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Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
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Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

# European Commission- UNESCO Conference: Joint Action for Capacity-Building in Bioethics



# JACOB

## Presentation Abstracts

Mexico City,  
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## Experience Sharing – Newly Established National Bioethics Committees

<b>Mr. Alfred A. Oteng (Ghana)</b>	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Chairperson of the National Bioethics Committee
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### ***National Bioethics Committee of Ghana***

Being the newest committee to be established by the Ghana National Commission for UNESCO, and having unique terms of reference in terms of its establishment, functions and specific roles in national development, the national bioethics committee faces several challenges. However, the need to solidify its identity and legal status appears to be most pressing.

As a committee which is expected to play advisory and advocacy roles, the nomination and or selection of representatives from identifiable institutions and other groups will need very careful consideration. Additionally, there will be the need to carefully assess its outputs, especially the pronouncements on societal issues, to generate long-term public confidence in the Committee.

<b>Mr. Rajaona Andriamananjara (Madagascar)</b>	Chairperson, Madagascar's Committee for Ethics of Science and Technology (CMEST)
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### ***The Madagascar Committee on Ethics of Science and Technology (CMEST)***

The Madagascar Committee on Ethics of Science and Technology (CMEST) was set up by the Madagascar National Academy of Arts, Letters and Sciences (which itself was founded in 1902), to address the entire spectrum of ethics of science and technology (EST). It is composed of Academy Members as well as non-Academy Members: they all come from different walks of life and disciplines. Being both very new (it is no more than two years old) and a newcomer in the field, CMEST had to start from the basics and adopt a step-by-step approach. Several successive challenges had to be met: convincing the Academy to accept its creation and adopt by-laws, setting up a core team, defining the mission statement and membership criteria, recruitment and nomination of members, and drafting rules and regulations. The first activities included team-building, self-training with regard to content (on basic international and national references), and organizing a first national day of EST.

The future will continue to represent greater challenges in view of a difficult national context (EST is generally not considered to be a high priority), and of a very dynamic international context (high-level debate on several key topics, multitude of on-going activities). The next steps in getting CMEST up to speed will thus consist of beefing up its capacity:

- organizing logistical support (secretariat, documentation, national and international networking);
- increasing its visibility; and
- defining better focused centers of interest.

<p><b>Mr. Ibrahima Boiro (Republic of Guinea)</b></p>	<p>President of the National Bioethics Committee of Republic of Guinea</p>
<p><b><i>Guinean National Committee for Bioethics</i></b></p>	
<p>Guinean National Committee for Bioethics was established by a decree of Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, with guidance from the Guinean National Commission for UNESCO, on the eve of adoption by the UNESCO General Conference of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights in October 2005.</p> <p>In doing so the government set up a working tool for realizing the reflections being undertaken amongst the academic and religious communities, as well as other segments of civil society in regards to ethical issues in medicine, life sciences and the associated technologies, applied to human beings but also by certain cultural practices related to our ancestral traditions. These concerns appear at the outset of the mandate of the National Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop bioethics legislation and policy in Guinea;</li> <li>• To implement public information programs and dissemination of knowledge on bioethics;</li> <li>• To monitor the activities of the International Bioethics Committee in connection with the Division of Ethics of Science and Technology of UNESCO</li> </ul> <p>The 19 members of the Guinean National Committee for Bioethics represent scientists, policymakers and religious leaders (Muslims and Christians). The Committee has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Bioethics Programme of UNESCO, and within its framework, has received technical training organized by UNESCO Secretariat.</p> <p>The Committee has also offered panel discussions and information about bioethics issues in some universities and research institutions in the country. The Committee has hosted awareness sessions in a few mosques and churches on the role of the Committee in elaborating bioethics knowledge in relation to various traditional practices.</p>	
<p><b>Mr. Anthony Mullings (Jamaica)</b></p>	<p>Member of the National Bioethics Committee of Jamaica, Senior Lecturer at the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Child Health of the University of the West Indies Campus of Mona</p>
<p><b><i>National Bioethics Committee of Jamaica</i></b></p>	
<p>The members of the National Bioethics Committee of Jamaica, which was set up on the 19th of September 2008 and ratified on the 10th of March 2009, while making plans for the future, were aware of the risk of overreaching and being overly ambitious. In keeping with what the Committee saw as its main objective, the members felt it was most important to devote time to develop a strategy to influence ethical thought, mainly locally, but where relevant – regionally and internationally. Two main elements are required in order to exercise an influence – a voice and credibility. Therefore, the Committee has to strive to establish such voice and credibility, so that the key audiences listen and are influenced.</p>	

