DEFINING UNIVERSITY OF THE 21st CENTURY

The delegates at the World Conference on Higher Education were trying to solve the problem of the vastly increased numbers of higher-level students from 13 million worldwide in 1970 to more than 80 million today: the inability of governments to pay for such expansion; the irruption of information technology and the concept that education has to become a lifelong process to cope with the constantly changing needs of work and society. We realize we need a "learning world" to match the "information society". And people are crying out for a truly learning world. One where not one single person should feel they are sentenced to lifelong exile from the world of learning.

They came up with some recommendations that are somewhat advanced in parts of the world - for example, the idea that no discrimination can be accepted concerning race, sex, language, religion neither for any economic or social distinctions, nor for physical disabilities, that university places should be awarded according to merit rather than membership of an elite, and must prepare students for work. They emphasized the role of universities in promoting civilization and human values such as peace, justice, freedom, equality and solidarity.

1. Are the following statements TRUE or FALSE? Write down the evidence from the text. No marks are given for only TRU or FALSE.
a. Every human being must have the opportunity of learning.
b. The university should give a higher position to some worthy principles of mankind.

2. In your own words and based on the ideas from the text, answer the following questions.

a. How does the increase in the number of higher-level students affect the present society?
b. What do the delegates at the World Conference suggest concerning Higher Education?