

newsletter

Thought for action – a matter of place

For several years now, UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences Sector has adopted the slogan "Food for thought, thought for action".

"Food for thought" is a concept easily grasped. From its very beginning and as laid down in its Constitution, UNESCO has sought to mobilize intellectuals, researchers and academics to debate issues of topical or future interest where the Organization's values are at stake. Thought thus nurtured has a value of its own: it is an essential aspect of the intellectual life of the international community.

"Thought for action" is rather more complex. On the one hand the Sector's action is mainly indirect. It involves a whole network of partnerships with public authorities, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs and universities, which precludes any assignment of thinking to one set place. On the other hand, not everyone is convinced that rigorous thought can be related to the demands of action.

And yet, if we take a closer look, it is precisely these two difficulties that show how it can be done. Action, because it fits into a complex network configuration, can be thought only within a space where the actors come together, with due respect for the diversity of their status, and which provides them with the requi- →

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site conditions for collective development of thought and action. As the demands of thought and of action do not come together unaided, they must be negotiated in a space that has precisely the same favorable properties.

Knowing what should be done does not make it easy. The challenge the Sector has taken up consists in creating just such a space where action can be thought. Such a space also needs a place. The innovative space is the International Forum on the Social Science – Policy Nexus. From 20 to 24 February 2006, the place is Argentina and Uruguay – Buenos Aires will host plenary sessions and a substantial part of the workshop programme; and Montevideo, Rosario and Córdoba will host thematically streamed workshops.

The topics for discussion at the Forum are those where ambitious action in a world undergoing great change questions thinking in general, and the social sciences in particular – populations and migration, urban policies and decentralization, regional integration, social policies, and global issues and dynamics. The diversity of the participants invited – policy makers, researchers, activists and journalists – shows a will to encourage connections of a new kind. And the new format, which is open to contributions the world over, through Internet, should ensure a genuinely inclusive space.

The Forum's objective is to kick-start a new dynamic, a new process to be defined in a Declaration the draft of which is outlined in this *Newsletter*. The hope is that this innovative process will show that it is possible to change the world through progress in social science knowledge and implementation of that knowledge.

At a time when one year comes to an end and another begins, what better can we wish for one another than to work together through thought and action for peace in the world?

To everyone, my very best wishes for 2006.

Pierre Sané
Assistant Director-General for
Social and Human Sciences



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In a world undergoing great change, the “conscience” aspect of the United Nations, which has been UNESCO’s since its inception, is becoming increasingly important. Among UNESCO’s five priority programmes, **the Ethics of Science and Technology**, implemented by the Organization’s Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS) aims, through ethical reflection, to guide progress in the life sciences and technological development. This ethical reflection takes into account the cultural, legal, philosophical and religious heritage of the world’s different communities. Through normative action, awareness-raising and strengthening the capacities of its Member States, UNESCO is striving to fulfil its mandate as “lead” international organization for ethical issues.

Bioethics and human rights – the new Universal Declaration

After a lengthy process of consultations, in October 2005, the 33rd session of UNESCO’s General Conference adopted the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights. It is a text that goes well beyond basic medical ethics and puts forward views on bioethics more in line with today’s social and political realities.

After two years of hard work, the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights was adopted by acclamation by Member States on 19 October 2005, thus solemnly affirming the international community’s commitment to establish a number of universal principles in the development and application of science and technology.

With this new Declaration, UNESCO is striving to respond to the needs of developing countries, indigenous communities and all vulnerable groups or individuals, who are the subject of specific mention throughout the text.

Guided by respect for human dignity, human rights and fundamental freedoms, the Universal Declaration deals with ethical issues raised by medicine, the life sciences and associated technologies as applied to human beings, while taking into account their social, legal and environmental dimensions.

It defines the universally acceptable norms, principles and procedures in the field of bioethics, in conformity with human rights as laid down by international law in order to help decision-making in this field.

Prospects for action

In addition to the well-established principles in the scientific community such as informed consent, the principle of autonomy and individual responsibility, respect for privacy and confidentiality, the Declaration raises the issues of access to quality health care and essential medicines, nutrition and provision of clean water, the improvement of living conditions and of the environment, and poverty reduction. The Universal Declaration thus opens perspectives for action that reach further than just medical ethics and reiterates the need to place bioethics within the context of reflection open to the political and social world.

This Declaration is the result of a process that lasted two years during which time the International Bioethics Committee (see p. 4) spent a year on elaborating the draft text of the Declaration which then underwent inter-governmental negotiations. Throughout the process, wide-ranging consultations, hearings and conferences took place worldwide, thus fuelling intercultural debate on these issues and guaranteeing a transparent, participatory process of all actors involved in bioethics.¶



The Declaration makes access to medication an ethical issue, like safe drinking water.

➡ **The Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights is available in English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Chinese on the Bioethics website: www.unesco.org/bioethics**

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The International Bioethics Committee looks to the future in Japan

At the invitation of the Government of Japan, the twelfth session of the International Bioethics Committee (IBC) was held from 15 to 17 December 2005 in Tokyo, Japan. UNESCO's Director-General and the Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences attended the session.

After UNESCO's Member States adopted the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights at the 33rd session of the General Conference (see page 3), the 12th session of the International Bioethics Committee (IBC) being organized in Tokyo from 15 to 17 December 2005, proved an occasion to salute the work undertaken by the 36 independent experts who make up this Committee.

Created in 1993, the IBC is an advisory body of UNESCO providing the only global forum for in-depth bioethical reflection on all the issues at stake. Over the last two years, the IBC has devoted its work to the elaboration of this Universal Declaration, setting up a Drafting Group on this issue and carrying out numerous hearings and consultations with all actors involved in bioethics.

At the Tokyo meeting, the IBC was looking to the future, already foreseeing the inevitable problems it will have to face in promoting this Declaration, with regard to cultural diversity, informed consent, public health and access to health care. The Committee also needed to define its programme of work for the 2006-2007 biennium and seized the opportunity afforded by the meeting in Japan to study the Asian perspective on current bioethics issues. ¶

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➔ IBC MEMBERS

R.L. Andorno (Argentina); G. Berlinguer (Italy); L. De Castro (Philippines); H. Gonçalves dos Santos (Portugal); Justice Unity Dow (Botswana); G. d'Empaire (Venezuela); A. Elungu (Democratic Republic of the Congo); D. Evans (New Zealand); H. Galjaard (The Netherlands); E. Gefenas (Lithuania); Y. Gómez Sánchez (Spain); H. Gros Espiell (Uruguay); N. Guessous-Idrissi (Morocco); M.M. Hamade (Lebanon); M. Hamdan (Jordan); O. Hartling (Denmark); C. Huriet (France); D. Adedayo Ijalaye (Nigeria); Michèle Jean (Canada); J. Kayolo Kigongo (Uganda); Justice Michael Kirby (Australia); R. Kollek (Germany); G. Kosztolányi (Hungary); L. Le Dinh (Viet Nam); T. Maimets (Estonia); A. Martínez-Palomo (Mexico); S. Qasim Mehdi (Pakistan); T. Morisaki (Japan); M. Özgüc (Turkey); E. Pellegrino (United States of America); M.I. Revel (Israel); Judge P. Robinson (Jamaica); W. Saad Hossne (Brazil); F. Saleh (Syrian Arab Republic); P. Narain Tandon (India).



MORE...

“Bioethics Committees at Work: Procedures and Policies”

Guide No. 2

This book has just been published in English with the French edition appearing soon. *Bioethics Committees at Work: Procedures and Policies* is a guide for governments, scientists, lawyers

and/or health professionals who have decided to create a bioethics committee. The publication's objective is to guide those who are drafting the committee's terms of reference, through the different stages that may be followed in order to help the committee come into being, whatever kind of

committee is chosen, as well as suggestions on how to conduct both formal and informal evaluation of the work accomplished by the committee. ¶

To obtain a copy of Guide No. 2, please consult:
www.unesco.org/shs/ethics

“The epistemological status of bioethics”

Redbioética No. 1.
 ISBN 970-32-2840-2

This is the first issue in a series of publications to be produced by the Institute of Judicial Research, National Autonomous University of Mexico, and the Latin American and Caribbean network of bioethics

(Redbioética). Redbioética was created by UNESCO in 2003. “The epistemological status of bioethics” is a collection of the eight principal contributions to the Bioethics Symposium organized in Montevideo, Uruguay, in November 2004. Eminent specialists from the region took part in the Symposium which

was coordinated by Professor Volnei Garrafa of the University of Brasília, Professor Miguel Kottow of the University of Chile, and Alya Saada, Regional Adviser for Social and Human Sciences of the UNESCO Office in Mexico. The publication is available in Spanish only. ¶



UNESCO's new Global Ethics Observatory puts ethics within everyone's reach

The Global Ethics Observatory (GEO) – a database of all currently available resources on ethics worldwide – was officially launched on 15 December 2005, at the meeting of the International Bioethics Committee (IBC) in Tokyo, Japan.

