



Internacional de la Educación
América Latina
IEAL

Education International

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Declaration of the Meeting of the Regional Committee, Council of Presidencies and/or General Secretariats of Education International Latin America

The Regional Committee and the Council of Presidencies and/or General Secretariats of Education International Latin America, meeting in San José, Costa Rica, on December 5 and 6, 2022, declare:

1. The regional context in the wake of the pandemic and the outbreak of the war in Ukraine confronts us with a reality marked by the growth of poverty and the continuing concentration of wealth, which generates an increase in the inequality gap and represents a clear setback with respect to the progress that had been achieved during the first stage of popular governments in the region.

2. While neo-fascist governments are being established in Europe and other parts of the world and a weakening of the democratic system is being experienced, Latin America demonstrates—as a result of the resistance of our peoples and their organizations—the will of the majority that seeks to distance itself from these right-wing tendencies and the policies imposed by concentrated groups of real power.

3. The clearest expressions of this lie in the victories of Gustavo Petro in Colombia, Gabriel Boric in Chile and Lula da Silva in Brazil. These make up the second wave of democratic and popular governments, which offer the opportunity to recover operational spaces for organizations from the popular field and their transformation agendas. However, these advances are taking place under adverse conditions that are not the same as those occurring under the first wave of progressive governments. We are facing a more authoritarian right wing, an increase in poverty, countries with greater burdens of public debt, and increasingly divided, polarized societies. This scenario sets up a greater challenge for the consolidation of these popular governments.

4. Worth mentioning separately is the intensification of judicial persecution that, together with the use of the mass media, generates conditions for systematic attacks against those political leaders who exercise popular leadership, such as Cristina Fernández de Kirchner in



Argentina. This corrosive action also extends to social and trade union leaders, who are stigmatized and persecuted as a means of criminalizing social protest.

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5. In the case of education unions in Latin America, this persecution has been particularly intense. It is clear that the objective of this demonization of education trade union organizations and their representatives is the response of the dominant power groups to the role the former have played in denouncing and resisting the attacks on public education conceived of as a social right.

6. A distinctive feature of the current situation is that the right has taken up the issue of education as its own cause, just as it traditionally has done with the issue of public security. Nowadays, the right has initiatives that target education workers and educational institutions, which they define as forming part of the problem rather than being part of the solution to combating the widening gaps to achieving equality.

7. The groups holding concentrated power have a clear educational project aligned with their neoliberal ideological conception of the absence of the state. On the one hand, they seek to consolidate a standardized education proposal based on a minimalistic curriculum and punitive evaluation. On the other hand, privatization and commercialization processes are being developed using the services of private foundations, projects financed by international financial institutions and the format of public-private partnerships, which enable and legitimize the participation of non-state actors and private profit.

8. This privatizing and anti-pedagogical project is institutionalized through supranational organizations such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, UNESCO, and in the particular case of Latin America, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). These actors recommend and promote within our countries the increasing participation of private and commercial actors in the definition, implementation and financing of educational policy.

9. Within the framework of these narratives and policies, the right encourages the indifference of citizens, taking advantage of feelings of discontent and skepticism towards public policy as a way of imposing its regressive project in educational matters.

10. Faced with this reality, teacher union organizations and the Latin American Pedagogical Movement must assume the active commitment



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to be part of this dispute in which the meaning of education is at stake. In particular, they must perform their role as tools to combat the model of inequality and to promote the search for an alternative model that allows the formation of citizens with critical thinking skills and social values, making these protagonists in the emancipatory processes we still continue to fight for in Latin America.

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For all the above reasons, the Regional Committee and the Council of Presidencies and/or General Secretariats establish and recommend:

- Recognition of the work of education workers in Latin America for their ethical and political commitment to guaranteeing the right to public education during the pandemic.
- The promotion through all possible actions of the development of the *Movimiento Pedagógico Latinoamericano* (Latin American Pedagogical Movement) as a political-organizational tool through which to position ourselves as interlocutors in the dispute over the meaning of public education conceived as a social right.
- Sustaining consistent action to achieve an increase in educational investment by the state and to coordinate initiatives with students to confront the policies of cutting educational budgets promoted by neoliberal governments and encouraged by international credit organizations.
- Actively assuming the development of the campaign that will be launched by Education International in January 2023 that is based on the following pillars: increasing the financing of state public education and investment in workers in the education sector; combating, putting a stop to, and rolling back the privatization and commercialization of education and reinforcing the narrative in favor of quality public education.
- Reiterating support for the Campaign of the *RED de Trabajadoras de la Educación* (Network of Women Education Workers) for the ratification of ILO Convention 190 on violence and harassment in the world of work.
- Promotion of the ratification and compliance with ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, and the definition of multiculturalism in educational policies as an



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underlying issue necessary to the consolidation of the historical identity and unity of the region.

- Ratification of Education International Latin America's initiative to consolidate a forum for the participation of trade union youth from all member organizations.
- Ratification of face-to-face classes as an indispensable condition for the development of teaching and learning processes and the promotion of public policies on access to connectivity and digital technologies as a means to guarantee access to these of the popular sectors.
- Promotion of the dissemination and use of reports produced by the monitoring undertaken by the *Observatorio Latinoamericano de la Política Educativa* (Latin American Observatory of Educational Policy, OLPE) for political-trade union action in Latin American countries.

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Approved on December 6, 2022 in San José, Costa Rica.

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