World Congress spoke out passionately about the government's tactics against Aboriginal people, their rights and their traditional lands.

An urgent resolution noted that the government had recently seized control of 64 remote Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory, under the pretext of protecting children from abuse. Ironically, in these communities there are 5,000 Aboriginal children who have no access to education from pre-primary through secondary school.

Delegates urged the Australian government to establish genuine partnerships with Aboriginal leaders, to immediately cease its plan to undermine the Land Rights of Aboriginal people, to prioritise the training of Indigenous teachers and education workers, and to provide professional support, including appropriate housing and school facilities.

tion for all and particularly for indigenous children, who are among those most likely to be deprived of education or to be exploited through child labour."

The 12-page Declaration addresses both individual and collective rights including cultural rights and identity, rights to education, health, employment, language, and others. It also outlaws discrimination against the world's 370 million indigenous and promotes their full and effective participation in all matters that concern them.

The Declaration also emphasizes the rights of indigenous peoples to maintain and strengthen their own institutions, cultures and traditions,

and to pursue their development in keeping with their own needs and aspirations.

Its adoption will strengthen the rights of indigenous peoples worldwide and serve as a comprehensive framework for cooperation in implementing new minimal international standards for indigenous people's rights.

The four countries voting against the declaration -- Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States -- said they could not support it because of concerns over provisions on self-determination, land and resources rights and provisions giving indigenous peoples a right of veto over national legislation and state management of resources.

Bulgaria: Nine out of ten teachers support strike

One month after a national strike began, about 90 per cent of secondary school teachers throughout Bulgaria joined to back demands for a significant pay rise.

On 24 October, representatives of the Unified National Education Strike Commission

and officials of the education and finance ministries agreed on a 20 per cent year-on-year increase in average gross salary for secondary school teachers as of November 1. However, teachers want two more 20% increments before July 2008.

The strike action intensified

as teachers blockaded major highways, the Danube Bridge and key crossings in Sofia and other major cities. In addition, thousands of teachers resigned en masse in five cities to protest their low wages.

Bulgarian teachers, who earn the lowest teacher salaries in

Europe, were demanding a 100% pay rise, to be implemented from now until 1 July 2008, and 5% of GDP be designated for education in the 2008 national budget. The average monthly salary of a teacher is only 340.78 levs (174 euros). Even with a 100% salary increase, their salary would still be lower than

Ethiopia: EI re-launches its UAA

In light of the Urgent Resolution adopted by its recent 5th World Congress, EI calls on the solidarity and support of its members and partners to ensure the immediate release of Ethiopian colleagues.

Members of the Ethiopian Teachers' Association (ETA) - Anteneh Getnet, Meqcha Mengistu and Woldie Dana - have been in detention in the Addis Ababa Kality central prison since their re-arrest in May. More recently, the police have arrested Wibit Legamo, wife of Woldia Dana, and Berrhanu Aba-Debissa, a member of ETA. All five have

been unjustly accused of being members of an illegal organisation called "Ethiopian Patriotic Front." Tilahun Ayalew has been missing since last 28 May.

Since 1993, EI member ETA has struggled to survive and to be recognized in accordance with international conventions. Although Ethiopia has ratified these, the government has persistently under-

mined the legitimacy of the ETA through intimidation, harassment, including torture, refusing to allow meetings to be held and seizing the assets of association. In all, it amounts to identity theft. Education International calls upon its affiliates to press the

Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to immediately release Anteneh Getnet, Meqcha Mengistu, Woldie Dana, Wibit Legamo and Berrhanu Aba-Debissa, and to cease all actions interfering in the internal affairs of the ETA.

For more information, please go to:
www.ei-ie.org/en/urgentactionappeal

Burma: Violent repression of peaceful demonstrations

Education International encourages all member organisations to write to the Burmese representatives in their countries following the recent violent repression used to break up peaceful demonstrations.

As has been widely reported in the global media, the Burmese authorities resorted to violence in order to stem a peaceful demonstration led by monks and nuns; an action which has left at least 13 dead to date.

On September 28, Education International wrote to the Ambassador of the Union of Burma, S.E. U Wunna Maung Lwin.

In his letter, Fred van Leeuwen, EI Secretary General, said that "it is most regrettable that the ignominious failure of the

government to address the issues raised by the peaceful demonstrators should have taken the lives of these people."