Thanks to UNESCO, everyone can now access, direct and free of charge, four databases covering the fields of bioethics, environmental ethics, science ethics and technology ethics. In addition to a Who's Who listing contact details of experts in each of these fields, the GEO user will be able to consult ethics-related listings of institutions, teaching programmes, legislation, and rules and regulations, collected from UNESCO's Member States. These databases are the first such resource on ethics activities around the world, and it is hoped the GEO server will be a crucial

platform for the Organization to support and advance ethics activities within Member States.

At its launching in Japan, three of the four databases – those covering experts, institutions and ethics teaching programmes – were presented. The fourth database – legislation, rules and regulations – will be online at a later stage. Although initially accessible in just a few languages, the GEO will eventually be available in UNESCO's six official languages: English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Chinese. ¶

For further information on this new system, please contact the Division of Ethics of Science and Technology at: geo@unesco.org.

To access GEO:
www.unesco.org/shs/ethics/geo

Renewal of COMEST membership

In January 2006, nearly half the membership of the World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST) will have finished their term; new experts will be appointed to serve for four years on the Commission.

Every two years, the World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST) renews half its membership on appointment by the Director-General of UNESCO. In January 2006, eight independent experts will become new members and thus begin their four-year term of office, which is renewable once only. Former members of COMEST continue to collaborate in the Commission's work and become "corresponding members".

The statutory renewal of membership will doubtless enrich the work of this consultative body with new experience, thus strengthening UNESCO's role as intellectual forum for forecasting future developments. Indeed, while COMEST's principal role is to advise the Organization's Member States on the ethics of science and technology, it also works to nurture reflection and encourage dialogue among scientists, decision-makers and members of the general public the world over.

A multidisciplinary approach

COMEST is composed of eighteen independent experts of varying disciplines and regions (scientists, philosophers, lawyers, education specialists, engineers and doctors). It builds on a multidisciplinary approach to the ethical challenges, with the firm conviction that without a rigorous, sound basis, any ethical measure would be futile, just as no ethics would be humane without philosophy and human rights being taken into consideration.

COMEST has several working groups of acknowledged experts in the relevant fields. Through these working groups the Commission is currently working on:

- developing discussions on ethics in each region
- reflecting on the relevance of new normative action
- promoting consideration of ethical issues in science research and teaching.

The development of the African continent is one of UNESCO's priorities for the next biennium, and pending confirmation of an invitation from an African Member State, the next ordinary session of COMEST, in 2007, is scheduled to take place in Africa. Previous ordinary sessions have been held in Norway (1999), Germany (2001), Brazil (2003) and Thailand (2005). In June 2006 the new members of the Commission will meet in extraordinary session at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. ¶

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“Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.” This conviction, inscribed in the Preamble to UNESCO’s Constitution, confers on the Organization the function of intellectual, ethical and strategic watch. The Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS) is endeavouring to strengthen this function through the promotion of the Organization’s role as international forum and laboratory of ideas. With the publication and dissemination of prospective studies, supporting research and the teaching of philosophy, organizing World Philosophy Day and lectures to encourage dialogue between civilizations, UNESCO hopes thus to contribute to a more informed awareness of the human sciences and of **philosophical reflection as a “school for freedom”** without which there can be neither understanding nor mutual respect.

The first “World Philosophy Day”

The global dimension to Philosophy Day was already there but now, since the General Conference last October, the word “World” has officially become part of its title. In November 2005, World Philosophy Day was celebrated at a special event held in Chile.

After the 33rd session of UNESCO’s General Conference considered the Executive Board’s recommendation to inscribe Philosophy Day in the calendar of World Days, this event was celebrated with great success at UNESCO headquarters and in some 70 countries on November 17 2005. A special event was organized on 24 November 2005, in Santiago de Chile, at the invitation of the Government of Chile. The Day’s events were officially opened by Ricardo Lagos Escobar, President of the Republic of Chile, with Sergio Bitar, Chile’s Education Minister and Chairperson of the Chilean National Commission for UNESCO.

Philosophers from around the world gathered in nine round tables and a philosophy café. Between discussions on cultural diversity and globalization, reflections on justice, violence and ethics, speakers, mediators and participants were able to reflect on subjects of great topical interest.

Tribute was paid to philosopher Paul Ricœur, author of “Time and Narrative”, who died in May 2005. Participants in the Day were able to gather in the “Café Centenario” for a special sale of paintings by Chilean artists, before moving on to the Plaza Alta Gran Nave for a jazz concert by the Angel Parra Trio.

The day before, on 23 November 2005, celebrations of World Philosophy Day had begun with a forum of reflection on “What UNESCO for the future?” (see p. 18).

On 24 November 2005, Pierre Sané, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, launched the first meeting of the “Interregional Philosophy Dialogue: Africa – Latin America”, which brought together philosophers from both regions, following the example of the Dialogue between Asia and the Arab world, launched in 2004. ¶

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**His Excellency Mr
Ricardo Lagos Escobar,
President of the
Republic of Chile,
opened World
Philosophy Day on
24 November 2005,
in Santiago de Chile.**





On 17 November 2005, hundreds of people, with strong youth participation, attended the Philosophy Day events organized at Jilin University,

Changchun, in China. Two further events for the 2005 Philosophy Day were organized by the UNESCO Beijing Office: in Beijing and Mongolia.

proves a success

An international symposium on the East-West dialogue

From 7 to 9 November 2005, scholars, intellectuals and philosophers of different cultures met at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris to discuss cultural diversity and the East-West dialogue at an International Symposium organized in partnership with the Japanese Research Centre for Moral Science, the Japan Foundation, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the International Research Center for Japanese Studies, the French National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilisations (INALCO), the École Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHE), the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (ICPHS), the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations (ISCSC), the French National Commission for UNESCO and the Permanent Delegation of Japan to UNESCO.

The meeting “Cultural Diversity and Transversal Values: East-West Dialogue on Spiritual/Secular Dynamics” was particularly meaningful as it took place almost 50 years after UNESCO launched its “Major Programme on the mutual

appreciation of the cultural values of East and West” (1957-1966). Now, as then, we need to be fully aware of both the richness and the fragility of cultural diversity in all its varied expressions, particularly in Western Europe and East Asia.

The Symposium examined the origin and nature of cultural values shared between the Far East and the West, through examples of long-term intercultural encounters. Intellectuals and philosophers of different cultures asked how the recurring secular, temporal problem should be dealt with. Posing that question today, and in such a way, contributed to the realization of a global environment of mutual respect among people of different cultures and civilizations.

At the meeting’s closure, participants adopted a final statement. ¶

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The President of the Executive Board, Mr. Zhang Xinsheng, and the President of the UNESCO General Conference, H. Ex. the Dr. Musa Bin Jaafar Bin Hassan, at the opening of the World Philosophy Day held at UNESCO Headquarters on November 17. The event gave special prominence to Côte d'Ivoire.



International migration, urban development, local populations keen to become involved in drawing up public policies, etc. Today's world keeps changing. Through its support for social science research and its efforts to share the findings with as many people as possible, UNESCO contributes to a better understanding of current trends on the part of the international community, thus helping to improve countries' responses to the challenges posed by change. In UNESCO it is the Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS) which is responsible for coordinating the only United Nations programme on **management of social transformations (the MOST Programme)**. It strives to strengthen the links between researchers and, in the broadest sense of the term, the policy-making community.

Most Programme – a new Intergovernmental Council to monitor Phase II

The 35 members of the new Intergovernmental Council, appointed in October 2005, have the task of supervising the implementation of the second phase of UNESCO's Management of Social Transformations (MOST) programme.

The 33rd session of UNESCO's General Conference, held last October in Paris, elected the new Intergovernmental Council (IGC) whose task is to supervise for the coming biennium the Organization's Management of Social Transformations (MOST) programme.

Seventeen States have joined the Council, which comprises 35 members in all. The Council will work with the Scientific Advisory Committee of six international experts, as well as with the sixty-eight MOST National Liaison Committees.

This new team of countries, chaired by South Africa's Minister for Social Development, Zola Skweyiya, will have a heavy workload in supervising implementation by the MOST Secretariat of Phase II of the programme: from the organization of the International Forum on the

Social Science – Policy Nexus (see the dossier) to the follow-up of the regional priorities finalized after the discussions held between 2002 and 2005, through the setting up of an online database of social science research findings, accessible to policy makers.

Shortly after their appointment, former members and newly elected members met in extraordinary session to debate the election of the new IGC Bureau for 2005-2007, the presentation of an evaluation report of the 60 MOST National Liaison Committees, and a communication on the status of the preparation for the Forum which is to take place in Argentina and Uruguay from 20 to 24 February 2006.

