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DRAFT RESOLUTION

REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF  
MINISTERS OF EDUCATION WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF CIDI

(Approved by the Permanent Council at its meeting of May 12, 2004)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

HAVING SEEN Resolutions CIDI/RES. 124 (VII-O/02) "Specialized or sectoral meetings of CIDI", CEP/CIDI/RES. 84 (LXXXVII-O/03) "Third Meeting of Ministers of Education within the framework of CIDI" and CIDI/RES. 153 (IX-O/04) "Report of the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education within the framework of CIDI;"

RECALLING that the General Assembly instructed the General Secretariat to provide technical and logistical support to the ministers of education for follow-up and implementation of the mandates of the Second and Third Summits of the Americas;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT:

That at the Second Meeting of Ministers of Education, the ministers of education agreed to hold the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education within the framework of CIDI;

That the Government of Mexico offered to sponsor the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education within the framework of CIDI;

That the Second Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Education will be held at OAS headquarters on September 27 and 28, 2004, to follow-up on the decisions adopted by the sectoral authorities and to prepare for the Fourth Meeting of Ministers of Education, which is scheduled to be held in 2005;

CONSIDERING:

That the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education within the scope of CIDI was held August 11 to 13, 2003, in Mexico City, Mexico, with the technical support of the Unit for Social Development and Education and the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development;

The final report of the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education and the decisions adopted, contained in document CIDI/RME/doc. 13/03,

RESOLVES:

1. To congratulate and thank the Government of Mexico for the work done in organizing and holding the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education within the framework of CIDI.
2. To endorse the “Declaration from Mexico” which was adopted by the ministers of education in the hemisphere at their third meeting held within the framework of CIDI, and is attached to this resolution.
3. To instruct the General Secretariat, through the Unit for Social Development and Education and in coordination with the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development, to continue supporting the process for preparation and follow-up of meetings in the education sector.
4. To request CIDI to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth regular session on the implementation of this resolution.

## DECLARATION OF MEXICO

We, the Ministers of Education of the member nations of the Organization of American States, gathered together in Mexico City on August 11 to 13, 2003, for the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education, after considering different proposals and varied arguments, resolve the following declaration:

1. We are committed to attaining the education goals of the Summits of the Americas, namely: “promoting the principles of equity, quality, relevance, and efficiency at all levels of the education system; ensuring, by 2010, universal access to and completion of quality primary education for all children and to quality secondary education for at least 75 percent of young people, with increasing graduation rates and lifelong learning opportunities for the general population; and eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005.”

2. We call on the different sectors engaged in educational activities so we can jointly promote a movement in the hemisphere that will ensure that education is the central priority of development for all sectors over the coming decades, thus creating an authentic alliance of the Americas in favor of education.

3. We have assumed the commitment of educating the present and future generations to ensure they are able to participate in a globalized environment and to construct a hemisphere in which no child is left behind.

4. We are aware of the challenges educators face due to increasing poverty among our populations and the everyday violence of our cities, together with the destabilizing international events that have occurred during the slightly more than two years since the Third Summit of the Americas.

5. We recognize the need to make education one of the tools of development to achieve greater social equality and to overcome poverty. We affirm the need to make sure that the economic development policies adopted by the countries of the hemisphere support their public education policies.

6. We hold that our societies will fully achieve their cultural, economic, and political development by placing top priority on expenditure and investment in quality education of all kinds, levels, and modalities, in scientific research, in technological development, and in disseminating and preserving the cultural diversity that is a source of wealth and inspiration for our societies and their education programs.

7. We assume our responsibility of consolidating an education system that is committed to democracy as a way of life, to social justice free of exceptions, and to respect for basic freedoms and individual dignity, avoiding all discrimination and intolerance. We therefore appreciate the statements made at our meeting by the organizations of civil society and indigenous communities. Collaboration among all sectors of our societies is crucial in attaining our goals.

8. We recognize the importance of instilling democratic awareness, culture, and values in the present and future generations, and of the principles of the Inter-American Democratic Charter,

particularly those dealing with education as a key means for strengthening democratic institutions, promoting the development of human potential, alleviating poverty, and fostering greater understanding among peoples, and we urge that efforts be made to incorporate those principles into our educational programs in accordance with the laws of each country.

9. We are aware of the priority of the goals set by the Heads of State and Government if we are to prevent future generations from expending resources on correcting the educational shortcomings of today's society.

10. We believe we can accomplish the education goals set by the Summits of the Americas by increasing our countries' investment in education and by making efficient use of those resources. We recommend that our governments explore financing strategies for advancing education in our hemisphere that include: increased public funding for this sector and private-public partnerships. In addition, several among us consider it worthwhile to explore the possibility of debt-for-education swaps. We recognize that such initiatives must be developed in coordination with our ministries of finance and with respect to our countries' legislation.

