

## **Resolution**

The symposium, after listening to 58 participants from 9 countries on new trends in higher education, supports the following ideas that were expressed by the presenters:

1. Many countries have a long and rich history of higher education. In the time of reform, society should be wise and courageous enough to build innovations on existing achievements.
2. No reform is carried out without problems and pain. We, as educators, should learn to overcome the difficulties and keep in mind that our task is to satisfy the social demand as well as to think about the future of our countries along commitment to guarantee quality.
3. Student-centered education, equality, and mutuality of relations between educators and students are essential trends of contemporary higher education. That is why our goal is to have students better acquainted with the essence of reform (in particular, of the Bologna process). Students should be actively involved in the changes taking place in the education system. Student participation in the assessment of the quality of syllabi and teaching is one way to make students responsible for their own future.
4. Two more new trends of higher education are student and teacher mobility and joint educational projects in which two or more countries participate. Countries joining the Bologna process can benefit from this trend, on condition that their educators bring their curricula, syllabi, and teaching in correspondence with global requirements. The Bologna process does not mean unification, but it does mean sharing major values and high standards.
5. Creation of international universities all over the world is one more comparatively new trend in higher education. In these universities, students, on the one hand, benefit from more contemporary methods of teaching, have newer educational materials, acquire new specialties, etc., than in more traditional local universities, and on the other hand, learn to communicate with international teachers and student community, and get prepared for international careers without leaving their country. One example of such a success story is International Black Sea University, the host of this symposium. IBSU has cooperation with other universities and hopes to make more contribution in future activities.
6. Georgia has achieved much success on the way to sharing international standards of higher education: unified national exams have dramatically improved the knowledge of freshman students, the policy “money follows the student” efficiently responds to the market demands, graduates’ diplomas satisfy the format of the Bologna process, the first step of accreditation of universities was carried out, etc. One of the proofs is the increasing number of international students and their wider geography. There is still much to be done, first of all, to work out the requirements for program accreditation and to carry it out.
7. Policy-makers popularize the idea that contemporary society is knowledge-based and everything has to be done by governmental educational bodies, university administration, teachers and students to contribute to building this kind of society. We need to define in detail what functions university graduates majoring in various fields should be able to perform, what sort of knowledge and skills they need for that performance, how we can assess the quality of teaching and students’ knowledge and skills. There is much theoretical and practical work to do in each country. Official documents of the Bologna process should be one of our guidelines in this process, providing better mutual understanding.
8. It is time to discuss higher education as the heart of development by all stakeholders (government, industry and academicians).
9. Indispensable and interrelated features of contemporary higher education are lifelong (continuous), distance, and computer-based (both off line and online), education. Universities should offer not only complete courses for undergraduate and postgraduate students leading to obtaining corresponding degrees, but also short courses for upgrading or re-qualification that can be realized face-to-face or at distance. Pedagogical efficiency of computer-aided materials and teaching process should be provided.
10. We believe that our symposium contributed significantly to the discussion and promotion of new ideas and trends in higher education.