<b>Ms. Adèle Sambo (Gabon)</b>	Member of the National Bioethics Committee of Gabon, Counselor in charge of research at the Ministry of Higher Education and Research
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***National Bioethics Committee of Gabon***

Despite the ongoing biomedical research in the country, including testing new drugs and vaccines, Gabon's national ethics committee was only recently established pursuant to the Law 22/2000 of 10 January 2001, which sets out the fundamental principles of scientific research in the Republic of Gabon. Two decrees signed in 2008 determine the composition and functioning of National Ethics Committee, and appoint its 19 members.

Gabon has been chosen by UNESCO to benefit from the ABC project, starting in June 2009, with a workshop in Libreville for the members of the newly established committee. The Committee has just created a website ( [www.cner-gabon.org](http://www.cner-gabon.org)). The Committee has already adopted by acclamation its standard operating procedures, is increasingly engaged in the review of various research policies, and is expected to make its recommendations soon.

<b>Mr. Walter Orlando Lara (El Salvador)</b>	Member of the National Bioethics Commission of El Salvador
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***Appointment of a National Bioethics Commission in El Salvador***

Currently, there is an interest from authorities to make progress in the bioethics field, based on the convergence of political and social will from different Ministries, Universities, and the National Commission of UNESCO, as well as the interest from the expert community. The Commission is considered as an advisory body requiring technical organisational capacity, with clearly defined responsibilities and with members whose actions are characterised by credibility, transparency, inclusion, development and honesty. The Commission's sustainability relies on its incorporation into the country's political system, which has to respect the advisory role of the impartial body. Inviting participation from citizens and from different stakeholders is extremely important, as well as disseminating information, guidelines for research, coordinating functions and establishing an overall legal framework.

## Challenges and perspectives in the process of setting up National Bioethics Committees

<b>Mr. Suress Bhagwant (Mauritius)</b>	Associate Professor, Faculty of Science, University of Mauritius
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### ***Towards setting up the National Bioethics Committee in the Republic of Mauritius***

Advancing the initiative of the Ambassador of the Republic of Mauritius at UNESCO, and following the visit of high-level delegation of the Organization to Mauritius, the decision was made among the key stakeholders that the establishment of National Bioethics Committee (NBC) would be a step in a right direction and would open the opportunity for Mauritius to join in the Assisting Bioethics Committees project.

The presentation highlights the major events prior to the establishment of the NBC in Mauritius and reports on various stages of the process. Issues such as terms and modalities, composition of members, the roles of the University of Mauritius and UNESCO, the Bill for National Bioethics Committee, and the Memorandum of Understanding, are amongst the topics considered.

<b>Mr. Mohamed Kharul Adib Abdul Rahman (Malaysia)</b>	Deputy Undersecretary, Strategic Division, Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, Malaysia
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### ***Mainstreaming Bioethics In Malaysia: First Steps***

Currently, bioethics in Malaysia is still very localized and self-regulated by the various internal review boards. At the moment, there is neither a national standard nor consensus on issues of bioethics. In parallel, while the majority of research and development (R&D) ventures are undertaken by public R&D institutions and universities, bioethics attracts only a minor public concern as these public institutions are considered to be acting in the interest of public policy. The lack of public awareness could be yet another reason for the lack of high-profile debates on various Bioethics issues. However, the government is also currently and increasingly attracting and promoting foreign R&D to Malaysia. Consequently, the issue of bioethics has now become more relevant, central and urgent.

To address the emerging issues mentioned above, the government has recently formed a National Bioethics Steering Committee. The sole purpose of this committee is to study and propose a viable national mechanism to manage bioethics on a holistic and systematic manner. While the committee has commenced its work, it faces daunting tasks to reconcile the multitude of critical issues, even at the onset. Particularly, diverging viewpoints exist on the type of entity or governing body for bioethics. Discussions are ongoing on the merits and drawbacks of forming a Commission (based on an Act of Parliament), a Council of Ministers, or a National Committee. Related issues concern the membership, scope of work, enforcement power and level of authority, policy matters and specific roles of the proposed entity. In the final analysis, while the national order is being pieced together, there is also an urgent need to elevate public awareness on bioethics before mainstreaming it into a national policy.

<b>Ms. Yolanda Gómez (Spain)</b>	Member of the Spanish Bioethics Committee, Professor of Constitutional Law
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### ***Creation of Spanish Bioethics Committee (SBC)***

The Spanish Bioethics Committee (SBC) was set up by Law 14/2007, 3 of July 2007, of Biomedical Research (LBR). Article 1.1 of the Law establishes that its aim is to regulate biomedical research, with full respect to dignity, identity and the inviolable and inalienable rights of a human person. The Law defines the Spanish Bioethics Committee as a collective, independent and advisory organ, which is composed of maximum number of twelve members, elected from scientific, legal and bioethical areas. The composition of the Committee must reflect a good balance among the different disciplines involved in bioethics. Towards this aim, experts are elected from the fields of biology, law, pharmacy, philosophy and medicine.

The creation in Spain of a permanent and independent Bioethics Committee is a very positive development. The broad functions given by the Law on Biomedical Research and the internal Statutory Regulation to the Committee will allow the Committee to develop its mission in a wide field of applications and technologies related to Medicine and Biology. Both the elaboration of its First Work Plan 2009-2010 and the elaboration of the important Report on the non-criminalization of abortion show the vitality of the Committee and the usefulness of its reports.

## Experienced National Bioethics Committees

**Mr. Constantin Bogdan  
(Romania)**

President of the National Bioethics Committee,  
National Commission for UNESCO

### ***The Romanian National Committee on Bioethics***

In Romania, which has been part of the European family of democracies for about two decades, the challenges of bioethics have been discussed openly only in recent years, paving a way for the development of relevant laws, regulations and principles.

The first 4 to 5 years after 1990 were used to organize and acquire information about other countries, and to seek the recommendations of international organizations, followed by the reflections, debates, and the alignment of governmental structures to facilitate the establishment of a national ethics committee.

The Romanian National Committee on Bioethics, which was created 10 years ago under the auspices of Romania's National Commission for UNESCO, has by now accumulated a rich experience. The multidisciplinary element of the Committee (it is composed of bioethics experts, researchers, doctors, lawyers, and theologians) lies at the foundation of its demonstrated effectiveness and facilitates a model of horizontal collaboration with other agencies.

**Mr. Jean Martin (Switzerland)**

Member of the International Bioethics Committee,  
Member of the Swiss National Advisory Commission on  
Biomedical Ethics, Privat-Docent at the University of  
Lausanne

### ***The Swiss National Bioethics Commission***

The Swiss National Bioethics Commission was established by an Act of Parliament of 1998. It follows scientific developments in the field of health and healthcare. It takes positions on the related social, scientific and legal issues. Its role is advisory; it provides advice for public authorities (executive and legislative) and the community. So far, the Committee has developed 16 position papers on topics including research on stem cells and embryos, reproductive cloning, pre-implantation diagnosis, management of a pandemic and assisted suicide.

The Committee has 18 to 25 members, appointed ad personam, and carries out its work independently. The conditions for fruitful work include: listening and mutual respect (a person with an opposing view or opinion is not an enemy, but a friend!), unrelenting search for consensus, or, if necessary, for the best achievable compromise, and the privacy of discussions.

The Committee makes its public pronouncements by the media, publications and the Web. Regarding the choice of topics, the Committee is prepared to accommodate the requests and questions from various persons or bodies. Nevertheless, the Committee addresses the priority issues of greatest importance for the country, including those where its opinion is likely to produce useful practical results.

<b>Mr. Jan Helge Solbakk (Norway)</b>	Professor on medical ethics at the University of Oslo, Director of The National Committee for Medical Research Ethics, The Research Council of Norway
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***The Norwegian model of national committees, commissions and boards guiding the advances and integrity of science and technology***

Since 1990 Norway has had three independent national committees for research ethics:

- The National Committee for Medical and Health Research Ethics
- The National Committee for Research Ethics in Science and Technology
- The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities

Since June 2006 this system of ethics committees has been regulated by law. It is a characteristic feature of the Norwegian model that these committees do not only deal with issues within the more narrowly defined field of research ethics, but include the broader field of science ethics as well.

