



Education International
Internationale de l'Éducation
Internacional de la Educación
Bildungsinternationale

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Managua Declaration Position of EI Regional Committee for Latin America concerning the International Financial Institutions and the commercialization of Education.

Within the structure of the event held in Nicaragua, on May 2007, carried out by Education International (EI) and the Union of Education Norway (UEN), the following Latin American education union organizations participated: CNTE/Brazil, CTERA/Argentina, CPC/Chile, UNE/Ecuador, SUTEP/Peru, FECODE/Colombia, FETRAENSEÑANZA /Venezuela, SITEK/Curacao, CONMERB/Bolivia, ADP/Dominican Republic, STEG/Guatemala, ANDES/EI Salvador, COLPROSUMAH/Honduras, COPEMH/Honduras, COPRUMH/Honduras, PRICPMAH/Honduras, ANDE/Costa Rica, SEC/Costa Rica, ANDEN/Nicaragua, FEPDES/Nicaragua. They claimed EI Regional Committee for Latin America for, not only to take into consideration, but also to make possible, the approval of the analysis and conclusions elaborated in such event, so that the member organizations and EILA, in the case whether pertinent on each region, apply such analysis and conclusions in each country.

In regard to this event, the analysis is as follows:

1. The national governments of Latin America, which are encouraged, pressed, and even financed by the International Financial Organisms, have initiated years ago several educational reforms. These reforms have had a regressive and negative impact on the quality of public education and its subsequent deterioration.
2. These reforms have been designed, approved, and executed without a national consensus regarding their contents and orientation. In addition, the education unions along with all their members were excluded from the discussion and definition issues. The only thing left for teachers is the obligation of executing these reforms; however, this is done without the approval of all the education workers. Besides, the teachers lack the appropriate training and the educational resources to achieve the reforms. Some inappropriate and inadequate proposals are also included like the ones of the World Bank (WB), the Inter- American Development Bank (IDB), as well as other international financial institutions.
3. The current reforms have not resolved the problems in coverage, quality, and equity in education. These problems are wrongly defined and the solutions presented are erroneous. On the contrary, we are witnessing high risk processes for the public educational systems and the human development perspective in the Latin American societies. As a consequence:
 - In the 80's the problems about the quality of public education increases with the fall of the public inversion and the remarkable deterioration of the working conditions for education workers.
 - A tendency that divides the education keeps growing, introducing the worst societal inequities. Nowadays the result is public education for the poor, private subsidiary education for middle class people, and private education for the rich (this one is even financed by the States.)
 - The decentralization processes have failed. Even tough the case of Brazil could be pointed out as a historical exception, the sub national entities like States, Provinces, and Municipalities are not prepared to assume the education issue as their own, neither are the schools and all the individuals involved in the matter to integrally administrate the educational process, as the several scholar autonomy forms propose. The lack of preparation is due to the inadequate availability of financial and sometimes human resources. This results in new forms of corruption, bureaucracies, and political clients.
 - The decentralization and privatization process has meant an increase of costs for families through a so called shared finance system. Due to this situation, youngsters and teenagers have suffered serious excluding situations.
 - New educational inequalities among States, Provinces, Departments, and Municipalities have increased disparities due to bad and unequal distribution of wealth and income.