The extraordinary session was opened by Director-General Koichiro Matsuura, who said "the MOST Programme has real potential for contributing in an innovative manner to create new links between the elaboration of social policies and social science research". It is hoped the February Forum will bear out that statement. ¶

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➡ THE 35 STATES MEMBERS OF THE IGC FOR 2005-2007

Afghanistan, Belgium, Congo, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Egypt, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Israel, Malaysia, Morocco, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand, Uganda, Uzbekistan and Venezuela. These 17 new members will sit on the IGC alongside Cameroon, China, Cuba, the Czech Republic, Fiji, Finland, Greece, Hungary, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Jordan, Mali, Mexico, Mozambique, Oman, Peru, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania. ¶

➡ MOST PRIORITIES BY REGION

Following wide-ranging consultations with UNESCO regional representatives and scientific partners, the regional priorities for Phase II of the MOST programme were decided as follows:

- Latin America and the Caribbean – Fight against poverty
- Africa – Regional integration process
- Arab States – Role of the State in social development
- Asia-Pacific – Human security
- Europe, including Central and Eastern Europe – Ageing populations
- Small Island Developing States (SIDS) – Socially sustainable development ¶

Zola Skweyiya

“Politicians don’t like to be told what to do”

Zola S. Skweyiya, Minister for Social Development of the Republic of South Africa, is the new Chairperson of UNESCO’s Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST) Intergovernmental Council. MOST is organizing the International Forum on the Social Science – Policy Nexus (IFSP), which will take place in Argentina and Uruguay in February 2006 (see pages 11 to 15).

You were recently elected president of the Intergovernmental Council of the MOST Programme. What does this election mean to you?

It gives me an opportunity to involve myself more, as a South African and as an African, in issues of social transformation. It also gives me an opportunity to put issues of extreme poverty in the forefront of the agenda. Some of the issues confronting us are to a large extent similar to those which many parts of the world, including parts of Europe and North America, experienced 200 years ago. Some of the issues are similar to those currently confronting parts of South America, the Caribbean and Asia. In Africa, all of these issues are a reality today.

As a member of the International Steering Committee of the IFSP, you have played an active role in organizing the Forum. Why did you decide to commit yourself to this initiative?

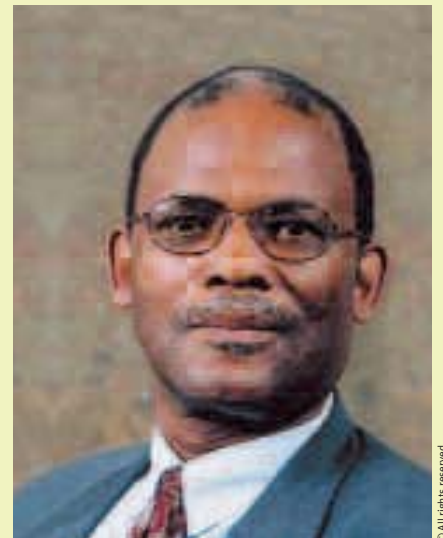
First of all because of the experience that I have as a South African in dealing with development issues, in particular the question of poverty which is central to the task of the government. Secondly, because of my experiences in the liberation movement which, until 1994, was an activist movement. When we came to power, the question arose: what kind of State do we want? We did not want to duplicate the model of the past colonisers. But, as a liberation movement, we did not have the resources to set up a State! We had to rely on assistance from the international community and from academics within South

Africa who had been questioning the previous order. This led to the Constitutional dispensation that we have today, which I believe reflects the aspirations of the people quite well, and which helped us define the initial public policies of the government. But what I see currently is that the connections between, and the networks across, decision-makers, academics and civil society, which existed in 1994, and which had been built up through the 1980s, have to a certain extent been weakened or, in some cases, no longer exist. When the liberation movement took over the State, it relied upon the same academics that had helped define the new policies to become involved in implementation. So they were absorbed into the State. That is our weakness today. I foresee that, in the very near future, we will not have the requisite academics in universities and policy activists in civil society to match the needs of the progressive State.

What issues of particular relevance for African decision-makers will be addressed at this Forum?

The Forum will be an opportunity to both share knowledge and explore possible avenues of further cooperation. It will also be an opportunity to learn from best practices. The South African State, which is only 11 years old, does not have to reinvent the wheel. Since 1957, when Ghana – the first former colony to do so – became independent, many countries in Africa have faced similar problems to those facing South Africa today. We should learn from their experiences and their practices, and make sure that we do not repeat their mistakes. For instance, the gender issues that we face in South Africa today have also confronted countries such as Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania. Many issues have global dimensions and we should therefore learn from each other. At the same time, we must use existing research to bolster our capacities. The Forum will enable various categories of participants to create networks of people working on the same questions and issues.

Interview



As a politician, how do you explain the lack of interaction between decision-makers and the academy?

Well, sometimes I don't think that the politicians want to be told what to do! Often researchers are critical. But in the end, in Africa, the concern for poverty is something that we all share. The challenge, as a politician, is to find ways to actively involve researchers. You have to make sure that you actually understand what they are saying and find ways to implement their ideas. This is important because the way we use our resources have all sorts of consequences. For instance, in South Africa we wanted to distribute emergency food parcels to poor and vulnerable families. But the way we did it caused more problems than it solved, because distribution was outsourced to private companies that did not come from the communities concerned and did not know precisely which were the poor households in the community. As a result, the food parcels were sometimes distributed to the wrong people. But thanks to the advocacy groups and academics, who became very critical and raised their concerns in the press, we were able to discover the problem. Critics maintained, and rightly so, that as a policy-maker I ought to have known. The issue is one of an openness to feedback but we also have to accept the existence of constraining tensions between researchers and decision-makers. For instance, in South Africa, we have not yet managed to reach all the orphans who have lost their parents due to AIDS and other factors. This issue – its dimensions and mechanism of resolution – continues to cause tensions between advocacy groups and the Government.

➔ BIOGRAPHY

Zola S. Skweyiya was born in 1942. He joined the African National Congress (ANC) at the age of 14, in the year when Nelson Mandela was arrested and tried for treason (1956). He has a doctorate in law from the University of Leipzig (1978). Dr Skweyiya established the ANC office in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) and represented the ANC at the Organization of African Unity from 1982 to 1985 and at the United Nations Commission for Human Rights from 1984 to 1993.

On returning from exile in 1990, he chaired the ANC Constitution Committee and participated in the ANC Negotiations Commissions. He is a former Chairperson of the United Nations Commission for Social Development. Dr Skweyiya was Minister of Public Service and Administration from 1994 to 1999 and has been Minister of Social Development since 1999.

« the challenge is to find ways to actively involve researchers »

One of the issues to be addressed at the IRSP is urban policies. Is this issue important in South Africa?

Urban policies are central to almost all Government programmes. As you know, people are migrating from rural areas into the cities, because of the demand for services and opportunities that are not available in the countryside. The Government is trying to improve infrastructure in rural areas but despite this, people are still moving to the big cities in large numbers. So we face the challenge of providing them with adequate housing, schools, water, sanitation, electricity and so on. We also have to face the social ramifications that often accompany certain features of rapid urbanization such as crime, drug abuse, violence against women and children, and the spread of HIV/AIDS.

One of the big challenges in South Africa has been to dismantle the inequalities resulting from the apartheid system. How far are you in this process?

We have moved far considering what we inherited from the apartheid regime. We have been able to ensure that we have a democratic State and have been able to meet some of the aspirations of the people, for instance in terms of education, health and social security and, to a certain extent, housing. But expectations are legitimately high and we still face many challenges, for instance in ensuring that education is free and available for all children, or in providing water and electricity for all. One problem is lack of skills – money alone is not enough. There are still many difficulties in reaching out to everybody, and in ensuring that the right people receive government services, at the right time and under dignified conditions. ¶

Dossier

The social science-policy nexus

A Forum for a new kind of dialogue

Under the aegis of UNESCO's MOST Programme, the International Forum on the Social Science – Policy Nexus (IFSP) will be held in Argentina and Uruguay from 20 to 24 February 2006.

“An innovative space for a new kind of dialogue” – the subject matter, the way in which the Forum preparations are going ahead, the plans for the actual discussions and the subsequent follow-up – all point to promising new ideas for debate at the IFSP which is to take place in Argentina and Uruguay from 20 to 24 February 2006.

The Forum is being organized jointly by UNESCO and the Governments of Argentina and Uruguay, with the backing of a range of academic, policy and NGO partners. The International Steering Committee*, which is coordinating the event, stressed from the outset the ambitious project of connecting the worlds of social science and policy, not just in terms of content but also with respect to format.

For several months now, eminent social science specialists, policy makers and civil society actors have been called on to take part in building this space for dialogue. In responding to the Steering Committee's call, they have contributed to the elaboration of the Forum's programme, which will tackle, in various formats, crucial issues of today's world (see p. 15).

Alongside the plenary sessions, when high-level speakers will put forward their views (see p. 14), a call for workshop proposals has resulted in about one hundred workshops being organized in Buenos Aires, Rosario, Cordoba and Montevideo. In addition, online contributions will ensure the widest possible participation both in the work of the Forum itself and in the elaboration of the Declaration, to be proclaimed at the Forum's closure on 24 February 2006 (see p. 13).

