

**AGENDA ITEM 18: AS ADOPTED****56th Executive Board meeting, September-December 2020****EXECUTIVE BOARD RESOLUTION ON THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN STIMULATING CRITICAL THINKING AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND PROMOTING DEMOCRACY**

**Condemning** the atrocious murder in France of Mr. Samuel Paty, a history and geography teacher, for teaching his students about critical thinking and freedom of expression;

**Restating** the principles of the resolution on [Education for Democracy](#) adopted at the EI 8th World Congress in Bangkok in July 2019;

**Reaffirming**, in particular, that one of the central missions of education is to teach students how to think for themselves and to respect the opinions and beliefs of others;

**Reaffirming** that educational institutions must be secure, respectful, inclusive, and impartial and that teachers must enjoy professional autonomy, academic freedom, and the right to choose the teaching and learning methods and materials they use, thereby defining, through the democratic process, the criteria for the quality of their work;

**Reaffirming** that freedom of conscience and expression and living together in harmony are fundamental values in a democratic society;

**Recognising** that social, economic, and environmental crises, as well as political and religious tensions, have a negative impact on children and places of learning;

**Recognising** that social networks are used extensively to spread false information and to disseminate hate messages;

**The Executive Board, at its 56<sup>th</sup> meeting, on 27 October 2020, resolves:**

- To give its full support to French affiliates, and to all education workers around the world who are subject to acts of violence directed against education and its role as an engine of democratic emancipation.
- To call on Ministers of Education worldwide to take concrete measures to protect and support education staff, including improved initial and continuing training, to put mechanisms in place to foster solidarity among the education community, and to identify and respond rapidly to threats and violence at all levels of the education system.
- To call on States to promote living together in harmony and to take strong measures to reduce social inequality, unemployment, and poverty, which lead to despair and provide a fertile breeding ground for the growth of violence and fanaticism.



- To call on member organisations to integrate even more strongly into their national and regional activities and demands the issues of teachers' pedagogical freedom, e.g. the teaching of critical thinking as a fundamental objective of the school curriculum.
- To request EI to provide their affiliates with access to research and analyses on critical thinking and freedom of expression issues and to exchange good practices.