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Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Education

“Education for Sustainable Democratic Societies: the Role of Teachers”

23rd session

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Resolution on the Council of Europe’s Education Programme
in the context of the current institutional reform

We, the Ministers of Education of the Council of Europe, meeting in Ljubljana for our 23rd Session:

- *convinced* that the Council of Europe's main objective of promoting democracy, human rights and the rule of law are as crucial to European societies today as when the Council of Europe was established in 1949 and the European Cultural Convention was adopted in 1954;
- *recalling* the importance accorded to education in the Action Plan adopted by the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Warsaw in 2005, in particular in developing the democratic culture without which democratic institutions and democratic legislation cannot exist;
- *welcoming* the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue "Living together as Equals in Dignity" adopted by the Committee of Ministers in May 2008;
- *welcoming* the provision of the Lisbon Treaty under which the European Union shall establish appropriate forms of cooperation with, *inter alia*, the Council of Europe¹;
- *supportive* of the reforms currently being undertaken so as to better enable the Council of Europe to carry out its crucial mission and ensure its political role in the years and decades to come;
- *convinced* that the Council of Europe has a special contribution to make in the current European architecture;
- *aware* of the serious financial and economic difficulties facing Europe today, reaffirm the importance of education in building a democratic and stable society;
- *mindful* of the importance of education to the promotion of the core values of the Council of Europe;
- *convinced* that democracy and democratic stability cannot be achieved without developing the ability and will of our citizens and societies to conduct intercultural dialogue;
- *committed* to constantly strengthening the contribution of education to the development of humane societies based on these fundamental values as a prerequisite for sustainable societies, culturally and politically as well as economically and environmentally;
- *convinced*, in particular, of the key role of teachers at all levels in this endeavour;

ADOPT the following Resolution:

1. The Council of Europe provides a unique platform in which policy makers and practitioners from all states party to the European Cultural Convention together develop the contribution of education to making our European societies the kind of societies in which we would like present and future generations to live.

¹ Article 188 P

2. The attraction of these ideals as well as of the European policies based on them are further underscored by the strong interest in cooperation with Europe from other parts of the world, in particular the Mediterranean;
3. The accession of Kazakhstan to the European Cultural Convention on 5 March 2010, as its 50th signatory state, testifies to the continued attraction of the ideals of European cooperation based on democracy, human rights and the rule of law.
4. The current difficulties, already mentioned above, are a real challenge for the construction of a Europe based on these fundamental values. This is why, the education programme of the Council of Europe should continue to promote quality education, accessible to all, throughout life.
5. This European construction requires each individual to have advanced competences in a broad range of areas. This can only be obtained through education policies and practice which address the full range of purposes of education²:
 - a. Preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies
 - b. Personal development
 - c. The development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base
 - d. Preparation for sustainable employment and entrepreneurship.
6. These goals can only effectively be met through strong education programmes, including those in the pan-European setting provided by the Council of Europe, encompassing all levels of education and relevant to political decision-makers as well as educational practitioners.
7. The Council of Europe's education programme must continue to avail itself of expertise and draw on the contributions of policy makers, as well as educators and students, in all fields and at all levels of education.
8. In deciding on the profile and content of the Council of Europe's education programme, its governance structure must provide adequate opportunity to hear and take account of the voice of public authorities responsible for education policies in all areas as well as pertinent actors in civil society, including educators and students.
9. The Council of Europe and other European and international institutions, in particular the European Union, UNESCO and other UN agencies, the OSCE/ODHIR, the OCED and the Nordic Council of Ministers should continue and strengthen their education cooperation.
10. We, Ministers welcome the Council of Europe's education programme for 2010 – 2014, which provides a coherent programme presenting a holistic view of the contribution of education to European societies, emphasising knowledge and understanding of human rights, democratic participation and the development of competences and attitudes required for citizens and societies to further develop democratic culture and intercultural dialogue.

² As stated in Recommendation Rec(2007)6 by the Committee of Ministers to member states on the public responsibility for higher education and research.