



## OMEP

*Organisation Mondiale Pour L'Éducation Préscolaire*

*Organización Mundial Para La Educación Preescolar*

*World Organization For Early Childhood*

### Declaration of the 67<sup>th</sup> OMEP World Assembly and Conference THE KEY TO THE WORLD'S FUTURE: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS July 2015, Washington, D.C.

A growing body of robust research from many disciplines provides incontrovertible scientific evidence of the critical importance of the early childhood years, from birth through age 8, for children, their families and the societies in which they live. This is especially true for children living in adverse environments and circumstances. Values, attitudes and behaviors form early in life, clearly indicating the crucial importance of early childhood education and care.

According to some of the world's leading human rights advocates, business leaders, neuroscientists, sociologists, and economists, expenditures on high quality early childhood education are among the best long-term investments any society can make. Recognizing the importance of early years education, the UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2015 - 2030 include this target: "Ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education..." The goal is to close the gaps that currently exist so that all children can reach their full potential.

Early childhood educators, together with parents, hold the key to capitalizing on the inherent power and potential of the early childhood years throughout the world and, especially, where circumstances create special vulnerabilities and marginalization of children. Men and women who choose this career path must be well prepared and well supported by public policies. They must have high professional and social status and the opportunity to exercise sound and ethical pedagogical judgment.

Because teachers and caregivers are the primary determinants of the quality of early childhood education, OMEP calls on all national and local governments as well as socially-responsible businesses to work toward a sustainable future by:

1. Promoting policies and practices that recognize the contributions of early childhood educators and young children to society, today and into the future.
2. Increasing significantly the funding for early childhood education, as well as for pre-service and in-service education for teachers and caregivers.
3. Improving the current levels of preparation for early childhood educators and providing continuing professional development throughout the career to enhance their capacity to build learning and teaching relationships with children, valuing their agency and their rights as citizens.
4. Incorporating curriculum and pedagogy for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in early childhood teacher preparation and daily practices with children, in keeping with the UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2015-2030,
5. Providing the best possible remuneration, working conditions, professional resources and administrative leadership for early childhood educators and caregivers.

OMEP enthusiastically recommits our organization to high quality early childhood teacher education. OMEP offers to the world community, and especially its leaders, the unwavering commitment, energy, and expertise of our members throughout the world in pursuit of these goals.

*With national committees and members in about 70 countries, OMEP is the oldest and largest worldwide, non-governmental organization for early childhood education, with special consultative status in the United Nations, UNICEF, and UNESCO.*