

**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**The sixth session of the Intergovernmental Council of the MOST Programme,
UNESCO Headquarters, 19-21 February 2003**

I. OPENING OF THE SESSION

The sixth session of the Intergovernmental Council of the MOST Programme was held at UNESCO, Paris, from 19 to 21 February 2003. The session was opened by Professor Marek Ziolkowski, Poland, the outgoing President of the IGC.

**II. ADDRESS BY MR PIERRE SANÉ, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL
FOR SOCIAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES OF UNESCO**

Mr Sané welcomed IGC delegates on behalf of the Director General of UNESCO and the MOST Secretariat, stressing the importance of this session for the MOST programme. He presented the restructuring of the UNESCO SHS sector, which reflects the broader UNESCO reform process in the direction of concentration and efficiency. He listed the 4 divisions within the sector (Ethics of science and technology, Human rights and democracy, Anticipation, philosophy and human security, Social science research and policy) and outlined their priorities. The MOST programme is hosted by the Social science, research and policy division.

Mr Sané described his professional background with Amnesty International and the IDRC.

He stressed that the time is right for MOST to adopt a new strategy for excellence and relevance, and that the evaluations conducted during 2002 provide the basis for a focused relaunch. At the heart of this should be linkages between research and policy, which are observably lacking in many countries. As the only UNESCO intergovernmental social science programme, MOST has a crucial role in meeting the future challenges of social transformations. He underlined that the present biennium is a transition period and informed that the idea is to go to the General Conference with strategies concerning the combat against racism, human rights and for the MOST Programme. The ADG informed that the final MOST evaluation would be presented by Professor Ossi V. Lindqvist, the Finish evaluator the following day. He drew attention to that in order to have an independent view of the future of the MOST Programme, he had requested Dr Elvi Whittaker, former chair of the Scientific Steering Committee to produce a paper. The delegates were likewise informed that the MOST working group which has been established within the Sector has also come up with its proposals for the refocusing of the Programme. ADG stressed the

importance of that research is used for the formulation of policies at local and global levels.

Mr Sané pointed out that redesigning the MOST programme is not just a matter of themes and priorities, but also of procedures and institutions. The roles of the IGC and its Bureau, of the Scientific Steering Committee, and of the National Liaison Committees, as well as that of the Secretariat, need to be rethought. As for the location and functions of the Secretariat, they must be considered in light of the decisions that will be made on the future of the MOST programme by the Executive Board and General Conference, which will consider *inter alia* the recommendations of the IGC. ADG stressed that the dialogue with the IGC Member States are of utmost importance.

III. ADDRESS BY THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT OF THE IGC, Mr MAREK ZIOLKOWSKI, PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY AND PRESIDENT OF THE SECTION OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN THE POLISH NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO.

Professor Ziolkowski welcomed all the representatives to this very important meeting for MOST. During the transitional period since the Fifth Session of the IGC in March 2001, there have been no new research projects, only the continuation and finalisation of the old themes. Activities have concentrated on the external evaluation of the first phase of the programme (1994-2001) with a view to recommendations for improvements during the second phase of the programme (2002-2009).

The time has now come to move on from the transitional period with the joint commitment of the IGC and the secretariat. MOST is at the heart of UNESCO's mandates. Evaluations of the first phase of MOST, like the recommendations of the fifth IGC, stress that MOST should be maintained and developed, while refocusing its activities, emphasising its distinctive niche, and improving its functioning. He noted valuable proposals to reinterpret the existing acronym as MO(ving towards) S(ustainable) T(transformation) and to focus specifically on research-policy linkages. However, he also expressed the view that, given the need for a more top-down approach, MOST should remain an international, comparative research programme combining scientific excellence with policy relevance, responding to fundamental issues and new practical challenges, and widely and effectively disseminated.

He proposed that the Council might consider ending its deliberations by recommending only the general directions and the number of thematic priorities, leaving to the Bureau, SSC and/or the Secretariat the task of proposing the final selection before the next meeting of the Executive Board in April.

IV. ELECTION OF THE BUREAU

Under the chairmanship of Professor Marek Ziolkowski and in the presence of a representative of the Office of International Standards and Legal Affairs, the elections were held to renew the Bureau of the Council. The President, the six Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur were elected by consensus.

