

**RECOMMENDATIONS  
OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL BIOETHICS COMMITTEE (IGBC)**

UNESCO House, Paris 23 – 24 June 2003

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At its third session, the Intergovernmental Bioethics Committee (IGBC):

1. *Congratulates* the International Bioethics Committee (IBC) and the Secretariat on the quality of the reports and documents presented;
2. *Recognizes* the efforts made by the Secretariat to improve the visibility of the work of IGBC, particularly on the UNESCO web site and *invites* the Secretariat to continue in this direction;
3. *Welcomes* the initiative of the Director-General to convene, after the 32<sup>nd</sup> Session of the General Conference a joint meeting of the Bureaux of IBC and IGBC, in order to foster dialogue between these two bodies and to improve interaction of their work;
4. Recognizing the importance of developing bioethical reflection and debate at all levels and of creating a regional and sub-regional synergy between the different actors concerned, *invites* UNESCO to pursue its action to foster the creation and/or strengthening of regional and sub-regional networks of centres, institutes and bioethics committees, and of research workers and scientists to foster the exchange of ideas and experiences and the understanding of different national situations, as well as to define and to implement appropriate strategies for the promotion and development of bioethical reflection and action at these levels;
5. *Encourages* UNESCO to undertake broadly encompassing action in the field of bioethics education and training, at all levels and targeting professionals (health professionals, lawyers, judges, journalists, educators, parliamentarians and non-governmental organizations, etc.) and universities, to foster, for example, the sharing of experiences at national and regional levels, the access to educational tools and materials and the introduction of bioethics into the curricula of universities;
6. *Also encourages* UNESCO to organize legal workshops in order to assist in the drafting of national legislation and regulations in the field of bioethics.

In relation to the **IBC Report on “Ethics, Intellectual Property and Genomics” (10 January 2002)** and the **Advice of IBC on the Patentability of the Human Genome (14 September 2001)**,

7. *Suggests* that IBC, within the framework of the follow-up of this issue, continues to reflect on this matter by refining the definition of the patentable areas in the field of genomics in conformity with Article 4 of the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights;
8. *Recognizes* that the issue of intellectual property in the field of genomics is a particularly complex problem that requires the competence of all the concerned intergovernmental organizations and *is pleased* that the Inter-Agency Committee on Bioethics will examine this issue as a matter of priority;
9. *Invites* UNESCO nevertheless to pursue its cooperation with the World Trade Organization (WTO) in order that the ethical aspects of intellectual property in relation to the human genome be duly taken into account, in particular in the review of the provisions of Article 27(2) of the TRIPS Agreement.

In relation to the **IBC Report on Pre-implantation Genetic Diagnosis (PGD) and Germ-line Interventions (24 April 2003)**,

10. *Appreciates* the pluralist approach of IBC in the examination of these issues;
11. *Recognizes* the risk of drifts associated with the use of PGD for social indications and *supports* the caution of IBC in recommending that the use of PGD be restricted to medical indications;
12. *Recognizes* the need to undertake psychosocial studies to evaluate the possible burden on women in relation to PGD.

In relation to the **Report of IBC on the Possibility of Elaborating a Universal Instrument on Bioethics (13 June 2003)**,

13. *Welcomes* the Report of IBC on the Possibility of Elaborating a Universal Instrument on Bioethics and *takes note* that IBC deems it feasible that UNESCO elaborates a universal instrument on bioethics;
14. *Deems* that, in the framework of the possible elaboration of a universal instrument on bioethics, broad consultations should be undertaken in order to involve the different stakeholders concerned, in particular States, the United Nations and the other specialized agencies of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, appropriate national bodies and specialists;
15. *Supports* the proposal of IBC that a possible universal instrument on bioethics be non-binding and that it focuses on the fundamental principles of bioethics, in accordance with international human rights law and taking into account cultural diversity;
16. *Supports* UNESCO's efforts to undertake this initiative.

In relation to the **Preliminary Draft of the International Declaration on Human Genetic Data (26 May 2003)**,

17. Having been informed of the Decision of the Executive Board to convene in Paris, immediately after the Third Session of IGBC, a Meeting of Government Experts Responsible for Finalizing the Draft of the International Declaration on Human Genetic Data with a view to its adoption by the 32nd session of the General Conference, *leaves it* to this meeting to finalize the said draft.

In relation to the **Report of the Director-General on the Inter-agency Committee on Bioethics**,

18. *Thanks* the Director-General for the report on the first meeting of the Inter-agency Committee, *invites* the Director-General to regularly report to IGBC on meetings of this Committee and *recommends* to the General Conference that it might express again its support to this initiative.

In relation to the **Evaluation of the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights**,

19. *Takes note* of the report on actions undertaken by the Secretariat in order to evaluate the impact of the Declaration and *invites* the Secretariat to continue this evaluation during the next biennium;
20. *Invites* Member States to communicate to the Secretariat all information relevant for the evaluation of the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights.