

The Buenos Aires Statement

The following statement was adopted by the Administrative Board of the International Association of Universities and the Heads of forty public and private universities from twelve Latin American countries participating in the Tenth IAU Round table in Buenos Aires, in November 1994:

1. The IAU Board and the Round Table stress and emphasise the central contribution of higher education and of research to development in all regions of the world.
2. To break out of the downward spiral of dependence and of underdevelopment is crucial for developing countries. Ownership and the advancement of knowledge together with highly qualified human resources are no less essential in the least developed countries as they are for the economically advanced.
3. The IAU underlines the crucial and abiding role of governments in assuring the resources necessary for higher education and for research. Although funds from private sources may constitute complementary financing for higher education, it would not be realistic to expect that funding of this nature could have more than a marginal impact on the current crisis in the higher education systems of the developing nations.
4. At the Sixth IAU Round table held at Harare (Zimbabwe) in 1987, a Statement was issued in response to the document *The Financing of Education in Developing Countries*, published by the World Bank. The Harare Statement dissented most emphatically from the general thrust of the Recommendations of the World Bank which called for cuts in public spending on higher education, for increasing reliance on non-public investment in higher education and for a reduction in the control of the State.
5. The IAU Board and university leaders participating in the Tenth IAU Round Table in Buenos Aires note with regret that the World Bank, in its most recent guidelines for lending to education (*Higher Education The Lessons of Experience*), published in 1994, retained essentially the same recommendations to governments as it did seven years earlier in Harare. They also regret that the World Bank persisted in linking the granting of loans to the implementation of these same conditions.
6. This reversion to an approach contested earlier cannot cast doubt on the soundness of the generalisations in the World Bank document about the lessons of recent experience. A major limitation of the World Bank document is seen in its failure to relate its analysis and recommendations to any particular vision of society and to the role of higher education within it. To the degree that this vision differs around the world, to that same extent is the scope of the recommendations limited.
7. IAU dissents from, and recommends that its individual Member Universities contest, any recommended solution to the higher education crisis that relates solely to economic and financial conditions and which takes little account of the particular and special political, cultural and historical aspects of national life. In this connection, the IAU recommends that its Member Universities advise their governments to seek as broad a range of views on the options for developing countries.