President: Prof. Dr. Arie de Ruijter (The Netherlands), Scientific Director CERES, Dean of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Tilburg University

Vice-Presidents:

Western Europe Region: Dr Tuomo Melasuo (Finland), Researcher, Institute of Peace Research, University of Tampere

Central Europe Region: Ms Elena Zamfir (Romania), President of the MOST National Liaison Committee, Chef de la Chaire d'assistance sociale, University of Bucharest

Latin America and the Caribbean Region: Mr Mauricio Montalvo (Ecuador), Director-General for International Organizations, Asuntos sociales

Asia and the Pacific Region: Dr Dewi Fortuna Anwar (Indonesia), Deputy Chairman, Indonesian National Institute for Science

Africa Region: Dr D. Olu Ajakaiye (Nigeria), Director-General, Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research

Arab States Region: Mr Amin Esber (Syrian Arab Republic), Ambassador Permanent Delegate, Permanent Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic to UNESCO

Rapporteur: Dr P. Manogran (Malaysia), Secretary General, Ministry of National Unity and Social Development

V. WELCOMING SPEECH BY PROF. DR. ARIE DE RUIJTER, THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Professor de Ruijter opened by expressing to the Conference his gratitude and that of the other members of the Bureau. He noted that the significance of the MOST programme depends above all on the difference it can make to policy-research linkages in terms of their contribution to sustainable social transformations. New forms of interdependency between the most local and the most global issues and dynamics create new opportunities and new problems for a world that is at once more unified, more diverse, and more polarised. Access to work, to education and to information is of crucial significance in enabling individuals to cope with these challenges, at a time when the nation-state as traditionally conceived is being fundamentally reshaped. In this challenging environment, policies informed by high-quality research are of vital importance. The challenge for the MOST programme is to define innovative ways of fostering them that build on and move beyond existing research.

VI. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Under the chairmanship of Prof. Dr. Arie de Ruijter the agenda was adopted by consensus.

VII. CREATION OF A DRAFTING GROUP

A drafting group was formed as follows:

Mr Wesner Emmanuel (Haiti), Ambassador, Permanent delegate, Permanent Delegate of Haiti to UNESCO

Mr Surichai Wankaew (Thailand), Associate Professor, Deputy Director of Asian Studies Institute, Member of Sub-committee on Social and Human Sciences, Chulalongkorn University

Mr Ousman Diop Blondin (Senegal), Deputy Permanent Delegate, the Permanent Delegation of Senegal to UNESCO

Mr Valery Tishkov (Russian Federation), Chief, Institute of Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences

VIII. KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY PR ASHWANI SAITH, INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL STUDIES (ISS), THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS, DEVELOPMENT STUDIES INSTITUTE (DESTIN), LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS (LSE), UNITED KINGDOM

Mr Saith questioned the ways in which the research-policy interface is implemented in terms of agenda, topics and measures. The North – its governments, international organisations and Bretton Woods Institutions – define development policies and criteria of efficiency, while these are applied in developing countries.

During the past 20 years, the development world has undergone major changes: the breakdown of the Soviet Union means one partner less for the developing countries to cooperate with, and the Scandinavian countries, who used to propose alternative approaches, have moved into the mainstream. Finally, the market-paradigm has pushed aside all other alternatives, so that alternative policy platforms or processes no longer exist. Researchers and policy makers from the South, being dependent on the North, are mainly performing as instruments rather than as actors. Prefabricated systems of policies, issues of least resistance and the prevailing instrumental focus raise questions about the research-policy interface.

Concluding, he appealed for academic and policy communities to abandon the monolithic approach and rather focus on the development of an alternative agenda, the recognition of the need for empowerment and capacity building as well as the particular economic situation throughout the world. For these issues, MOST provides an ideal platform.

IX. KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY PROFESSOR CHARLY GABRIEL MBOCK, DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH, MINISTRY OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH, CAMEROON (See ANNEX II)

Professor Mbock opened by stating the view that knowledge and social transformation are now in a situation of conflict. Referring to the Budapest conference in 1999 and the statements of the five presidents of the scientific programmes of UNESCO, he called for a bridge between science and policy, which MOST is providing by aiming at the sustainability of development with the support of research. Mentioning several analysts, he stressed the importance of putting the human being at the center of research and policy, while regretting the commercialisation of knowledge.