According to Pierre Sané, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Social and Human

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Sciences, “although the challenges of the global society may be too much for the social sciences alone, without the social sciences there would be no way those challenges could be met”.

Indeed, although researchers and policy makers pose different questions, have different agendas to follow, and are assessed according to different criteria, they all have a bearing on the same society: this first truly global society that humanity has ever known and which today is facing major challenges. Hence the will of the Forum organizers to ensure the success of an event that goes way beyond being just another conference.

“My main wish is for the Forum to gather the best of positive experiences with regard to the link between policies and the social sciences, and I hope there will be specific commitments to help strengthen this link for the good of society”, stated Daniel Filmus, sociologist and Argentine Minister of Education, Science and Technology, in an interview published in *SHS Newsletter 09*.

That hope is shared by Jorge Brovetto, Education and Culture Minister of Uruguay, who sees in this Forum an opportunity to “move nearer the ideal of an America without borders and a world without destructive antagonisms, by projecting other forms of globalization based on a rapprochement of peoples and the diversity of cultures”. So the meeting place is set for Argentina and Uruguay... [1]

* The International Steering Committee is composed of government representatives of Argentina, Uruguay, South Africa, Peru and Mali, as well as the following organizations: UNESCO, UNDESA, UNRISD, UNU-CRIS, ILO, UNDP, the World Bank, FLACSO, AICARDES, AASSREC, CODESRIA, the European Commission, the European Science Foundation, SAREC, SSHRC, ODI, GASPP, and the ISSC.

Do you think it possible, necessary and/or urgent to create an international space for dialogue between decision-makers and social scientists?

Aleksandra Ålund, Professor of Ethnic Studies, Linköping University, Sweden.

“Past experience in most thematic networks emphasizes that dialogue between decision-makers and social scientists is possible, necessary and urgent. For instance, the project “Multicultural Policies and Modes of Citizenship in European Cities”, focusing on multicultural policies for the inclusion of immigrants and ethnic minorities in local decision-making, offered an international space for dialogue between researchers, decision-makers and citizen groups. A key lesson has been that dialogue remains inadequate, and policy use of relevant research even more so, especially cross-nationally.”

70 countries represented in 100 workshops

In total, among the speakers announced by the workshop organizers, 68 countries will be represented by government ministers or well-known researchers: Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Barbados, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Palestinian Authority, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

Sémou Pathé Gueye, Professor of philosophy, Cheikh Anta Diop University, Senegal.

“To stress that government is a matter of anticipation is not to make politicians subordinate to scientists. The stronger the objective knowledge basis for a decision, the greater the likelihood that it, and the action it entails, will prove relevant. Therein lies the need for an ongoing space of dialogue between policy-makers and social scientists, with due respect for their respective functions and prerogatives. What politicians can derive from such a dialogue are the means to enhance the effectiveness of their action. Equally, however, social scientists gain access to greater social usefulness, especially when they agree to direct their research, whether basic or applied, towards solving the short-, medium- and long-term problems that their own societies face.
Such dialogue is possible, on condition each party recognizes and respects the other. What counts as “science” is not for policy-makers to say. It is however their responsibility to create an environment conducive to research that simultaneously develops science and its capacity to respond to the needs and expectations of society. As for researchers, they should neither claim illusory “neutrality” nor sacrifice science to party-political dictates. What they need to be able to do is to provide decision-makers with scientifically credible information and knowledge that can be used without reference to ideology or political concerns.”

A Draft Declaration wide open to consultation

The idea of launching an ongoing process of research and action via the Forum is certainly ambitious. It is a challenge in itself that the mere fact of holding the conference, the new format and the work programme define an agenda that can be discussed as widely as possible, by all interested parties as well as the actual participants, with the Forum acting as springboard for the range of issues to be discussed. Hence the need to debate a Draft Declaration in advance of the event.

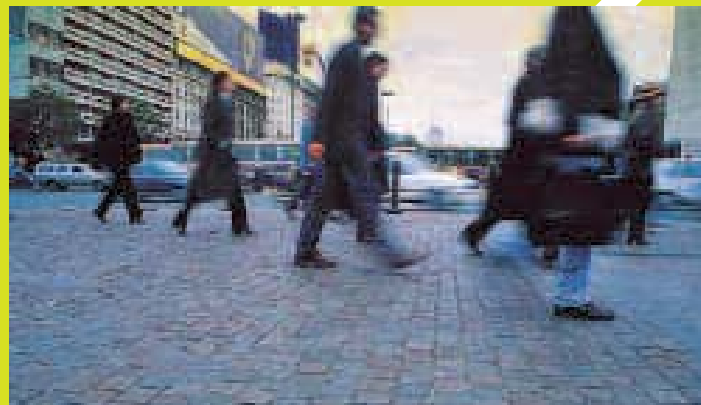
This is neither a science symposium nor an international conference, but a Forum whose aim is to launch a new process of research and action among social science actors and policy makers. The Forum's International Steering Committee intends the formal conclusion of the gathering to be marked by the adoption of a Declaration.

A new process means new drafting methods; so this activity will not be taking place to one side, away from the workshops and plenary sessions. The members of the Steering Committee have expressed the wish that a draft text succinctly setting out the concerns, an assessment and an action plan based on consensus, should be widely discussed before and during the February 2006 meeting. It is the promotion and implementation of this Declaration, which will ensure the continuity of the process launched by the Forum. But how can one comment on a text if there is neither the time nor the opportunity to get hold of it?

A 7 point action plan

Since 21 November last, the Draft Declaration of the Steering Committee has been widely disseminated for comments, criticism and proposals from all interested parties. Based on a summary of all the views received as well as reports of the workshops – which will also have a new format with the installation of an experimental reproduction system in real-time – the Steering Committee will adopt the final text in Buenos Aires and the Declaration will be formally presented at the closing plenary session on 24 February.

The Draft Declaration begins by recalling the urgent concerns that call for a new approach to the social science/policy nexus. To summarize, neither knowledge nor the ability to take action are equal to the goals, notably the Millennium Development Goals, to which the international community is committed, although the means are in fact available. The text continues with a warning and a diagnosis: the problem is an urgent one and the social sciences can help solve it.



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Hence the proposal for a seven-point action plan to change our thinking about mobilizing the social sciences in order to serve public action priorities:

1. creation of new networks of policy makers, researchers and civil society around the urgent demands of global social development;
2. clear emphasis, within the structure of these networks, on cooperation and exchange of information, research findings and best practices with respect to the inclusion of policy relevance in designing research projects;
3. cooperation to improve and complement existing funding programmes for international social science research;
4. sensitivity of policy makers to critical and alternative social science research;
5. specific backing for research institutions in developing countries, particularly in Africa;
6. setting up an appropriate administrative structure to enable the new networks to fulfil their tasks;
7. call for action on the part of all relevant United Nations agencies, national governments and other appropriate bodies. ¶

➡ YOU CAN GIVE YOUR VIEWS ON THE DRAFT DECLARATION

The full text is available online, in English, French and Spanish: www.unesco.org/shs/ifsp/declaration. This web page allows you to keyboard in your reaction of not more than 500 words. Readers unable to use the system may contact the editorial staff of the *International Social Sciences Journal* which will be publishing the draft in its December 2005 issue; subsequent issues will report on the debate. ¶

Contact : John Crowley, j.crowley@unesco.org, tel.: +33 (0)1 45 68 38 28

Do you think it possible, necessary and/or urgent to create an international space for dialogue between decision-makers and social scientists?

Vladimir Pavlovich Kultygin, Professor of Sociology, Moscow Lomonosov State University, Russian Federation.

 “The roots of such current ills as terrorism, weapons proliferation and environmental degradation lie in poorly designed social policies. Precisely because the capacity exists to solve the problems of hunger, want, ignorance and illness, those who are left behind can but feel humiliated. The common good demands an alliance of social science and policy.”

Speakers invited to the plenary sessions

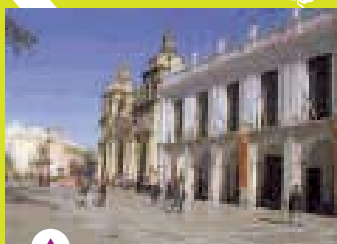
- **Prof. Sonia Alvarez**, Political Studies Department, University of California, Santa Cruz, USA;
- **Prof. Lourdes Arizpe**, Regional Centre for Multidisciplinary Research, Mexico City National Autonomous University (UNAM, Mexico), President of the International Social Science Council;
- **Prof. Manuel Castells**, Department of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley, USA;
- **Mr Juan Luis Cebrian**, *El País*, Spain;
- **Dr Ha-Joon Chang**, Lecturer in Development Studies, Faculty of Economics, University of Cambridge, UK;
- **Mr Bill Emmott**, Editor, *The Economist*, UK;
- ▶ **PROF. EVELYNE HUBER**, Department of Political Science, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and Director, Institute of Latin American Studies, USA;
- **Mr Helio Jaguaribe De Mattos**, Dean, Institute of Political and Social Studies, former Minister of Science & Technology, Brazil;
- **Mr Alain Lipietz**, Member of the European Parliament, France;
- **Prof. Mahmood Mamdani**, Director, Institute of African Studies, Columbia University, USA;
- **Mr Thandika Mkandawire**, Director, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development;
- **Mr José Nun**, Secretary of State for Culture, Argentina;
- **Mrs Nina Pacari Vega**, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ecuador;
- **Prof. Semou Pathé Gueye**, Department of Philosophy, Cheikh Anta Diop University, Senegal;
- **Mr Ignacio Ramonet**, Director, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, France;
- **Prof. Saskia Sassen**, Department of Sociology, University of Chicago, USA;
- **Mr Jome Kwame Sundaram**, Assistant Secretary General for Economic Development, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs;
- **Dr Alain Touraine**, sociologist, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, France.

