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**SYNTHESIS OF REPORTS BY MEMBER STATES IN THE CONTEXT
OF THE PERMANENT SYSTEM OF REPORTING ON EDUCATION FOR PEACE,
HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY, INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING
AND TOLERANCE, AND REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONVENTIONS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS THEREON**

SUMMARY

The Director-General presents to the Executive Board, prior to submission to the General Conference, a synthesis of national reports based on the analysis of replies to the questionnaire which was sent to all Member States (CL/3544 of 27 March 2000). The information supplied by Member States refers specifically to the implementation of the Declaration and Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy (adopted by the General Conference at its 28th session).

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In accordance with 28 C/Resolution 5.41, the Permanent System of Reporting on Education for Peace, Human Rights, Democracy, International Understanding and Tolerance covers the following instruments, adopted by UNESCO or with its contribution:

- The Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace, and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Paris, 1974);
- The World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy (Montreal, 1993);
- The Declaration and Programme of Action of the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993);
- The Declaration of Ministers of the 44th session of the International Conference on Education (Geneva, 1994), and the Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, approved by the UNESCO General Conference at its 28th session (Paris, 1995);
- The Plan of Action of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004);
- The UNESCO Declaration of Principles on Tolerance and the Follow-Up Plan of Action for the United Nations Year for Tolerance (Paris, 1995);
- The Declaration and Platform for Action of the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995).

2. For the purpose of monitoring the implementation of these instruments, and in particular the Declaration and Integrated Framework of Action, the Executive Board approved, at its 156th session, a questionnaire drawn up by UNESCO and addressed to all Member States with a view in particular to identifying general trends in education for peace, human rights, democracy, international understanding and tolerance, and assessing to what extent these instruments have met with a practical response in national policies.

This synthesis recapitulates the data provided by Member States in response to the questionnaire.

II. ANALYSIS OF PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN IMPLEMENTING THE INSTRUMENTS CONCERNING EDUCATION FOR PEACE, HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY, INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING AND TOLERANCE

3. The replies provided by Member States on the basis of the above-mentioned questionnaire point out the increasingly important place occupied by education for peace, human rights, democracy, international understanding and tolerance in citizen development and training. Administrative, political and legislative measures have been taken at different levels in order to facilitate the implementation of the provisions of the Declaration and

Integrated Framework of Action and to ensure their dissemination in educational establishments and among the public. In order to facilitate access to and understanding of these documents, they have been translated in certain countries into the national language and made available to citizens. For example, various citizen training programmes have been launched to promote respect for human dignity and cultural diversity. Of these, mention may be made of: “Human rights in everyday life” (Germany); “My way and Eurostep” (Bulgaria); and “Projet de réminiscence”, set up by Belgium and carried out in close cooperation with the South African Government. That programme both enabled a multicultural, intergenerational project to be instituted in Belgium, and led to the setting up in South Africa of a theatre intended for all races and all ages; in 1995, Finland set up two schemes (“Our challenge to global citizenship”, and “Human Rights Ambassador”) which enabled training to be provided for over 1,200 students, schoolchildren and teachers. In New Zealand, the Human Rights Commission launched several citizen training programmes in human rights: establishment of the “citizens’ advice bureau”, the purpose of which is to advise citizens on matters relating to respect for human rights; setting up of an “education for human rights programme in small and medium-sized companies” designed to enable employees to learn about the basic concepts of human rights. In the Republic of Korea, the Government set up a programme entitled “Raising awareness of cultural diversity” which was initiated by the National Commission and the Ministry of Education in 1998. Its purpose is to encourage foreigners living there to share their cultures with the country’s young people, and to develop education for international understanding. The cultural exchange activities are supported by embassies and cultural centres.

4. In addition to the programmes which constitute genuine campaigns for citizen training and in which local associations, non-governmental organizations and governments cooperate closely, States are introducing other strategies which often result in the implementation of projects aimed at the introduction of civics and concepts of human rights into curricula, the training of teachers and teacher-trainers at all levels and the production of training materials and teaching aids tailored to the local context. These strategies vary from one country to another. A number of States are developing strategies in a context of overall educational reform taking into account the political and social changes that have taken place in the country (this is the case particularly in countries in democratic transition, those which are still in a situation of post-conflict reconstruction and those which are embarking on reforms to bring their education systems into line with the country’s new socio-economic conditions). Countries which enjoy relative political and economic stability often adopt strategies in stages as changes are gradually introduced at each educational level. Some of these projects, financed by international partners, are implemented by national institutions with UNESCO’s technical support. For example, in the field of formal education, several activities for teacher training and the development of teaching aids have been carried out or are under way, especially in Central America, West Africa, southern Africa and, more recently, in south-east Europe. In the field of non-formal education, innovative methods for the teaching of human rights have been tested in the framework of social mobilization projects focused on human rights. Since 1996, ten projects of this type have been implemented or are being implemented in the following countries: Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ecuador, Guatemala, Malawi, Mongolia, Pakistan and Senegal. All these projects are based on an integrated approach to human rights and local development.