In the African context, intellectuals in their ivory towers should take responsibility and shoulder the burden in the decision-making process. Decision-makers are also to blame, however, as they are afraid of changes which researchers might propose. Thus, Africa should recover from being dependent and move towards regaining its dignity, along the lines of NEPAD (the New Partnership for African Development), through an integrated and cross-disciplinary approach. African people should become citizens rather than mere consumers of globalisation.

Expressing his gratitude to UNESCO, he especially thanked MOST for offering a forum in which to regain Africa's dignity.

Discussion

The Indonesian question on the development of non-mainstream solutions was answered by Professor Ashwani Saith, who noted that alternatives to prefabricated solutions are scarce; however the World Bank is progressively integrating criticism, e.g. environmental issues; and MOST too is providing a platform for aggregating innovative attempts throughout the world.

Finally, Russia warned that research and policy should not be linked too closely together: knowledge can retain its value only in so far as it preserves its independence.

X JOINT SESSION OF THE SSC AND OF IGC

Dr. Arie de Ruijter, Vice-President, SSC, opened by repeating the general conclusions made during the last meeting of SSC in April 2002, including the recognized need for a restructuring of the programme, and the need to strengthen and emphasise the research-policy interface. The programme's main raison d'être is the linkage between research and policy making. The same meeting concluded that

- The draft was too general, and recommendations too broad
- SSC should be more proactive than it has been in the past
- There is a stronger need to focus on sustainable development.

A part of the same discussion was whether MOST should change its focus from the original bottom-up approach to a top-down approach. There is a need to start with problem definitions, recognizing the need of an interdisciplinary focus to deal with contemporary issues. The need for quality control of research results had also been stressed. Regarding the future of MOST he said that the general opinion was that it is not so much about changing the three broad areas, but rather to focus on certain clusters such as human security, sustainability, social justice etc.

Professor Lenelis Kruse-Graumann, Member SSC, Institute of Psychology, University of Hagen started by underlining two propositions: firstly, the importance of strengthening the linkage between policy and research, and secondly, the need to refocus MOST on 'sustainability' or changing MOST to 'Moving towards Sustainable Transformations'. She highlighted that these two propositions are closely related. Sustainable transformations remain a hollow end if one does not specify to which end one wants these transformations to take. Sustainability is the most daunting task of the 21st century. Most MOST projects can be redefined and adjusted under the sustainability concept. There is a need for solution-oriented research. She underlined that we need to act in this world of uncertainties and manage it in more sustainable ways. This calls for wider collaboration between natural and social sciences on one side and other stakeholders and the policy-makers on the other side. Research-policy linkages must work in a two way process: research must be communicated and transformed in a useful form so that it can be useful for the policy makers, and secondly, policy makers need to have a chance to describe their problem into research questions which are taken up by the research community. UNESCO is in an excellent position to work on sustainability, thanks to inter alia the five programmes under one roof, with potential for inter-disciplinarily and international co-operation.

Discussion

There was general consensus that the two presentations were full of lessons to learn and that the next phase of MOST should focus on the research-policy link. Many Member States emphasized that the world is today facing situations and processes that the programme should and is well positioned to tackle.

Several delegates stressed that though the link research and policy is important certain warnings should be issued. In particular, the need to ensure the quality and independency of research was stressed. Policy and research are accountable to different audiences. Some saw a risk in that researchers, in particular social scientists that normally are dependent on funding from the public compared to natural sciences, would experience pressure from their government. A warning was raised of the need to prevent researchers in becoming technocrats and that their abilities to carry out independent research should be ensured.

Though the relevancy and importance of cooperation between natural and social sciences was emphasized; it was recognized that the existing institutionalised barriers between the natural and social disciplines represent a hindrance. Whereas some argued that 'sustainability' as a framework for research underlining the focus of UNESCO is a good approach; some questioned the concept.

The President underlined that though the idea of linking social and natural sciences and policy are a good idea; the social sciences should keep their own identity. The President stressed that research of today, must take into account the implications of policy making. If MOST does not participate in this process, it loses an opportunity. The comparative advantage of UNESCO is the opportunity to work together with other sectors.

