



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

# *UNESCO and civil society*

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Sector for External Relations and Cooperation  
Section for UNESCO Clubs and New Partnerships

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# INTRODUCTION



*In the past twenty years the influence of civil society has risen dramatically, marking out the democratic boundaries for a new form of governance and redefining the processes of interaction at world level. For an intergovernmental organization such as UNESCO, this increasing power of non-state actors represents a real promise.*

*Born of the ashes of the Second World War, UNESCO for many years derived its structures and its operational methods from the bipolar world. Globalization and the collapse of the communist bloc radically transformed the international context. Some ten years ago the Organization launched an immense process of reflection to deal with this transformation of the modern world, and this has enabled the Organization to embark upon a salutary movement of reform which is still ongoing.*

*UNESCO must match its methods of action to the new constraints that arise from the far-reaching transformations in society. By multiplying interactions and emphasizing interdependencies, globalization and world governance have changed the system of international relations. Poverty reduction, reducing child and maternal mortality, combating HIV-AIDS, primary education for all, promoting gender equality, sustainable development: the challenges to be overcome require the commitment of society as a whole. In the global village that the world now is, these challenges cannot be met by the community of States alone. In order to share the challenges and to multiply the results, UNESCO has enlisted the assistance of the full gamut of non-state actors: their growing influence on and participation in world affairs strengthen democracy and constantly redefine multilateralism.*

*This awakening of civil society is not viewed by UNESCO and the Member States as a departure from their traditional prerogatives. On the contrary, the partnership policy that the Organization has espoused ever since its foundation is thereby confirmed. It provides an opportunity to coordinate worldwide all the forces that are determined to confront the challenges of the new millennium alongside the Organization. Clubs for UNESCO, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), parliamentarians, municipalities, local and regional authorities and the private sector - all these actors have demonstrated their unfailing commitment and their resolve to take part in and to contribute to achieving the Organization's objectives and priorities.*

*As the guarantor of the ethical and moral responsibility of international bodies, UNESCO must be the first to adapt to the new facts of world diplomacy. Essential and unavoidable, this work of constant structural and programmatic renewal is an absolute requirement if UNESCO's mandate and ideals are to be properly geared to the new multilateralist reality of the world that stems from the undeniable rise of civil society.*

*By virtue of its intergovernmental heritage, it is not UNESCO's vocation to structure or to act as mentor to actors in civil society. None the less, the partnership policy it has pursued for more than 60 years has legitimized its influence and its impact in every sphere, and today it appears more convincing than ever. This principle of openness that the Organization has espoused from its very foundation has now received fresh impetus from, in particular, the publication of the Report by the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations, chaired by Fernando Henrique Cardoso, and the establishment of a Global Partnership for Development (MDG 8).<sup>1</sup> Today UNESCO collaborates with a great many actors, each of which contributes its help, its resolve and its own personality to the Organization's work. This pooling of experience, resources and energies is a precursor to the instauration of the Global Partnership for Development.*

*UNESCO is at a turning point in the reform process that it initiated several years ago. Through continuous adaptation the Organization has so far ensured that its work can survive. However, although numerous reforms have been crowned with success, it still has an immense task to accomplish, especially in the context of the world's ever faster development. In that respect, UNESCO is endeavouring to involve its partners in the "Delivering as One" process to bring coherence to the action of the United Nations system in its spheres of competence. To maintain its raison d'être, UNESCO is obliged to pursue further its reforms and diversify its partners for a broader dissemination of its message and its ideals. In that way it may acquire the resources to achieve its ideal.*

**Ahmed Sayyad**

Assistant Director-General  
for External Relations and Cooperation

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1 To start off the twenty-first century under good auspices, the United Nations Member States agreed on eight objectives to be achieved by 2015. These Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which range from halving extreme poverty to primary education for all, constitute together with the Global Partnership a master plan for creating by 2015 the prerequisites for equitable world development.

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# 1

## A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

### A. UNESCO's mandate and mission

Since its foundation in 1945 UNESCO has played a key role in the United Nations system. Because the world can prevent conflict only by contributing actively to human development, a lasting peace must be built first and foremost in the minds of men. UNESCO seeks always to pave the way for dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples on the foundation of respect for values shared by all. Through respect for difference and diversity, it fights to bring about sustainable development based on human rights and democracy.

In all its fields of competence (education, science, culture and communication) UNESCO recognizes the need to gather all forces around it. Thus the Organization seeks to unite behind its banner, alongside the Member States and Associate Members, all actors determined to improve the lot of future generations.

The forum for debate in which the ethical and standard-setting problems of our age are tackled, UNESCO has, through the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and in its new Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4), clearly defined its priorities for the years ahead:

- as a laboratory of ideas, it must be at the head of global thinking about the future;
- as a driver of standard-setting action, it must help to formulate and implement equitable international rules;
- as a centre for information exchange, it must promote the collection and distribution of knowledge;

- as a pole of competence, it must lend its expertise to Member States in support of their development projects;
- lastly, as a catalyst of international cooperation, UNESCO is responsible for building bridges between its partners, whether governmental or non-governmental, so as to bring about the ideal conditions for achieving its objectives.



## B. An historic partnership

In the face of the looming challenges, no participation, no resolve and no energy can be spared. UNESCO is today pursuing the establishment of a genuine culture of partnership, which is the only guarantor of the proper and effective implementation of its mandate. Thus: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization may make suitable arrangements for consultation and cooperation with non-governmental international organizations concerned with matters within its competence, and may invite them to undertake specific tasks. Such cooperation may also include appropriate participation by representatives of such organizations on advisory committees set up by the General Conference.<sup>2</sup>

UNESCO occupies a unique place in the United Nations system. Between the will of the States and the aspirations of the peoples, it is located at the meeting-point of nations. Its very Constitution makes provision for NGOs and centres, associations and clubs for UNESCO to take a full and rightful place in its methods of operation. Integrating NGOs into its consultation system has allowed UNESCO to affirm its avant-gardism by creating a space where all can engage in dialogue. Its intergovernmental nature and its privileged links to civil society have enabled it successfully to lay claim to the position of arbiter and mediator in global-level interactions.

But if UNESCO succeeded from the outset in developing consultations and partnerships, only recently have these arrangements been systematized to allow for participation in all of its strategies and objectives. Thus the inexorable rise of civil society has led the Organization quite naturally to include it in its own negotiation processes. Though an intergovernmental organization, it was by following the ebb and flow of contemporary societies that UNESCO was able to take effective action in this changing world:

*The rise of civil society is indeed one of the landmark events of our times. Global governance is no longer the sole domain of Governments. The growing participation and influence of non-state actors is enhancing democracy and reshaping multilateralism.*<sup>3</sup>

2 Transmittal letter dated 7 June 2004 from Fernando Henrique Cardoso, former President of Brazil, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

3 Preamble to the Constitution of UNESCO, 1945.

In furtherance of the Millennium Development Goals, which included a call for a Global Partnership for Development, a panel chaired by Fernando Henrique Cardoso was requested in 2003 to give fresh impetus to cooperation between the United Nations and civil society as a whole, as well as elected representatives and the private sector. Greater external openness and participation by all relevant parties in consultative and negotiating processes were described as basic prerequisites for the sound functioning of modern global governance. The recommendations made in the report partly filled the gap that had previously distanced international organizations from the realities of contemporary society. The report proposed that partnerships with civil society become more numerous and be consolidated to improve the public visibility of United Nations bodies.

It is therefore for UNESCO, the ethical and moral face of international governance, to play a major role in this “global community of interest”.

As a laboratory of ideas, UNESCO has always promoted dialogue, the exchange of ideas and knowledge sharing, and encouraged all global state and non-state actors to participate actively. From its inception, by virtue of the fundamental mission entrusted to it, it has opened its doors to all actors in civil society which offered to support it in its mission to “build peace in the minds of men through education, science, culture and communication.”<sup>4</sup> Thus, throughout its history UNESCO has been able to unite forces and enlist energies to defend an ethical vision of global governance.

As an intergovernmental organization, UNESCO is at the service of the Member States. It has also gathered around itself a range of volunteer actors choosing to fight alongside it for the same values and principles. This is in direct line of descent from the ideas of UNESCO’s founding fathers, that community of philosophers, researchers and intellectuals who helped to root its action in the concepts of sharing, exchange and openness. Thus since 1947 a host of non-state partners, such as the Movement of Clubs for UNESCO and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), have enthusiastically backed the Organization’s work at the local, national and regional levels. Subsequently other civil society actors (elected representatives, private enterprises, etc.) have taken part in achieving UNESCO’s goals and discharging its mandates.

Globalization and decentralization have today shifted the location of decision-making and of exercise of power. In a few decades, a host of new actors playing

.....  
4 Article XI.4 of the Constitution of UNESCO.

decisive roles in the social, economic and cultural spheres have thereby fostered the emergence of new practices in participative democracy.

It seems clear that the challenges confronting the world can no longer be met by state actors alone. The establishment of the Global Partnership for Development, adopted by the United Nations, offers UNESCO an opportunity to play a pioneering role in implementing and structuring this goal. It must create a synergy with the new actors from civil society, gain from their contributions, knowledge and expertise, and also draw on elected representatives and the private sector, all of whom have affirmed their will to support actively the Organization in its fields of competence.

## C. Civil society: initial concept and redefinition

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Since UNESCO's foundation its links with non-governmental actors have gradually changed. Conventional State-to-State international cooperation is now supplemented by a form of multi-actor partnership which takes account of the aspirations of all of civil society, a concept which it is appropriate to define.

A strict definition of civil society is difficult to provide, even today, because its boundaries are fluid and uncertain. However, it is generally agreed to consist of a heterogeneous body of private entities: trade unions and employers' organizations, NGOs, professional associations and local authorities. It also includes charitable organizations, research institutes, universities and religious communities. Furthermore, civil society is a set of the body social which, acting at the margin of States, in a sense as a countervailing power and chiefly through participative democracy, influences political and economic decisions. Lastly, in the context of globalization and global governance, the concept of civil society is also used in the area of international solidarity. We shall now take a closer look at the concept of civil society in the context of UNESCO.

Because of its founding principle, UNESCO today cooperates with a large number of partners, the earlier boundaries of cooperation having now been far exceeded. An exhaustive inventory of contributions cannot be provided here, and we shall focus our study on UNESCO's most commonly recognized partners.<sup>5</sup>

- *Clubs, Centres and Associations for UNESCO* have long testified to the enthusiasm felt by the peoples of the world for the Organization's mandates and ideals.
- The dynamism of *non-profit-making organizations* is acknowledged by international bodies. These are NGOs, university or science foundations, human rights groups or environmental, fair trade etc. groups.
- Through their democratic legitimacy, *parliamentarians* reflect public aspirations.

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5 Traditionally national and local elected representatives and the private sector were not included in civil society. However, the Cardoso panel tasked with evaluating cooperation between the United Nations and civil society recommended that they should be included in the global partnership and we shall consequently take account of them here.

- *Cities* and *local authorities*, which today enjoy greater autonomy, contribute unflaggingly to the Organization's action through innovations in participative democracy and urban development.
- The *private sector* is forming ever closer relationships with UNESCO, relationships first established in 1999 in line with Global Compact criteria.



## D. The rise of civil society and new forms of partnership

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For some 20 years a host of new actors have been entering the democratic arena. They have raised their voices and called into question the absolute authority of States. Consequently, both locally and globally, global governance has gradually taken on a new face.

Firstly, decentralization brought about the transfer of part of the States' powers to the local and regional authorities: regions, counties, local councils, communes and districts. These bodies rapidly learned to take over the new responsibilities delegated by the central authorities. Through debate and acting through social processes, the public formed a range of communities of interest and a form of "regional or local governance" emerged.

Then came the phenomenon of globalization with its social challenges and its repercussions in economics, trade, security, culture and the environment. The States found themselves stripped of a large number of their prerogatives, which were handed over to supranational organizations or regional authorities such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organization (WTO) or the European Union. In a now interdependent world society, traditional forms of participative democracy were abandoned in favour of "global governance". A number of citizens, wishing to influence political processes and concerned to voice their aspirations and claims at the highest level, then turned to new forms of participative democracy.

Thus in a world with permeable borders and communications enabled by the rapid development of information technologies, the new actors of civil society are today raising their voices on both local and global issues. In part regrouped and structured, civil society aims to place its power of influence and its ability to act at the service of a new global governance.

Civil society has thereby become an unavoidable element in the political dialogue at international level. Its influence on both States and public opinion can be seen at all levels of the world agenda. Not without some disagreements, it has succeeded in raising its aspirations and its own agenda and in imposing them on governments. Challenging the traditional monopoly of the political sphere, civil society – in particular through its use of new communication technologies – takes action in a networked structure that brings all non-state actors into a now reorganized social

space. This host of associations, representatives and organizations is determined to participate in all aspects of democratic life, and lays claim to an active role in a growing number of political processes.

These increasingly professional actors initially confined themselves to field work, but they now wish to put forward their contributions and their expertise in international fields. Civil society is aiming, through its interactions with the entirety of the democratic space, to transform political practices on a lasting basis. Interlocutors and seats of power have grown more numerous, and civil society is now placing before States and international organizations a multilateral and transnational vision of political practices unfettered by the traditionally recognized codes. To organizations such as UNESCO, these new forms of participative democracy, albeit formulated outside the national and international framework of state, are not an obstacle: rather they hold the promise of a fruitful association.

Thus global governance is no longer the prerogative of governments alone. The ever growing influence of non-state actors and their growing participation in world affairs are redefining in depth the totality of democratic processes. In order to discharge the missions entrusted to it, UNESCO must mobilize all available resources. An exhaustive inventory of the huge field of cooperation that the Organization enjoys today cannot be drawn up here: NGOs, professional associations and community groups, women's and young people's associations, parliamentarians, cities, mayors and local authorities, enterprises, etc. For several years now, UNESCO has been strengthening its relations with a growing number of collaborators "developing an audacious partnership based on the realism of the time and privileged position of those called upon to collaborate there."<sup>6</sup>

International organizations and non-governmental actors hold positions that are now complementary rather than antagonistic. Consequently, in order to discharge its mandate effectively, UNESCO draws on the manifold experience and the innovation of civil society. By opening yet further to the new forms of governance, the Organization gives fresh impetus and new legitimacy to intergovernmental processes. It thereby secures the assistance of those very civil populations which, previously excluded from international processes, had sometimes shown a degree of suspicion towards the major intergovernmental organizations.

6 .....  
*Ahmed Sayyad, L'UNESCO: Une vision pour le XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle (UNESCO: A vision for the 21st century), Paris, Publisud, 1999, p. 89. French only.*

By forming strong partnerships with NGOs, parliamentarians, local authorities or the private sector, UNESCO has then created a space for dialogue. In step with the concerns of the citizens as a whole, it thereby secures the support and active collaboration of public opinion which is now predominant in influence and indirect action in all fields of world politics. The Organization, opening more fully to the exterior, enlists at its side energies and experiences that are essential to the defence of its principles and to the achievement of its objectives. It offers the community of States and populations the tools they need to face up to the new challenges. In this, UNESCO is instituting a form of complementarity between the old and new forms of democracy, between the global and the local, to offer the world a new vision of multilateralism.



# 2

## A PARTNERSHIP FOR UNESCO'S MISSIONS

As we have seen, UNESCO's partners are many, and a typology of them can be established. We shall deal in turn with the Clubs, Centres and Associations for UNESCO, the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), parliamentarians, cities and local authorities, and lastly the private sector.

### **A. Clubs, Centres and Associations for UNESCO: allies from the outset**

Clubs, Centres and Associations for UNESCO were born of a realization: that citizens, and not just governments, must be specifically associated with building a lasting peace and fostering "the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind".<sup>7</sup>

Evidence of the enthusiasm and idealism of UNESCO's founders, the clubs, groups of volunteers serving UNESCO's ideals, have been allies from the outset and have down the years proven themselves to be valuable partners. The Movement of Clubs for UNESCO came about spontaneously just after the Organization's foundation; in Japan the first club was set up in Sendai on 19 July 1947, before the country even joined the Organization. In the USA, the UNESCO Group of the Steele Center of Denver, Colorado, was founded in December 1947. Thus, just a few months after UNESCO was founded, a popular movement had sprung up in support of this new Organization for world peace.

