

Opening Ceremony:

Good morning to everyone,

I would like to make some brief remarks about a paper we have developed entitled: "A New Era of Deaf Participation and Collaboration" said Joe McLaughlin of the ICED 2010 organizing committee.

There has been a great deal of discussion regarding the need for ICED to offer a public apology for the Milan Congress resolutions banning sign language in educational programs.

First of all, we know that ICED has no institutional structure or formal organization such as a secretariat. It exists today only as an international congress held every five years, and there is no continuous history of the Congress as an organization. Each Congress is an independent event hosted by an independent local organizing committee acting in its own right. Such committees accept the role of conference organizer as their contribution to facilitating the sharing of research and best practices in the field of education of the Deaf around the world.

The Congress and/or its organizing committee is not an official arm of any larger organization and as such, cannot make policy or pass binding resolutions. Thus, ICED is quite different from many other congresses. It is not a forum for policy development or the imposition of views on the field and it speaks for no one, not even the participants at each congress. In fact, no "resolutions" have been passed at any Congresses in recent history and the organizational structure of today is quite different from that of the Milan Congress in 1880.

The congress theme for ICED 2010 is "Partners in Education" and this choice emphasizes the importance of working together. It is only when educators, parents, students, the deaf and hard of hearing community and the greater community in any part of the world, work together with respect and tolerance will we achieve the progress we strive for in meeting the educational needs of our students. In this light, the British Columbia Deaf Community approached the ICED 2010 Organizing Committee here in Vancouver to work together to develop a statement which addresses the issues concerning the Milan Congress. We have entitled this statement "A New Era of Deaf Participation and Collaboration". The format used in developing the statement is similar to that used by the International Association of Counseling conferences in addressing statements from oppressed groups. These conferences established an internationally recognized way to present such statements: The Statement of Principle first recognizes the

issue as the way to start the healing process for the oppressed group. The Accord for the Future is designed to start the process of change.

In brief our Statement of Principle includes:

1. a statement of the wrong that happened in the Milan Congress
2. a description of how this impacted the oppressed group, the Deaf Community
3. an acknowledgement that we agree that this event was wrong
- 4 a commitment to work together in partnership

I would now like to call on Marguerite Henderson, a member of the Vancouver Organizing Committee of ICED 2010 to read Our Statement of Principle.

Marguerite reads The Statement of Principle

Thank you, Marguerite

I now invite Mr. Markku Jokinen, President of The World Federation of the Deaf to respond to the Joint statement.

Thank you, Mr. Jokinen.

The Accord for the Future will be presented this afternoon in the concurrent session: "The Contributions of An Engaged Community: Parents, Educators, Researchers and Deaf Citizens in Partnership" This discussion is important because it will present the second part of the document which includes recommendations for the future. This afternoon's session will enable Deaf people and ICED 2010 participants who are here from all parts of the world to have their say.

The British Columbia Deaf Community has a table in the exhibit area and there will be a book for you to sign if you wish to support the statement and accord of this New Era of Deaf Participation and Collaboration. The book will remain on the B.C Deaf Community table throughout the Congress. At the closing ceremony the book will be passed on to the WFD which will continue to collect signatures of support. Thank you for your cooperation and your support. This is just the beginning and we need to continue the dialogue.