Some Member States drew attention to the fact that the content of social scientific concepts are not always agreed upon; making the integration of the results difficult. The concept of inequality differs from country to country, making the integration of research results difficult.

In response to the above, the President stressed that we are clear of the need to deal with the concepts. One of the challenges of MOST is to find out how to abstract from concrete science and to operationalize concepts such as poverty. The President stressed that the very complex world of today rely more than ever on scientific research.

Some Member States requested a concern with relevant issues as a result of 11 September which should be within the scope of MOST.

In the discussion of the research and policy linkages it is necessary that research be being challenged for its relevance.

Some Member States stressed that the linking of research to policy is a delicate issue. There is a conceptual difference between researchers and policy makers, and a lack of social institutions.

Some Member States underlined that IGC should ensure that MOST is placed in a universal context and that the future of the programme of MOST is taking into account the problems of multidisciplinary boundaries. Researchers should be encouraged to produce policy relevant research contributing inter alia to implement the MDGs and not produce knowledge for the sake of knowledge.

One Member State pointed to that in research there are two important issues: How is the agenda set and what counts for evidence.

Thursday 20th February

XI OPENING ADDRESS BY MR PIERRE SANÉ, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR SOCIAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES OF UNESCO

Mr. Sané first pointed out that the MOST programme represents only one of the different components of the activities of the Social and Human Sciences Sector of UNESCO. In the context of the reorientation of the programme, he emphasized that the proposed focus on policy-research linkages that cut across topics and themes. MOST should not restrict itself to its traditional areas, but covers by its very nature a very wide range of topics, including multicultural societies, migration, urban issues, water issues, drugs, etc., as well as the various methods used to tackle these topics, such as networks, exchange centers, training, etc. Thus, MOST is not confined to the social sciences in a disciplinary sense: its problems reach into all sectors of UNESCO and, in principle, no policy area is inherently outside its scope. The correlative risk is of course dispersion: the reorientation of the programme should lead to a more focused approach and an efficient and effective use of resources.

With reference to the evaluation report, Mr Sané particularly stressed the importance of feeding academic results and theories into tangible policy outcomes. He reminded the Council that the policy-research interface was the “raison d’être” of MOST, and its source of added value compared to other research programmes. Undoubtedly, as the evaluation shows, instances of social science research directly influencing policy making have been rather scarce. One reason is that research is often too abstract. Each region has specific priorities (such as poverty for Africa, water for the Arab countries), which MOST should be able to take into account by developing mechanisms appropriate for interdisciplinary projects that need to be sensitive to their particular contexts. He concluded by emphasising that MOST’s distinctive value lies in its ability to bring together, in this way, truly international paradigms and truly local implementation.

XII REPORT BY THE MOST SECRETARIAT ON ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT FROM MARCH 2001 TO FEBRUARY 2003 (PAUL DE GUCHTENEIRE)¹

Mr. Guchteneire reminded the Council that the main long-term objective of MOST was to bridge the gap between policy-making and research with specific reference to three major topics: Multicultural and multi-ethnic societies, Social and environmental

¹ The presentation by Mr de Guchteneire was a summary of the working documents Ref: SHS-03/CONF.201/3 and Ref: SHS-03/CONF.201/4, accessible on line at the following electronic address: <http://www.unesco.org/most/igc2003.htm>

These documents are not annexed as they were distributed to all National Commissions before the IGC.

urban issues and Local-global linkages, governance. He provided a detailed overview of the restructuring of the Secretariat and the division of Social Science, Research and Policy, indicating that the work on the original themes of MOST has now been put at the responsibility of the new Sections on International Migration and multicultural policies, Urban Development and Democracy and Governance. Mr. de Guchteneire informed that the Secretariat of the MOST Programme is currently under the Section of International Policies and Co-operation in Social sciences.

He mentioned that web site access has increased (1.8 million visitors during 2001), indicating the popularity of the MOST programme and its publications, as well as its truly global extent: MOST projects comprise participants in 109 countries.

Mr. de Guchteneire mentioned the key events during the period such as the participation of MOST in the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, -as a result UNESCO is now accepted as an official partner in the WSF. He also described the activities of the different networks, the recent publications, and the Summer Schools. He concluded on the three main impacts of the MOST programme: first, the establishment of large-scale international scientific cooperation, secondly the development of new modalities for the social sciences, and finally the establishment of new partnerships between academia and policy-makers.