7

*Preamble to the Constitution of UNESCO.*

Today the approximately 3,700 Clubs for UNESCO scattered across a hundred or so countries give priority to action in the field in order to contribute to disseminating UNESCO's principles and goals and to making known the values that the Organization champions among local communities.

Indispensable actors in civil society, for UNESCO these clubs are a wonderful way of accessing the public in every part of the world. They take action on global problems at the local level, and thus contribute to thinking about the choice of social model. They are a genuine movement of influence showing the need for citizens to be associated in specific terms with our work in order to mobilize public opinion in support of our priorities.

### ***Shared principles and diversity of action***

Initially set up chiefly in schools and universities, Clubs for UNESCO now bring together people of all ages and all socio-professional categories who share the ideals of peace and solidarity set out in the UNESCO Constitution:

*To contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion.<sup>8</sup>*

Although they are very varied, all Clubs for UNESCO adhere to the common principles of the Organization's Constitution and to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The **objectives** of the Clubs for UNESCO may be summarized as follows:

- to promote understanding of UNESCO's goals and ideals and to work towards the implementation of its programme;
- to develop international understanding, cooperation and peace;
- to promote human rights and the rights of peoples;
- to contribute to the civic and democratic education of their members;

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<sup>8</sup> Article I.1 of the Constitution of UNESCO, 1945.

- to take part in economic and social development seen as the achievement of the most appropriate conditions for the human personality to develop fully;
- to be a school of tolerance.

Of course, each club is free to take a view on the relative priority to be attached to each individual objective. It should in particular be observed that in the developing countries, clubs often consider their main goal to be taking part in the development of their own country, whilst most clubs in the industrialized countries view cooperation with third world countries as the most important objective after international understanding. Obviously, the major objectives defined above may be worded differently and other objectives may be added, whether different in nature or simply less generalized.

The **functions** of a club can be summed up in three words: education, information and action. More exactly, it is a matter of educating the club members and of informing both its members and the public at large by acquiring and distributing information, while action is the sine qua non of the club's existence since the first two functions – education and information – while necessary, can in no way be seen as adequate, and any club that confined itself to them would to some extent betray its calling. Furthermore, education and information only take on their full value if they lead to action.

Although no exhaustive inventory of activities can be produced here to embrace the infinite variety of the clubs, we can none the less cite some characteristic ones:

- conferences and debates, seminars and study days, colloquia and symposia, meetings;
- public demonstrations, sport activities;
- anniversary celebrations, participation in international days, weeks, years and decades;
- collecting, producing and distributing information material;
- building and renovation projects;
- cultural activities;
- organization of courses and practical work, social action;
- action in support of development, literacy education;
- international mutual assistance;
- excursions and study travels, exchanges with other clubs.

The content of these various activities, while in accordance with the spirit and objectives of UNESCO, is practically infinite; it depends on the interests, imagination and dynamism of club members.

For instance, clubs help to disseminate the Organization's values in schools and universities (promotion of peace and international exchange, of human rights, environmental protection, etc.), and offer the younger generations complementary education. They bring pupils, students and teaching staff together in cultural and socio-educational centres, universities or higher educational establishments to tell citizens about UNESCO's challenges. Drivers of exchange, they encourage the twinning of schools and inter-university dialogue, and help to promote the Organization's specific activities. However, Clubs, Centres and Associations for UNESCO do not confine themselves to youth activities: they also enlist many volunteers who aspire to defend at their own level the Organization's programme priorities. The clubs thus constitute an active echo to most of UNESCO's major missions: promotion of quality education for all, building inclusive knowledge societies, mobilization of science and science policies for sustainable development, defending ethical practices and standards, and promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue.

By organizing an in-depth study of the basic documents of the United Nations and of UNESCO (the Constitution of UNESCO, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, etc.), the clubs also help to spread knowledge of their shared principles among their members; they help to raise their members' civic and democratic awareness through conferences, study days, competitions and exhibitions. By commemorating major events or prominent personalities, they also recall UNESCO's historic contribution to promoting the arts, letters and science.

Specific teaching about the Organization's programmes also helps to inform the public at large about international issues or such problems as preservation of the cultural and historical heritage, sustainable development, combating discrimination or training in new information technologies through workshops or seminars.

What the clubs do specifically depends as much on their resources and their capacity for action or operations as on their members' priorities or precise profiles. However, the large number of activities carried out nationally, regionally or internationally always reflects the Organization's priorities.

In the field of health, for instance, Clubs for UNESCO are particularly active in combating narcotics addiction and sexually-transmitted diseases. They group together a large number of dispensaries and vaccination centres which teach elementary health knowledge and offer the public a wide range of treatment. Through their constant communication and prevention work, they play a particularly strong role in combating the spread of AIDS, which is a major United Nations Millennium Development Goal.

With regard to the emerging environmental challenges such as climate warming, desertification or water resources management, a growing number of eco-clubs are now being set up all over the world, and do much to raise the awareness of members and the public at large. Through their growing expertise and their field work, these Clubs for UNESCO bear daily witness to the will of the world's citizens to combat the effects of climate change and to take specific action to protect the environment.

Many clubs are also interested in cultural activities and are concerned to promote the UNESCO Convention on the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. Using exhibitions, publications or themed travel, they organize campaigns to protect natural sites, historical locations and humanity's entire oral and intangible heritage. Additionally, the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005), which UNESCO promulgated, led to the establishment of a large number of clubs promoting languages, arts and cultures at local, national and regional level. Many forms of promotion are used: organizing culture weeks, festivals or arts support groups.

Although they use UNESCO's name and logo (see below), the clubs, centres and associations nonetheless remain financially and legally independent of it. Whilst the Organization sponsors a number of their activities, its rule has always been to respect their independent judgement and it takes no active part in either their development or their structuring. The clubs stem from the initiative of individuals, and their establishment springs from their members' spontaneous feeling of a need to take a more active part in international affairs in UNESCO's fields of competence. Their action is aimed at pursuing the ideal set out in the Preamble to the Constitution of UNESCO: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed".

UNESCO quickly recognized the importance of the clubs' establishment, their action being the more valuable for being voluntary and for allowing access to both

young people and a public opinion often ill-informed of its programmes, its goals, its work or even its difficulties. Consequently the various sessions of the Organization's General Conference have adopted resolutions authorizing the Director-General to lend UNESCO's support to clubs that bore its name and to the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations. However, as we have seen, UNESCO refuses to intervene in the establishment or development of clubs, as that would risk compromising the freshness of their inspiration and their originality. However, it tries to help them whenever an opportunity arises. For instance, it encourages their initiatives through advice and intellectual support.

Thus UNESCO encourages initiatives, suggests that new clubs might be established where it thinks them desirable, and responds to requests for advice in setting up programmes of action. It also seeks to promote the exchange of good practices and experience among clubs, and to improve its own performance as a facilitator, in particular by supporting cooperation and synergy among the various clubs. One method of facilitating these information exchanges among clubs from different countries is through publications aimed at helping present or future club leaders. Thus brochures on the Clubs for UNESCO movement and the International Directory of Clubs for UNESCO are published periodically on the basis of information passed on by the National Commissions. Information sheets about UNESCO and its programmes are sent to clubs either directly or through the Federation or National Commission of the appropriate country.

There are many Federations of Clubs that maintain consistent relations with the Organization and more especially with the Clubs for UNESCO and New Partnerships Section, which is responsible for relations with these actors, and with the programme sectors at the Organization's Headquarters. At the same time, they increasingly frequently contact the regional offices in the various parts of the world. This cooperation proves very effective, since the UNESCO field office staff can best help the clubs to develop their activities at the local level, to cooperate in organizing and running meetings or in launching programmes in their specialist areas.

Additionally, the National Commissions or National Federations coordinate the activities of their countries' clubs and give them intellectual and material assistance. Conduits for UNESCO, they also seek to promote the establishment of many clubs, suggest activities, offer help, promote contacts and exchanges by organizing meetings or publishing liaison bulletins and provide information documents.

Below we shall establish a clearer distinction between the National Commissions and National Federations.

## ***National Commissions for UNESCO, coordinating bodies***

As constituent elements of the Organization and a unique network within the United Nations system, the National Commissions for UNESCO contribute to developing its “partnership culture” for the achievement of its objectives. They play a fundamental role in liaising with and mobilizing partners at the local and national levels.

Clubs for UNESCO maintain close relations with the National Commissions for UNESCO. Indeed it is the latter that grant Clubs for UNESCO their status and consequently the right to use the Organization's name and logo (see below for use of the logo). The National Commissions consequently have a considerable responsibility for ensuring that clubs' activities are in line with UNESCO's goals and principles.

Thus their work is decisive in support of the UNESCO Clubs' activities. Indeed, they may either directly, or in conjunction with their government, fund the current expenditure of some clubs or offer occasional subsidies for events that go beyond the usual framework of club activities (exhibitions, public conferences, travel, etc.). National Commissions also support the production, publication and distribution of documentation about the Organization within the clubs. Further, they put the clubs in touch with the full range of their national and international networks by facilitating horizontal contacts with local communities, associations, elected representatives, enterprises and other actors in civil society. The National Commissions thereby strengthen the ideal of solidarity and openness characteristic of Clubs for UNESCO.

## ***World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations, and the regional federations***

A non-governmental organization in formal association with UNESCO, the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (WFUCA), established in 1981, is an essential partner for promoting UNESCO's values. WFUCA and the regional federations that were set up later provide the many Clubs for UNESCO with a platform and enable them to speak with a single voice at major international summits. By facilitating exchange of expertise and information sharing, WFUCA promotes the mobilization, cooperation and coordination of a network whose limits were once difficult to perceive. It organizes rallies and exchanges and mobilizes the

strength and resolve of the different clubs on the five continents around UNESCO's priorities. A World Congress of the WFUCA is held every four years to evaluate and coordinate its programmes and to elect its Executive Bureau, made up of representatives from all regions.

As we saw previously, with the assistance of the National Commissions, Clubs may be organized into national federations when numbers or resources are adequate. These federations are intended to facilitate contacts and carry out the work of the Clubs, Centres and Associations for UNESCO at the local, national and regional levels. To date there are over 100 federations or national coordination bodies worldwide.

At the regional level there are five coordinating bodies: the African Confederation of UNESCO Clubs (ACUCA), the European Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (EFUCA), the Asian Pacific Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations (AFUCA), the Arab Federation of UNESCO Clubs (FEDACLU) and the Latin American and Caribbean Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations (FLACACU).

These structures enable the clubs to increase the effectiveness and range of their work by organizing their activities at the international level through WFUCA.

### ***Use of UNESCO's name and logo***

One of UNESCO's goals is on the one hand to associate its name and logo effectively with the activities of its networks and partners so as to increase its visibility and influence, and on the other, to protect them against inappropriate and unauthorized use.

The name and logo are subject to regulations defined by the Organization's governing bodies (the General Conference and Executive Board of UNESCO), namely the Directives concerning the use of the name, acronym, logo and Internet domain names of UNESCO, which the governing bodies approved at the 33rd and 34th sessions of the General Conference.

#### **• Authorization**

In specific cases as set out in the above-mentioned Directives, the governing bodies empower the National Commissions for UNESCO to authorize use by other bodies, namely Clubs, Centres and Associations for UNESCO and their national



coordinating bodies. The National Commissions have the right to authorize use of UNESCO's name, acronym or logo, but only in the form of a linked logo. The latter shall specify the identity of the movement concerned, and must therefore be in compliance with the specific regulations of the given entities, networks or programmes. National Commissions may establish time limits and/or conduct periodic reviews of authorizations. National Commissions have the right to withdraw their authorization.

Any decision authorizing the use of UNESCO's name, acronym, logo and/or domain names shall be based on the following criteria: (i) relevance of the proposed association to the Organization's strategic objectives and programme; and (ii) compliance with the values, principles and constitutional aims of UNESCO.

The use of the name, acronym, logo and/or domain name must be expressly authorized in advance and in writing, and must comply with the specified conditions and procedures, in particular with respect to its visual presentation, duration and scope.

### • **Logo block**

UNESCO's logo block is made up of three elements:

- the **logo** (temple) including the UNESCO acronym;
- the **full name** of the Organization: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in one or more languages;
- a **dotted line** in logarithmic progression.

These three elements are **indissociable**.

### ***Clubs for UNESCO: a movement for the future***

The Movement of Clubs for UNESCO is developing considerably because it meets the aspirations of a growing part of the public, especially young people. More and more people throughout the world are recognizing the need to support the work of UNESCO and the United Nations by committing personally to their drive for development of understanding, international cooperation and peace, and for respect for the rights of the individual and for progress of societies.

Although the specific contribution that Clubs for UNESCO can make to achieving these goals is now recognized everywhere, the clubs nonetheless sometimes face

difficulties in some countries in which the values championed by the Organization and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are not yet sufficiently widespread or encouraged by national policies or local customs.

Additionally, the clubs' activities are constantly gaining depth and spreading to new fields. A constant process of thought is matched by specific, original actions stemming from a study of the local, national, regional and international situations. The clubs' role as transmitters of information on contemporary problems and UNESCO's achievements grows stronger each day. Communication among clubs in different countries and continents is intensifying, and usually leads to joint work, cooperative activities to serve development, hallmarked by that "active solidarity" that WFUCA has made its watchword. Growing intercultural exchanges are the harbinger of a richly meaningful mutual understanding.

Thus the Movement of Clubs for UNESCO is asserting itself as a growing force of which ever greater notice is taken. In recent years, UNESCO's governing bodies and the National Commissions have expressed views that are even more resolutely favourable than before to enhanced support for these bodies, which have proved their ability to involve the public in the Organization's work. This closer relationship, which has already taken effect in many countries with the Associated Schools, has also been endorsed and encouraged by resolutions passed unanimously by those entities, opening promising new prospects for the movement.

Furthermore, the rise in the number and importance of Clubs for UNESCO illustrates the growing role that civil society plays worldwide, and demonstrates the need to work together in the broadest possible action that UNESCO could undertake. They exactly match the political myth of civil society as defined by François Rangeon:

*a set of positive values, such as autonomy, responsibility and individuals taking charge of their own problems. Because of its collective dimension, civil society seems to escape the dangers of individualism and encourages solidarity. Because of its civil dimension, it evokes emancipation from the tutelage of the State.*<sup>9</sup>

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9 François Rangeon, "Société civile: histoire d'un mot" (Civil society: the history of a word), in CURAPP, *La Société civile*, Paris, PUF, 1986, pp. 9-32.

## **B. NGOs, actors in world governance**

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Over the last three decades, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have grown very markedly in number and vigour. In such varied fields as emergency aid, health, education, the media or the economy, they have become essential partners of the intergovernmental organizations, governments and local communities. Both real and perceived, that growth is due on the one hand to the relatively recent emergence of civil society in the developing countries, and on the other hand, to an increase in NGOs' visibility because of information and communication technologies. The trend is also closely bound up with the phenomenon of globalization, with the citizens' will to take part in directing world affairs and an ever growing recognition by United Nations agencies and programmes of the need to involve the NGOs, especially since the 1990s.

In that context, the NGOs can no longer be seen as simply executive organizations: they intend now to play a part in identifying and defining world priorities. Thus they are more and more politically active in the most varied of fields, are consulted as experts on the drafting and implementation of standard-setting documents, including those at the international level, and are indispensable intermediaries with the public.