Ana Maria Romero-Lozada, Minister for Women and Social Development, Government of Peru.

 “An international space for dialogue between decision-makers and social scientists is necessary and urgent, and it has to be possible. As a Minister, I realize the importance of having permanent participation and feedback from academics and experts on social issues. Their independent and dispassionate perspective is crucial for monitoring and evaluation of social policies. Otherwise, we run the risk of designing and implementing policies that are neither appropriate nor effective because, for instance, they fail to recognize the multidimensional roots of poverty.”

Anis Ahmad Dani, Social Policy Adviser, ESSD Network, World Bank

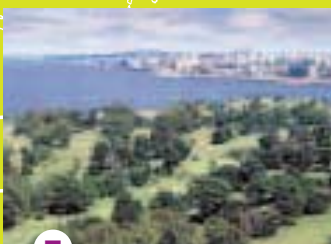
 “Dialogue between social scientists and policy makers is essential to sustainable development. The link between research and policy making in developing countries is particularly weak and, to the extent that it exists, is based largely on economic prescriptions extrapolated from global knowledge. There is an urgent need for high quality social research, relevant to development challenges within developing countries. However, for that research to affect policy, the dialogue needs to include other stakeholders, donor agencies, the private sector, and civil society organizations, who influence policy-making.”



CÓRDOBA

15 workshops on "Populations and migration"

Universidad de Córdoba
21, 22 and 23 February 2006



MONTEVIDEO

6 workshops on "Regional integration"

Edificio Mercosur, Cancellaria and Universidad de Montevideo
21, 22 and 23 February 2006



BUENOS AIRES

Plenary sessions

Teatro Alvear
20 and 24 February 2006

27 workshops on "Global issues and dynamics", 36 workshops on "Social policies"

Centro Cultural de la Cooperación
Paseo La Plaza
Universidad del Museo Social Argentino
Bauen Hotel Cooperativo
Casona del Arte-Foro Gandhi y
Liberarte-Bodegón Cultural
21, 22 and 23 February 2006



ROSARIO

14 workshops on "Urban policies and decentralization"

Universidad de Rosario
22 and 23 February 2006

ARGENTINA
URUGUAY

Information on the Forum

Several tools have been put online so that everyone who is interested can access information on the Forum:

- **The official IFSP website** tells you all you need to know about the Forum programme and logistics for taking part in the event, in English, French and Spanish. This website also provides links to websites of the IFSP's different partners;
- **The information e-letter** in English, French and Spanish, called Flash-Forum, also gives the latest information on the 1st and 15th of each month.
To subscribe to the e-letter:
www.unesco.org/shs/ifsp/subscribe
- **The full information package** can be downloaded from the IFSP website, printed and distributed.

IFSP website: www.unesco.org/shs/ifsp



Taking part in the Forum

From 28 November 2005, registration forms can be completed online and sent direct, or printed out, filled in and sent by fax to:

+ 54 11 4792 4400.

Although the Forum is free of charge for students and journalists, participation costs will vary depending on individual or group registration.

Individual registration:

- Government or international organization representative: _____ us \$150
- Researchers and private individuals: _____ us \$50

Group registration (15 people max.):

- International, regional and local organizations and institutions: _____ us \$750
- NGOs and associations: _____ us \$150

People unable to travel to Argentina or Uruguay can contribute to the Forum by logging on to the **IFSP website**, and sending questions, reactions or proposals on the different subjects under discussion; these will then be communicated to the Forum participants.

Registration and contributions deadline

is 30 January 2006.

Urban Policies and the Right to the City – soon to be an international research network

On the joint initiative of UNESCO and UN-HABITAT, a working group met for the first time in Paris in September 2005 to study the modalities of launching an international research network. The aim: to encourage the development of public policies structured around urban development and social justice.

The sharp increase in urbanization is a well-known fact. Today, half the people on the planet live in urban areas and it is estimated that by 2050 that figure will have risen to two-thirds.

This phenomenon particularly affects developing countries where there is exponential urbanization. Although the expansion of towns and cities is a potential factor for economic and social development, such

growth also brings poverty into urban areas and with poverty comes the widening gap between those who choose to live in urban areas and those who have no choice in the matter.

It is this state of affairs that led UNESCO and UN-HABITAT, in close collaboration with the International Social Science Council (ISSC), to set up an international network to study issues of urban policies and the concept of The Right to the City. This concept – created by Henri Lefebvre in 1968, and highly regarded by a growing number of researchers – is based on the idea that the appropriation of urban areas by residents and their participation in decision-making must be strengthened.

A working group met for the first time on 15 and 16 September 2005, at UNESCO Headquarters, with the aim of examining what the structure, priorities and modalities

of this new network should be. Several experts and representatives of partner institutions attended the meeting. They studied strategies that are already being followed, including the idea of rights in urban policy-making, as in the statutes of the city of Brasilia (Brazil), the European Charter of Human Rights in the City, and the International Coalition of Cities against Racism, recently launched by UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences Sector (see p. 21).

Promotion of public policies development structured around urban development and social justice should be the main argument of the recommendations submitted by the working group to the World Urban Forum scheduled for June 2006 in Vancouver (Canada). ¶

For more information, please contact:

Brigitte Colin, b.colin@unesco.org, tel.: +33 (0)1 45 68 37 54
www.unesco.org/shs/urban

MORE...

Social Sustainability in Historical Districts – case studies of Barcelona, Beijing, Karachi, Lahore, Malaga, Moscow, Quito and Seoul

No. 56 of the *Human Settlements and Socio-Cultural Environment series*, published by the Social and Human Sciences Sector, reproduces the proceedings of the Round Table meeting of experts organized by UNESCO at the second session of the UN-HABITAT World Urban Forum, held in September 2004 in Barcelona, Spain. In addition to the papers

of the various speakers, this bilingual (English/Spanish) publication presents case studies on the experiences of workshops conducted in Barcelona, Beijing, Karachi, Lahore, Malaga, Moscow, Quito and Seoul. The UNESCO Round Table led to the creation of a regional research network for Central Europe on the subject, headed by Dr Georgy Enyedi, member of the European Union REHABIMED network. The Round Table also began research into best practices, launched by UN-HABITAT and UNESCO; the



research findings will be published in 2006. The meeting prepared the ground for an international student competition, coordinated by Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. Competition entries will be shown in an exhibition to be held during World Urban Forum III in Vancouver. ¶

Current issue of the IJMS – The links between academic research and public policies in the field of migration and ethnic relations: selected national case studies

At a time when several countries are questioning the consequences of past immigration policies, the latest issue of the *International Journal on Multicultural Societies* (IJMS) sheds light on the current situation with several case studies.

“The links between academic research and public policies in the field of migration and

ethnic relations” – is the subject developed in Volume 7, No. 1 of the IJMS, an online journal, published by UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS). Featured in this issue after the editorial by IJMS Editor, Matthias Koenig, are an article on immigration in Belgium by Eric Florence and Marco Martiniello, researchers at Liège University, Belgium, and guest editors of this issue; an article by Biao Xiang and Shen Tan on migration research in China and a review of its relationship to policy since the 1980s; post-war immigration

and integration policies in the Netherlands by Rinus Penninx; and an article by Mohamed Charef “Migration, a major social issue but a marginal field of research in Morocco”. ¶

IJMS Volume 7, No. 1, 2005 is accessible on:
www.unesco.org/shs/ijms/vol7/issue1

Migration without borders

The right to mobility under debate at UNESCO

There are no boundaries to Human Rights and the migration of people is one of today's major challenges, so UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences Sector has embarked on a project to assess the ethical, economic and social situation of opening up borders.

Illegal immigration made international headlines with the incidents that took place in October at the frontier posts of Ceuta and Melilla.

The attempts to gain forced entry at those frontiers underline both the desperation of the migrants, risking their lives in order to reach European territory, and the political deadlock of such situations. Indeed, what should be done when even barbed-wire fences do not deter migrants?

In human rights terms, those incidents show the vulnerability of illegal immigrants and the need to protect their basic rights. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Migrants, which came into force in 2003 but has only been ratified by 33 States, has a crucial role to play.