The Act of 30 June 2006 on ethics and integrity in research also led to the establishment of The National Commission for the Investigation of Scientific Misconduct with the mandate of investigating charges and suspicions of scientific misconduct.

In addition to these four national ethics bodies, there exist as well two independent national advisory boards on biotechnology and on technology in general – The Norwegian Biotechnology Advisory Board, established in 1991, and The Norwegian Board of Technology, established in 2000.

The presentation explores the characteristic features, strengths and weaknesses of this particular system of bodies dealing with the ethics and the integrity of scientific and technological advances.

<b>Mr. Eugenijus Gefenas (Lithuania)</b>	Member of the International Bioethics Committee, Chairperson of the National Bioethics Committee
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***National bioethics committees in the new member states of the EU***

The presentation deals with the national bioethics committees (NBC) in the new member states (NMS) of the EU and the availability of information about their activities and structures. A survey of the internet resources on the European NBCs has shown that about 2/3 of the NBCs in the NMS have already established their websites. However, only half of those websites provide information in English and most often this information is limited to some basic organisational features. These findings do not necessarily mean that the NBCs are not actively engaged in the policy making and public debate on problematic issues of bioethics; however, they demonstrate a somehow limited openness to international community which might also be a result of a limited financial support given to these institutions. It could also be assumed that the NBCs in the NMS have a broader mandate than those established in the old EU member states as they are often involved in the ethical review of human research. The presentation focuses on the main activities and problems faced by the NBCs in the NMS of the EU, as well as the tendencies of their development.



<b>Mr. Bozidar Voljc (Slovenia)</b>	Member of the National Medical Ethics Committee of Republic of Slovenia, former Minister of Health, Acting member of the WHO Executive Board
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***The Slovenia's National Committee on Bioethics***

The Slovenia's National Medical Ethics Committee has more than 40 years of history. It was established at the Medical Faculty as The Board for Medical Ethics for the review of theses related to doctorates and other medical research. In 1995 it became The National Committee at The Ministry of Health for statements about deontological questions in regard with health care practice, rights of patients and healthcare workers, testing of drugs, research on human beings, protection of personal data and other moral and ethical issues in connection with values of life. Questions to the Committee are submitted by the government, the public, media and citizens, but it also declares itself on its own initiative. Its members include experienced and reputed medical doctors of different specialities, as well as a clinical psychologist, a sociologist, a lawyer, a theologian and a lay person. Such a composition allows for a multidisciplinary approach to ethical issues. Based on need, the committee may summon the expertise and knowledge of external experts.

The Committee is an independent body, not formally accountable to any supervising authority; it may also advise in cases where legislation lags behind the development in science or medical practice. No legal actions have been taken yet against its decisions. The Committee enjoys a great reputation in the Slovenian lay and professional public and with its work it has gained an international reputation as well. The experiences acquired by the Committee testify for the need for multidisciplinary composition of the ethics committees. However, since most questions in medical ethics and deontology originate in medical activities, the fair representation of medical doctors among the Committee members represents an important advantage.

<b>Mr. Harald Schmidt (UK)</b>	Assistant Director of the Nuffield Council on Bioethics, Expert of the Assisting Bioethics Committees (ABC) project
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***The Nuffield Council on Bioethics***

The Nuffield Council on Bioethics was established in 1991 and is currently funded by the Nuffield Foundation, the Wellcome Trust, and the Medical Research Council. Its terms of reference require it:

1. to identify and define ethical questions raised by recent advances in biological and medical research in order to respond to, and to anticipate, public concern;
2. to make arrangements for examining and reporting on such questions with a view to promoting public understanding and discussion; this may lead, where needed, to the formulation of new guidelines by the appropriate regulatory or other body;
3. in the light of the outcome of its work, to publish reports; and to make representations, as the Council may judge appropriate.

The presentation comments on the Council's position in the UK policy landscape, briefly summarizes its work to date, and highlights key aspects of its working methods.