### ***Development of NGOs' methods of action***

The first organizations for development cooperation were set up in the colonial era: their key goals were community development and "social progress". At the end of the Second World War, organizations – often religious in nature – appeared on the international scene with the principal goal of assisting populations suffering from the wars in Europe. Generally they were apolitical, and their members were non-professional volunteers. During the 1960s these organizations, secure in the experience they had gained in Europe, switched their attention to the developing countries. At the same time, between 1960 and 1970, NGOs began to realize the need to move beyond aid and take an interest in economic, social, political and cultural issues of development. NGOs then sought ways of influencing decision-making at both the national and international levels. In this period, too, there arose more demanding and more political non-governmental movements. Those movements also became aware of the need to mobilize public opinion, and launched major publicity campaigns for the causes and goals they championed.

From 1980 to 1990, more pragmatic approaches emerged among NGOs. They turned professional and refined their expertise in several fields. Their actions were more marked by a quest for sustainability and a will to work in greater cooperation with governments and intergovernmental agencies. NGOs also realized at that time that they could not replace governments, and consequently must influence them. They thus became skilled partners whose expertise was truly valued at the point of political decision-making. That trend is still consolidating and developing to this day. NGOs are increasingly active in lobbying, taking their cue from private sector organizations, and are now recognized by intergovernmental organizations as valid interlocutors. Consequently, one of the main current challenges for NGOs is to be able to take action alongside and in cooperation with governments and intergovernmental agencies while preserving the independence that is their hallmark.

Further, citizens' movements grew up autonomously in the desire to influence the solutions applied to world challenges. The emblem of those movements, the World Social Forum, which has met in various forms since 2001, has made it possible to stimulate reflection about the relationship between representative and participative democracy and question the role of civil society actors in global governance.

Although the need to involve civil society organizations more fully is almost unanimously recognized, a question also arises as to their legitimacy. NGOs are diverse and pursue a wide range of objectives. There is as yet no international mechanism for providing an exhaustive definition of what an NGO is, just as there are no rules of transparency or accountability applicable to all those organizations. As Isolda Agazzi very rightly emphasizes:

*The growing importance of NGOs in decision-making processes and in the democratization of global governance has not been adequately reflected in international law or in the formal structure of the international institutions [...] such that the gulf between their international activism and their legal status in terms of international rights and obligations is widening constantly.*<sup>10</sup>

Attempts have been made, such as the Council of Europe's Convention 124, entitled European Convention on the Recognition of the Legal Personality of International Non-Governmental Organizations, which came into force in 1991; however, it has to date been ratified by just 11 European countries. This Convention may serve in

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<sup>10</sup> Isolda Agazzi, *Les ONG dans le système onusien: Vers un partenariat multi-acteurs? (The NGOs in the UN system: Towards a multi-actor partnership?)*, [www.strategicsinternational.com/16\\_10.pdf](http://www.strategicsinternational.com/16_10.pdf).

future as a model for a more global reflection on issues involved in the recognition of NGOs by United Nations agencies and programmes.

At the same time, issues of legitimacy, transparency and accountability have been raised by the NGOs themselves. For instance, in 2006 a group of 11 international NGOs publicly announced their adherence to an Accountability Charter for International NGOs,<sup>11</sup> which was the result of reflection begun in 2004. The Charter is aimed at establishing common ethical and managerial standards, a code of conduct for international NGOs. This initiative is too new for its first repercussions to have been felt, but it could be crucial for the future of relations between the United Nations system and NGOs.

### **A historical link with UNESCO**

Right from the establishment of UNESCO, the States that drafted its Constitution wished to include an arrangement that enabled the Organization to cooperate with any “non-governmental international organization” in its fields of competence. That article is the foundation for cooperation with NGOs, which was regulated as of 1960 by Directives on UNESCO’s relations with international NGOs.

In the mid-1990s, the Organization undertook a vast study to reflect in its cooperation machinery the current social, cultural, economic and political changes, particularly those linked to globalization and the unprecedented growth in the number of NGOs worldwide. Thus new Directives were adopted in 1995 on UNESCO’s relations with NGOs. In this regard, Ahmed Sayyad emphasized one of the major innovations in the application of those Directives:

*the strengthening of cooperation between UNESCO and the NGOs, showing particular interest in organizations confronting obstacles, especially in the developing countries, and fostering the establishment of organizations at local level or in some regions where none exist.*<sup>12</sup>

Additionally, those Directives created two major kinds of cooperation, operational and formal, enabling a large number of organizations to collaborate with UNESCO. Moreover, the Directives placed particular emphasis on the development of collective cooperation mechanisms, so as to structure better the methods through which NGOs participate in the Organization’s programmes.

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<sup>11</sup> For more information see <http://www.ingoaccountabilitycharter.org/>

<sup>12</sup> Ahmed Sayyad, L’UNESCO: Une vision pour le XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

Today UNESCO has official relations with more than 300 NGOs in all parts of the world and active in the most diverse fields. As a report to UNESCO's Executive Board emphasized as long ago as 1988:

*The NGOs with which UNESCO cooperates are very varied and have activities and interests which range over all the Organization's fields of competence, whether they be specialist or learned organizations, (teachers, scientific research workers, philosophers, sociologists, journalists, writers, lawyers, etc.), mass organizations (trade unions, cooperatives, women's associations, youth movements, etc.) or religious organizations.<sup>13</sup>*

UNESCO's ability to gather such diverse organizations around it has always been one of its chief strengths.

This historical link that UNESCO succeeded from its inception in forging with NGOs is closely bound up with the nature of its fields of competence. Education, science, culture and communication are fields that have always drawn attention and contributions from civil society organizations. This puts UNESCO in a particular position with regard to the other United Nations agencies, since it has built strong links and created what is called a "UNESCO family" consisting of a very broad range of organizations.

UNESCO also maintains official relations with a particular category of NGO, foundations and other such institutions, which have a different status and which lend UNESCO a different capacity for execution through their independent financial resources.

### **Methods of cooperation with NGOs**

Over the past 20 years, the shift in the location of decision-making and the diversification of actors on the world stage have directly influenced UNESCO's relations with NGOs.

The drafting of the "Sexennial report of the Executive Board to the General Conference on the Contribution made to UNESCO's activities by Non-Governmental Organizations (2001-2006)" allowed a number of recent trends in cooperation with NGOs to be identified. For instance, a substantial increase was observed in coope-

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13 "Cooperation by UNESCO with international non-governmental organizations", 129 EX/INF.5, 1988.

ration over programme formulation and upstream thinking. A significant example is the Education for All (EFA) programme where NGOs were heavily involved in dialogue with governments at the national level and also internationally. Civil society networks have also been represented in all major debates on EFA strategies, in part thanks to the sound operation of the collective consultation of NGOs on that topic.

Moreover, NGOs increasingly display a real ability to organize and unite that enables them to exercise a major influence. It is in part due to the mobilization of NGOs at the two phases of the World Summit on the Information Society, in 2003 and 2005, that the vision championed by UNESCO received a full hearing. On that occasion, NGOs showed themselves to be heavyweight partners by enabling UNESCO's cherished concept of "knowledge societies" to be endorsed.

At the same time, NGOs continue to play their now traditional UNESCO role in the application of standard-setting documents, especially in culture. They contribute to specifying the exact application of conventions, to assessing their implementation and also to training specialists at the national level. They are also essential partners in the implementation of the Organization's programmes, and fundamental agents in publicizing and promoting UNESCO's ideals. In that area, the unprecedented mobilization achieved during the International Year for the Culture of Peace, in 2000, relied to a great extent on the involvement of NGOs, at every level.

One lesson of recent years, then, is that fruitful and more systematic cooperation could be developed between NGOs and National Commissions for UNESCO and also the Organization's field units. There is a real resolve on the part of the various actors to work together and to find partnering practices that allow all to respond as effectively as possible to the challenges confronting us.

The recommendations made at the end of the sexennial report mentioned above are designed to strengthen that cooperation and to establish a genuine culture of partnership. They aim on the one hand, to bring the various actors to realize the need to unite all available resources and, on the other, to promote better global democratic participation. The participation of civil society organizations, among other things, effectively allows the beneficiaries to take ownership of programmes, guaranteeing more effective actions.

## Coordination Structures

UNESCO has sound structures for cooperation with NGOs, including at the highest level. Since 1966 the Executive Board has been supported by a permanent committee for relations with NGOs (Committee on International Non-Governmental Organizations). The Committee's mandate has evolved continually throughout its history. Initially confined to questions of accreditation, it is now involved in all matters concerning UNESCO's cooperation with NGOs.

At the 174th session of the Executive Board, in 2006, an action plan was adopted to revitalize the Committee's work by organizing round tables and discussions attended by all cooperating actors: representatives of Member States, NGOs and the Secretariat. The dynamism of those thematic events, judging by polls of their participants, has done much to strengthen the dialogue between the Organization and its partners.

Additionally the Directives adopted in 1995 provide for a number of joint liaison and coordination mechanisms.

The International Conference of NGOs is the authority that brings together all NGOs that have official relations with UNESCO. Every two years it brings together all NGOs having formal and operational relations with the Organization to discuss topics of common interest. It is a place for meeting and dialogue at which future guidelines are decided upon for the collective work of the organizations concerned.

The NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee is the permanent representative body for NGOs in official relations with UNESCO. Elected by the International Conference, it represents their interests to the Organization and promotes coordination of their joint activities. The Liaison Committee also ensures the sound functioning of the joint programmatic commissions that allow NGOs and the programme sectors to work in synergy around UNESCO's priorities.

Lastly, at the Secretariat level, the Section for Non-Governmental Organizations in the Sector for External Relations and Cooperation is responsible for all coordination activities aimed at fostering fruitful interaction between NGOs and the programme sectors. That includes the institutional aspects of UNESCO's cooperation with NGOs and foundations as well as liaising between them and the Secretariat at Headquarters and in the field, the Member States and the governing bodies. In these functions, the Section for NGOs is assisted by a network of focal points in each Sector.



## C. The parliamentary world, a spokesperson for UNESCO's missions

*"It is the peoples who, through their elected representatives, will push governments to move forward." (Léopold Sédar Senghor, February 1966)*

Parliamentarians, the elected representatives of the people, embody the full political, social and economic diversity of civil society and play an essential part in democracy. They reflect the citizens' concerns, in particular by adopting appropriate measures in response to their expectations. Thus parliamentarians are well placed to make the public aware of UNESCO's mission and to ensure that its programme objectives are well reflected in national legislation.

In particular, parliamentarians legislate and adopt national budgets, ratify treaties and conventions or authorize their ratification, check up on the executive's action, policies and agents. They may freely debate questions of national and international importance that allow them to implement their mandate. Parliamentarians also represent the base of legitimate political power and are responsible for the laws and regulations which they adopt. They guarantee democratic principles at national level: free and fair elections, freedom of the press, respect for law and citizenship without discrimination and lastly, the existence of a strong civil society. They act as a democratic link between civil society and the authorities. In that context, they represent a fundamental link between the national concerns of the citizens and objectives and priorities at the national or international levels.

Through the programme for relations with parliamentarians that it instituted in 1994, UNESCO seeks to sensitize parliamentarians and involve them in its activities, priorities and programmes of direct relevance to the electorate. Responsible for checking on the executive's implementation of State policies and programmes, the elected representatives can ensure that account is taken of the Organization's values and objectives in national legislation. UNESCO thus collaborates closely with elected representatives, who are key actors in politics, to anchor its ideals more firmly in national and local political realities and trends.

Parliamentarians' participation in UNESCO's work has assumed many forms down the years, especially through parliamentary organizations and regional and/or thematic debates, parliamentary associations and focal points whose

functions are to promote UNESCO's strategies and guidelines and to stimulate the Organization's thinking on the formulation of national policies. This powerful network of national legislators has thereby helped significantly to promote a more regular interaction between the Organization and parliaments. In effect, the nation's elected representatives, as legislators and citizens' representatives, are their electors' spokespersons and defend their interests. Their political action at the national level, especially in legislative and budgetary matters, while respecting democratic practices, is essential to good global governance. By paying greater attention to major issues of international and multilateral significance, they are now behaving as actors for change in global governance.

### **Legislative work and standard-setting action**

*To effectively mobilize all educational, political and cultural communities around such issues as the fight against poverty, education for all, sustainable development, the dialogue among civilisations, and freedom of the press.<sup>14</sup>*

As elected representatives, parliamentarians have an intrinsic and permanent link with their voters. They thus remain best placed to draw their constituents' attention to UNESCO's mandate and objectives, focusing the attention of the State and their fellow-citizens on the Organization's priorities and activities.

By instituting a culture of partnership with parliamentarians, UNESCO may benefit from the influence they exert through their function, which consists in particular of checking on executive and financial action at the national level. For UNESCO, this is a way of recruiting actors from varied backgrounds but with shared objectives, and acting to achieve those objectives. Parliamentarians invited to take part in UNESCO's work can thus contribute their expertise, disseminate information to appropriate parliamentary commissions and also mobilize them on behalf of recommendations made by UNESCO in its fields of competence. This aspect is particularly important when relations between government and civil society are tense, since parliamentarians are privileged intermediaries between government and society at large: trade unions, mayors, local authorities, associations, religious representatives, media, interest groups, etc.

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14 *Speech of Koichiro Matsuura, Director General of UNESCO, UNESCO/Interparliamentary Union Joint Meeting, 6 October 2003, Sector for External Relations and Cooperation, UNESCO.*

Parliamentarians' knowledge of national networks, their particular features and the ways in which they interact is an essential asset that UNESCO can today turn to its advantage. The first to be informed of their fellow citizens' needs, parliamentarians are best placed to transmit their pleas to international bodies. These actors of change can allow UNESCO to be more directly attuned to the aspirations of the peoples and through cooperation with them to respond appropriately and promptly.

Until the 20th century, parliamentarians were not involved in international decision-making. International affairs were the prerogative of the executive. From the advent of multilateral cooperation, international organizations sprang forth in virtually every field of competence previously reserved for the State. Subsequently, the changes stemming from globalization strengthened the power of regional and international decision-making bodies as compared with governments. A democratic State must now take full account of the importance of decisions taken at the international and regional levels whose repercussions will be felt on citizens' lives at the national level. For their part, parliamentarians play a part in world interparliamentary cooperation, and can intervene in matters handled at the United Nations, multilateral negotiations and the ratification of documents and treaties signed by their respective governments. Prime actors in democracy, parliamentarians are today, then, wholly involved in negotiation machinery. By promoting their involvement in consultation processes, UNESCO is offering the public a clear guarantee that it takes account of their concerns. Involving elected representatives in all stages of the production of UNESCO's directives enables their credibility to be enhanced in the eyes of civil society and of public opinion, and to facilitate their practical application:

*Parliamentary mechanisms, commissions and others, are very useful tools. Parliamentarians [...] know more about what will and will not work.*<sup>15</sup>

Having an acute knowledge of national legislative processes, parliamentarians can thus give preference in their countries to passing laws that are compatible with international requirements and standards. They are the keystone of the democratic apparatus, and through their constant intermediation, both in the Chamber and in

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<sup>15</sup> UNESCO-IPU Joint Meeting, launching of the Parliamentary network of cooperation with National Commissions for UNESCO, 6 October 2003, p. 16.

the parliamentary commissions, they enable UNESCO Directives to be matched, adjusted and harmonized with national legislation.

Additionally, with the process of globalization and multi-level governance, parliamentarians increasingly play a particular and completely legitimate role in international relations. A parliamentary diplomacy is thereby developing: exchanges and cooperation with other interparliamentary assemblies, establishment of friendship groups or twinning, organization of courses or seminars on how a parliament works, election observation, opportunities to discuss conventions or treaties, etc. In this way parliamentarians help to promote common values, pluralist democracy, human rights, greater cooperation or exchange of information and good practices to prevent conflicts that threaten international peace and security. Further, their scope for action reflects their fellow-citizens' concerns: it can therefore extend to the management of issues of migration, environmental pollution, counter-terrorism, etc. Moreover, they themselves aspire to play a role at the global level, as can be seen from their participation in international negotiations, organizational work in the United Nations system or the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

Parliamentarians also act as spokespersons for their electors. They consult them regularly and can thus pass on proposals from civil society that allow the degree of convergence between the latter's expectations and the priorities of national authorities to be measured.

