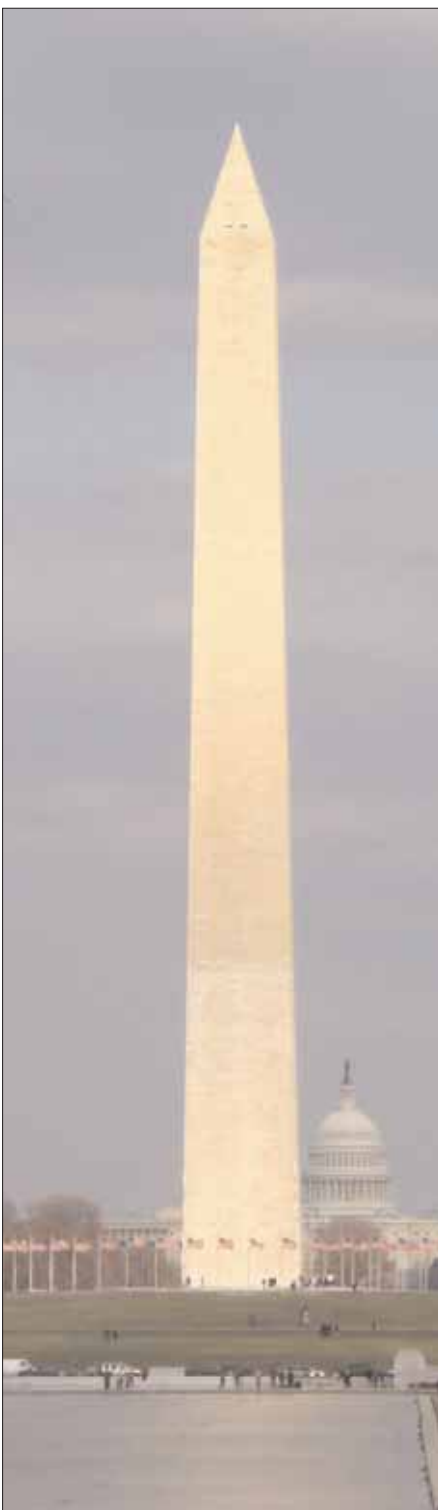


## The Washington Statement on Teachers



Researchers, officials and representatives of regional and international organisations meeting for the Fourth Commonwealth Teachers' Research Symposium hosted by the National Education Association (NEA) of the United States in Washington, DC, USA, and co-ordinated by the NEA and the Commonwealth Secretariat, agreed to the following, over a two-day period during which research and data were presented and shared with all participants:

- ◆ The evidence of high levels of teacher attrition in many countries globally has serious implications for the future of the teaching profession.
- ◆ Evidence-based research on teachers must be used to influence teacher policy and practice along with greater adherence to international standards on teachers, especially the ILO and UNESCO standards of 1966 and 1997.
- ◆ Traditional routes to teacher training and qualifications are not always sufficient to address attrition in the profession. Improved induction, mentoring, terms and conditions of employment and different modalities in teaching training must be explored.

The impact of the current global financial and economic crisis and its implications for increased teacher mobility was raised. Establishment of a Commonwealth Teachers' Task Force, which would bring new perspectives on the profession to the table and assist countries in applying proven standards and good practices, was encouraged. In respect of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (CTRP) increased advocacy to support its implementation was urged as one role which the proposed Task Force could undertake. Such a Task Force should:

- ◆ establish mechanisms to track and monitor data from Ministries of Education, teacher unions and recruitment agencies;
- ◆ carry out an independent review of recruitment agencies operating internationally;
- ◆ establish a Global Recruiter Data Base with the endorsement of UNESCO, Education International and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Other agreements were for establishment of a mechanism which would enable alignment of such advocacy alongside other international initiatives addressing the needs of the teaching profession, to avoid replication.

The Symposium participants called for exploration and attention to the gender dimension of teacher mobility and migration, including the impact of migration on children left behind. They agreed on the need for:

- ◆ moving the discussion on 'teaching' beyond supply and demand to a holistic approach to teacher policy, including continual professional development, that favours quality education for all learners;
- ◆ revitalisation of the Commonwealth Working Group on the Professional Development of Teachers and its expansion to include non-Commonwealth bodies such as the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers.

Finally, a Global Initiative on Teachers, which may take the form of a consultation or forum, was proposed, as was the importance of capacity building to ensure that research took account of policy and broader collaboration across partners to advance information sharing. As for advocacy efforts, such an initiative should be careful to work in synergy and avoid duplication with other international initiatives on teachers and EFA, such as the recently created Teachers for EFA Task Force.

The Symposium concluded by expressing the gratitude of all participants to the NEA for their excellent hosting of the event.

*Adopted on 20 March 2009 at NEA Headquarters, Washington, DC, USA*

