



21st International Congress on the Education of the Deaf

July 18-22, 2010, Vancouver, Canada

www.iced2010.com

Mr. Henrik Sundqvist
President, SDU
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Stockholm, Sweden

April 1, 2010

Dear Mr. Sundqvist;

Thank you for your letter regarding your request on behalf of the DNUR (Dovas Nordiska Ungdoms Rad), The Swedish Deaf Youth Association, SDU, that the 21st International Congress on Education of the Deaf give an apology for the actions taken at the 1880 Milan Congress.

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 cannot be compared, for example, to the World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf where that Congress is quite clearly an organ of WFD. Whereas that congress has a particular role in the establishment of policy for the broader body and is charged with the debating and passing of resolutions, ICED has no such official role or function. ICED has no membership. The organizing committee cannot speak on behalf of any registrants attending ICED as nobody belongs to ICED. ICED as an organization does not exist. It exists only as a conference held every 5 years.

The impact and decision of the Milan (1880) Congress to ban Sign Language from schools for the Deaf has clearly had a marked affect on the education and indeed the lives of Deaf students. We can all agree that this decision was, quite simply, wrong. It polarized the field of Deaf Education, introduced a contra-productive dogma and limited free choices of individuals and organizations. More importantly from a human and social/emotional aspect, it has been devastating for many Deaf people, their families and the Deaf Community.

We appreciate the concerns you have expressed and have been working with the BC Deaf Community to address these issues. I do hope I will have the opportunity to meet you and your colleagues at ICED in Vancouver this summer.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Claire Anderson".

Claire Anderson
Chair, ICED 2010