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ORGANIZACION MUNDIAL PARA LA EDUCACION PREESCOLAR
WORLD ORGANISATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

**Declaration of the 69th Assembly and World Conference of OMEP
HIGHER INVESTMENT FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION (ECCE)
Opatija, Croatia, June 20, 2017**

Early childhood education is a personal and social right, whose realization is essential for the integral development of the human being, the accomplishment of all other rights and the construction of a full citizenship, from birth.

However, due to poverty and inequalities, a great deal of children does not have access to ECCE programs and services, so that, instead of a right, it is in many cases, a privilege of a few. According to UNESCO data for 2016 in the world, 67% of children aged 5 to 6 are enrolled in pre-school education, but receive education with noticeable differences in quality. Children aged 3 to 4 from the richest families in low- and middle-income countries, are almost six times more likely to receive an education than the poorest children. Meanwhile, children under age 3 are invisible in studies and public policies for ECCE.

The International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) specifies that States have a legal obligation to promote, protect or restore the rights of children, considering the principle of child's best interest. Therefore, investing in children must be a priority of governments.

Insufficient investment in many countries has led to social injustice, discrimination in access, low quality offers and weak sustainability of policies, with grave consequences for the present and future lives of children. UNESCO argues that the lack of fair and sufficient funding was a key reason for the world's failure to meet the EFA goals in 2015. Currently, development aid for education is less than that the one provided in 2009. Similarly, the percentage of the total expenditure on education that the families must pay for, is usually much higher in poorer countries than in richer ones, and it is therefore essential to reduce it in order to make equality a reality according with the new goals for education.

That is why the Committee on the Rights of the Child in General Comment No. 19, recently adopted, postulates that States must meet their budgetary obligations to guarantee compliance with the rights of the child, in accordance with the principles of effectiveness, efficiency, equity, transparency and sustainability. Also, the Sustainable Development Objective 4 (ODS 4) and the Education Action Framework 2030 show the importance of adequate funding in order to accomplish it and the responsibility of all countries to achieve it.

Therefore, OMEP appeals to governments to comply with the financial commitments related to the development and sustainability of ECCE, ensuring with urgency:

- to give priority and increase public spending on ECCE:
- to allocate the necessary resources for equity and quality in ECCE;
- to ensure free and public ECCE, which guarantees the expansion of the rights of the most disadvantaged sectors;

OMEP members around the world are committed to participating, collaborating, monitoring, evaluating, monitoring and enforcing the compliance of global commitments to Early Childhood Care and Education.

OMEP is the oldest and largest non-governmental organization in the world for early childhood education, with special consultative status in the United Nations, UNICEF and UNESCO. It is present with national committees and members in more than 70 countries.

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