

RESOLUTION 3.1

SCHOOL-RELATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Proposed by the Executive Board

Original language: English

1. **Recognising** that many governments have committed to supporting the right to education in safety, within their commitment to quality Education For All;
2. **Also recognising, however**, that school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) affects millions of children¹ and education personnel worldwide each year, and is defined as including acts or threats of sexual, physical or psychological violence that takes place in or around schools and educational settings as well as on the way to and from school; and that SRGBV includes acts of bullying (including cyber-bullying), sexual or verbal or physical harassment, non-consensual touching, rape and assault;
3. **Further recognising**, that SRGBV is distinct from violent political and military attacks on educational facilities, on students and on educators and education support personnel, but that SRGBV often increases in conflict-affected countries and during emergencies;
4. **Observing** that students, educators and education support personnel alike can be both victims and perpetrators of SRGBV, and that girls and women are most vulnerable to this type of violence;
5. **Deploring** the fact that SRGBV is a critical barrier to girls' and boys' right to education, not only because of its serious physical and psychological health implications, but also because it leads to the deterioration of the learning environment as a whole, since the experience, or even the threat, of SRGBV often results in irregular attendance, dropping out of education, truancy, poor school performance, and low self-esteem, and reduces the chances of successful transition into the labour market later in life;
6. **Regretting** that SRGBV too often remains undetected, unreported, and even ignored in schools and educational settings - the very social institutions in which all present are expected to be safe, respected, protected and empowered;
7. **Affirming** that it is not possible to deliver quality education without addressing the issues of child protection and staff safety in educational settings, as well as on the way to educational settings, given that young children, women and LGBT persons are particularly vulnerable;
8. **Concerned** that SRGBV has been, and continues to be, a key barrier to the achievement of the MDGs and the EFA goals, and, unless serious efforts are made to eliminate SRGBV, will also continue to be a barrier post-2015;
9. **Noting** that there is currently a considerable amount of concern and action on SRGBV at national, regional and international levels, but that far too often neither teachers, education support personnel (in schools or higher education institutions) nor their unions or organisations are included in the planning or implementation of programmes and measures to address and eliminate SRGBV, and similar violence in;

¹ For the purposes of this resolution, 'child' or 'children' refers to 'people below the age of 18 years, unless, under the national law applicable to children, majority is attained before the age of 18. The term 'student' refers to any other category of learner, including those within higher education and lifelong learning.

10. **Recalling** the 2009 EI Declaration *Schools Shall be Safe Sanctuaries*, which calls on governments to take practical measures to ensure protection from, and to end, impunity for, attacks on students, teachers, academics, education support personnel and education facilities, and calls on EI affiliates to monitor attacks, to prioritise preventative action and share expertise on resilience and recovery, and to support campaigns of solidarity in order to make education an agent for peace;

11. **The 7th EI World Congress,**

- a. **Calls** on governments, as those primarily responsible for safety and security in education institutions, to provide a well-defined legal and policy framework outlining the state's obligations to prevent SRGBV and promote child protection and protection of education personnel across all relevant government ministries and impose on education ministries, and their partners, an obligation to include teachers and educators' unions and organisations in establishing sustainable and holistic mechanisms, for preventing and responding to, SRGBV in all educational settings;
- b. **Calls** further for a concerted effort by EI and its members organisations to advocate for curricula and teaching practices that challenge the acceptability of violence against women and girls and promote gender-equitable norms of behaviour based on mutual respect both inside and outside of educational settings; and for initial training and continuous professional development programmes for education personnel to address SRGBV;
- c. **Requests** member organisations to carefully review their own organisational Codes of Conduct, Codes of Professional Ethics or Codes of Practice, to ensure that they are gender-sensitive and can be applied when SRGBV incidents and issues arise in educational settings, so that perpetrators are held to account and victims receive adequate support;

12. **Mandates the EI Executive Board:**

- a. To review the EI Declaration on Professional Ethics taking into consideration the need for it to be more explicitly gender-aware, and for it to include explicit references to the eradication of SRGBV, including trans and homophobic violence; such a renewed Declaration on Professional Ethics should also be accompanied by a guide on how EI members can use and implement it, especially with regard to equality issues;
- b. To collaborate with UN agencies and other strategic civil society partners working on SRGBV issues at national, regional and global levels to ensure that that the knowledge, experiences and perspectives of teachers, educators and education support personnel consistently informs and is reflected in such work;
- c. To support the work of member organisations in securing positive action by national governments to end SRGBV within their jurisdictions.