Beyond the support that parliamentarians can give to UNESCO initiatives, it must be kept in mind that they are directly responsible in their own countries for adopting the budget and the allocation of funds. They are above all the people who allocate the Organization's resources and it is therefore essential to consult parliaments. However, dialogue with parliamentarians allows UNESCO to alert a country to its own activities. In conjunction with the elected representatives, the Organization can thereby encourage parliaments to allocate national funds to the fields it prioritizes and encourage indirectly the promotion of its strategic objectives in the Member States.

### ***Structures and areas of cooperation***

UNESCO has set up appropriate machinery to ensure a permanent dialogue and sustained collaboration with parliamentarians from all Member States at the international, regional and national levels.

*At the national level*, a cooperation agreement was reached with the Interparliamentary Union (IPU) in 1997. Under that agreement, IPU commits its members – 154 national parliaments and eight associate members – to work for peace and security, cooperation among peoples and universal respect for justice, as well as for human rights and fundamental freedoms in conformity with the objectives and principles proclaimed by the Constitution of UNESCO.

*At the regional level*, cooperation agreements have been reached between UNESCO and regional parliamentary associations: the Parlamento Latinoamericano (Parlatino, 1994) and the Parliamentary Assembly of Francophonie (APF, 2005). Ad hoc relations have also been established with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, the African Parliamentary Union (APU), the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU) and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). Regional forums have been established for specific UNESCO programmes and particularly education for all (EFA), culture and science.

So as to institutionalize interaction *at the national level*, in 2003 UNESCO and the IPU launched a new cooperation mechanism by designating parliamentary focal points for UNESCO in national parliaments. The role of this institutional network is to establish a permanent national-level link between the activities of Member States' parliaments and those of National Commissions for UNESCO. It enables links to be set up between the executive, the legislative and civil society, and will facilitate UNESCO support for the formulation of national policies.

The focal points play an essential role as permanent conduits for information and guidance between parliaments, the National Commissions for UNESCO and the Organization itself. They advise UNESCO both about national parliamentary initiatives in its fields of competence and about the impact of the application of its programmes, and they thereby promote a better match of joint activities. Intermediaries between the executive authority and civil society, they also become the spokespersons for UNESCO's work to their compatriots. For instance, the Romanian Parliamentary Group of Friends of UNESCO has constituted within the Romanian Parliament a Standing Parliamentary Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO. The establishment of this Parliamentary Commission tasked with improving support for our programmes is a first for UNESCO and even for the United Nations system.

In exchange, UNESCO offers parliaments directly its expertise for all matters relating to its fields of competence.

## **Communities of interest**

The Organization wishes to ensure on a day-to-day basis constructive cooperation with parliamentarians and to procure the resources to give tangible form to its programmes. We shall endeavour to give concrete examples of possible cooperation between UNESCO and parliamentarians, which lies at the very heart of the Organization's efforts to humanize the globalization process. These examples are inspired by topics raised at interparliamentary conferences organized by UNESCO.

- ***Education for all (EFA)***

UNESCO is particularly concerned to develop systematic and practical activities with elected representatives in EFA. Education is a key issue in every country, and is a problem with which we are all grappling. Elected representatives' support for EFA is essential if the programme is to be given the attention it deserves. EFA, which concerns two of the Millennium Development Goals, requires more than ever that everyone be mobilized for its effective implementation. Whether in respect of the threats raised by the AIDS pandemic, that looms over the environment or over international security, education in all its forms is the only weapon available to us. It must not be confined to the transmission of knowledge, however useful that may be: it must also take account of civic and humanistic values for the construction of a better world.

Quality education is costly and elected representatives have considerable responsibility for ensuring that sufficient funds are allocated to it in national budgets. Parliamentarians have the power and the duty to speak up for EFA, to ensure that the right to education is enshrined in legislation and that ambitious educational policies are developed together with machinery to monitor their application.

- ***The ratification of UNESCO's international conventions***

The responsibility of elected representatives relates in particular to the cultural heritage. The UNESCO conventions in this area cover a broad range of cultural realities – be it the tangible, intangible and subaquatic heritage or the unlawful trafficking of cultural goods. The conventions as a whole form a real arsenal of protection for the cultural diversity of humanity's common heritage, which is an integral part of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 2003. Contemporary creativity, which hitherto had been protected only by copyright under the 1952 Convention, as

revised in 1971, has also benefited from a standard-setting document adopted in 2005; and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions now completes the standard-setting structure that UNESCO has built to defend cultural diversity.

In pursuing this strategy, the Organization continues to shape its initial mission of safeguarding world peace by providing for all the conditions for harmonious human development. The importance of preserving cultural diversity should strongly encourage parliamentarians to work for the ratification of these conventions in their respective countries. And indeed, each form of creativity, if conceived in respect with universal values and a spirit of openness to the other, contains the seeds of a meeting, a dialogue, from which everyone can draw the ability and the freedom to be transformed.

The International Convention against Doping in Sport (2005) is aimed at protecting the intrinsic value and integrity of sport as well as athletes' health and that of the young people who admire them and, lastly, the moral values of our societies. Today more than ever, sport is an integral part of the social fabric of almost every country. In that context, doping, which undermines fundamental ethical values, endangers athletes' health and thwarts the rules and honesty, has become the gravest threat to the credibility and integrity of sport. Sport has an immense power to bring peoples together and to promote forms of competition which ennoble the human spirit instead of plunging it into hatred and conflict. Consequently, no effort should be spared to eliminate the scourge of doping in sport. The anti-doping convention is a capital instrument in this fight. For the ratification process to move forward, the support and contribution of legislators are essential.

- *Promotion of human rights and democracy*

From the outset, UNESCO has played a key role in promoting democratic values and principles as well as human rights. Its Constitution proclaims the democratic ideals of justice, freedom, equality and solidarity, which it sees as the pillars on which peace must be built. Universal respect for those ideals even forms the substance of Article I of the Constitution adopted in London on 16 November 1945. The problem is not so much that the rights proclaimed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – to which the UNESCO Constitution makes reference – have not always been respected: the difficulty is that they have not always – or even not often – been taken seriously. Taking human rights seriously in their full implication is a particular challenge for elected representatives to take up.

Good governance, respect for human rights, pluralism and democracy, and the renewal of the Organization's commitment to civil society, are so many other fundamental issues for the future: they are part and parcel of conflict prevention and fostering social stability. Making these ideals reality should be an integral part of the elected representatives' function.

- *Access to water*

UNESCO is in the front line of the quest for solutions to the problems of freshwater resources. Its efforts relate in particular to conflicts arising from urban water, ethics, the integrated management of water resources, gender equality in sustainable water supply and the management of that resource. UNESCO is also concerned over cross-border and international waters, underground waters, conflict resolution and prevention, management of disasters and risks relating to water, better use of water and eco-hydrology. The three keystones of UNESCO's activities relating to water are: the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education, and the Secretariat of the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP). In total some 200 water professionals work in these three structures.

IHP is aimed at building scientific, technological and human resources with the principal aim of halving, by 2015, the number of people having access neither to drinking water nor to sanitation. Although there are large quantities of fresh water on our planet, it is unequally distributed because of poor management, limited resources or environmental change. In fact, almost one fifth of the world population still has no access to drinking water and 40% lacks basic sanitation. That is why the second World Water Development Report emphasizes the importance of sound governance in managing the world's water resources and combating poverty. UNESCO is ready to continue supporting the World Water Assessment Programme, and all elected representatives have been invited to take active part in it.

- *Access to information and knowledge*

At both phases of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), in 2003 and 2005, UNESCO invariably championed the concept of building knowledge societies. These are not yet a reality, at least in much of the world. In showing what such societies could become, UNESCO sought to expand the range of choices and possible actions, collaborating closely in particular with elected representatives.

Emphasis was placed on four key principles: freedom of expression, quality education for all, universal access to information and knowledge, and respect for cultural



and linguistic diversity. These four principles are why UNESCO urged a transition from the concept of “information” to that of “knowledge” as an essential dimension of the kinds of society that are now coming about (see below).

The idea that knowledge societies should be integrative, pluralist, fair, open and participative was also emphasized. UNESCO considers that at this stage in their development, knowledge societies should be modelled and moved not just by technical forces, but also by social choices. These choices must also be illuminated by democratic debate in parliaments and by consultation with civil society.

At the World Summit in 2005 in Tunis, the international community laid great stress on the importance of information technologies. In the UNESCO World Report: Towards Knowledge Societies, published in 2005, UNESCO emphasized that knowledge societies are not simply information societies. New technologies do indeed play a very important role in them, but it is knowledge that is their real driver. Behind the digital divide separating those with access to information technology from the rest, there lies another far more alarming divide: the knowledge divide, separating those who enjoy the benefits of education and scientific knowledge from those excluded from those benefits. The rapid progress in the new information and communication technologies and in the media is thus breeding fear in the developing countries of being left by the wayside. Legislators and elected representatives have a key role to play in the concept of building knowledge societies and in the choice of means and allocation of resources for achieving those goals.

There are very many more examples of relevant activities or joint actions other than those set out in the preceding pages. Cooperation between UNESCO and parliamentarians offers a wide range indeed of possible actions to improve the lives of fellow-citizens. However, many efforts must still be made to reinforce these actions and obtain convincing results, especially as regards the harmonization of designation of parliamentary focal points in national parliaments, standing consultation of elected representatives, improved visibility among parliamentarians for the partnership programme and the development of its role as a think tank. Additionally, other fields of work ought to be defined in debate and reflection with the elected representatives of each Member State and each region of the world. UNESCO is thus appealing to the responsibility of elected representatives to support it in its mission and together to meet the challenges of today's world for a better tomorrow.

## D. Cities and local communities, from the local to the global

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*Thanks to rapid urban growth not just in China but elsewhere in Asia and Africa, sometime in the coming year or so the population of the world will become mostly urban.<sup>16</sup>*

Today more than half of the world's population (6,700m inhabitants) lives in an urban environment, with 2 billion people living in poverty. By 2025, the world will have 8 billion inhabitants. The challenges arising from headlong urbanization are significant: efficiency of urban management and sustainable development are critical issues for the 21st century. For most citizens, it is local authorities that have most impact on their lives. UNESCO must therefore act today in cooperation with local governments to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The role of municipalities in local planning and budgeting, decentralization policy and the application of development plans at local and municipal level makes them permanent partners in UNESCO's work.

These partners, mayors and local elected representatives, must face up to the local implications of global problems whilst staying very close to their citizens. Because of that they have experience and expertise essential to the whole of UNESCO's operational activities. They can bring a fresh look at daily realities, and their experience on the ground may contribute to thinking about the choice of a social model.

The effects of economic liberalization and globalization are hard felt at local level and cities therefore pay a heavy tribute to globalization. What are the answers to the questions raised by the urban millenary? The point is to see what contribution civil society actors might make to UNESCO's efforts to improve the quality of life through education, science, culture and communication and to resolve the problems of poverty at local level.

### ***A network at the service of urban development***

At the time of the Millennium + 5 World Summit in New York, the United Nations emphasized the full importance of the local authorities' role in achieving the

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<sup>16</sup> Worldwatch Institute, 21st session of UN-Habitat, Nairobi Conference, May 2007.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). On that occasion the United Nations General Assembly called for a lasting dialogue between the international authorities and local authorities. The latter, through their representative bodies, have long expressed their will to act as partners in defining the policies whose consequences they experience at first hand. Since March 2005, UNESCO has been working in conjunction with UN-Habitat to formulate its body of programmes designed to promote urban development.

UNESCO seeks to consolidate commitment to its own priorities and initiatives by developing cooperation with municipalities, local authorities and city associations, which are essential partners for the sustainable development of communities. This partnership policy has led UNESCO to establish a strategic partnership with local elected representatives, “who are in constant contact with the local citizen whom they represent and whose rights they defend,”<sup>17</sup> and also with the major associations of cities over joint missions and programmes.

The Organization has also reached cooperation agreements with several associations of cities that give it an opportunity to increase the resources applied to its mandate, such as United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC), the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC), the Union of Luso-Afro-America-Asiatic Capital Cities (UCCLA) and the Organization of Islamic Cities and Capitals (OICC).

Their contribution makes local-level social, political, cultural and environmental data available to UNESCO, and gives it support on the ground for all its operational activities. Additionally, with its local partners, the Organization is obliged to act “as a catalyst of research and action, facilitate knowledge transfer, mobilize energies through urban policies”<sup>18</sup> for ethical and sustainable development.

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17 Ahmed Sayyad, *L'UNESCO: Une vision pour le XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, op. cit., p. 89.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

## **UNESCO and UCLG, a future partnership**

*To be the united voice and world advocate of democratic local self-government, promoting its values, objectives and interests, through cooperation between local governments, and within the wider international community.<sup>19</sup>*

The founding congress of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) took place in Paris in May 2004. This body arose from the unification of three organizations: the World Federation of United Cities (FMCU-UTO), the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) and Metropolis, World Association of the Major Metropolises. UCLG brings together more than 1,000 cities and 112 local government associations in 127 countries of all sizes, rural and urban, throughout the world. It therefore represents more than half of all local governments worldwide. Cities and associations that are UCLG members commit to working together to promote

*peace, democracy and citizenship, democratic urban governance and decentralization, cooperation among cities and solidarity, and contributes to sustainable development and the enhancement of the status of cultural diversity in urban settings.<sup>20</sup>*

Meeting in Beijing in June 2005, the World Council of UCLG approved the establishment of 13 commissions and working groups under the 2004-2007 working programme. Those commissions and groups, which unite 400 local communities and local government associations from all parts of the world, were required to facilitate networking, contribute to and enrich the political debate within the UCLG bodies and to encourage direct exchange between members.

The UCLG commissions and working groups have the following remits:

- decentralization and local self-government;
- city diplomacy;
- decentralized cooperation;
- local finance and development;
- culture;
- social inclusion and participative democracy;

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<sup>19</sup> UCLG Constitution.

<sup>20</sup> UNESCO Partners, 1945-2005, Sector for External Relations and Cooperation.

- gender equality;
- Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
- urban mobility;
- urban planning;
- Mediterranean;
- peripheral cities;
- information society.

At the second session of its World Congress in Jeju, Republic of Korea, in October 2007, under the title “Changing cities are driving our world”, UCLG reiterated its desire to contribute to the work of the United Nations, particularly by working towards the achievement of the MDGs.

In addition, the Cardoso report in 2004 advised the United Nations to “regard United Cities and Local Governments as an advisory body on governance matters”. UCLG already contributes to the work of several United Nations bodies. A principal member of the United Nations Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (UNACLA), it also participates in the agenda of UN-Habitat, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), etc.

UNESCO’s ideals and the goals pursued by UCLG are perfectly in tune with each other, in particular with regard to the promotion of democracy and human rights, respect for cultural and linguistic diversity, local development, education and training, culture and communication and the advancement of women in society. In that respect, UNESCO and UCLG have signed a cooperation agreement which, among other things, tries to avert the implementation of parallel initiatives: this paves the way for synergy in common areas of action.

As the Organization’s best champion and advocate with respect to cities, UCLG has a decentralized structure spread across seven regions. Its contribution is already making available to the Organization a vast network of information and expertise bringing together cities, communities and local authorities worldwide.

## UNESCO's mandate at the heart of urban development

*Sustainable development requires committed, active and knowledgeable citizens. It also requires caring and informed decision-makers who will make the right choices about the complex, interrelated issues facing human societies.<sup>21</sup>*

The explosion of urbanization and the contemporary phenomena of decentralization have made cities true catalysts of the full range of social, political, cultural and environmental processes. Cities often find themselves overwhelmed by the many challenges they must confront. That is why by creating more spaces for dialogue among communities, UNESCO seeks to put in place, in partnership with all local communities, the conditions for responsible urban development.