5. In some countries, education for human rights, democracy, international understanding and tolerance begins at an early age and continues up to the higher educational level, also including non-formal education, a field in which associations and non-governmental organizations play a major role. These concepts are introduced into subjects such as civics,

ethics, history, geography and modern languages. The depth of the treatment given to these concepts depends on the educational level concerned and the concepts are imparted following differing teaching approaches. In Cameroon, for instance, in the field of teacher training, subjects including notions of tolerance and international understanding have been introduced into the courses in teacher training colleges: health and family education, environmental education, education for democracy, peace, tolerance and understanding among cultures and peoples. Subjects such as ethics (respect for oneself, others and the environment) and civics (learning how to share and live together) have become compulsory in primary and secondary education.

6. The development and the production of training materials and teaching aids based on concepts relating to the culture of peace, human rights, cultural diversity, international understanding and tolerance are among the most important activities in this sphere. These activities are undertaken either by the Ministries of Education, specialized national institutions or even non-governmental organizations in the case of materials for enhancing the general public's awareness. In connection with national and subregional projects for education in human rights, peace and democracy, implemented by the Member States, materials in keeping with local contexts and the needs of the beneficiaries are produced and made available to teachers and teacher-trainers. In Croatia, within the national (nursery, primary and secondary) programme for human rights education and also within other non-formal education projects, textbooks incorporating new educational approaches have been produced.

7. The training of teachers and educational personnel at all levels is a key factor in promoting education for a culture of peace, human rights, cultural diversity, international understanding and tolerance. Accordingly, States attach paramount importance to such training, which is provided through seminars and workshops generally organized by the Ministries of Education in collaboration with national institutions, non-governmental organizations and international partners working in these fields. It may take the form of initial training, and is provided by higher-level teacher training institutes as well as by universities. Its duration varies from one country to another; in most cases, however, three years represents the norm. Such training may also be ongoing. In such cases, it is provided during the academic year, and may continue throughout the teacher's career. UNESCO provides considerable support for teacher training programmes. In some countries, research findings produced in the human rights field are also published, and may serve as source material for both student and teacher training. The UNESCO Chairs also contribute to the training of teachers and trainers, and enable human rights education to be developed in higher education establishments. The Chairs organize competitions relating to human rights as well as training courses for professionals having responsibilities in this field.

8. Legislative and social provisions have been made on behalf of vulnerable sectors of the population (physically and mentally disabled groups, refugees, immigrants, ethnic minorities, etc.). Ministries of Education – in some countries, Ministries of Social Affairs – National Commissions, non-governmental organizations and local associations carry out programmes to promote the right to education for the most disadvantaged population categories in order to provide them with the means of becoming integrated into society and taking part in public activities. For example, in Mexico, the National Human Rights Commission organized from 1995 to 1998 a series of activities for indigenous communities (training courses, seminars and workshops devoted to human rights education, etc.). It should however be noted that, in most countries, such provisions are not always reflected in effective implementation measures, and conditions of access to education for such population groups still remain difficult.

9. Networking among the various national and regional institutions for purposes of pooling information and experience is another effective means of promoting education for a culture of peace and human rights. In this context also, the UNESCO Chairs play a significant role. Most of the States that replied to the questionnaire have Chairs, and promote the exchange of research findings and experience at higher level. This exchange policy, which is also practised among educational establishments, is regarded as beneficial for the development and understanding of cultural diversity, which can in turn promote international understanding. Among the national institutions which perform this function, mention may also be made of the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (ACEIU) located in the Republic of Korea, whose objectives are to promote and develop education for international understanding in the region in line with the provisions of the Declaration and Integrated Framework of Action. The Associated Schools Project Network continues to develop, and the number of its participating establishments has increased steadily (over 6,000 schools, in 166 countries). The Network is regarded as an effective means of exchanging innovatory methods and approaches in education for a culture of peace and human rights. The UNESCO Clubs and Associations also represent major channels for training, mobilizing and raising the awareness of young people.