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- The equity subject remains as a serious issue and the few compensatory measures taken do not mitigate the problems coming from the daily Latin American unfortunate and unacceptable social inequities.
 - In highly frequent instances, because of the privatization and decentralization process, the national educational systems have been destroyed. The regulations left for private education are ineffective.
 - The reforms have deteriorated the educational profession causing very low incomes back in the 80's and a totally inefficient recovery of them in the 90's and later 2000. As a consequence, being a teacher has become an unattractive profession and a third level university option for new generations.
 - The initial teaching career and the in-service training have been privatized. Nowadays there are hundreds of so called universities and high educational institutes that, lacking a commitment to quality and quantity population controls, graduate teachers. Therefore, there is a mass of unemployed professionals that also have a deficiency for teaching vocation.
4. Additionally, the private capital invested in education, along with the international financial institutions, are pressing the World Trade Organization to include the issue of education into the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). Several governments from the Latin American region have already subscribed such agreement to apply it nationwide, trying to promote the trans nationalization and commercialization of education.
 5. If education is included in the GATS, it would allow opportunities for the privatization and transformation of education. GATS would lead room for capital profit, private investment, and transnational commercialization. In addition, this inclusion would force the countries to subsidize national private education and foreign capital invested in education, against the interests of public education, national identity, and development.
 6. The international financial institutions, along with the World Bank and some national governments, put responsibility on the education trade unions and teachers for the problems in the quality of public education. These accusations occur because the education trade unions have rejected punitive educational evaluations, which main purpose is to discredit not only them but also the public education as well. The education trade unions also reject the privatization and the decentralization forms that lead to bureaucracy, camouflaged privatization, corruption, political clients, and the destruction of the national educational system. The international financial institutions also pretend to blame the education trade union about the failure and deterioration of education. The truth behind it is that these institutions and their allied governments were responsible for cutting the public expending for education, privatizing and decentralizing it. They also sank teachers into misery dramatically lowering their social status. Schools were also destroyed, elementary services, such as didactic materials, were not provided, and they did all this to pay the external debt and to apply the neo liberal reforms.
 7. The main objective of the international financial institutions and some "governments" of Latin America is to destroy the education unions. If this happens, these education unions, that represent the main obstacle against their plans for the educational reforms, will be out of the way.

Taking this into consideration, The EI Regional Committee for Latin America concludes the following:

1. To reaffirm that education is a human right and that cannot be turn into merchandise. EI will openly fight back the policies that lead to public educational deterioration and the national and also international facilitators of the privatization process.
2. To work, not only in each one of the countries but also at a regional level, in order to create and to promote, with the help of other society sectors, proposals that defend the existence of the systems of national education. Such proposals will defend the right for a free and lifelong public education for everyone as well as the defense of life.
3. Since the tasks of building and defending public education require a strengthened union organization, this process is a definite and highly important stage to have a well-fortified union that also has a strategically place in the society.

In consequence it is decided:

- To call all education unions to publicly denounce, in each one of their countries, the negative impact that the application of the policies of World Bank and Inter-American



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Development Bank had in public education. In this sense, EI Regional Committee for Latin America requests all education unions to organize a Latin American calling to the National States, so they define and implement, along with the help of the education organizations, an education policy in attention to the requirements of the national development. EI also requests the trade unions to restrict the illegitimate substitution functions the International Banks have played against the National States.

- To promote the mobilization of the Latin American society against making education private and commercial, as well as rejecting its inclusion into the GATS and free trade agreements. Based on the formerly mentioned facts, EI Regional Committee for Latin America will coordinate actions with other Latin American Unions, for instance: Inter American Organization of Workers and the Global Union Federations from the region.
- To create a positive solidarity attitude to confront the neo liberal transformations and the government policies which main purpose is to weaken the education unions and strengthening privatization policies.
- To request the education unions of the developing countries to pressure their governments to wisely use the funds delivered to the international financial organisms. Therefore, these funds will not be used to either promote the privatization of education or to destroy the education unions.
- To elaborate a proposal about the main policies that a national alternative Latin American system should have. These policies need to have as a main orientation the recovery and fortification of a public and free educational system that guarantees quality and equity for everybody.
- All organizations must work on their own fortification and also in the construction of strategic social alliances to reach the proposed objectives. Such alliances will have as their core the joint of the education workers; however, they will also have to include some other social sectors as well as their organizations too.
- The present stage requires the organizations to fortify the internal and external processes of communication and to generate new basic training processes to move towards effective forms of participative democracy.

Particularly, the EI Regional Committee for Latin America (RC-EILA) recommends that:

- The Education International Office for Latin America (EILA) with the direct participation of the educational organizations from the region, continue updating the balances about the educational situations in each country. The main objective is to have updated data about the problems and be able to join the impact analysis of the projects financed by World Bank (WB) and Inter American Development Bank (IDB). It is also suggested that the study of new educational laws be incorporated into such an analysis, so that new trends of thought can be collected.
- EILA regional office continues monitoring educational projects financed by the World Bank (WB) and Inter American Development Bank (IDB). EILA provides the organizations with actual information about the previous banks and continues with a follow up of the policies in both, doctrinal and specific projects.
- To promote a compared study about the educational legislations in the Latin American countries, and the changes aimed at the new approved laws within the last four years.