He also reminded the Burmese authorities that "freedom of expression is a fundamental human right."

To read the full text of the letter and of the Urgent Action Appeal, please go to:
www.ei-ie.org/en/news/show.php?id=619&theme=ei&country=myanmar

their counterparts in neighbouring countries such as Serbia and Romania.

EI strongly supports the struggle of Bulgarian teachers. "The provision of quality public education is the responsibility of the government and it should devote the necessary resources for



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it. This includes paying decent wages and giving decent working conditions to teachers," said EI General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen. EI member organisations from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) which met from 4-6 Oct in Riga, Latvia also declared their full support of

their Bulgarian colleagues. The strike involves EI affiliates SEB and PODKREPA. SEB spokesperson Ms Kounka Damianova thanked colleagues from around the world for their support.

Research matters

"In the past, before we started carrying out research, we were seen as people who were just making a lot of noise. We were accused of not having the evidence to support our claims and statements. Now we can."

This quote from the Tanzania Teachers' Union (TTU) fully illustrates the purpose of "Research matters - Research as a union tool to improve educational policy", EI's latest publication from the EFAIDS Programme.

This booklet shows that research is crucial for unions to have a greater say in educational policy.

It gives guidelines intended to be used by all EI affiliates (including those not directly involved in the EFAIDS programme) on how to initiate, commission and use research to promote the union's political goals in today's globalised world. It highlights some unions like TTU whose research has led to successful policy de-

velopment, advocacy and policy making activities.

Teachers' unions around the world are encouraged to undertake research on issues that the educational community is facing in order to achieve quality education for all, such as a lack of qualified teachers, inductive learning environments, gender inequities, the HIV/AIDS epidemic and the digital divide within and between developed and developing nations.

"In addition to greater influence on national and international policy," the booklet explains, "research confers a wide range of other benefits on the union. These include: improved policy development, strengthened advocacy activities, informed training programmes, and public relations opportunities."

It also notes that "research can be more effective when undertaken in partnership or consultation with strategically aligned stakeholder organisations or individuals," especially concerning the process of defining the research topic, which appears to be of crucial importance.

Teachers' unions are presented with the choice of carrying out research themselves or of outsourcing the work.

The research is meant to be based on reliable evidence and policy recommendations need to be clear and applicable.

Finally, the research results must be presented publicly to initiate a policy discussion. Thus

it is important to organise public debates and events and to use the media to disseminate the research outcomes.

Teachers' unions should consider their key objectives and messages and whether their research has directly addressed the issues in question. "Having a clear and consistent message to communicate to policy makers through the research is essential," says the booklet.

In that regard it recommends that in conveying the key messages of their research teachers' unions involve the government and form alliances with others who are championing the same cause.



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To read the full report, please go to:

http://www.ei-ie.org/efaids/en/documentation_ei.php



Ghana: Union research reconfirms HIV/AIDS as a key workplace issue

Although there is a very high degree of awareness about HIV/AIDS among teachers and education workers in Ghana, few actually know whether or not they are HIV positive.

Research conducted by the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) and Teachers and Educational Workers' Union (TEWU) found that although more than half of the respondents had had direct contact with someone living with HIV/AIDS and 85% believed it is useful for everyone to know their status, only 20%

have actually been tested.

The research study, "An Assessment of the Awareness of HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector and the Needs of Teachers and Education Workers Living with HIV/AIDS in Ghana" also explores the experiences and needs of teachers and education workers living with HIV/AIDS.

Many of those interviewed discovered their status for the first time when their spouse or child fell sick. Many are still transmitting the disease unknowingly and what is more, most only received counselling after

they got to know their status. Many preferred then not to disclose their status to families or colleagues, for fear of discrimination and job loss.

Workers living with HIV/AIDS singled out financial support for food and medication, love and care, professional counselling and education for their children as their essential needs.

The prevalence of HIV infection in Ghana is only about 3%, among the lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa. However the research stresses that a generalised lack of awareness about HIV status could be disastrous

for the future, and that prevention strategies should be emphasized.

The researchers conclude that responsibility for care of those who are infected lies not only with governments, but also with employers and trade unions. They call upon everyone in the education sector, including the trade unions, to contribute to the well-being of infected teachers and their families.