UNESCO is convinced that international migration policies should focus on human rights and for several years it has been involved in the campaign promoting ratification of the Convention, which provides the essential terms of reference for responding to events such as those of Ceuta and Melilla.

In its recent report to the United Nations Secretary-General, the Global Commission on International Migration (GCM) stressed that the international community cannot address the issue of migration flows from a purely repressive point of view. There has to be a global approach to this phenomenon, one which takes into account the need for immigrant labour in many countries and the role immigrants play in development. Every migrant should be free to choose where he wishes to go.



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Whether it's between Mali and Côte d'Ivoire (above), or Mexico and the United States of America (bottom, left), all over the world poverty drives people to seek work in neighbouring countries.

Social, economic and ethical issues at stake

This is the approach UNESCO is adopting in its Migration without borders programme. It assesses the ethical, economic and social stakes involved in cross-border mobility for migrants and this will be the subject of a publication foreseen for 2006. Article 13 (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country". And yet what is the meaning of that right when it has no corollary – the right to enter into a country other than his own? In this era of globalization, capital, information, goods and services circulate with increasing ease throughout the world. Why exclude human beings from this freedom of movement?

Is it now time to envisage cross-border mobility and the possibility of freedom of movement for every human being? Within the European Union, this experiment has been tried; it encountered no major difficulties. Although probably too early to try this out on a global level, nonetheless the scepticism that such a scenario often encounters must be overcome, and there need to be discussions open to every possible viewpoint regarding a right to mobility. It should be kept in mind that the utopias of today are perhaps tomorrow's realities. ¶

For more information, please contact:

Antoine Pécoud, a.pecoud@unesco.org, tel: +33 (0)1 45 68 43 31
www.unesco.org/migration

➡ UNESCO is a member of the Steering Committee of the Campaign for the Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Migrants. The Organization works with NGOs that are active in the field such as *December 18*, and is also involved in preparing the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development for the sixty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2006.



During this 60th anniversary year for UNESCO, every issue of the *SHS Newsletter* will be presenting a special supplement on United Nations action to promote the social and human sciences.

With the close connection between past and future plans, and following on the pages in the last issue of the *SHS Newsletter*, we now turn to the future with a year of debates organized by the Philosophy and Human Sciences Section of the Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS).

What UNESCO

When timetables and agendas interlink, initiatives and activities take on added meaning. This is precisely the case for the discussions initiated by SHS with a view to identifying the key themes for UNESCO's future: philosophers, decision-makers, academics and experts in all fields have been contributing to this debate for over a year now.

The Forum "What UNESCO for the future?" was launched on the occasion of the Third Philosophy Day, on 18 November 2004. November 2005 marked the Forum's first birthday, just when the Organization was celebrating its 60 years of existence.

At this propitious time for thinking back over the years it is also time to start planning ahead with UNESCO's next Medium-Term Strategy (2008-2013), and so the question posed by the Philosophy and Human Sciences Section is all the more pertinent.

In order to build anything, the ground first has to be prepared. And even though a large part of UNESCO's history is interwoven with 20th century ideas, the Organization cannot build its future action without fully grasping the new fields of knowledge and different kinds of intellectual cooperation that are emerging in all societies. The links between UNESCO's different fields of competence – education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture, communication and information – have also undergone radical change over the past twenty years.

What is the most useful approach to thinking about these changes so that such reflection can be translated into action? What impedes UNESCO's action? How best can we identify such obstacles and over-

come them? Are today's messages, arguments and convictions enough to answer the new questions being posed particularly by the younger section of society? Can we go beyond the separated system of fields of competence we have now and devise new structures which, in turn, would lead to new words to describe the Organization's programme and perhaps even replace the UNESCO acronym with a new one? The Forum "What UNESCO for the future?" has been attempting to answer these and other questions through a range of innovative ideas.

A matter of foresight

The Social and Human Sciences Sector has moved into thought-provoking mode: it welcomes new ideas and encourages reflection along new, untried lines. And it invites Permanent Delegations, National Commissions, the Secretariat as well as all UNESCO partners, to come together in helping to build innovative channels of work and action.

The first Forum discussions brought together such eminent personalities as Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Fatma Haddad-Chamakh, Edgar Morin and Hisashi Owada (18 November 2004), Jacques Attali and Randolph Kent (18 May 2005), and Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Robert Badinter and Ghassan Salamé (14 June 2005). The fourth Forum took place on 15 September 2005 with Ping Huang, Albert Jacquard and Achille Mbembe, and in November 2005, the Forum went on the road with discussions in Chile (see p. 6) and the Republic of Korea.

But wherever the Forum discussions take place, the aim is the same:

Eradication of poverty – an intersectoral programme

Last October a brochure presenting UNESCO's programme for the eradication of poverty and especially extreme poverty, was published on the occasion of the week devoted to the poverty issue, within the framework of the Organization's 60th anniversary celebrations.

Coordinated by the Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS), this intersectoral programme, launched in 2001, is implemented through work on the ground and research projects. In 2002-2003, twenty-two projects were accep-

ted, with twenty others following in 2004-2005; of the latter, seventeen were pilot projects and three conceptual research projects. This programme is carried out all over the world and it tries to help people realize that to be freed from poverty is a basic human right, an ethical imperative and the number one priority of the international community.¶

For more information please contact:
Chifa Tekaya, c.tekaya@unesco.org ,
Tel.: +33 (0)1 45 68 47 20
www.unesco.org/shs/poverty

for the future?

to answer the question “What UNESCO for the future?” Words hold meaning as does the order in which they are placed. If “UNESCO's future” is a matter of strategy, then maybe “the future of UNESCO” might suggest yet further ideas.

No pre-prepared thinking

Now, in 2005, at this time of great change, what are the role and mission of the Organization? In an effort to respond to global challenges, the Social and Human Sciences Sector is aiming to move the Organization forward through encouraging reflection away from ready sound-bites. The Philosophy and Human Sciences Section publishes the full discussion papers on its website and is currently preparing a publication foreseen for December 2006, compiling the most productive and the most daringly innovative ideas of this ambitious contribution for a revitalized UNESCO.¶

For more information, please contact: **Marina Faetanini**, m.faetanini@unesco.org, www.unesco.org/shs/philosophy

60 weeks for 60 years – SHS dates

As announced in *SHS Newsletter 10*, instead of commemorating its 60th anniversary with a single event, UNESCO is celebrating over sixty weeks.

From September 2005 through to November 2006, the Organization hopes to provide Permanent Delegations, staff, UNESCO partners and the general public with a year-long opportunity of learning more about the Organization's programme. In all, the social and human sciences will take centre stage fourteen times during the anniversary celebrations. In December 2005 and during 2006 there will still be nine opportunities to learn more about the Sector's activities in the following fields:

5 to 10 December 2005:

Human Rights

12 to 17 December 2005:

Information technology

9 to 14 January 2006:

Management of Social Transformations (MOST)

27 March to 1 April 2006:

Foresight and forecasting

8 to 13 May 2006:

Fight against Racism

10 to 15 July 2006:

Ethics of Science

7 to 12 August 2006:

Traditional knowledge

28 August to 2 September 2006:

Cities and housing

4 to 9 September 2006:

Bioethics

Reports of the programme presentations given in September/October – Human Security, Education and Citizenship, Natural Disaster Prevention, Fight against Poverty, and UNESCO's founding ideals – are accessible on UNESCO's website: www.unesco.org

The promotion of human rights as inscribed in UNESCO's Constitution is one of the main assignments of the Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS). Within the United Nations reform strategy, which places human rights at the heart of all its programmes, SHS works to encourage and disseminate human rights research; to promote education in human rights; to lead action in the fight against all forms of discrimination at national, regional and international level; to encourage cooperation among all actors and networks; to promote democracy and to further reflection on new forms of violence, notably by drawing up regional plans for human security.

Child Soldiers in Liberia regain their dignity

With its “Children in Need” programme, UNESCO is launching a project for rehabilitating Liberia’s child soldiers through sport

Eric G. is 17. He was a soldier in Liberia’s civil war. He told us how he joined the rebel forces to avenge his mother and sister who had been raped by government army soldiers. Patrick F. is twelve and a half. He remembers how they used to call him “the one who laughs as he kills”. And Jimmy D. is 16. He will probably never be able to forget having seen the rebel forces torture to death children his own age by cutting off different parts of their bodies.

These statements, collected by the NGO “Human Rights Watch”, tell of the ghastly experiences of thousands of children, boys and girls, during the civil war in Liberia (1989-1997 and 2000-2003). Of the 101,873 soldiers who handed in their weapons during the recent disarmament process, 12,062 – that is a little over 10% – were under 18.