<b>Mr. Hans van Delden (Netherlands)</b>	Professor of Medical Ethics at the University Medical Center in Utrecht
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***National Bioethics Infrastructure in Netherlands***

In the Netherlands, several national, regional and local ethics committees function in parallel. One may wonder about the nature of their activities and the source of authority for their decisions. The presentation argues that ‘doing ethics’ is a fundamental interpersonal activity aimed at identifying good reasons to act. In order to reach a position in which one can claim that the advice given is indeed based on good reasons and should be followed by all who are in similar circumstances, taking the ethical position is essential for committee members. This entails being prepared to listen, to look for arguments for and against one’s own position, to refrain from the use of authoritarian statements and to look at the matter at hand from the perspective of all stakeholders involved. Only then can one hope to generate reasons that are convincing for others who are similarly motivated to find good reasons to act.

<b>Mr. Michel Daher (Lebanon)</b>	Member of the National Lebanese Advisory Committee for Ethics of Health and Life Sciences, Director of Ethics and Bioethics Teaching Program, University of Balamand
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***The Role and the Activities of the National Lebanese Advisory Committee for Ethics of Health and Life Sciences***

The National Lebanese Advisory Committee for Ethics of Health and Life Sciences (*Comité Consultatif National Libanais d’Ethique pour les Sciences de la Sante et de la Vie*) was created in 2001 by the Ministerial Council, Decree No: 63/2001, and recognized as a public utility. The role and the objectives of the Committee relate to its functions as an advisory board for bioethics issues: to elaborate legislation, to propose recommendations, and to promote bioethics education. The Board of the Committee includes 24 members, representing multiple disciplines and covering all communities in Lebanon.

Some of the projects implemented by the Committee in the past 8 years include promulgation of the national legislation on genetic testing, on patients’ rights and informed consent, and on the creation of medical ethics committees in the hospitals and the control of medical research. Moreover, the Committee has prepared and presented to the Ministerial Council for approval the Law on Assisted Reproduction Technology, the Amendment to the Law on Organ Donation and Organ Transplantation, and the Law on Rights of the Psychiatric Patients. At the local level, the Committee has established active contacts with different scientific societies and NGO’s, and has collaborated with them for joint educational symposia, discussion panels, workshops, and publications. On an international level, the Committee has a good and continuous collaboration with the French CCNE, and the UNESCO’s International Bioethics Committee.

<b>Ms. Lise Wied Kirkegaard (Denmark)</b>	Director of Secretariat of the Danish Council on Ethics
<b><i>The Danish Council of Ethics (DCE)</i></b>	
<p>The Danish Council of Ethics was established in 1987 in the wake of the first in-vitro fertilization in Denmark in 1983. The tasks of the Council are to provide the Parliament and the official authorities with ongoing advice and information on issues related to the effects of new bio- and gene-technology on human beings, natural environment and foodstuff, and to contribute to the public debate within these issues. The Council's sphere of activity also includes the other ethical issues associated with health services and biomedical research related to human beings.</p> <p>In other words, the Danish Council is characterized by being advisory, having the Parliament and the public as target groups, and having developed a tradition where complex, ethical dilemmas are not solved, but scrutinized. The Council, consisting of laymen and experts, is not aiming at consensus-based solutions, but at a more pluralistic argumentation that displays "the pros and cons" in a dilemma concerned. Often, majority and minority positions are presented side by side, giving a stimulus to the debate.</p>	
<b>Ms. Vasantha Muthuswamy (India)</b>	Senior Deputy Director General and Chief of the Indian Council of Medical Research, New Delhi, India
<b><i>Indian Council of Medical Research</i></b>	
<p>"The Indian Research Fund Association" (IRFA), set up in 1911 after the plague epidemic of the late 19th and early 20th century in India, subsequently expanded its activity to leading health problems in the country and became the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in 1949, after independence. Today, the ICMR is the premier autonomous organization of Government of India for planning, promoting and coordinating biomedical research in the country.</p> <p>New scientific and technological innovations are emerging at a rapid pace, requiring critical evaluation and close monitoring of safety and ethics considerations. A new Central Ethics Committee on Human Research (CECHR) was constituted in 1996, which developed the "Ethical guidelines for biomedical research involving human subjects" in 2000, updated in 2006. A Bioethics cell was also set up to handle various aspects such as capacity building, updating and developing new guidelines, bioethics education, research on different aspects of biomedical ethics, etc. It has links with other organizations dealing with capacity building.</p> <p>The Central Ethics Committee of the Council acts as National Ethics Committee and takes policy decisions of national relevance, including those referred by the different Departments of Government of India.</p>	

