

## International Labour Conference

Geneva, 9 June 2022

### Intervention in the General Debate

#### Education International

#### Ms Haldis Holst, Deputy General Secretary

Chair, distinguished delegates,

My name is Haldis Holst, Deputy General Secretary of **Education International** the global union federation of more than 32 million teachers, academics, and education support personnel.

The report of the Director General must be read with the pandemic in mind. We know firsthand that workers and their unions have struggled and suffered.

In the education sector, Covid led to school closures, dramatic changes in how and where teachers were expected to work and to dismissals, often without social dialogue or respect for labour rights.

The meeting of the ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the two teacher recommendations, the CEART, held in October and presented to the Commission of Standards today, stresses issues of precarity and requests, I quote, “more structured and democratic mechanisms to hear the voice of teachers and their representative organizations in relation to their evolving, and increasingly precarious, employment and working conditions, as well as emerging challenges affecting professionalization that have resulted from the COVID pandemic.”

Last year, Education International and its affiliates successfully participated in a hybrid ILO Sectoral meeting on the future of work in education. Its conclusions describe quality education that is accessible and equitable as a fundamental human right and a public good.

The Conclusions are strong concerning

- **Social dialogue** as crucial to the establishment of education policies and to ensuring decent working conditions of education personnel.
- The need for **professional autonomy and training and lifelong learning opportunities** for educators
- **Technology-mediated education** - that responds to access and to challenges in the digital transformation of work, including developing appropriate privacy and personal data protection measures.

- **Privatisation**, where Governments are invited to strengthen governance and regulation of private education providers.

Teachers are leaders in their communities. They promote critical thinking, human rights, and principles of **democracy**. In schools, they fight against **School-related gender-based violence, bullying** and **corporal punishment**. EI was represented on the drafting committee for the adoption of the ILO convention 190 and we are encouraged that 14 countries already have ratified it.

During this ILO conference, EI welcomed the rich discussions at the ILO **Commission (on the Application) of Standards**, although we regret the absence of the examination of Jordan and the Philippines.

We can see from the **apprenticeships** standard setting discussion that without publicly funded **TVET** infrastructure it will be impossible to establish the apprenticeships we need. The ILO constituents have a crucial role in ensuring a convention that supports high quality TVET institutions.

Finally, I would like to commend the work of the ILO to end **child labour** through acting on the universal right to education and reinforcement of social protection mechanisms. Programmes involving education unions in 13 countries through an area-based approach show the success of initiatives combining quality teaching and community involvement.