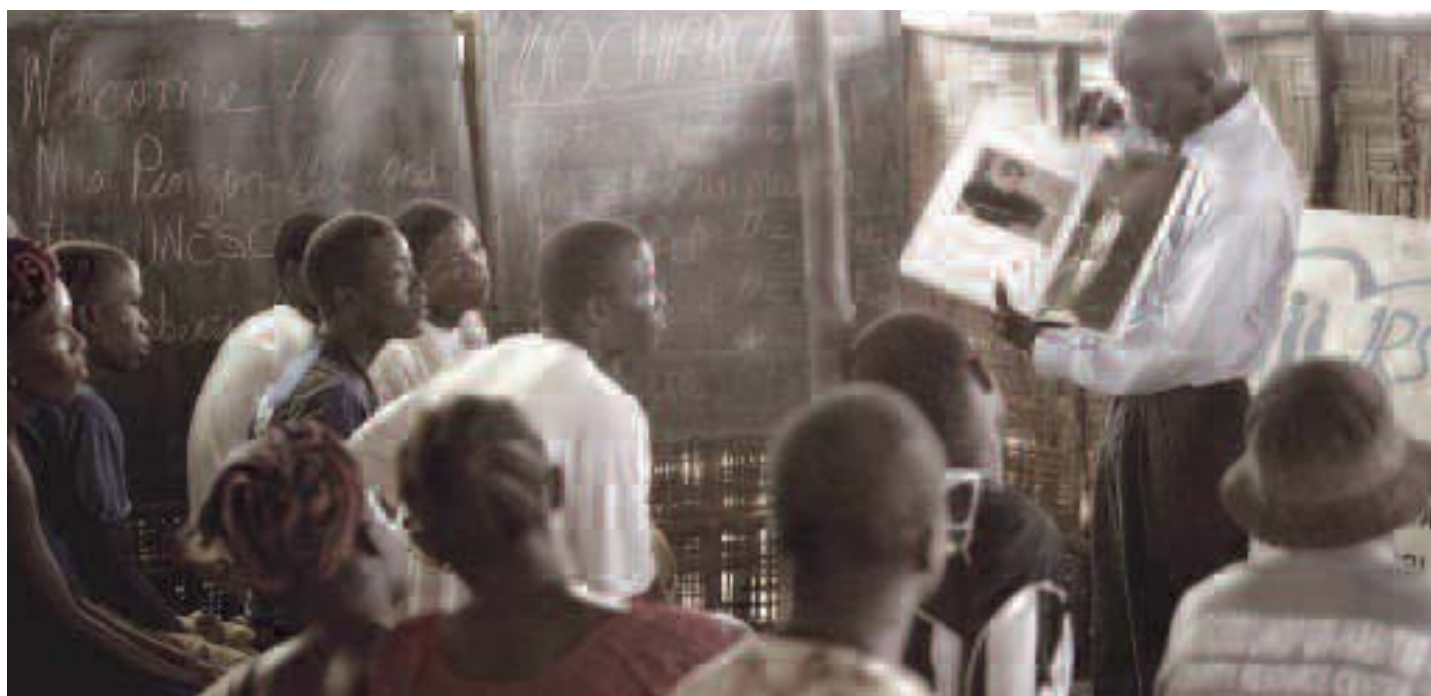
They form part of the 300,000 child soldiers in the UN worldwide census of “children associated with armed groups”.

Behind these statements lie hidden the shattered childhoods of so many. These young minds with a future ahead of them, need to be recovered and rebuilt if there is to be any hope of reconstructing society and strengthening peace in Liberia and beyond its frontiers.

Sport – a special tool

Since the end of the conflict, great efforts have been made on the ground by many international organizations trying to help these children get back their place in society, through reception centres, education programmes and individual or group training sessions. But the challenge is enormous. The trauma affecting a whole generation, cannot be eased without additional efforts, concentrating on the psychological, identitarian reconstruction of every single child.

UNESCO, through its “Children in Need” programme, has resolved to support child victims of the war in Liberia. In order to do this, the





© Vincent Ohl

Organization will be relying on the expertise of “Sport without frontiers” (SSF), an NGO which has already successfully completed several rehabilitation programmes in other post-conflict areas. The SSF approach is based on the premise that sport is a special tool that can enable war-traumatized children to regain self-confidence while helping them get back into the education or training systems.

US \$ 1 million foreseen

To strengthen SSF’s action, the Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS), which coordinates the Children in Need programme, has also decided to support a local NGO “Women and Children Rehabilitation Resource Center” (WOCHIRRC), that together with SSF will be setting up sports education activities. At the same time a parallel cooperation agreement between UNESCO, the SSF and the Liberian Government, will enable young people – some of whom are former soldiers – to follow specialist training as educators in rehabilitation through sport.

In this pilot stage of the project, SSF and WOCHIRRC will be receiving US \$200,000 for activities carried out over the two-year period 2005-2006. In total, US \$1 million is foreseen for this project to help former child soldiers; this first stage of the project is being carried out in Africa but the hope is that the project will also be able to help children of other continents; children like Patrick F. who must learn again how to laugh and play. ¶

For more information, please contact:

Françoise Pinzon-Gil, f.pinzon-gil@unesco.org, tel.: +33 (0)1 45 68 44 26

“Society has abandoned us, it rejects us. But we weren’t the real cause of the conflict; we were just used by bad people... We have become what we are today because of the decisions of some of our compatriots who now pass themselves off as politicians and liberators.”

Student Macolmson
Ex-Combatants Coordinator
(standing, right)



➔ TRAVELOGUE

In line with activities on the ground carried out by UNESCO in Liberia, the Organization is also supporting the initiative of French photographer Vincent Ohl, who is doing a collection of photographs, particularly of child soldiers in Liberia, in the “Travelogue” series. The profits will go to the Children in Need programme. ¶

➔ “CHILDREN IN NEED” – A PROGRAMME FUNDED BY PRIVATE DONATIONS

The “Children in Need” programme is entirely funded by private donations to a special account, with the programme chaired by UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Ms Ute-Henriette Ohoven. Financed exclusively by donations from the private sector with UNESCO acting as coordinator, the programme was designed in order to receive, analyse and evaluate project proposals from UNESCO’s vast network, with funds and partners being mobilized to support the best proposals. In emergency situations (earthquakes, floods, etc.) this programme can intervene within a matter of days. Every year, US \$2 million are collected in order to successfully implement the 20 to 50 projects that are subsequently carried out by local NGOs within periods of 6 months to 3 years. ¶

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More and more cities sign up to the Coalition of Cities Against Racism

On 21 March 2006 we will once again be celebrating International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. More and more cities are responding to UNESCO’s call to fight racial discrimination on a daily basis.

In October 2005, seven more cities adhered to the Coalition of Cities Against Racism: Bangkok, Chang Mai (Thailand), Matala (Sri Lanka), Sakai (Japan), Suva (Fiji), Vientiane (Lao PDR) and Wellington (New Zealand). Representatives of those cities took part in a meeting of experts on “the definition of a ten-point plan of action for an inclusive urban society in Asia and the Pacific” organized from 27 to 29 October 2005 under the aegis of

the Metropolitan Administration of Bangkok.

One week earlier, local officials, researchers and NGO representatives from Canada, Australia and Sweden had met in Toronto (Canada) to share their experiences and ideas on the tools to be developed for assessing municipal action against racism, at a workshop organized by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, the Local Government Association of Queensland (Australia) and UNESCO’s Social and Human Sciences Sector. ¶

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13th World AIDS Day – Stop discrimination!

“Stop AIDS – Keep the promise!” The 13th World AIDS Day is taking this theme to restate the United Nations commitment in the fight against the AIDS pandemic. So the international day of action against HIV and AIDS will be the right time to take stock of the UNESCO-UNAIDS action together with many youth organizations over the past six years, on fighting discrimination.

“AIDS has everything to do with Human Rights”, Mary Robinson, former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, stated recently. One might add that AIDS also has everything to do with young people. Today, more than 10 million people aged between 15 and 24 are infected with HIV, and half of all those newly infected are of that same age group.

Young people are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection, but at the same time they are in the best position to change the course of the pandemic. That is why since 1999, with the active involvement of young people, UNESCO-UNAIDS has been developing a “youth-to-youth” programme to fight fear and ignorance of the disease.

Discrimination and the consequent violation of human rights of people living with HIV and AIDS are not only intolerable attitudes, but also contribute directly to the spread of the epidemic, since they hamper prevention and care efforts.

For six years, the UNESCO-UNAIDS Youth Initiative on HIV, AIDS and Human Rights, has been encouraging young people all over the world to take part in drawing up, implementing and promoting human rights action.

6 projects in 5 countries

In 2001, in partnership with the International Federation of Medical Students’ Association (IFMSA), a special kit was designed and in 2002-2003, over 200 youth leaders from 40 different countries were trained in the HIV and Human Rights workshops that took place in Africa (Cameroon and South Africa), Asia (Indonesia), and the Arab States (Lebanon).

As a follow-up to these workshops, and still in close cooperation with the youth organizations, since 2003 UNESCO and UNAIDS have been supporting the youth-led initiatives that

fight HIV-related stigma and discrimination in their communities. Five countries are currently involved in the implementation of six projects: Bangladesh, Malawi, Mozambique, Sri Lanka and Zambia.