An arena for competing ideas, a place of exchange, cities are also an extraordinary reservoir of individual experience and capabilities. They thereby appear to be laboratories for the implementation of the Organization's various programmes on sustainable urban development.

- *The city: an educational centre*

It is fundamental to the building of an active and responsible citizenship that cities put education in all its forms and at every level at the heart of their sustainable development. At the local level, the school is in fact a force for change, with municipalities playing a decisive role in offering quality education to all.

As the basic prerequisite for sustainable development and for peace between the peoples, education shapes the world and its future. In all countries, developed and developing, education and the enhancement of human potential determine the countries' ability to embark successfully on the path of progress. In the absence of education and training systems that enable individuals to acquire the knowledge, skills and aptitudes needed to enable the national economy to join the world economy, development prospects are inevitably reduced.

Recognition should be given to the significance and importance of education as an inherent part of the development of the economy, employment, means of subsistence and income-generating activities. Education also allows us to combat poverty, excessive consumption, environmental destruction, urban degradation, demographic increase, gender inequality, health problems and even conflicts and violations

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21 UNESCO, *Sector for External Relations and Cooperation: UNESCO Partners. 1945-2005. 2003 edition.*

of human rights. Education should help everyone to acquire the values, attitudes, skills and behaviours needed to face those challenges. In this regard there is vast scope for actions that allow municipalities to support the Organization.

As the lead organization in the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) (2005-2014), UNESCO can, through the urban communities, prepare young citizens to best effect to face the challenges of the new millennium. So as to optimize its educational action, UNESCO needs the communities' support in providing at local level technical support to schools, community-based education, local economic development programmes, funding for initiatives in education for sustainable development, and lastly, help in establishing research projects in this last area. The Decade must be promoted primarily at the local level for it to have repercussions at the global level.

The school system in its entirety – schools, colleges, high schools and universities – in effect constitutes a platform for:

*establishing a connection between world problems and local life, of serving as an enabler of change and permitting acquisition of the knowledge and skills required to function as an active and responsible citizen.*<sup>22</sup>

Alongside urban organizations, local communities and its educational networks, UNESCO contributes to this exercise by offering young people ways of acquiring all the behaviours and values championed by its programmes, particularly the right to education, emphasizing integration, lifelong learning and combating exclusion and discrimination. Everything suggests that this contribution is increasing as societies and economies increasingly call on “knowledge”. These principles are an integral part of UNESCO’s concept of quality education for all. It is, furthermore, significant that in order to face up to the challenges of globalization, the development process calls for human capacities to be built in modern societies with their prospects for stability and economic and social viability. The achievement of the DESD goals should enlist all local actors in building an equitable knowledge society.

• *Science: the urban habitat at the heart of environmental problems*

Exponential urban growth is causing major problems of environmental protection for cities and their outskirts. These environmental problems cover several major

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22 UNESCO and Cities, Partners, Sector for External Relations and Cooperation, 2008 edition, p. 8.



themes, including access to water, climate change, biodiversity and prevention of natural disasters. Modern societies are increasingly vulnerable to environmental impacts, and are experiencing accelerating population concentrations in megalopolises with untamed or ill-tamed urban development. All these interdependent problem areas aim to achieve a single goal: improving the quality of life.

Effective cooperation resides in the implementation of various programmes aimed in particular at analysing and defining solutions to the issue of water in cities. The International Hydrological Programme (IHP) has been alerting civil society actors to the problems of freshwater and urban water management since it was established in 1975. It enables data in these areas to be centralized and strategies and priority action guidelines to be drawn up, taking the socio-economic dimension into account. For its part, UNESCO's Urban Water Management programme analyses the current water management situation in cities. It recommends appropriate methods of providing secure drinking water access, responsible consumption and pollution reduction.

Furthermore, constant cooperation between the Organization and cities supports a strengthening of information and knowledge networks that are needed for distributing, to all local authority actors worldwide, scientific audits, studies and forecasts, as well as various tools and strategies for improving the sustainable management of existing waters. UNESCO is also developing many pilot projects, for example at Porto-Novo (Benin), a city which has adopted a real territorial management policy and development strategy. The Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme, established in the early 1970s, also contributes to strengthen cities' ability to improve their management of urban ecosystems.

In 2003, the International Year of Freshwater, UNESCO and its local partners focused together on the ethical and the socio-economic problems raised by the responsible evaluation and management of world water resources, tackling such topics as access to drinking water, sanitation and disaster prevention. This reflection, part of the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" (2005-2015) does full justice to the issue of water, and responds to the expectations of a majority of the world population.

In 2008, the International Year of Sanitation, cooperation between local communities and UNESCO is focused more intently on issues of basic sanitation, closely linked to the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved by 2015.



By promoting more vigorously than ever fruitful exchanges of competences on the full range of environmental issues, UNESCO is alerting citizens to disaster management, to ecology and to the sustainable development of urban communities, since international recognition of these issues is needed to counteract the negative impact of growing urbanization.

• *Culture: a major axis of urban development*

Places where diversity is expressed, cities are at the heart of cultural life. Recognizing their great potential, UNESCO in cooperation with local authorities and associations has set up numerous programmes in the domain of culture.

The initiator in 2001 of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, UNESCO is thereby maintaining its commitment to artistic production, with the help of its local partners, and is lending cities its support and expertise. Thanks to the Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity, which the Organization launched in 2002, UNESCO is promoting the development of partnerships in support of programmes and activities carried out in the context of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

This cultural development notably includes the creative industries, whose economic potential is one of the major vectors of sustainable development. Both locally and in international exchanges, UNESCO seeks to promote the position of the emerging countries by strengthening their creative capabilities, be they in publishing, music, the cinema, multimedia or crafts. Increasingly, cities play an essential role in harnessing creativity to further economic and social development. They bring together all cultural actors from the entire chain of creative industry, from the initial creative act to production and distribution. Real hothouses of creative groups, cities have the means to capitalize on this creativity, and networks of cities enable that potential to be mobilized and so to create a worldwide impact. Some cities are large enough to influence local cultural industries by giving them access to international markets. Through the Creative Cities Network, UNESCO seeks to facilitate knowledge sharing among different cultural communities, to build the capabilities of cities, and lastly, to stimulate innovation through exchanges of know-how, experience and skills. Additionally, since the project is currently in a consolidation phase, a fresh selection process has been launched for candidate cities, drawing more heavily on expertise external to UNESCO, particularly through associations and urbanism experts.

Further, in order to protect copyright, UNESCO has since 2001, together with professional publishers' and librarians' associations, been associated with the World Book Capital City initiative. The title of World Book Capital is awarded on 23 April (the same date as the World Book and Copyright Day) to the best book promotion programme. UNESCO manages the selection and nomination process in compliance with Resolution 29 of the 31st General Conference of UNESCO (2 November 2001). An invitation for applications having been issued, the choice of city is made by a committee made up of representatives from the International Publishers' Association (IPA), the International Booksellers Federation (IBF), the International Association of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), and UNESCO. The contribution of the Cities Network to this initiative is essential to ensure varied and quality participation in the competition.

Another example of the Organization's initiative in support of cities is the UNESCO Cities for Peace Prize, which rewards municipal initiatives that help to strengthen social cohesion, to improve living conditions in struggling suburbs and to develop a genuine urban spirit of living together. This initiative also fosters an exchange of examples of good practice in harmony in an urban environment. Exchange of good practice is also at the heart of the programme "Culture in the Neighbourhoods", which promotes intercultural dialogue in the urban environment.

To induce local authorities and city technicians to apply practices and policies that build social sustainability into historical districts, UNESCO has also formulated principles for launching regeneration projects. The point is not only to make them realize the need to preserve heritage and to capitalize on cultural diversity, but also to build new forms of social cohesion in cities, the purpose being to maintain a balance between economic competitiveness and harmonious urban development.

The UCLG Working Group on Culture, set up in June 2005, aims "to promote the role of culture as a central dimension of local policies through the dissemination and implementation of the Agenda 21 for culture". UCLG adopted Agenda 21 as the reference document for its cultural programmes: its aim is to establish an undertaking by cities and local governments in respect of cultural development. In June 2007, more than 250 cities, local governments and organizations worldwide had subscribed to Agenda 21 for culture. UCLG, through its Working Group on Culture, collaborates with UNESCO to disseminate Agenda 21 and contribute to its implementation.

- *A meeting point of social processes*

There can be no sustainable development without extended analysis of social, political and cultural interaction processes in the major urban centres. “Humanizing urban development”, the aim of UNESCO’s Urban Development Programme, provides an opportunity to promote more vigorously among local communities public urban policies that respect, protect and foster integration, social cohesion and local democracy.<sup>23</sup> Alongside UN-Habitat, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, with which UNESCO signed a cooperation agreement in March 2005, and its local partners, the Organization also supports international research projects on cities, social transformations and urban policies, the regeneration of historical cities, the training of urban professionals and the participation of young people in city management. UNESCO and UN-Habitat also jointly launched in March 2005 an international research programme into public urban policies, “Urban policy and the right to the city”, which brings together urban professionals, researchers and experts from different regions.

Moreover, in 2004 UNESCO launched one of its beacon projects, the establishment of a network of cities to improve policies to combat racism, discrimination, xenophobia and exclusion. The International Coalition of Cities against Racism enables cities to exchange and pool their experience so as to promote joint actions in the fight against all forms of discrimination. In order to take into account the specificities and priorities of each region of the world, regional coalitions were set up in Africa, North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe. Through a 10-point action plan specific to each region, local authorities commit to promoting human rights and specifically to combating all forms of exclusion in the fields of education, housing employment or cultural activities. Signatory cities commit to integrating this plan into their municipal strategies and policies.

UNESCO’s “Growing up in Cities” project is another example of an action launched under the intergovernmental Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme. It is aimed at encouraging and helping local authorities in designing

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<sup>23</sup> *This programme's major challenges are the promotion of local democracy, urban governance, citizenship and integration of migrants, the social sustainability of historical districts and urban revitalization, participation and urban professionals capacity-building.*

programmes and policies that improve the urban environment for and with children and young people while involving them in their city's development.<sup>24</sup>

Lastly, to sensitize local authorities and urban technicians to applying practices and policies that build social sustainability into historic districts, UNESCO has produced a guide: *Historic Districts for All: A Social and Human Approach for Sustainable Revitalization*,<sup>25</sup> which formulates principles for managing projects on the regeneration of these districts. This approach calls for attention to be paid not only to the need to preserve heritage and to capitalize on cultural diversity, but also to build new forms of social cohesion into cities and to maintain a harmonious balance between economic competitiveness and urban development. The final version of this guide was presented at the World Urban Forum in Nanjing in October 2008.

• *A vector of exchange*

Virtually all networks, all communication and information areas and infrastructures are concentrated in cities. The public's access to information sources is a major priority in the context of establishing a knowledge society based on freedom of expression, universal access to information and knowledge, respect for cultural and linguistic diversity and quality education for all. Establishing these principles, which cannot be dissociated from urban development, is the keystone of each citizen's genuine participation in the democratic life of society. The sound functioning of a democratic society and the participation of cities in this common effort are capital.

However, at least in a large part of the world, public access to information sources is not yet a reality. That often remains a brake on the socio-economic development of emerging countries. UNESCO, together with local communities, has taken a large number of initiatives aimed at opening up certain remote regions, including the establishment of community multimedia centres (CMCs) which make good some of the information deficit. The challenge is nothing less than to establish a global

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24 In 2002, this project led to the publication of two books: Louise Chawla (ed.), *Growing Up in an Urbanizing World*, UNESCO Publishing-Earthscan, (<http://www.unesco.org/most/guic/guicpubframes.htm>); David Driskell (in collaboration with members of the *Growing Up in Cities Project*), *Creating Better Cities with Children and Youth* A manual for participation, UNESCO publishing-Earthscan Publications (<http://www.unesco.org/most/guic/guicpubframes.htm>).

25 In cooperation with UN-Habitat and regional associations of cities and local authorities such as AIMF (International Association of Francophone Mayors) and CFLG (Commonwealth Forum of Local Governments).

strategy to pave the way for the most deprived communities to take an active part in the knowledge society. CMCs and the community learning centres set up under UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) have become a preferred access to information and development for many communities, many of which are marginalized by their poverty and their remoteness from modern communication networks. For instance, the mere combination of a local radio and a remote centre equipped with two or three Internet-linked computers can radically transform the living conditions of entire communities. CMCs illustrate the advantages to be gained by linking information and communication technologies (ICT) with more traditional media such as local radios. Thus CMCs are far more than information transmission points. Strictly speaking, they are information, education and entertainment media, but they also allow communities to take part in public debate, to take effective action in learning new technologies or to acquire the necessary skills to manage similar infrastructures, especially as part of anti-AIDS projects, agricultural teaching programmes and open or distance learning programmes.

From that viewpoint, CMCs are fertile laboratories of local democracy, development and good governance, and we should support and promote this integrated vision. ICT applications play a decisive role in moving from the concept of a global information society to that of diversified knowledge societies. However, care must be taken that the Internet, through its very openness and the wealth of information it brings, does not damage the legitimate requirement for specialized knowledge. A balance is needed and it can only be achieved through education and the dissemination of basic information skills.

The programme which provides greater information access also strengthens the medias' abilities and enables international networks for freedom of expression to be set up, while also encouraging citizens to take part in local-level machinery for thinking and decision-making. By enabling all to engage in public affairs, it sustainably consolidates community links, guarantees transparent and responsible management of local affairs and facilitates the establishment of sustainable democratic processes. UNESCO's local partners, through the expertise they contribute and thanks to their networks, help to establish these community centres effectively. Through twinning arrangements or through direct contributions, industrialized cities and developing cities can join in UNESCO's action to promote equal access for all to the knowledge society.

## E. The private sector: an actor in the Millennium Development Objectives

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Civil society does not always agree unanimously about the business world, from small enterprises to the multinationals. Because it has an undeniable influence on the leaders and the destiny of the modern world, the private sector often finds itself in direct confrontation with civil society.

At a time when markets are an ever increasing presence in world governance, UNESCO must cooperate with the private sector for the proper discharge of its mandates, which give it responsibility for acting as an impartial mediator and an active link between its various partners. To face up to the challenges of the new millennium (promoting education, combating poverty or protecting the environment), it is essential to unite every will that is prepared to lend support, expertise or resources.

The Global Compact<sup>26</sup> that the Secretary-General of the United Nations proposed in 1999 spelled out ten principles for cooperation between international bodies and the business world. As part of promoting its various goals, it is the Organization's duty today to go beyond a passive partnership, consisting simply of financial support: the dynamics of NGOs, parliamentarians, and local authorities must be reconciled, and partnerships be sought with the world of business. UNESCO offers these economic and social actors – whose views often differ strongly – a space for dialogue and consensus. UNESCO, the private sector and civil society thus have an opportunity to form an effective tripartite partnership.

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26 *The United Nations Global Compact, 1999, annex p. 137*

## Placing ethics at the heart of the business world

*While remaining true to the ethical vocation given it by its Constitution, UNESCO undertakes to respond to the specific needs of its Member States.<sup>27</sup>*

Small enterprises and multinationals often influence world events. The free enterprise system often imposes its pace and its processes at world level. In order to contribute effectively to solving the new challenges of global governance, UNESCO and the private sector have succeeded in reconciling their ethical aspirations and their goals. However, in the context of cooperating with the private sector, it appears to be of prime importance for UNESCO to place its moral status to the fore and preserve its guiding role.

Nowadays missions of promoting social justice or working towards sustainable development can only be defended effectively in close liaison with the private sector. Short-term profit and profitability, which competition and shareholders have long imposed on enterprises, are starting to be called into question by the business world. An increasing number of investors believe today that an enterprise's profitability and future should be measured both by its economic and financial results and by its social and environmental outputs. Thus more and more enterprises are making efforts to be not just economically viable, but also socially responsible.