10. The 1974 Recommendation urges Member States to promote, at every stage of education, an active civic training which will enable every person to gain a knowledge of the method of operation and the work of public institutions, whether local, national or international, to become acquainted with the procedures for solving fundamental problems, and to participate in the cultural life of the community and in public affairs. As such, civic education occupies a central position in several countries. One of its aims is to improve the educational process as a whole in order to form responsible citizens who are concerned about their fellows, committed to peace, human rights and democracy, and are able to appreciate the value of freedom and to avoid conflicts or, where they cannot be avoided, to solve such conflicts by non-violent means. In European countries in transition, a number of national and regional institutions have been set up for the purpose of promoting civics and strengthening democracy through training and research schemes, as well as by raising citizen awareness (Estonia, Lithuania, etc.). In France, a prominent role has been given since 1996 to civics in the new primary school curricula. It is through civics courses that schoolchildren learn about the rules of existence governing school and society, and the principles and precepts underpinning democracy. The “children’s parliament”, another form of introduction to democracy, enables schoolchildren to become acquainted with the modus operandi of the democratic institutions of their country. In Cameroon, pupils also take part in a number of out-of-school activities that can enhance their understanding in matters of cultural diversity. Such activities are conducted either among pupils at the same school (election of heads of class, general association of pupils) or among schoolchildren from different establishments (Catholic movement, national federation of arts and culture, national federation of school sports associations, etc.).

III. MAIN LESSONS AND CONCLUSIONS

11. This report is based essentially on an analysis of replies to the questionnaire which was sent to all Member States in pursuance of paragraph 1(a) of 23 C/Resolution 13.3. Few States did in fact reply (only 24 out of 185, representing 12.97%). The national institutions concerned should attach greater importance to this reporting system, since it makes it possible to measure progress achieved at national level and to take the measures required in order to promote and implement the instruments concerning which Member States have made

commitments. It is also to be noted that the replies received all refer essentially to measures taken in order to improve educational content, and provide scant information on the process of democratic organization of their education systems (improvement of the rules governing the operation of educational establishments, community-school interaction, etc.).

12. Nevertheless, on the basis of the replies to the questionnaire and in the light of information gathered elsewhere – national reports, reports of meetings and conferences, etc. – the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Progress has been achieved in fostering a greater awareness of, on the one hand, the importance of such education for the harmonious development of countries and, on the other, the need to integrate all the aspects of such education in an overall strategy for citizens' education and training at all levels. However, there is not always an observable match between the commitments made and the means allocated for their implementation (in particular in the field of training and the production of textbooks and educational materials). Efforts should be made to allocate greater resources to developing this type of education.
- Although formal education remains the sector in which the greatest number of activities are being promoted in this field, it is absolutely essential to link such action to all schemes being carried out in the informal education sector in order to integrate all aspects of the development of national education systems.
- More and more local associations and non-governmental organizations are working hand in hand with government authorities in order to increase public awareness and to provide for the training of trainers. Such back-up action deserves to receive more extensive encouragement and support, both technical and financial.
- Language teaching, including the teaching of foreign languages and the mother tongues of minorities and indigenous people, is an effective means of fostering mutual understanding at the intercultural and international level.
- Since the adoption of the Declaration and Platform for Action of the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), ever greater efforts have been made to integrate gender-related issues into educational curricula and institutional practices.
- Issues relating to racial discrimination, xenophobia and ethnic and religious intolerance are still accorded very little prominence in educational curricula.
- Although environmental education has in recent times begun to occupy a front-rank position in many countries, it has not yet taken on the scale of what might be defined as education for the planet's survival and world ethics, i.e. education that is based on ever closer ties between peace, the environment and development.
- In view of the proliferation of endemic diseases and the consequences thereof at the human and social levels (in particular when they lead to situations of exclusion and the denial of the basic rights of those sections of the population most afflicted thereby), preventive education schemes should be given the widest possible support. Likewise, major efforts should be made to alert young people to the

dangers of drug abuse and of excessive consumption of substances that are harmful to health.

- The development of national, regional and international networking arrangements serves to strengthen information pooling and the exchange of documentation, innovatory experimental outcomes and research findings on different subjects and aspects of education for a culture of peace, human rights, democracy, international understanding and tolerance.

13. The Permanent System of Reporting on Education for Peace, Human Rights, Democracy, International Understanding and Tolerance is a useful instrument that enables Member States themselves to gauge the impact of the measures taken and the commitments made in this field, and to refocus as required their national policies. For UNESCO, the aim must be to use the information gathered in order effectively to provide its Member States with all necessary support for developing quality education that is geared to the promotion of the right to education and the human values that lie at the core of the mandate assigned to it by its Constitution.