In 2004-2005, the UNESCO-UNAIDS Youth Initiative on HIV, AIDS and Human Rights activities were extended to Latin America and the Caribbean and countries covered by the UNESCO Moscow Cluster Office. To this end, the Latin American and the Caribbean Council of AIDS Services Organizations (LACASSO) hosted a consultation meeting in Venezuela with youth organization representatives from the region. Based on the outcome of the consultation, a subregional youth-led training workshop on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights was organized in Lima, Peru, in February 2005.

These are the activities to date of the joint UNESCO-UNAIDS youth initiative. A brochure with detailed information on action taken so far and inviting ideas for scaling up the initiative is accessible on the Social and Human Sciences website: www.unesco.org/shs. ¶

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Brochures and stickers against discrimination are available in English and French.

“The world is still facing an upsurge of intolerance and exclusion that are sustained by economic uncertainty, social exclusion, aggressive nationalism and pandemics. (...) We must work for a culture of mutual, active and combative tolerance in order to prevent new tragedies. However, our aspiration to live together in harmony in a more open and fairer world is also at stake.”

Koïchiro Matsuura,
Director-General of UNESCO,
10th International Day for Tolerance,
16 November 2005

Sharing knowledge to reduce inequality

Calling on governments to open up to an “intelligent” form of sustainable, human development, UNESCO’s first World Report pleads in favour of knowledge-sharing which must not be considered a mere commercial product.

On the eve of the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society, held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005, the first in a series of World Reports, *Towards Knowledge Societies* was presented at UNESCO Headquarters by the Organization’s Director-General, Koichiro Matsuura, together with two former United Nations Secretaries-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali and Javier Perez de Cuellar.

This 220 page Report is the work of an international team of experts and intellectuals, coordinated by the Division of Foresight, Philosophy and Human Sciences, Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS). It is a call to go beyond the information society and establish knowledge societies that “encompass the broader social, ethical and political dimensions”.

At the press conference during the presentation of the Report, the Director-General emphasized the fact that “knowledge cannot be considered as a mere commercial product”. He underlined that “knowledge feeds on knowledge” and that “a lack of knowledge accentuates the difficulty of filling that gap” and he called for “knowledge sharing” which would help “reduce extreme poverty” and “maintain opportunities in future competitive economies” while notably avoiding a “brain drain”.

“Firm policies are needed, not only in countries of the South, but also those of the North where the digital divide tends to make populations vulnerable”, he continued, while Javier



Perez de Cuellar in responding to a journalist sceptical about countries’ abilities to implement the recommendations of this Report, reminded those present that within the United Nations “it is always the Member States who have the responsibility to implement what they have voted”.

Emphasizing the importance of this Report which clearly places “education as an international priority”, the former United Nations Secretary-General called on politicians to “take up the challenge of the third industrial revolution – that of the new information and communication technologies – which mean new opportunities for a sustainable development”.

Boutros Boutros-Ghali remarked that since “access to education costs money, it is also the most powerful antidote to the political or religious fundamentalisms of people crushed by poverty and numbed by ignorance”. He went on to say that “through this Report, UNESCO is providing us with scope for reflection and action ... and the opportunity to finally give full meaning to cooperation”.

The focus of the next World Report, to be published in 2007, will be Cultural Diversity. ¶

The UNESCO World Report *Towards Knowledge Societies* is available online at www.unesco.org/shs in English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Chinese. UNESCO Publishing, Paris, 2005, ISBN 92-3-204000-X

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Social Science Perspectives on HIV/AIDS

International Social Science Journal, n° 186, December 2005. UNESCO / Blackwell.

Viruses too are social phenomena. That may sound like a joke or a paradox, but it simply reflects the fact that relating to illness is a constitutive part of the human condition.

Because the ways in which HIV/AIDS is transmitted are heavily fraught with symbolism, the pandemic underlines with special force the essential nature of epidemiology as a social science. Issue 186 of the *ISSJ* offers three main angles on HIV/AIDS:

- the beliefs, attitudes and behaviour that

shape, promote or hinder the epidemic;

- the political, ethical and economic issues raised by prevention and treatment;

- policy responses and the necessary role within them of the human rights of people living with HIV and AIDS.

The issue includes case studies covering a wide range of countries, from Vietnam to Albania and from China to Angola.

Correction

Contrary to previous announcements, the June 2005 issue of the *ISSJ*, n° 184, is entitled “Taking Stock. Women’s Empowerment Ten Years After Beijing”, whereas the issue dealing with “Moralizing Capitalism” is n° 185 (September 2005).

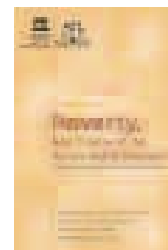
Is poverty a human rights issue?

UNESCO, Poverty and Human Rights, Paris, 2005, 338 pp.

The proceedings of the international seminar and public lectures “Is poverty a human rights issue?” organized at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, on 18 and 19 October 2005, have just been published in English and French.

This two-day meeting was organized by the Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS) which coordinates Eradication of Poverty, one of UNESCO’s cross-cutting programmes (see page 19). Over the

two days, those attending the meeting were able to compare the viewpoints on poverty of Thomas Pogge, philosopher, and Arjun Sengupta, UN Independent Expert on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty. Also taking the floor were academics, researchers, bilateral cooperation agencies and United Nations representatives.



DECEMBER

1 December: World AIDS Day. Mexico City, Mexico. (a.saada@unesco.org)

5 December: First Meeting of the GEO-Legal Working Group. Paris, France. (h.tenhave@unesco.org)

6 December: *60 minutes on the subject:* The role of UNESCO in building a universal culture of human rights. Paris, France. (y.donders@unesco.org)

6 December: Official inauguration of the exhibition on human rights by Plantu (5-10 December). Paris, France. (y.donders@unesco.org)

6-7 December: Second Meeting of the Expert Group on Nanotechnology and Ethics. Paris, France. (h.tenhave@unesco.org)

8-12 December: Rotating Conference on Ethics. Manila, Philippines. (h.tenhave@unesco.org)

15-17 December: 12th Session of the International Bioethics Committee (IBC). Tokyo, Japan. (h.tenhave@unesco.org)

19-20 December: International Conference on "Democracy and Human Rights in the Arab World". Cairo, Egypt. (m.goucha@unesco.org)

FEBRUARY

6-7 February: Bureau Meeting of the World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST). Paris, France. (h.tenhave@unesco.org)

13-14 February: Rotating Conference on Ethics of Science. Dunedin, New Zealand. (h.tenhave@unesco.org)

20-24 February: International Forum on the Social Science-Policy Nexus. Argentina and Uruguay. (ifsp@unesco.org)

New items on the UNESCO website

Visitors to UNESCO's website can now access country-by-country information on the Organization's programme implementation (www.unesco.org/en/worldwide). And the "Towards Democracy in Iraq" project is already accessible online in Arabic, English and French. This is a joint project of the Communication and Information Sector (ci) with the Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS), aiming to back up UNESCO's action in Iraq in the fields of human rights and freedom of expression. This website provides a consultative service on basic human rights, in order to support independence and pluralism in the media – both essential conditions for democracy. ¶

A Study on Human Rights at the United Nations

The Dossier Section of *SHS Newsletter 10* on human rights set out the broad lines of "The human rights-based approach and the United Nations system", a study by André Frankovitz of the Human Rights Council of Australia. The document is now accessible on the SHS website: www.unesco.org/shs/human-rights/promotion.

This 74-page study, commissioned by UNESCO, was finalized in May 2005. It explores the process of integrating human rights into the United Nations specialized agencies and highlights progress attained and the challenges still to be met.

Working with youth in Central America

Following repeated requests from the five countries that make up SICA (Central American Integration System), UNESCO has undertaken to draw up a medium-term plan (2006-2012) for the prevention of juvenile violence in Central America. Several countries in the region – particularly El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua – are experiencing a rise in violent behaviour on the part of organized youth gangs.

In May 2005, the Director-General of UNESCO set up an intersectoral working group (ISWG). The ISWG undertook an observation and fact-finding mission in El Salvador in September 2005 to design national and regional projects. Based on the findings of that mission, a meeting of international experts in Mexico in September 2005, and research carried out at Headquarters and in the field, the ISWG was able to draw up a work plan for the 2006-2007 biennium, in line with the proposed strategy.

The strategy behind UNESCO's involvement is to help prevent violence by widening young people's horizons through easing their access to development in a more positive context – economic, educational and social. The Organization's contribution will thus be centred around Preventive Education: creating identitarian points of reference through culture; improving public opinion towards young people through an awareness-raising exercise with the media; and improving youth policies through research. ¶

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Evaluation of 8 years of one of the MOST networks

The "Cities, environment and gender relations" MOST network has just completed eight years of work. Its research findings and the results of its activities were presented at a seminar at the Graduate Institute of Development Studies (IUÉD) in Geneva, Switzerland, on 24 and 25 November 2005.

Work carried out by the network took place in eight countries on three continents: Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Romania and Senegal. The next issue of the *SHS Newsletter* (15 March 2006) will report more fully on this network. ¶