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## REVIEW OF FRANCE'S EDUCATION POLICY

On 3rd May 1994, the OECD Education Committee, at the request of the French authorities, reviewed education policy in France. The French Delegation was led by Mr. François Bayrou, Minister of Education, and consisted of senior officials from the Ministries for Education, and for Higher Education and Research. The previous review was carried out some twenty years ago and both the French authorities and the Member countries of the Organisation wished to discuss and draw lessons from solutions devised by the French authorities to complex problems also faced to a large extent by the other OECD countries.

Both the OECD and the French authorities agreed that the review could not deal with all the problems confronting the French education system. The French authorities wanted the review to centre around the concept of equal opportunities. Consequently, the OECD Experts, following their examination of the situation in France, selected four major issues which seemed to them to cover a number of political and strategic matters of vital concern to many governments.

These issues are as follows:

- i) How to prevent exclusion through underachievement? The case of educational priority areas;
- ii) How to ensure quality and consistency of education within an increasingly diversified system? The case of teacher training;
- iii) How to harmonize the dynamics of education and employment? The case of the new "intermediate" diplomas;
- iv) How to strengthen the innovative and strategic planning potential of the educational system and strike a fresh balance?

Each of these major issues is reflected in a series of recommendations to the French authorities who have been invited to submit to OECD in the Spring of 1996 a follow-up report on measures taken to resolve outstanding problems.

The French Education Minister welcomed the quality of the review report and emphasized its interest at a time when his Ministry is preparing detailed proposals for a "New contract for Education". As is customary with education policy reviews, the background documentation includes a self-analytical report to OECD on the French education system drawn up by the French authorities and a review report by OECD prepared by the following Experts:

Mr. Burkart LUTZ	Former Director of the Institute for Research in the Social Sciences, Munich, Germany (Rapporteur)
Mr. Roberto CARNEIRO	Former Minister for Education and Sport, currently Chairman of "TV Independente S.A.", Portugal
Mrs. Hilary STEEDMAN	Secretary and Senior Research Fellow, National Institute for Economic and Social Research, London, United Kingdom.

Both these documents will be the subject of an OECD publication in the coming months.

Further information is available from Mr. Pierre Laderrière, Education and Training Division, OECD Directorate for Education, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs; Tel: 45 24 92 77; Fax: 45 24 90 98.