

WORLD COUNCIL OF COMPARATIVE EDUCATION SOCIETIES



Sarajevo Congress Declaration

We, the participants at the Congress of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCESⁱ), numbering over 600 people from some 74 countries, are assembled in Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina, on 7 September 2007, to celebrate the achievements of the first major international education conference held in this city since the end of the devastating 1992-1995 war. We believe that Sarajevo is a fitting and symbolic location for an international gathering dedicated to exploring the theme: *Living Together: Education and Intercultural Dialogue*.

We acknowledge and support the broad aims of the local Congress convenors at the University of Sarajevo, which are to promote the values of peace, solidarity and sustainability within the country and the region through intercultural dialogue. We applaud in particular the dedication and courage that teachers and other educators in the B&H community have revealed to us in rebuilding the educational life chances for young people over the last decade.

As members of the global educational community in our capacity as individual educators, researchers and practitioners, we concur with the goals of the Congress. Education at all levels — from higher education to pre-school education, from formal training to nonformal lifelong learning— plays a vital role in fostering values of peaceful intercultural dialogue, respect, social justice and equity, and is a major factor in bringing about reconciliation among diverse communities. Appropriate, relevant education is a fundamental prerequisite to sustainable human development, creativity and excellence.

We urge governments, national and global organisations, non-government organisations and international agencies to promote education as a vehicle for intercultural dialogue. We urge Ministries and Departments of Education to support educational agreements such as the Bologna process and the World Declaration for Education For All, and to expand cultural, academic and scholastic links and exchanges both in Europe and across the planet. We would like to see teachers and other professionals modelling, enabling and promoting initiatives that foster dialogue across different communities, particularly in post-conflict and transitional societies. We urge politicians and policy makers actively and constructively to finance education that enhances intercultural dialogue.

As we leave the inspiring city of Sarajevo, and on the basis of the dialogue of this international Congress, we undertake to commit to furthering educational action and research for intercultural understanding. We further intend to implement in our individual area of expertise and influence, one or more of the many significant and profound recommendations and discussions that arose from our dialogue during this historic Congress.

Approved by acclamation at the General Assembly, WCCES on this 7th day of September, 2007.

ⁱ The World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES) is a non-profit, non-political Council of 36 Comparative Education Societies which in turn represents many thousands of educators, researchers, practitioners and policy makers who reside in over 75 countries. This Congress was convened by the World Council, in association with the International Association for Intercultural Education (IAIE). The WCCES is an NGO in operational relations with UNESCO. The Congress is a triennial international event where individuals meet to discuss and compare educational issues and policies in an open dialogue.