11. We applaud the joint efforts of the IDB and the OAS in analyzing the problem of education funding in the hemisphere and in identifying strategies to counteract its negative effects. We will thus continue with national, subregional, and hemispheric dialogues to analyze the challenges of funding education, involving finance ministers, education ministers, and members of the business community who are committed to educational endeavors. Another priority is to analyze and discuss the commitment that is required from our political organizations, legislatures, and mass media with respect to education funding and its accomplishment and sustainability, and we urge the hemispheric community to make efforts in that regard.

12. We are convinced that better information is indispensable if we are to improve education. Collectively, we have made a good start by analyzing and publishing data through the indicators of the Summit project led by Chile and with particular support from UNESCO/OREALC and other international agencies. We will advance with a second stage in this effort, improving and extending the comparable indicators and focusing on strengthening the ability of our ministries to gather information and make good use of it. Additionally, we assume the commitment, in each of our nations, of focusing and intensifying efforts to assess the progress made by our students at all levels.

13. During the United Nations Literacy Decade, which began this year under the aegis of UNESCO, we will pursue literacy programs in the continent in order to attain the goals set forth in the Dakar Commitment on Education for All.

14. We are aware of the vital importance of quality basic education for children as a mechanism for securing their physical development and wellbeing, the optimal development of their intellectual capacities, and their creative imaginations and ethical sensitivities. Among the neediest population groups, basic education must be supplemented with prenatal attention, nutrition, and health care for children from birth onwards. We thus reaffirm our commitment of guaranteeing equitable opportunities, including those segments of the population with special educational needs, through continuous support in order to provide a safe, wholesome, and properly structured environment.

15. We recognize that although we have made progress with enrolment in and coverage of basic education over the past decade, we agree to continue implementing policies to increase coverage and retention and to prevent scholastic failure. So that the children of the neediest families can remain in school, we recommend implementing support programs, such as scholarships, transfers to cover the opportunity costs faced by the very poor, and other social protection policies.

16. We agree to make the necessary efforts to expand the coverage of secondary and high-school education, particularly in the technical arena, including the elements necessary for preparing our young people for life, citizenship, and the workplace, and incorporating into that learning process broad elements of creativity, innovation, and the development of entrepreneurial skills, together with an understanding of economic and educational realities, free enterprise, the role of the state, civil society, and the media, and the development of skills and virtues for their incorporation into those realities. All this must be accompanied by a system to certify the knowledge and skills of those students who graduate from these levels of education.

17. We express our fullest recognition and profound gratitude to teachers, promoters of community education, literacy instructors, and, in general, all the men and women whose professional mission in life is to educate and seek knowledge. In addition, we reaffirm our commitment toward working to maximize the status enjoyed by educators.

18. We underscore the importance of the forums for debating and exchanging experiences and proposals created by the nations of the Americas to generate a continuous process of education, assessment, training, and professional development for teachers, which will serve as a tool for meeting the challenge of interconnecting education policy with social realities, in order to promote equity, overcome the educational differences existing between rich and poor, and, with the help of modern information and communications technologies, devise pedagogical models that will afford teachers proper professional development.

19. We urge our educational communities to increase their efforts to channel education toward achieving committed quality.

20. We recognize the importance of identifying, organizing, and exchanging best practices. We support their critical transfer, together with that of consolidated programs, and we urge the OAS Unit for Social Development and Education to continue with and expand this initiative, incorporating programs from the largest possible number of member states. We also encourage the use of the tools the OAS has at hand to support the implementation of this strategy.

21. We are pleased to have formally established the Inter-American Committee on Education, the technical and political functions of which must work for and build consensus in favor of hemispheric and subregional programs and support the pursuit of the mandates of the Summits of the Americas. We call for permanent participation by organizations and agencies at the international and other levels in helping to design, execute, and follow up on the CIE's programs, thereby allowing closer coordination on projects that address issues common to them.

22. We agree to guarantee the continuity of the Summit projects currently underway: the Regional Education Indicators Program and the Hemispheric Assessment Forum. We also instruct the CIE to develop programs in the areas of equity and quality, education, training, evaluation, the

professional development of teachers, and secondary and high-school education, using new information and communication technologies as their shared axis.

23. We thank the Mexican people and government for the special welcome they have extended to us during this Third Meeting of Ministers of Education. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the work of Mexico's Secretariat of Public Education in ensuring the success of this event. We would also like to recognize the importance of the encouraging message given by the President of the United Mexican States, Vicente Fox, on the occasion of the meeting's inauguration.