It is not UNESCO's prime vocation to correct the inequalities of the free enterprise system. However, by reinforcing its links with business world networks, it will equip itself to promote the development of social capital at all stages of its action, from local to global and from standard-setting to operations. Far from being subordinate, this partnership today is essential to the concrete achievement of the Organization's goals. By allying itself with the private sector, UNESCO can facilitate the integration of the concept of social and environmental responsibility into the current management of the business world. UNESCO's objective is to achieve a better match between market interests, civil society's grievances and development priorities. The quest to harmonize cooperation among the various partners and the promotion of interdisciplinarity enable it to defend effectively its mandates in education, science, culture, the human and social sciences, communication and information.

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<sup>27</sup> Ahmed Sayyad, L'UNESCO: Une vision pour le XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

However, in order to defend its goals effectively, UNESCO cannot simply react or confine itself to mitigating the social and environmental deficiencies of markets. It must act upstream by contributing to the ecological education and sensitization of tomorrow's enterprise heads, since its relations with the private sector in this area are equally standard-setting.

The Education Sector, in association with the UNITWIN network, is already encouraging the training of tomorrow's actors in social ethics and environmental awareness. The aim is, by relying on various private sector networks, associations and foundations, to promote the Organization's founding principles at the very heart of the business world. Furthermore, inside schools of commerce and universities, UNESCO is able to influence directly the training of tomorrow's executives and to root its recommendations in respect of social responsibility, ethics and the environment firmly in their mindsets.

### ***Examples of cooperation***

Through its programmes and within its different sectors, UNESCO is in permanent contact with every element of civil society. Its networks reach equally into political, intellectual, cultural, economic and social circles. Through parliamentary associations, Clubs for UNESCO and Chairs, NGOs or foundations, it also has access to a host of experts. Interdisciplinarity and interrelations with this network of expertise facilitate and improve its action every day, whether upstream or on the ground. Now, working in partnership with the private sector can enable UNESCO to expand still further its network of expertise. Many enterprises do in fact have a high degree of technical, administrative or managerial competence in a great many fields. Education for all, promoting cultural diversity, emergence of knowledge society, defending scientific ethics and protecting world water resources – all of UNESCO's priority programmes would benefit greatly from privileged access to private sector resources and expertise.

Every sector could benefit. Here are a few examples:

#### **• *Education***

Since 2006, a joint programme has been run in association with Hewlett-Packard to stop the brain-drain from emerging countries. Originally intended for Africa and very successful there, it has now been extended to South-East Europe.



• **Sciences**

Since its establishment in 1998, the OREAL-UNESCO programme “For Women in Science” has given awards to over 100 women scientists from every continent.

• **Culture**

More than 500 multinational, small- or medium-sized companies are actively participating, in conjunction with the whole of civil society, in the Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity. This promotes creative industries and protects copyright in developing countries

• **Communication and Information**

Since 2004, Microsoft has made its expertise and resources available to UNESCO to overcome the digital divide and to promote information and communication technologies at world level.

• **Social and Human Sciences**

Space Group, a Korean enterprise specializing in urban development, has since 2005 been cooperating in a gathering of international experts on preservation of historical heritage and change management in urban areas.

These contributions are only a sample of the current and future partnerships established between UNESCO and the business world. Pharmaceutical industries, energy, agriculture or advanced technology businesses, etc. – the private sector in all its diversity is open to UNESCO. By making a strategic choice of partners, the totality of UNESCO’s programmes could benefit from the extraordinary potential of the networks, expertise and funding potential of a willing private sector.

In their “Comprehensive strategy devised to raise the visibility of UNESCO’s action...”,<sup>28</sup> the report authors drew a nuanced balance-sheet of the Organization both in respect of its general image and in respect of programme promotion. The positive impact of its programmes and missions was often mitigated by an “image that is complex, abstract and frequently hazy” among the public at large. The

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<sup>28</sup> “Comprehensive strategy devised to raise the visibility of UNESCO’s action through strengthening the coordination of information and dissemination activities within the Secretariat”, 161 EX/43, 2 May 2001.

Directives recommended in 2001 – “Developing a communication culture”, “Making communication a two-way process through responsiveness to target audiences”, “Anchoring communication activities in the programme” – have helped to make UNESCO’s achievements more accessible to the public at large. By reinforcing its partnership with the private sector, UNESCO can enjoy still greater visibility and a growing impact on both media and public opinion. Increased cooperation with the media and the multinationals will thus enable it to obtain contributions by management experts, communication specialists, information networks, etc., which themselves may promote major international groups at the global level. UNESCO owes it to itself to develop close and strategic links with its private sector partners to find the resources needed to promote its own programmes. Already the Organization has established partnership relations with extended press and media groups. For instance, the BBC, NKTV and CNN have committed themselves to ensuring sustained media coverage of the Organization’s priorities and achievements.

However, funding needs should never be the sole reason for seeking partnerships with the business world. UNESCO’s goals and priorities could never be subjected to a straightforward search for subsidies, however essential that may be. That is why the strategic choice of partners is fundamental in its dealings with the private sector. UNESCO must at the outset carefully determine the needs that its different programmes have, and scrupulously identify potential partners. In this way the Organization will avoid as far as possible waiting passively for partnership offers from enterprises. Indeed, the choice must be active: partnerships must be identified which may defend in complete synergy both its programmes and its founding principles. Through this careful study UNESCO will be able to formulate the principles and procedures for its choice of private partners, identify a coherent typology of forms of association with the business world, and lastly establish a kind of inventory of partners appropriate to the defence of its goals. In this, UNESCO will base itself on the Directives adopted in 2000 in the context of the Global Compact. That initiative was launched by the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, and was designed to bring together businesses and United Nations agencies, the world of work and civil society, around nine universal principles relating to human rights, labour standards and the environment. Since 24 June 2004, the Global Compact has embraced a 10th principle relating to combating corruption. Using the power of collective action, the Global Compact endeavours in particular to promote the civic responsibility of businesses such that the business world can participate in the search for solutions to the problems arising from globalization. In partnership with other social actors, the private sector may thus contribute to creating a more viable and more visible global economy.

As we have seen, civil society as a whole displays some reticence with regard to the private sector. Local authorities and non-profit associations commonly view with circumspection the manifest wish of some multinationals to become involved in partnership programmes for sustainable development. In particular, they express doubt as to the real motivation prompting multinational enterprises to display growing interest in environmental or ethical issues. True, the budget that major companies now allocate to protect their image is considerable, and the ethical statements that some of them make really form part of their communication strategies. Today all of the media and the public at large, especially in developed countries, have focused in particular on the concepts of fairness and sustainable development. In terms of brand image, environmental responsibility and social responsibility are undeniable assets. But if in some cases, enterprises have a genuine awareness that goes beyond the phase of a mere communication tool, in others social responsibility is simply used to “greenwash” a commercial venture.

UNESCO must therefore, when negotiating partnerships with the private sector, ensure that the prospective partners’ concept of ethics does not damage its moral authority or its international credibility. To avoid those dangers, it must carefully study the profile of its current or future partners, and thereby avoid the paradoxes or discordant notes that might damage both its image and its future missions.

While the private sector is often criticized, especially in international bodies, that criticism is neither effective nor constructive. Association with the world of business is today an obvious thing. UNESCO can nowadays benefit from the private sector’s knowledge, resources and expertise without sacrificing in any way its integrity, impartiality or independence. The Organization has now overcome its traditional reservations, and has adapted its coordination structure in order to allow the private sector to participate fully at its side in championing its objectives.

# 3

## A PARTNERSHIP FOR AN ETHICAL GLOBAL GOVERNANCE



### A. Moral authority and global governance

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*Through assertive use of the moral leadership [...] the Organization could champion a new vision of global governance throughout the international system, based on principles of inclusion, participation, responsiveness, transparency and equity.* <sup>29</sup>

Within the United Nations system, UNESCO occupies a unique position as the conscience of the nations. Its ability to unite the actors of new global governance and to lead them to confront the challenges of the millennium at its sides is due above all to its moral authority. Alongside its fight to promote education, science, culture and communication, one of its leading roles today is still to reassert the ethical responsibility of organizations.

UNESCO thus remains the guardian and repository of the moral standards and principles of world governance: helping to maintain peace and to promote the moral and intellectual solidarity of humanity, defence of democracy and human rights, fighting for education and knowledge-sharing, safeguarding diversity and the cultural heritage, preserving the environment, eliminating poverty, etc. In its fields of competence as in the context of its partnerships, the Organization is in practice obliged to disseminate its ethical vision of multilateralism.

UNESCO has furthermore enjoyed, ever since its foundation, the contribution of valuable partners – scientists, intellectuals, historic personalities and so on – and

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<sup>29</sup> "Report of the panel of eminent persons on United Nations-Civil Society relations" p. 70, para. 176.

many wills have always made it possible, thanks to their expertise and their individual inclinations, to induce a wave of international reflection. Today, the awakening of the new civil society actors is for UNESCO an opportunity to feed directly on the aspirations of the peoples. The Organization must redouble its efforts to instil in its partners, through its strength and its conviction, all the ideals and principles written into its Constitution.

Over and above its operational activities, UNESCO's ethical and intellectual missions remain the chief source of its legitimacy. Before any request for a contribution, whether of funds or of expertise, it must give priority in its partnerships to defending its image and its symbols. To face up to the new ethical challenges, UNESCO must again proclaim to the world the values that it has made its own and choose its partnerships in the light of its long-term objectives and strategies.

With regard to these new partners, "it is important to bear in mind their added value to the Organization's visibility, as well as the potential risk they may pose to UNESCO's image and reputation."<sup>30</sup> Indeed, obliged to behave with exemplary standards in every ethical and moral area, the Organization could find its image rapidly dented were it to act with negligence or imprudence. In order to preserve its legitimacy in the eyes of current or future partners, UNESCO must protect itself against mismatches. The Organization's name, logo and symbols are its brand and its added value. It will protect its image by studying each partnership proposal case by case and selecting with great care. In this way, it will guarantee the durability of its principles and actions, which match exactly the desires voiced by public opinion. Those desires, partly because of the new information and communication media, play an increasingly important role in the formulation of both national and international policies. Through their ability to raise awareness, UNESCO's partners thus remain, upstream and downstream, its best assistants to legitimate its action and to respond to the expectations of public opinion.

The concept of democracy of opinion came into being to describe the new democratic legitimacy of a strong and active civil society. UNESCO's partners, each in their own respective field, are very close to their audiences and enjoy a considerable influence over them. Consequently, in order to improve its visibility even further and to modernize its communications aimed at global opinion, the Organization can lean still more heavily on the networks and experience of parliamentarians, local authorities, NGOs and foundations, universities, associations or enterprises

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30 *"Directives concerning the use of the name, acronym, logo and Internet domain names of UNESCO", paragraph 4.*

that second it in its action. In its activities, it must constantly take account of the power of influence of public opinion. Open to the exterior, partnerships propel UNESCO to the forefront of various stages, from the local to the global, and offer it an opportunity to promote its mandates and goals across the democratic field of vision. They help in specific ways to build space for dialogue and enable the Organization to undertake its mediating work at the “glocal” level.

## **B. Strengthening exchange and consultation**

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UNESCO and all its partners agree on the need to improve their ways of cooperating. Many civil society actors still experience chronic difficulties in the processes of information communication and transmission. The better to define everyone's role it appears today essential, before any operational collaboration, to provide more spaces for dialogue, and to invite all civil society actors to take part. UNESCO's partners can give aid most effectively in their own specialized fields. In practice, UNESCO identifies its programme sectors' needs so as to define better what contributions and expertise it needs from its various partners. In this way, the innovative initiatives and experiments carried out in recent years have enabled both United Nations bodies and civil society to put forward a number of strategic recommendations in respect of their partnership. The diversity of its partners and their many fields of action obviously prevent UNESCO from approaching its relations with civil society in a uniform way. Nonetheless, the Organization's observations and initiatives enable the chief recommendations to be set out below.

### ***Promote the free flow of information***

Before it undertakes any mediation, UNESCO emphasizes the distribution of information among its programme sectors and its various partners. To this day NGOs, elected representatives and the private sector – and also the National Commissions and field offices – all too often point to a lack of information about directives governing the ways of partnership. Consequently the distribution of recommendations must be systematized, practical handbooks must be produced on the Organization's partners and common instruments must be made available to stimulate partnerships and to promote interaction.

Using a shared and up-to-date database, and relying on new communication technologies, UNESCO could keep all of its partners constantly informed about the needs and prospects of its programme activities. These modern information-handling tools can help to bring the Organization's expectations in line with its collaborators' ability to take action. Establishing documentation services, databases and electronic information bulletins would also provide partners with a relevant and regular update on joint cooperation activities.

## Revitalize collective consultation mechanisms

The collective consultation processes were defined by the 1995 Directives, and today enable UNESCO to have an exact idea of its various partners' aspirations and wishes. It therefore has effective tools for ascertaining and taking account of its collaborators' requirements.

Collective thematic consultations above all enable UNESCO's programme sectors to draw on the networks and expertise of representatives of civil society. While programme sectors have always carried out case-by-case enquiries, collective thematic consultations arranged periodically on the occasion of major international conferences bring together all partners in the new global governance. Despite budgetary difficulties, which sometimes make it impossible to obtain attendance by all parties, they have created a favourable space for debate around a common programme, and have helped to implement priorities on UNESCO's agenda. Only two formally-recognized consultations of this type now survive.

Through the collective consultation on education for all (EFA),<sup>31</sup> UNESCO and NGOs, thanks to the development of the concept of lifelong learning, are working to democratize and to improve learning worldwide. Within the framework of the follow-up to the World Education Forum, and in collaboration with the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee and civil society, UNESCO is also securing active promotion of education at the national and regional levels.

For its part, the collective consultation on higher education<sup>32</sup> ensures follow-up to the World Conference on Higher Education (Paris, 1998). This consultation reviews the initiatives and practical action taken in higher education in support of sustainable development, taking account of the role of women and the place of research and new information technologies.

It should be noted that UNESCO has regularly organized many activities with all elements in civil society. In this way it has created space for discussion to give partners the opportunity to make and argue their claims on the international scene. This kind of consultation is ideal for providing equitable representation for world aspirations, and helps to reduce the representation gap between countries of the North and the South.

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31 *EFA Global Monitoring Report, UNESCO, 2007.*

32 *9th UNESCO/NGO Collective Consultation on Higher Education, UNESCO, Paris, 6-8 April 2005.*



For civil society, this preliminary stage of consultation is fundamental if effective action is to be successfully conducted, whether standard-setting or operational. In this way, and in a symbiotic spirit, it can optimize its action in relation to the Organization's programme sectors by increasing consultation and intensifying debate.

Over and above straightforward bilateral discussions, UNESCO now advocates a multilateralist vision of cooperation. For its governing bodies, it is a top priority to instil a real culture of partnership and to promote interdisciplinarity. In this respect UNESCO's programmes have many times demonstrated the dynamism of their partnership approach. In tune with a civil society that is steeply ascendant, UNESCO can thereby discreetly enrich joint initiatives with its long experience: by a sound attribution of roles it can also ensure the appropriate use of resources and competences.

By listening, following up, advising and helping, UNESCO also has the ability to specify, at all stages of governance and alongside civil society, elected representatives and the private sector, the optimal circumstances for the effective achievement of its goals, which involves the following phases:

- UNESCO regularly consults the parties, and can thus clearly define the common challenges. Through direct consultation or in liaison with its various partners (IPU, UCLG, WFUCA, the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee), it can thereby identify needs and define joint programmes and implementation strategies.
- By promoting multipartite partnerships, it achieves greater representativity, and so gains legitimacy for its action. UNESCO ensures a sound distribution of tasks in the light of its various partners' resources, networks and expertise. It thereby creates the necessary conditions for greater synergy, and fosters innovation in its various actions.
- UNESCO fosters debate by creating room for dialogue, and so encourages contacts to ensure that good experience is shared among its various partners. It thereby promotes lasting, responsible and ethical links among its collaborators and so enshrines its role as the facilitator of new global governance.
- Through continuous monitoring of tasks, lastly, UNESCO ensures programme follow-up, certifies transparent management of resources and energies, and attests to the sound functioning of the various democratic processes.