<b>Mr. Evariste Likinda (Democratic Republic of Congo)</b>	President of the National Bioethics Committee of Democratic Republic of Congo
<b><i>National Bioethics Committee in the Democratic Republic of Congo</i></b>	
<p>While the national attention within the DRC has been totally captured by the search for solutions to the multifaceted existential crisis of the past two decades, there has been very little opportunity to reflect on emerging bioethical issues in the country, let alone on the relevant legislation, despite the seven years since the creation of the national bioethics committee.</p> <p>At the first glance, the bioethical dilemmas seem to be related to the scientific progress enjoyed by the most technologically advanced societies, and to be distant from the under-medicalized societies of the developing world. However, the bioethical debate is equally necessary and urgent for the poor countries that aspire to development. The populations of different countries around the world are increasingly facing problems of global and universal nature, making the delineation between poor and rich countries useless in this context. Moreover, the debate often concerns all of humanity; for instance, the issues related to protecting human dignity from threats that arise from multicenter research that is cross-initiated in rich countries, and often involves human subjects that belong to an especially vulnerable group due to their poverty.</p>	
<b>Mr. Boris Grigorievich Yudin (Russian Federation)</b>	Member of the Russian National Bioethics Committee, Director of the Institute of Human Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences
<b><i>Russian Committee for Bioethics</i></b>	
<p>Russian Committee for Bioethics (RCB) was established in April, 2006, under Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO as an independent inter-agency public expert and advisory body. Areas of activities of RCB include the elaboration of national position on actual bioethical issues; expert assessment of international and Russian legislation and promotion of legislative initiatives on bioethically relevant issues; monitoring of the implementation of international and national ethical standards in biomedical research and practical healthcare services, and; identification and analysis of new tendencies, studying of the international practice in bioethics and informing of Russian general public, ministries, political and administrative bodies and agencies on these issues.</p> <p>The issues that saw the engagement of RCB during the past three years include euthanasia, formulation of draft Federal law “On biomedical research”, and amending Russian law on transplantation of human organs and tissues. The RCB has also initiated the First Russian Congress on Bioethics (September, 2008). In the nearest future RCB is going to discuss problems of ethical review of biomedical research in Russia. RCB is actively involved in many projects initiated by UNESCO’s Division of Ethics of Science and Technology.</p>	

<b>Ms. Jeanine-Anne Stiennon (Belgium)</b>	Member of the International Bioethics Committee, Vice-President and former President of the National Bioethics Committee, Honorary Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Mons, President of the Belgian Royal Academy of Medicine
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***Belgium's Advisory Bioethics Committee***

Belgium's Advisory Bioethics Committee (CCB) is independent from its founding authorities. It has been given two missions: to advise on research issues and applications in the areas of biology, medicine and healthcare; and to inform the general public and authorities on the above mentioned issues.

The characteristic modus operandi established by the CCB – which is a National Committee in charge of drafting recommendations to the legislative authorities and to the general public, emphasizes the importance of reaching consensus about a process but allows for disagreement on the essence of such recommendations. The ethical reflections of CCB have been considered for legislation purposes (e.g. laws concerning euthanasia, research on in-vitro embryo, on human beings, biobanking, etc.).

## Existing Regional Bioethics Networks and Charting Future for International Cooperation

**Mr. Pēteris Zilgalvis (European Commission)**

Head of the Governance and Ethics Unit, DG Research, European Commission

### ***Europe's Commitment to Bioethics - and Beyond***

The European Commission has stimulated bioethics research and ethics review since the early 1990s, funding numerous international bioethics research projects, conferences and capacity building actions. In doing so, the Commission has been instrumental in establishing a robust bioethics research community, as well as furthering a comprehensive infrastructure for ethics review in Europe. It has also accomplished the inclusion of ethics and governance throughout European research policies.

