

Let's Celebrate Teachers!

World Teachers' Day, celebrated on October 5th each year, commemorates the anniversary of the signing in 1966 of the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers. Every year, this day presents an occasion to draw attention to the crucial role teachers play in providing quality education for all, at all levels. To this end, a message will be jointly signed by UNESCO, ILO, UNDP, UNICEF and Education International. The emphasis of this year's message is on the theme of "Planning for an Effective Teaching Force".

To celebrate World Teachers' Day this year, special events are being organised at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. In the morning of 5 October 2007, the UNESCO Director-General will read the above-mentioned joint message and then invite the other signatories to make comments. The ceremony will be followed by a high-level panel discussion on "Issues and Challenges Facing the Teaching Profession: the Way Forward".

The theme of this year's message will be emphasized further in a two day and a half workshop which ties in with the World Teachers' Day ceremony. The workshop is being jointly organised by

the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and the Higher Education Division, Section for Teacher Education, on "Improving Comparative Indicators on Teachers and Teaching for Effective Policy and Management". Given the shortage that exists presently in data and information about teachers and teaching, the aim of the workshop is to underscore the need for timely and comprehensive data on teachers and to highlight the importance of developing indicators which support greater understanding of the issues and facilitate the formulation of evidence-based teacher policy.

Experts from key organizations, the academic world, NGOs and UNESCO as well as national specialists have been invited to the workshop to address issues related to qualitative and quantitative knowledge about teachers and the teaching profession. Attention will be drawn to information systems, research, cost analysis, micro-planning and school mapping as valuable tools to be deployed to address this information gap. On World Teachers' Day, the workshop experts will join the signatories for the panel debate on the key issues and challenges facing the teaching profession and the achievement of Education For All.

We, teachers of the world, demand

- A decent working environment - a safe and healthy learning environment for teachers and learners, appropriate class-sizes and adequate pedagogical resources in the classroom;
- Living wages - salaries that allow for decent living conditions and that are regularly paid;
- Equal pay and equal rights for women - female teachers should not experience discrimination of any form and governments should ensure the empowerment of women in the education setting, in decision making and in the workplace;
- Initial and ongoing professional development - the opportunity to gain and to develop professional skills, to be kept up-to-date with new information and pedagogical techniques, and to develop a career;
- Involvement in policy-making - to ensure that new policies reflect the reality of the classroom, social dialogue should be an integral part of education planning and policy formulation;
- Collective bargaining to defend and enhance teachers' rights - working conditions, as well as quality assessments of teaching procedures, must be negotiated between representatives of the government/employers and the representative education unions.

Better working conditions for teachers mean better learning conditions for learners

World Teachers' Day! What is it?

On October 5 each year, teachers' organisations worldwide mobilise to ensure that the needs of future generations are taken into consideration.

UNESCO inaugurated October 5 as World Teachers' Day in 1994 to commemorate the joint signing of the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers on 5 October 1966. World Teachers' Day also highlights the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel adopted in 1997.

According to UNESCO, World Teachers' Day represents a significant token of the awareness, understanding and appreciation displayed for the vital contribution

that teachers make to education and development.

Education International strongly believes that this Teachers' Day should be internationally recognized and celebrated around the world. EI also believes that, on this anniversary date, the principles of the 1966 and 1997 Recommendations should be considered for implementation in all nations.

Over 100 countries observe World Teachers' Day. The efforts of Education International and its 348 member organisations have contributed to this widely spread recognition. Every year, EI launches a public awareness campaign to highlight the contributions of the teaching profession.