

AGREEMENT ON MODALITIES OF CO-OPERATION AMONG UNESCO CHAIRS IN HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY, PEACE AND TOLERANCE

Stadtschlaining/Austria, 27 April 2002

We, the representatives of UNESCO Chairs in Human Rights, Democracy, Peace and Tolerance,

Acknowledging the inherent link between peace, democracy, development and human rights,

Recalling that all human rights – civil, cultural, economic, political and social – are universal, indivisible, interdependent, interrelated and of equal importance to guarantee respect for human dignity and ensure human development,

Guided by the provisions of human rights standard-setting instruments as well as relevant United Nations and UNESCO resolutions and programme documents, including the Millennium Declaration, UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy, the Plan of Action of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004), the programme for the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010) and the Programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995-2004),

Taking into account recent positive developments, in particular the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity as well as the entry into force of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court on 1 July 2002,

Convinced that the role of the Chairs in the promotion of human rights, peace, democracy, tolerance, international understanding and mutual respect should be further increased,

Noting with great concern ongoing violations of human rights in many parts of the world, associated with widespread extreme poverty, social marginalization and exclusion, racism and xenophobia, discrimination against women, children and persons belonging to vulnerable groups,

Alarmed by threats to peace, to human life and security caused by injustice and inequality, armed conflicts, organized crime and terrorism,

Noting with great concern the deterioration of the natural environment,

Disturbed by the negative impact of globalization on the full enjoyment of human rights,

Convinced that the benefits of scientific and technological progress should be accessible for all,

Resolved that UNESCO Chairs will continue to jointly develop, in co-operation with relevant partners at local, national, regional and international levels, activities aimed at promoting values of human rights, democracy, peace, non-discrimination, social justice, tolerance and understanding among peoples and between different cultures,

Bearing in mind the necessity to strengthen the universal network and regional sub-networks of UNESCO Chairs in Human Rights, Democracy, Peace and Tolerance,

Expressing their gratitude to the European University Center for Peace Studies and its UNESCO Chair for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy for its efforts for successful implementation of its role as co-ordinator of Chairs' Network and for the organization of biannual meetings,

Have agreed, with a view to ensure a meaningful contribution of UNESCO Chairs in Human Rights, Democracy, Peace and Tolerance to the promotion and protection of human rights,

strengthening peace and security, consolidation of democracy and encouragement of international dialogue and understanding, to undertake the following:

- 1.** Contribute to the universal acceptance and enforcement of legal standards aimed at the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms which are indivisible, interdependent, interrelated and of equal importance, through the encouragement of:
 - universal ratification of international and regional human rights instruments and their implementation through national legislation;
 - elaboration of new normative texts wherever appropriate, in particular by sensitizing decision-makers and the general public;
 - protection of the rights of women, children, indigenous people, persons belonging to minorities and other vulnerable groups.

- 2.** Make efforts to empower people by means of education and awareness-raising, to defend effectively their inherent dignity and rights by increasing knowledge and understanding of international, regional and national human rights standards as well as of the procedures and mechanisms for their implementation and protection, in particular through:
 - dissemination, in national and local languages, of the texts of human rights instruments, the norms of humanitarian law and the results of research,
 - training of students, teachers and trainers in order to ensure a multiplier effect of educational activities;

- 3.** Contribute to the creation of an environment more conducive to the implementation of human rights by training professionals with special responsibilities in the field of human rights, such as law enforcement officials, the judiciary, police and military personnel, immigration officers and social security workers as well as media professionals;

- 4.** Actively engage in research activities aimed at further clarification of the content of human rights, in particular of economic, social and cultural rights, the elucidation of obstacles and challenges to their implementation associated, *inter alia*, with the process of globalization, widespread poverty and extreme poverty, organized crime and terrorism, with a view to contributing to further codification of human rights and reinforcing their justiciability,

- 5.** Develop research programmes and realize them in co-operation with academic community, research institutions and civil society at national, sub-regional and regional levels as well as through networking and partnership with other UNESCO Chairs;

- 6.** Contribute actively to the implementation of UNESCO's Strategy on Human Rights to be approved in 2002 and in particular with regard to the research activities on economic, social and cultural rights;

- 7.** Maintain and intensify the exchange of information, research results, educational programmes, materials, publications and documentation of meetings between the Chairs and to make use of the facilities provided by new information technologies in order to enhance cooperation among them including, *inter alia*, updating on a regular basis and further developing the Internet Forum of Chairholders;

- 8.** Appoint, for the purpose of ensuring a more fruitful cooperation among the members of the network, Regional Coordinators who will be entrusted with following up the implementation of the present Agreement and should report on a regular basis to UNESCO on the developments;

- 9.** Strengthen interaction with the academic community, non-governmental organizations, human rights research and training institutions, civil society associations, entities of the private sector and intergovernmental organizations in order to promote, through joint efforts, the values of human rights, democracy, peace, tolerance and international understanding;

10. Ensure representation of our network at the World Forum of UNESCO Chairs (UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 13-15 November 2002) and establish contacts with other networks of Chairs with a view to mainstreaming human rights in the activities of UNESCO Chairs;

11. Continue to issue on a regular basis the *Bulletin of UNESCO Chairs in Human Rights, Democracy, Peace and Tolerance* in hard-copy and also on the Internet, and to entrust the responsibility for the preparation and publication of the fourth issue, which should summarize the results of the third meeting and provide information on the activities of the Chairs, on issues of common interest and problems, to the European University Center for Peace Studies, Stadtschlaining, Austria, and its UNESCO Chair on Peace, Human Rights and Democracy;

12. Continue to hold the meetings of the representatives of the UNESCO Chairs on a regular basis, preferably b