The European Commission is extending its commitment to ethics to new fields like nanotechnology and Information and Communication Technologies. Furthermore, it aims to involve civil society in decision making at the earliest stage about new technological developments. A major challenge in the age of globalisation is to further integrate bioethics values throughout relevant international policies and advance the level of international cooperation – and agreement – on bioethics policies. In tackling these challenges, the European Commission will continue to advocate for the core values of human dignity, inclusion, social justice and sustainability.

**Mr. Abdallah Daar (Canada)**

Member of the International Bioethics Committee, Director of Ethics and Policy at the McLaughlin Centre for Molecular Medicine, University of Toronto

### ***Building Networks in Bioethics***

The presentation addresses the issue of building networks and bioethics capacity through project-specific collaboration. The highlights include the work of the Ethical, Cultural and Social issues program of the McLaughlin-Rotman Centre for Global Health, based at the University of Toronto/University Health Network. The examples of specific projects that include, among others, public engagement, community engagement, and research ethics, are chosen to emphasize the bi-directional learning and the building of sustainable networks with colleagues in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Much of the work is grounded in specific, identified real-world needs, and often involves empirical research that also serves as the basis for graduate degrees for students, many of whom come from the developing world.

<b>Mr. Pere Puigdomenèch Rosell (Spain)</b>	Member of the European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies, Research Professor of CSIC, Director of the Plant Molecular Genetics Laboratory, CSIC-IRIA, Barcelona
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### ***The European Group of Ethics on Sciences and New Technologies***

The European Group of Ethics on Sciences and New Technologies is a consultative committee of the President of the European Commission. It is formed in its present period by 15 members having a personal expertise in the fields of philosophy, law and science. Its remit is to produce opinions on matters of interest formulated by the President of the European Commission dealing with the ethics of new developments in science. The present group (2005-2009) has produced opinions on nanomedicine, on projects including human stem cells, animals, cloning and agriculture. An opinion on the ethics of Synthetic Biology is just being released.

<b>Mr. Javier Arias-Diaz (Steering Committee on Bioethics (CDBI), Council of Europe)</b>	Representative of the Ministry of Science & Innovation on the CDBI, Secretary of the Spanish Bioethics Committee
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### ***The Steering Committee on Bioethics (CDBI), Council of Europe***

The Bioethics Division within the Health and Bioethics Department of the Council of Europe (CoE) Secretariat is responsible for all activities of the Organization undertaken in the field of bioethics. In particular, the Division serves as the secretariat of the Steering Committee on Bioethics (CDBI) – an intergovernmental committee composed of representatives of the 47 Member States of the CoE. International organizations active in the field of bioethics - in particular the European Union, OECD, the WHO and UNESCO - as well as non-member states such as Australia, Israel, Canada, Mexico and the United States of America are also invited to participate in the work of the CDBI. In this context, a substantial set of legal instruments has already been adopted which serves as a reference point in the field of bioethics at international level. The Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine (the Oviedo Convention), the first international legally binding instrument in that field, provides a framework for the protection of human rights and human dignity by establishing fundamental principles applicable to daily medicine as well as to new technologies in the fields of biology and medicine. Additional protocols to the Convention develop these principles in greater detail in specific fields such as cloning, transplantation of organs and tissues of human origin, biomedical research and genetic testing for health purposes.

<b>Ms. Lotta Eriksson (NEC Forum)</b>	Secretary of the Swedish National Council on Medical Ethics
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### ***Forum of National Ethics Councils (NEC Forum) in the European Union***

This presentation addresses the network of the National Ethics Councils in the EU. The NEC-Forum contributes to the coordination of ethics policies in Europe, and is an independent informal platform for exchange of information, experience and best practices in ethics and science. NEC-Forum started in 2003 and meets twice a year. The meetings are hosted by the National Ethics Council of the country holding the current EU Presidency. The Forum is supported by the European Commission, and the meetings are organized in close collaboration with EC staff. The presentation sketches the background and the context in which the network operates, and give examples of agendas/topics discussed at recent meetings.

<b>Ms. Olga Kubar (Russian Federation)</b>	Member of the International Bioethics Committee, Head of the Clinical Department, Saint-Petersburg Pasteur Institute, Former Chair, Forum for Ethics Committees in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)
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### ***Bioethics Networks in the CIS Region***

The presentation focuses on the historical development, current situation and future perspectives for the capacity building of the national bioethical systems in public health policies in CIS countries. It examines the social, historical, cultural, philosophical and legal issues of bioethics education and the ethical requirements during the process of implementation of public health policies. Moreover, the presentation explores specific problems with regard to bioethics on the national and regional levels and outlines ways of integrating CIS countries into the process of global discussion on the role of National Bioethics Committees in the promotion of universal ethical principles.

<b>Ms. Nouzha Guessous Idrissi (Morocco)</b>	Medical Biologist, Parasitologist, Researcher and Consultant in Human Rights and Bioethics, former Chair of the International Bioethics Committee
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### ***International Cooperation in the Field of Bioethics***

Promoting cooperation in the field of bioethics is a need recognized by all international bodies, including UNESCO, which re-iterates the duty to promote international cooperation in all its statements and reports on the subject. This cooperation includes the exchange of information and experiences, the skills necessary for the professional development of members of ethics committees, and education and training in bioethics in general. Fostering bioethics education, according to Article 23 of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights, is the responsibility of the States, in collaboration with international and regional intergovernmental organizations, as well as non governmental organizations.

Open, transparent and pluralistic bioethics deliberations are essential at the national level. Taking advantage of socio-cultural and historical similarities, regional networks of bioethics can be particularly useful to enrich the debate and improve skills by combining the experiences of different countries. Thus, while such networks exist and operate effectively in Europe and in parts of Asia, they are being currently built and strengthened among the countries in Africa and in the Arab region. These networks can rely on support from international bodies on bioethics (UNESCO, WHO), and become platforms for exchange and sharing of ideas, experiences, information and human resources.



<b>Mr. Victor Fernando Lolas Stepke (PAHO)</b>	Member of the International Bioethics Committee, Psychiatrist, Director of the Bioethics Programme at the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Professor at the Faculty of Medicine and Director of the Interdisciplinary Centre on Bioethical Studies, University of Chile
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***International Bioethics: a View from the Health Field***

Bioethics is the use of dialogue for identifying dilemmas and conflicts, formulating, justifying, and applying ethical principles, and promoting the respect of human dignity in the changing scenario of social life caused by science, technology, and innovation. The two main ethical traditions of Western thought, deontology and teleology, find in bioethics and the social institutions it has created or reinforced a synthesis with the harmonization of different social interests, rationalities, and human groups. Building networks for the implementation of bioethical principles internationally implies recognition of perennial challenges to morality and ethics: the tension between individual and group interests, delineation of national and security interests of nation-states, and protection of human rights and duties under different political contexts. Regulations and laws governing health and welfare should be considered “global public goods” while the fundamentals of health diplomacy must focus on effective priority-setting, resource allocation, equality and equity, and the determination of which Millennium Development Goals are realistically attainable and which are beyond our reach.

The contention of the presentation is that the health field is in need of a sound “policy space” that considers ethics as a transnational, basic human condition of welfare and development. It points to the need for “ethical sustainability” of policies aimed at the larger community of nations.

<b>Mr. Volnei Garrafa (Brazil)</b>	Coordinator of the UNESCO Chair and of the Post-Graduate Program on Bioethics of the University of Brasilia and President of the Latin-American and Caribbean Network on Bioethics of UNESCO-REDBIOETICA
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***Bill on the Establishment of Brazil's National Bioethics Council***

In order to achieve the goal of an effective national bioethics council, Brazil decided to take a safer, but longer and more difficult road. Unlike the fast track of Decrees - often canceled by successive governments – a draft Proposed Bill (PL) was established through a democratic participation of different sectors of civil society in the country. Currently, the PL is in the National Congress for a vote. The proposal defines a peer advisory national bioethics council, tasked with the examination of ethical issues concerning health practices, the scientific and technological advances in the fields of biology, medicine and health, and situations that put in risk human life and environmental balance. The Council will be located in the Executive, together with the Presidency of the Republic, with 21 members and 21 alternates. The Council is composed of the representatives of the following sectors of Brazilian society: academic representatives from life and health sciences, philosophy, humanities and social sciences, natural sciences, as well as experts with specialized knowledge in bioethics, and personal advisors to the President of the Republic.