XIII REPORT ON THE FINAL EVALUATION OF PHASE I OF THE MOST PROGRAMME BY PROFESSOR OSSI V. LINDQVIST, CHAIRMAN OF THE EVALUATION TEAM, DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE OF APPLIED BIOTECHNOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF KUOPIO, FINLAND²

Having briefly introduced the evaluation team and its methods, Prof. Lindqvist presented the recommendations and the reasons lying behind them.

MOST must provide attractive opportunities for researchers, which clearly cannot derive solely from its top-down structure or its small budget. It should not remain solely within local scientific communities, but use the value added by its international and crosscutting approach. There should be a continuous, multiple-flow interface between researchers and policy-makers (particularly with respect to regarding new topics), while there is a need for capacity building especially among young scientists as well as for better visibility of the programme.

Mentioning the difficulties of impact assessment in the social sciences, Prof. Lindqvist called for monitoring during the planning phase and explicit guidelines for scientists and partners. The strengths of MOST, such as its good reputation and its international comparative focus, by far outweigh its weaknesses, namely its slowness and the lack of linkages between individual projects. Regarding administration, Prof. Lindqvist recommended a concentration on essential topics as well as further activities in the countries, while the budget should be strategically planned in a four-year rather than a two-year cycle.

² The presentation by Prof. Lindqvist was a summary of the working document Ref: SHS-03/CONF.201/6, accessible on line at the following electronic address:

<http://www.unesco.org/most/igc2003.htm>

This document is not annexed as it was distributed to all National Commissions before the IGC.

Concluding, he reiterated the fifteen recommendations and, having referred to future trends, called for MOST to find niches for its numerous activities, especially in terms of capacity building in developing countries. MOST should provide high-quality, multi-disciplinary, problem-oriented research, while exploiting the full range of professional networks and connections in disseminating its results.

Discussion

During the subsequent discussion several points were raised, relating both to the two speeches and to the recommendations;

- There was general support for the results of the evaluations and for the orientation towards policy relevance, subject to the provision that it is not the purpose of MOST to formulate policy. However, the proposal to rename the programme itself encountered some opposition. In thematic terms, several member states emphasized the importance of keeping poverty at the heart of the policy-research objectives.
- The clarification that MOST is not to be confined within the social sciences was also widely welcomed. Several member states added, however, that only the research side of the linkage had been presented, while impact on policy had not been highlighted in the evaluation.
- Several member states stressed the peculiar problems of small countries, especially in the developing world, where the general requirement to be sensitive to local contexts is especially compelling. They commented on the need to promote access, and how MOST might contribute in this respect, for instance in promoting academic exchanges and capacity building. It was pointed out that the evaluation report contains passages about developing countries that might be interpreted as derogatory.
- It was pointed out by many member states that the MOST programme has a lower profile than its quality deserves; they called for an effort to be directed at greater visibility.
- Several member states mentioned the need for National Liaison Committees to contribute more to the development and dissemination of the MOST programme.
- A number of comments were made on the importance for the programme of attracting external funding, a key condition for which is academic excellence at all levels.

Thursday after-noon session, 20 February 2003

XIV The **PRESENTATION BY PROFESSOR ELVI WHITTAKER, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**³, elaborated on the recommendations tabled in her paper. She underlined the need for concentration and strongly supported the evaluation's recommendation to refocus MOST on its core business - the policy-research linkages. She also mentioned the need to adjust the secretariat's structure to the retooled programme and advocated autonomy for MOST within the SHS sector.

XV The **PRESENTATION** (see ANNEX III) **BY Mr PIERRE SANE**, ADG/SHS responded to the two sets of recommendations put forward by the evaluators and by Professor Elvi Whittaker. He highlighted some of the already existing examples of

³ The presentation by Prof. Elvi Whittaker was a summary of the working document Ref: SHS-03/CONF.201/5, accessible on line at the following electronic address:

<http://www.unesco.org/most/igc2003.htm>

This document is not annexed as it was distributed to all National Commissions before the IGC.

MOST research on the policy-science interface across the regions and proposed action to be taken by the secretariat in the second phase of MOST. He also submitted a tentative workplan for the period between the IGC and the 32nd session of UNESCO's General Conference, in October 2003.

