

**Hundred and seventy-fifth session**

175 EX/10  
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Item 9 of the provisional agenda

**CONVENING OF THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
ON ADULT EDUCATION (CONFINTEA VI) IN 2009**

**SUMMARY**

The General Conference by 33 C/Resolution 5, invited the Director-General to make the necessary arrangements to organize the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) in 2009 and to include provision for it within the Draft Programme and Budget for 2008-2009 (34 C/5).

This document provides background information on the contribution of adult learning to UNESCO's major priority programmes and to the attainment of the objectives of EFA, the MDGs, DESD and UNLD. It invites the Director-General to take the necessary measures for convening the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) in 2009. It also calls on Member States, civil society organizations, United Nations partners and the private sector to prepare and contribute to this important conference.

Decision proposed: paragraph 8.

1. The 33rd session of the General Conference reaffirmed the strategic importance of adult education for the Organization and by 33 C/Resolution 5 invited the Director-General to make the necessary arrangements to organize the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) in 2009 and to include provision for it within the Draft Programme and Budget for 2008-2009 (34 C/5).

2. In pursuance of the above resolution and in view of the broad consultation at all geographical levels as well as the thematic preparatory work required for its success, an Executive Board decision and a reasonable lead time would enable the Conference to serve as a catalyst for change

and a landmark event in the programmes and activities of the Organization and for the international community in the area of adult literacy and lifelong learning.

3. The UNESCO International Conference on Adult Education is held every 12 years. The first took place in Elsinore as far back as in 1949. Subsequent conferences were held in Montreal, 1960; Tokyo, 1972; and Paris, 1985. The Fifth International Conference held in Hamburg in 1997 marked a turning point in the conception of adult learning. The Sixth International Conference will serve as an impetus to explore ways and means to address some of the most important issues and challenges confronted by humankind.

4. Adult literacy, adult basic and continuing education and lifelong learning are key tools to address global challenges in such areas as democracy, peace and human rights, preservation of diversity, education for all, learning for sustainability, HIV and AIDS, conflict resolution and workforce development. The convening of CONFINTEA VI will be an important opportunity for the adult education community to rally around and make a strong impact on several major national and international challenges. Furthermore, adult learning is critical to UNESCO's main programme priorities and to the attainment of the objectives of EFA, the MDGs, DESD and UNLD.

5. CONFINTEA VI (2009) offers a unique opportunity to consider progress towards attaining the objectives of the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012) and to promote and reaffirm support to the Education for All goals relating to the literacy and life skills of young people and adults (Dakar goals 3 and 4). It will strengthen the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE); Global Initiative on Education and HIV and AIDS (EDUCAIDS); and the Teacher Training Initiative for sub-Saharan Africa (TTISSA).

6. The Conference will also serve to reinforce the knowledge base, capacity and competence of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) as UNESCO's leadership arm and world class centre in literacy, non-formal education, adult education and lifelong learning.

7. The UNESCO International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA) is an important platform at the international level for a political dialogue and renewed commitment to adult education. It is also one of the most powerful forums led by UNESCO, with a large participation of NGOs, CSOs, United Nations agencies, regional organizations, trade unions and the private sector.

### **Proposed draft decision**

8. In the light of the above, the Executive Board may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Executive Board,

1. Having examined document 175 EX/10,
2. Recalling 33 C/Resolution 5,
3. Reaffirming the strategic importance of adult education and the leadership role of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) in literacy, non-formal education, adult education and lifelong learning,
4. Recognizing the importance of advance planning by UNESCO and its Member States to the success of CONFINTEA VI,

5. Noting that adult literacy, basic education and lifelong learning are key to the attainment of the global challenges taken up by the community of nations, namely, EFA, the MDGs, DESD and UNLD,
6. Calls upon Member States, civil society organizations, United Nations partners and the private sector to prepare and contribute to this important Conference;
7. Invites the Director-General to take the necessary measures for convening the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education in 2009 within the Draft Programme and Budget for 2008-2009 (34 C/5), and for deciding on the venue, while seeking additional extrabudgetary resources for the meeting.