

Paris, 9 September 2008

**Subject: Summary of meeting on September 5<sup>th</sup> with cosponsors of Resolution EX179/49 and other UNESCO Member States on the development of a UNESCO strategy on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)**

1. Under the chairmanship of the Permanent Delegate of the Germany to UNESCO Ambassador Overfeld, Deputy Assistant Director General Tang (Education Sector) and Prof. Kenneth King (em Edinborough) briefed Member States on the preparatory process so far to develop the draft strategy. They notably outlined that consultations with ILO, OECD, and other organizations active in TVET have been launched and that a meeting of senior level UNESCO staff (Secretariat, regional offices, field offices) will be taking place in the framework of the ICE conference in Geneva. Consultations with relevant German government institutions notably the Federal Ministry for Science and Education (BMBF), the German Ministry for Development Cooperation (BMZ), and the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB) took place on August 5<sup>th</sup> in Bonn. The German government will host a meeting of international external experts with UNESCO towards the end of 2008, the result of which will be fed into another meeting with cosponsors and interested delegations prior to the drafting of the TVET strategy.
2. In the following rich and substantial debate, delegations outlined their countries perception of the role of UNESCO in TVET and needs a UNESCO-TVET strategy ought to address:
  - There was unanimous recognition of the substantial role UNESCO should play in developing and promoting TVET. Delegations outlined that due to its near universal membership, UNESCO was particularly well positioned to give legitimacy in placing TVET with the necessary high profile on the international education agenda, a task delegations stressed was very urgent.
  - Delegations emphasised that the role of TVET in the EFA context as well as its relevance for secondary education ought to be addressed. There was

widespread recognition of the equally strong linkages between TVET and lifelong learning. In that context, some delegations stressed the need to look into issues of science and technology transfer from North to South.

- Delegations encouraged UNESCO to make use of elements of its cross-cutting mandate (human rights, quality education etc.) for a TVET strategy.
- Many emphasised the need to develop proper benchmarking and indicators for TVET. They felt that UNESCO was particularly well placed to incorporate these into a TVET strategy.
- Delegations put great emphasis on a leading role UNESCO should take in promoting and developing TVET in the One UN context. They stressed the need that TVET must become a vital element of One UN activities and ought to be incorporated in CCAs and UNDAFs.
- Delegations called on UNESCO to actively address in its TVET strategy the issue of coherence, coordination and close cooperation with other actors in the field, notably ILO, UNIDO, OECD and the World Bank.
- Delegations referred to the costs of putting in place and implementing TVET at the national level. To allocate necessary resources at the national level in developing countries, the need to incorporate TVETs into national Poverty Reduction and Strategy Papers (PRSP's) was stressed.
- Delegations further outlined that due emphasis should be put on following issues:
  - Awareness raising for TVET strategies at the national level including promoting the awareness of equal importance of academic training and TVET. Some delegations outlined in that context the importance of proper information on TVET also outside the context of national education strategies in light of the fact that particularly least developed countries often do not have a national education strategy proper.

- The particular relevance of access for low-income and marginalized groups of society to TVET and the need to emphasis in that context on issues of gender were stressed.
- While delegations were aware of the difficulties to define skill development\_(Dakar goal 3), they emphasised the need to incorporate TVET in teacher training. In that context, some delegations also emphasized the need to develop adaptable teaching materials.
- They stressed that national TVET strategies must address specific country situations and be based on thorough needs assessment. This needs assessment ought to take into account particularly future needs of he national economy and the private sector.
- There was unanimous acknowledgement of the fact that close cooperation between government and private sector in TVET is vital, i.a. with regard to the identification of needs. At the same time, many delegations stressed the predominant role of government (notably with regard to questions of equal access, standards of education, and quality control).
- The existence of different needs with regard to the formal and non-formal sector was stressed by many. Delegations emphasised the great importance of addressing non-formal sector needs in light of the focus many want to give to TVET in developing countries.