To receive a copy of the report, please write to:
efaids@ei-ie.org



EFAIDS Programme branches out

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Building a Gender Friendly School Environment

What is the link between gender, HIV and AIDS, and Education for All? How can schools be made more gender-friendly? These and other questions are addressed in a

new toolkit developed by EI, the EDC and WHO for teachers' unions.

"Building a Gender-Friendly School Environment" aims to help teacher unions to create a healthy, safe environment in schools for learners of all ages. The materials will support teachers and their unions in the following areas:

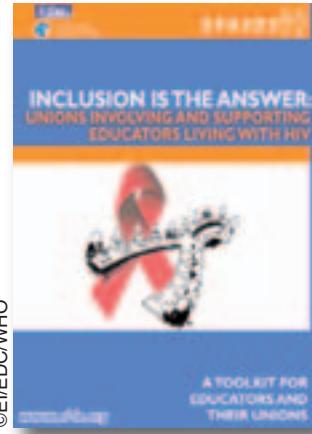
- understanding fully concepts like gender, gender relations, gender identity and safety and their relevance to EFA and HIV/AIDS
- assessing critically their own school environment
- working with colleagues to make this environment more gender friendly.

Building a Gender-Friendly School Environment will be

used by union leaders and educators in the EFAIDS programme in 35 countries.

Inclusion is the Answer: Unions Involving and Supporting Educators living with HIV

This guide will help unions to reach out to people living with HIV and AIDS. The toolkit stresses the importance of understanding and catering for their needs. It furthermore explains how engaging with people living with HIV and AIDS can be of mutual benefit, both to the union in implementing its HIV/AIDS education activi-



ties and to individuals, by allowing them to use their knowledge and experience to make a valuable contribution to halting the spread of HIV.

To download the tool kits, please click here:

www.ei-ie.org/efaids/en/documentation_ei.php



Sex trafficking leads to rise in AIDS

New research has confirmed the link between sex trafficking of girls and HIV.

Girls forced into prostitution before the age of 15 and girls traded between brothels are particularly likely to be infected with HIV and to pose an

AIDS risk back in their home countries, according to a study recently published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

The study concerned girls from Nepal sold into brothels in India, but the findings could pertain to Iraqi girls in refugee camps in

Syria or Afghan girls driven into Iran or Pakistan, according to the lead author. Dr. Jay Silverman of Harvard University said most authorities fighting human trafficking don't make the connection with HIV, and are not documenting its spread through trafficking.

Thirty-eight percent of the Nepali women tested were HIV positive, but among the youngest girls – those who had been sold into sex slavery before the age of 15 – the infection rate was 61 percent.

NOVEMBER 2007

08-09 > International Conference on School Leadership Development Strategies, OECD, Dublin, Ireland

12-14 > EI International Higher Education and Research Conference, Malaga, Spain

12 > Global Task Force on Labour, ILO/IPEC, Paris, France

12-14 > EI Latin America workshop on GATS, Santiago de Chile

12-14 > Regional Workshop for Asia on Implementing the Teacher Protocol Commonwealth Secretariat, Darussalam, Brunei

13 > OECD/EI/TUAC PISA Seminar, Brussels, Belgium

14-16 > International Forum on Teacher Education , ICTE, Shanghai, China

16 > EI Pan European Structure Review Committee, Brussels, Belgium

DECEMBER 2007

01 > WORLD AIDS DAY, Worldwide

04-07 > Seminar on Diversity - Action against Racism and Xenophobia, ITUC/ILO/ACTRAV, Geneva, Switzerland

05-07 > International Conference of NGOs, UNESCO, Paris, France

10-11 > GUFS / TUAC - Organising, Recognition and Union Rights, AFL-CIO, Washington DC, USA

10-13 > 1st Session Intergovernmental Committee on Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural expressions, UNESCO, Ottawa, Canada

11-12 > World Bank Consultation of selected GUF's on HIV/AIDS, Washington DC, USA

13-14 > Development Cooperation, EI, Brussels, Belgium

JANUARY 2008

15-16 > Council of Global Unions, GUF, Brussels, Belgium

17 > EI/PSI Management Meeting, Brussels, Belgium

21-24 > 3rd General Assembly, Global Campaign for Education, Sao Paulo, Brazil

23-27 > World Economic Forum, Davos, Switzerland