In seeking synergy in its multipartite partnerships, UNESCO consequently prevents dispersal of strength and energy. Over and above simply bilateral partnerships, it also helps to bring about a wide network of actors and eases the machinery of tripartite cooperation between its programmes, civil society and the National Commissions.

## C. A structured and simplified partnership policy

The concentration of UNESCO's structures, inherited from the bipolar world, long led to a misalignment between it and its partners, especially at the end of the last century, because decision-making processes were not attuned to the workings of the political world. Finding itself unable to act autonomously, as it had in the past, the Organization had to reinvent itself and embarked upon rethinking its structures and management tools. A policy of long-term reforms enabled UNESCO to overcome many of its difficulties by relying in particular on a new policy of decentralizing its programmes.

Thus UNESCO updated coordination of its field offices by implementing a decentralization strategy that ensures its visibility and presence on the ground. Today, thanks to the 51 field offices (cluster, national or regional), and to the Geneva and New York liaison offices, UNESCO guarantees effective execution of its programme activities in close consultation with the National Commissions, the other United Nations bodies and various partners.

Through the appropriate management of personnel and resources, this vast network contributes to the sound planning and the implementation and coordination of activities in the field. The figureheads of the decentralization processes, the field offices are now essential assets for a sound match between the changing global, regional and national situation and the Organization's strategic thrust. By being close to the ground, listening to Member States and the aspirations of civil society, UNESCO has shown that it was better able to champion its objectives. That success is today encouraging the relocation of a growing number of programme activities to the local and regional levels.

All of UNESCO's partners, through their involvement with its programmes and goals and with the strength of their varied networks, have the opportunity to second it in this work of renewal. For its part, the Organization is obliged – while keeping in mind its intergovernmental status – to build recommendations from civil society that are essential to its goals into the application of its reforms. The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) was a recent illustration of that.<sup>33</sup> At that event, civil society actively helped to draw UNESCO's attention to the socio-cultural consequences of the new world order, and to the need to justify democratically

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33 At WSIS (Geneva, 2003 and Tunis, 2005) civil society was active in the sub-committees, and contributed ad hoc to the drafting teams. All of its participants, as well as those from the Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors (CCBI) expressed satisfaction with this democratic progress.

the whole of the decision-making processes. Although the reforms carried through have been successful, they testify at the same time to the immense task that remains. Recurrent problems include the representational difficulties of non-state actors from the countries of the South, weakness in information transmission, the lack of coordination between Headquarters and partners, etc. UNESCO is obliged to continue the renewal processes on which it has embarked by further intensifying its structural reforms. In particular, as we saw earlier, proper information transmission is an essential prerequisite for sound cooperation between UNESCO and its partners. Ensuring a regular flow of communication and debate is viewed by all permanent parties as absolutely essential for an effective association.

Some sectors have called for an intersectoral database covering all the actors working in their fields of competence. Such a resource, if kept up-to-date and exhaustive, would stimulate and speed up partnerships appropriately. It would allow each programme sector to anticipate upstream contributions and to target its partners in the light of its needs rather than waiting passively for offers of contributions. Accessible to all UNESCO's collaborators, such a database would also promote horizontal transmission of competences. It would allow partners to form close contacts without reference to the Organization and allow them to work in constant liaison on their joint activities. The Sector for External Relations and Cooperation has indeed created several databases for partners of the Organization, but access to those programmes should be extended to the whole of civil society to promote further synergies and multipartite contributions.

Similarly, it would be advantageous to revitalize the joint consultation machinery such as the joint programmatic commissions (JPCs) by extending them to all our partnerships. The JPCs allow programme sectors to deal directly with competent NGOs to involve them in operational strategies and activities. They could also benefit from the areas of expertise of all of UNESCO's partners. By extending them to the entirety of civil society actors – NGOs but also parliamentarians, local authorities and private sector – the Organization would be obtaining an effective and legitimized instrument for the programme sectors.

Civil society today, through bodies as diverse as the Interparliamentary Union or United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), which enable it to unite its forces in organizations or structured committees, is more effective in championing joint positions and recommendations. Because of their broadly representative nature, these organizations generally appear to be trustworthy and legitimate interlocutors both for UNESCO's governing bodies and for the programme sectors.

These structures have several advantages and qualities:

- they stimulate upstream coordination and exchange of competences among their various members;
- they have delegates with mandates to collaborate directly with the governing bodies;
- they coordinate grievances and make it easier for their claims and recommendations to be heard by UNESCO's bodies and at major international summits;
- they contribute to the implementation of resolutions adopted by the UNESCO General Conference;
- in the operational context, they help to prevent energies being dispersed, and allow effective and coherent cooperation to be organized through a better distribution of tasks and an alignment of agendas.

As hubs of cooperation, these collective organizations and committees play a fundamental role in improving UNESCO's systems for cooperation with and representation of civil society. They help a great deal to concentrate energies. It would thus be advantageous for UNESCO to give them an enhanced role at every step in its standard-setting and operational action. For the Organization they represent essential indispensable relays in the galaxy of civil society.

## D. The role of National Commissions for UNESCO

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As liaison bodies established between UNESCO and the Member States, the National Commissions for UNESCO are in direct contact with all the actors in their respective countries. Through their privileged position they are viewed as the guarantors of the Organization's visibility in the field, and through their proximity they appear to be best placed to inform both public opinion and current or potential partners about UNESCO's missions and goals.

At the intergovernmental level, the National Commissions have a liaison function. They thereby remain in permanent contact with the ministerial departments affected by the Organization's programmes. They also maintain privileged relations with their countries' decision-makers: parliamentarians, local authorities, NGOs and the business world. The arbiters of interactions, National Commissions have a central role to play in information processes and in mobilizing civil society around UNESCO's priorities. The Organization's shop-windows and precious intermediaries, their role is to promote participation by all partners in implementing the Organization's activities and to give it greater visibility.

However, beyond the straightforward role of evaluating and transmitting, National Commissions should, in line with the recommendations of the Cardoso plan, be at the forefront of mediation. Since they are in touch with the partners' needs and recommendations, they have prime responsibility for promoting information transmission, encouraging interaction and coordinating joint actions by civil society and UNESCO. National Commissions should therefore implant a culture of partnership in their actions and initiatives.

As regards support for National Commissions in relaying UNESCO's action at the national level, the parliamentary focal points have now demonstrated their potential: in particular, the parliamentarians advise their peers of UNESCO's priorities, and actively facilitate their implementation at the national level. By allowing legislative problems to be included immediately, these focal points support the National Commissions in their important work. However, civil society actors as a whole do not yet have the same facility of liaison with Member States.

With regard to inclusion in the Organization's consultation processes, UNESCO wishes parliamentary representatives to be systematically nominated inside the National Commissions themselves. With a view to optimizing interaction processes, the success of this initiative pleads in favour of its extension to the

rest of UNESCO's partners. The World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (WFUCA) and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) could benefit if some of their representatives took part in this national integration initiative. This arrangement could allow other representatives of civil society to be included and would definitely pave the way for tremendous synergy in support of UNESCO's missions.

Lastly, because of their central liaison role, the National Commissions for UNESCO are the first to be affected by the vast decentralization process that UNESCO initiated several years ago. Their restructuring and improved resourcing in equipment and funding remain absolutely essential for effective mobilization of energies to be guaranteed in their respective countries. Essential coordination bodies, they remain a major asset through their ability to facilitate dialogue with all civil society actors at national level.

## **E. For sustainable partnerships**

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### ***Facilitate accreditation systems***

Cooperation between civil society and UNESCO, from the local to the global level, is sometimes organized outside the framework of standards defined by the Executive Board. These very useful and effective contributions are not always formalized by the Organization's high-level authorities. As part of promoting its partnership culture, UNESCO can neglect no expertise and no network of competence. Therefore, the programme sectors and the representatives of civil society both call for simplification of the accreditation procedures, and for an improved regulatory framework covering all forms of current or potential partnerships. This would in particular involve normalizing partnerships between UNESCO and civil society on the ground, from the local to the international level. The Organization could thus easily update its networks in real time, and reassert in specific terms its facilitating and mediating role.

### ***Establish partnership monitoring and assessment processes***

UNESCO has as yet no machinery for evaluating partnerships. At the same time as it analyses current cooperation methods, UNESCO will in collaboration with its partners design tools for assessing and monitoring the totality of external contributions. The Organization, its partners and public opinion would then have up-to-date data on the activities undertaken. They could then benefit from previous experience to adjust and improve their standard-setting and operational activities. Civil society could thus testify for the Organization and Member States to the proper use of material and intellectual resources and ensure that fruitful partnerships are enhanced. Each success, by strengthening the portrayal of the Organization as a mediator, could help to modernize its image in the eyes of public opinion and for future partnerships.



# CONCLUSION

Companions from the outset, the UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations bring together people of different ages and socio-professional backgrounds. Around 3,700 in number, existing in over 100 countries, they have for over half a century contributed to information, training and activities linked with UNESCO's priorities. Permanent witnesses to the enthusiasm of the world's peoples for the Organization's ideals, they play a fundamental role in disseminating them at the national, regional and international levels.

NGOs, natural offshoots of civil society, have through their vitality and diversity contributed greatly to that society's awakening. Far from being antagonists, through their historical association with the Organization's activities, they are now able to bring positive upstream influence to bear on international processes, and to contribute their field experience to all the programme sectors. Popular, dynamic and innovative, they are UNESCO's informal emissaries both to public opinion and in the context of international meetings. Their inclusion guarantees a wide dissemination of the Organization's activities and mandates, and roots its action firmly in interdisciplinary reality, which is the absolute prerequisite for a proper synergy. With the International Conference of NGOs, the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee and the joint programmatic commissions, the NGOs are places of encounter and of dialogue, and have set up the structures for effective coordination.

However, it now appears essential for UNESCO to contribute actively to the geographical rebalancing of its partnerships. The under-representation of NGOs from the countries of the South, both for budgetary reasons and through issues of national situations, greatly damages the representative legitimacy and effectiveness of UNESCO's liaison structures. It is now one of its fundamental objectives to strengthen cooperation with NGOs from developing countries, and to ensure their promotion at the local and regional levels.

Parliamentarians are in permanent contact with both their governments and their fellow-citizens. Responsible for ratifying international treaties, drafting legislative documents and voting national budgets, parliamentarians are at the nexus of standard-setting negotiation processes. Their privileged position has made them ideal spokespersons for UNESCO's missions and goals to their constituents and

their governments as well as to political parties, trade unions and local communities with which they deal on a daily basis. The intimate democratic link to their constituents also allows them to be the natural outlets for the latter's claims on the international scene. The established cooperation between UNESCO and parliamentarians today facilitates the alignment of national particularities and international standards. Strengthening UNESCO's parliamentary network has confirmed the essential role of elected representatives in its decentralization processes.

In a world in which humanity is now in its majority urban, cities and local authorities have through decentralization become real catalysts for the whole set of problems that concern UNESCO. Genuinely independent entities, they are today in the forefront of the many challenges confronting the peoples of the world, be they social, educational, cultural, political or environmental processes. Urban communities are now offered to UNESCO in their extraordinary diversity. Each region, each commune, with its wealth of experience and its competencies, strong in its uniqueness, can now take part in the activities of the Organization's programme sectors. In accordance with the Cardoso report, which advised the United Nations to strengthen its links with local authorities whose power is ever clearer, UNESCO is now strengthening its cooperation with the host of municipalities, regional organizations and cities' associations that offer it their contributions.

In 1999, through the Global Compact, the United Nations set out in 10 points the framework for future partnerships between UNESCO and the private sector. It thereby enabled enterprises, which had long been kept at arm's length from international bodies, to confirm their participation in UNESCO's college of partners. UNESCO today seeks to instil responsibility in this major actor in the destiny of the modern world. Over and above a quest for financial support, it aims to promote actively an ethical vision of markets. As testified by the fruitful partnerships it has already concluded with several enterprises, as an impartial guide UNESCO can encourage the private sector to adopt a management model for world affairs that accords with the principles of multilateralism, openness, transparency and equity.

So UNESCO, through its many partnerships, is creating an opportunity to promote its ethical and moral principles well beyond the strictly intergovernmental framework. Because world peace "must be founded [...] upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind,"<sup>34</sup> the Organization is today responsible for uniting around itself all those who are willing to second it in its missions. A mediator and

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34 *Constitution of UNESCO, preamble.*

guide to debate, it can thus disseminate its ethical and multilateralist concept of cooperation throughout civil society.

“This cooperation has inter alia allowed UNESCO to recognize the importance of problems both upstream and downstream and thus to be attuned to civil society.”<sup>35</sup> A catalyst of international cooperation, UNESCO today has the opportunity to unite behind its banner the totality of wills of the new democratic reality. Its traditional encouragement of experimentation and innovation by its many partners is growing even stronger today, and its action is rooted in a genuine culture of partnership. UNESCO has no wish to assume direction of world affairs. Without presuming to be a leader, it must none the less become a true source of emulation, and embody an open space for reflection and collective action which enable civil society to flourish as a whole. World governance is everyone’s business. Far from repudiating its intergovernmental heritage, UNESCO’s duty is to recruit every support which could now contribute to the implementation of its programme and strategic activities.

To that end, UNESCO must strengthen the structures that guarantee the standard-setting and operational harmony of activities it undertakes with its partners, and improve the alignment of their possible contributions with the needs of its programme sectors. It will thus create the conditions for a proper synergy at all levels of cooperation.

In drawing up the balance sheet of its past experience, the Organization is today entering a new phase of cooperation, and in the face of the looming challenges, it is resolutely founding the partnerships of the new millennium.

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35 Ahmed Sayyad, *L’UNESCO: Une vision pour le XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

# **ANNEXES**

# **Constitution of UNESCO**

**Official text  
Adopted: 1945**

## **Preamble**

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The Constitution of UNESCO, signed on 16 November 1945, came into force on 4 November 1946 after ratification by twenty countries: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, France, Greece, India, Lebanon, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States. Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Adopted in London on 16 November 1945 and amended by the General Conference at its 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 12th, 15th, 17th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th and 31st sessions. The Governments of the States Parties to this Constitution on behalf of their peoples declare:

That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed;

That ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war;

That the great and terrible war which has now ended was a war made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races;

That the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfil in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern;

That a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.

For these reasons, the States Parties to this Constitution, believing in full and equal opportunities for education for all, in the unrestricted pursuit of objective truth, and in the free exchange of ideas and knowledge, are agreed and determined to develop and to increase the means of communication between their peoples and

to employ these means for the purposes of mutual understanding and a truer and more perfect knowledge of each other's lives;

In consequence whereof they do hereby create the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization for the purpose of advancing, through the educational and scientific and cultural relations of the peoples of the world, the objectives of international peace and of the common welfare of mankind for which the United Nations Organization was established and which its Charter proclaims.

## Article I

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### *Purposes and functions*

1. The purpose of the Organization is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations.
2. To realize this purpose the Organization will:
  - (a) Collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, through all means of mass communication and to that end recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image;
  - (b) Give fresh impulse to popular education and to the spread of culture:

By collaborating with Members, at their request, in the development of educational activities;

By instituting collaboration among the nations to advance the ideal of equality of educational opportunity without regard to race, sex or any distinctions, economic or social;

By suggesting educational methods best suited to prepare the children of the world for the responsibilities of freedom;

(c) Maintain, increase and diffuse knowledge:

By assuring the conservation and protection of the world's inheritance of books, works of art and monuments of history and science, and recommending to the nations concerned the necessary international conventions;

By encouraging cooperation among the nations in all branches of intellectual activity, including the international exchange of persons active in the fields of education, science and culture and the exchange of publications, objects of artistic and scientific interest and other materials of information;

By initiating methods of international cooperation calculated to give the people of all countries access to the printed and published materials produced by any of them.