Discussion

With regard to the presentations of this afternoon, delegates of member states as well as observers raised the following points:

they underlined the important status of the evaluation document which responded to a statutory obligation of the MOST programme;

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they reminded the secretariat of not drawing too hasty conclusions and let the IGC take the necessary time for fulfilling its role as the decision-making body on the reorientation of MOST. The role of governments with respect to the secretariat was recalled; and delegates emphasized their say on the future running of the programme.

-they noted **two alternative roads/visions** deriving from the recommendations. These visions are associated to a “revolutionary” (1) and an “evolutionary” (2) way of transforming the MOST programme:

1. MOST as a think tank and research instrument centred around the link between research and policy-making, doing away with the three main themes.
2. Phase two should build on phase one of the programme, by critically assessing the thematic thrust of research on social transformations, refining it and making it more goal-oriented.

Within this specific debate on programme orientation, attention was drawn to the difficulty of measuring the long-term impact of undertakings such as MOST. A warning was issued as to the unrealistic ambitions to have research producing direct policy results on short notice. Member states generally agreed to the strengthened policy-research focus as the underlying *raison d'être* of MOST. Intermediary institutions between science and policy-makers were said to be of high importance in certain countries where scientific production would not necessarily reach out to the policy-making level. It was broadly recognized that a lot needs to be done in this field. Policy agenda-setting in many countries was said to be under threat due to short term thinking. Certain member states also pointed to the need of research themes to be driven by and defined jointly with policy-makers, and the necessary transformation of research outputs into outcomes and solutions. But they also want to keep MOST's identity as the only intergovernmental social science programme carrying out high-quality problem-oriented research. The mandate to make better linkages with other programmes and sectors at UNESCO was also emphasized. Attention was drawn to the inadequacy of targetting policy-makers without defining who they are. Such shortcomings might also lead to dispersion.

Many member states supported the interdisciplinary relevance of the programme, as well as its successful stimulating and strengthening of the social sciences in the developing world. It was recalled that the three research foci of MOST stem from large consultation with Member States and are still relevant. The need to take on board **new thematic orientations** was also stressed several times. One proposal was to change the main theme of MOST on an annual basis. A strong plea was voiced to

let the regions define their own regional priority themes; as illustrated by several calls from the Latin American region to have MOST working on poverty.

With respect to reorienting MOST towards “**Sustainable Transformations**”, there were contradictory opinions. Several Member States, especially from the African region, stressed the importance of sustainability as a thematic framework for a re-oriented MOST programme, whereas others felt that MOST should not work with hybrid concepts. The representative of UN Habitat from Geneva outlined the importance of strengthened and continued inter-agency cooperation with respect to the Habitat II-follow-up. The role of NGOs in the implementation of a number of MOST projects was also stressed.

The visibility of the programme was an issue addressed by many delegates, with a call to pay more attention to it in the future. Several member states advocated the strengthening of the **MOST Liaison Committees**. With respect to staffing, some member states expressed the view that organisational and managerial questions relating to MOST staff should be left to the Assistant Director-General.

Summary:

1. The Vice-Chairperson, Professor Anwar, summarized the debates by recognizing the need for change, but noting that delegates prone more “evolutionary” than “revolutionary” approaches to achieve this. The emphasis on the policy-research paradigm is doubtlessly of highest importance, but should not serve as a basis to do away with all the achievements of the past. Greater regional sensitivity with respect to the themes retained by MOST was a concern of importance.
2. Professor Whittaker expressed some sadness about the difficulties of delegates to accept a reorientation of MOST towards the policy-research link as the central focus of the programme.
3. The Assistant Director-General, Pierre Sané stated his gratefulness for a very inspiring debate. He emphasized his want for transparency and joint decision-making with IGC and explained that the sector had taken its time to develop the proposed action plan on the basis of both the evaluation and the expertise from professor Whittaker, former Chairperson of the Scientific Steering Committee (1994-1997). The present IGC session provided an opportunity to discuss these recommendations with member states before the evaluation shall be presented to the Executive Board at its 166th session (April 2003). To enforce the governing bodies of MOST, it was suggested to provide the IGC Bureau with a more pro-active role and have it meet annually or bi-annually, for its close connection with the programme planning and implementation.