3. With a view to preserving the independence, integrity and fruitful diversity of the cultures and educational systems of the States Members of the Organization, the Organization is prohibited from intervening in matters which are essentially within their domestic jurisdiction.

## **Article II**

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### ***Membership***

1. Membership of the United Nations Organization shall carry with it the right to membership of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
2. Subject to the conditions of the Agreement between this Organization and the United Nations Organization, approved pursuant to Article X of this Constitution, states not members of the United Nations Organization may be admitted to membership of the Organization, upon recommendation of the Executive Board, by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Conference.



3. Territories or groups of territories which are not responsible for the conduct of their international relations may be admitted as Associate Members by the General Conference by a two-thirds majority of Members present and voting, upon application made on behalf of such territory or group of territories by the Member or other authority having responsibility for their international relations. The nature and extent of the rights and obligations of Associate Members shall be determined by the General Conference.
4. Members of the Organization which are suspended from the exercise of the rights and privileges of membership of the United Nations Organization shall, upon the request of the latter, be suspended from the rights and privileges of this Organization.
5. Members of the Organization which are expelled from the United Nations Organization shall automatically cease to be Members of this Organization.
6. Any Member State or Associate Member of the Organization may withdraw from the Organization by notice addressed to the Director-General. Such notice shall take effect on 31 December of the year following that during which the notice was given. No such withdrawal shall affect the financial obligations owed to the Organization on the date the withdrawal takes effect. Notice of withdrawal by an Associate Member shall be given on its behalf by the Member State or other authority having responsibility for its international relations.
7. Each Member State is entitled to appoint a Permanent Delegate to the Organization.
8. The Permanent Delegate of the Member State shall present his credentials to the Director-General of the Organization, and shall officially assume his duties from the day of presentation of his credentials.

## Article III

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### **Organs**

The Organization shall include a General Conference, an Executive Board and a Secretariat.

## Article IV

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### **The General Conference**

#### **A. Composition**

1. The General Conference shall consist of the representatives of the States Members of the Organization. The Government of each Member State shall appoint not more than five delegates, who shall be selected after consultation with the National Commission, if established, or with educational, scientific and cultural bodies.

#### **B. Functions**

2. The General Conference shall determine the policies and the main lines of work of the Organization. It shall take decisions on programmes submitted to it by the Executive Board.
3. The General Conference shall, when it deems desirable and in accordance with the regulations to be made by it, summon international conferences of states on education, the sciences and humanities or the dissemination of knowledge; non-governmental conferences on the same subjects may be summoned by the General Conference or by the Executive Board in accordance with such regulations.
4. The General Conference shall, in adopting proposals for submission to the Member States, distinguish between recommendations and international conventions submitted for their approval. In the former case a majority vote shall suffice; in the latter case a two-thirds majority shall be required. Each of the Member States shall submit recommendations or conventions to its competent authorities within a period of one year from the close of the session of the General Conference at which they were adopted.
5. Subject to the provisions of Article V, paragraph 6 (c), the General Conference shall advise the United Nations Organization on the educational, scientific and cultural aspects of matters of concern to the latter, in accordance with the terms and procedure agreed upon between the appropriate authorities of the two Organizations.

6. The General Conference shall receive and consider the reports sent to the Organization by Member States on the action taken upon the recommendations and conventions referred to in paragraph 4 above or, if it so decides, analytical summaries of these reports.
7. The General Conference shall elect the members of the Executive Board and, on the recommendation of the Board, shall appoint the Director-General.

### **C. Voting**

8. (a) Each Member State shall have one vote in the General Conference. Decisions shall be made by a simple majority except in cases in which a two-thirds majority is required by the provisions of this Constitution, or the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference. A majority shall be a majority of the Members present and voting.
- (b) A Member State shall have no vote in the General Conference if the total amount of contributions due from it exceeds the total amount of contributions payable by it for the current year and the immediately preceding calendar year.
- (c) The General Conference may nevertheless permit such a Member State to vote, if it is satisfied that failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member State.

### **D. Procedure**

9. (a) The General Conference shall meet in ordinary session every two years. It may meet in extraordinary session if it decides to do so itself or if summoned by the Executive Board, or on the demand of at least one third of the Member States.
  - (b) At each session the location of its next ordinary session shall be designated by the General Conference. The location of an extraordinary session shall be decided by the General Conference if the session is summoned by it, or otherwise by the Executive Board.
10. The General Conference shall adopt its own rules of procedure. It shall at each session elect a President and other officers.

11. The General Conference shall set up special and technical committees and such other subsidiary organs as may be necessary for its purposes.
2. The General Conference shall cause arrangements to be made for public access to meetings, subject to such regulations as it shall prescribe.

### **E. Observers**

13. The General Conference, on the recommendation of the Executive Board and by a two-thirds majority may, subject to its rules of procedure, invite as observers at specified sessions of the Conference or of its commissions representatives of international organizations, such as those referred to in Article XI, paragraph 4.
14. When consultative arrangements have been approved by the Executive Board for such international non-governmental or semi-governmental organizations in the manner provided in Article XI, paragraph 4, those organizations shall be invited to send observers to sessions of the General Conference and its commissions.

## **Article V**

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### **Executive Board**

#### **A. Composition**

1. (a) The Executive Board shall be elected by the General Conference and it shall consist of fifty-eight Member States. The President of the General Conference shall sit *ex officio* in an advisory capacity on the Executive Board.  
  
(b) Elected States Members of the Executive Board are hereinafter referred to as “Members” of the Executive Board.
2. (a) Each Member of the Executive Board shall appoint one representative. It may also appoint alternates.

- (b) In selecting its representative on the Executive Board, the Member of the Executive Board shall endeavour to appoint a person qualified in one or more of the fields of competence of UNESCO and with the necessary experience and capacity to fulfil the administrative and executive duties of the Board. Bearing in mind the importance of continuity, each representative shall be appointed for the duration of the term of the Member of the Executive Board, unless exceptional circumstances warrant his replacement. The alternates appointed by each Member of the Executive Board shall act in the absence of its representative in all his functions.
3. In electing Members to the Executive Board, the General Conference shall have regard to the diversity of cultures and a balanced geographical distribution.
- 4 (a) Members of the Executive Board shall serve from the close of the session of the General Conference which elected them until the close of the second ordinary session of the General Conference following their election. The General Conference shall, at each of its ordinary sessions, elect the number of Members of the Executive Board required to fill vacancies occurring at the end of the session.
- (b) Members of the Executive Board are eligible for re-election. Re-elected Members of the Executive Board shall endeavour to change their representatives on the Board.
5. In the event of the withdrawal from the Organization of a Member of the Executive Board, its term of office shall be terminated on the date when the withdrawal becomes effective.

## **B. Functions**

6. (a) The Executive Board shall prepare the agenda for the General Conference. It shall examine the programme of work for the Organization and corresponding budget estimates submitted to it by the Director-General in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article VI and shall submit them with such recommendations as it considers desirable to the General Conference.
- (b) The Executive Board, acting under the authority of the General Conference, shall be responsible for the execution of the programme adopted by the Conference. In accordance with the decisions of the General Conference and having regard to circumstances arising between two ordinary ses-

sions, the Executive Board shall take all necessary measures to ensure the effective and rational execution of the programme by the Director-General.

- (c) Between ordinary sessions of the General Conference, the Board may discharge the functions of adviser to the United Nations, set forth in Article IV, paragraph 5, whenever the problem upon which advice is sought has already been dealt with in principle by the Conference, or when the solution is implicit in decisions of the Conference.
7. The Executive Board shall recommend to the General Conference the admission of new Members to the Organization.
8. Subject to decisions of the General Conference, the Executive Board shall adopt its own rules of procedure. It shall elect its officers from among its Members.
9. The Executive Board shall meet in regular session at least four times during a biennium and may meet in special session if convoked by the Chairman on his initiative or upon the request of six Members of the Executive Board.
10. The Chairman of the Executive Board shall present, on behalf of the Board, to the General Conference at each ordinary session, with or without comments, the reports on the activities of the Organization which the Director-General is required to prepare in accordance with the provisions of Article VI.3 (b).
11. The Executive Board shall make all necessary arrangements to consult the representatives of international organizations or qualified persons concerned with questions within its competence.
12. Between sessions of the General Conference, the Executive Board may request advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice on legal questions arising within the field of the Organization's activities.
13. The Executive Board shall also exercise the powers delegated to it by the General Conference on behalf of the Conference as a whole.

## Article VI

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### **Secretariat**

1. The Secretariat shall consist of a Director-General and such staff as may be required.
2. The Director-General shall be nominated by the Executive Board and appointed by the General Conference for a period of four years, under such conditions as the Conference may approve. The Director-General may be appointed for a further term of four years but shall not be eligible for reappointment for a subsequent term. The Director-General shall be the chief administrative officer of the Organization.
3. (a) The Director-General, or a deputy designated by him, shall participate, without the right to vote, in all meetings of the General Conference, of the Executive Board, and of the Committees of the Organization. He shall formulate proposals for appropriate action by the Conference and the Board, and shall prepare for submission to the Board a draft programme of work for the Organization with corresponding budget estimates.  
  
(b) The Director-General shall prepare and communicate to Member States and to the Executive Board periodical reports on the activities of the Organization. The General Conference shall determine the periods to be covered by these reports.
4. The Director-General shall appoint the staff of the Secretariat in accordance with staff regulations to be approved by the General Conference. Subject to the paramount consideration of securing the highest standards of integrity, efficiency and technical competence, appointment to the staff shall be on as wide a geographical basis as possible.
5. The responsibilities of the Director-General and of the staff shall be exclusively international in character. In the discharge of their duties they shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any authority external to the Organization. They shall refrain from any action which might prejudice their positions as international officials. Each State Member of the Organization undertakes to respect the international character of the responsibilities of the

Director-General and the staff, and not to seek to influence them in the discharge of their duties.

6. Nothing in this Article shall preclude the Organization from entering into special arrangements within the United Nations Organization for common services and staff and for the interchange of personnel.

## **Article VII**

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### ***National cooperating bodies***

1. Each Member State shall make such arrangements as suit its particular conditions for the purpose of associating its principal bodies interested in educational, scientific and cultural matters with the work of the Organization, preferably by the formation of a National Commission broadly representative of the government and such bodies.
2. National Commissions or National Cooperating Bodies, where they exist, shall act in an advisory capacity to their respective delegations to the General Conference, to the representatives and alternates of their countries on the Executive Board and to their Governments in matters relating to the Organization and shall function as agencies of liaison in all matters of interest to it.
3. The Organization may, on the request of a Member State, delegate, either temporarily, a member of its Secretariat to serve on the National Commission of that state, in order to assist in the development of its work.

## **Article VIII**

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### ***Reports by Member States***

Each Member State shall submit to the Organization, at such times and in such manner as shall be determined by the General Conference, reports on the laws,



regulations and statistics relating to its educational, scientific and cultural institutions and activities, and on the action taken upon the recommendations and conventions referred to in Article IV, paragraph 4.

## Article IX

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### ***Budget***

1. The budget shall be administered by the Organization.
2. The General Conference shall approve and give final effect to the budget and to the apportionment of financial responsibility among the States Members of the Organization subject to such arrangement with the United Nations as may be provided in the agreement to be entered into pursuant to Article X.
3. The Director-General may accept voluntary contributions, gifts, bequests and subventions directly from governments, public and private institutions, associations and private persons, subject to the conditions specified in the Financial Regulations.

## Article X

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### ***Relations with the United Nations Organization***

This Organization shall be brought into relation with the United Nations Organization, as soon as practicable, as one of the specialized agencies referred to in Article 57 of the Charter of the United Nations. This relationship shall be effected through an agreement with the United Nations Organization under Article 63 of the Charter, which agreement shall be subject to the approval of the General Conference of this Organization. The agreement shall provide for effective cooperation between the two Organizations in the pursuit of their common purposes, and at the same time shall recognize the autonomy of this Organization, within

the fields of its competence as defined in this Constitution. Such agreement may, among other matters, provide for the approval and financing of the budget of the Organization by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

## **Article XI**

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### ***Relations with other specialized international organizations and agencies***

1. This Organization may cooperate with other specialized intergovernmental organizations and agencies whose interests and activities are related to its purposes. To this end the Director- General, acting under the general authority of the Executive Board, may establish effective working relationships with such organizations and agencies and establish such joint committees as may be necessary to assure effective cooperation. Any formal arrangements entered into with such organizations or agencies shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Board.
2. Whenever the General Conference of this Organization and the competent authorities of any other specialized intergovernmental organizations or agencies whose purpose and functions lie within the competence of this Organization deem it desirable to effect a transfer of their resources and activities to this Organization, the Director-General, subject to the approval of the Conference, may enter into mutually acceptable arrangements for this purpose.
3. This Organization may make appropriate arrangements with other intergovernmental organizations for reciprocal representation at meetings.
4. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization may make suitable arrangements for consultation and cooperation with non-governmental international organizations concerned with matters within its competence, and may invite them to undertake specific tasks. Such cooperation may also include appropriate participation by representatives of such organizations on advisory committees set up by the General Conference.

## Article XII

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### *Legal status of the Organization*

The provisions of Articles 104 and 105 of the Charter of the United Nations Organization concerning the legal status of that Organization, its privileges and immunities, shall apply in the same way to this Organization.

## Article XIII

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### *Amendments*

1. Proposals for amendments to this Constitution shall become effective upon receiving the approval of the General Conference by a two-thirds majority; provided, however, that those amendments which involve fundamental alterations in the aims of the Organization or new obligations for the Member States shall require subsequent acceptance on the part of two thirds of the Member States before they come into force. The draft texts of proposed amendments shall be communicated by the Director-General to the Member States at least six months in advance of their consideration by the General Conference.
2. The General Conference shall have power to adopt by a two-thirds majority rules of procedure for carrying out the provisions of this Article.

## Article XIV

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### *Interpretation*

1. The English and French texts of this Constitution shall be regarded as equally authoritative.

2. Any question or dispute concerning the interpretation of this Constitution shall be referred for determination to the International Court of Justice or to an arbitral tribunal, as the General Conference may determine under its Rules of Procedure.

## **Article XV**

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### ***Entry into force***

1. This Constitution shall be subject to acceptance. The instrument of acceptance shall be deposited with the Government of the United Kingdom.
2. This Constitution shall remain open for signature in the archives of the Government of the United Kingdom. Signature may take place either before or after the deposit of the instrument of acceptance. No acceptance shall be valid unless preceded or followed by signature. However, a state that has withdrawn from the Organization shall simply deposit a new instrument of acceptance in order to resume membership.
3. This Constitution shall come into force when it has been accepted by twenty of its signatories. Subsequent acceptances shall take effect immediately.
4. The Government of the United Kingdom will inform all Members of the United Nations and the Director-General of the receipt of all instruments of acceptance and of the date on which the Constitution comes into force in accordance with the preceding paragraph.

In faith whereof, the undersigned, duly authorized to that effect, have signed this Constitution in the English and French languages, both texts being equally authentic.

Done in London the sixteenth day of November, one thousand nine hundred and forty-five, in a single copy, in the English and French languages, of which certified copies will be communicated by the Government of the United Kingdom to the Governments of all the Members of the United Nations.

**OUTCOME DOCUMENT OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL FORUM  
OF CIVIL SOCIETY**

**34th session of the General Conference – 25 October 2007**

**UNESCO – Sector for External Relations and Cooperation**

## UNESCO's partners

### *Thursday 25 October 2007*

We, representatives of the Member States of UNESCO, non-governmental organizations, parliamentarians, local representatives and private sector enterprises, participating in the International Forum of Civil Society convened by UNESCO on 25 October 2007 in Paris during the 34th session of the General Conference,

Considering Article XI.4 of the Constitution of UNESCO, which stipulates that the Organization “may make suitable arrangements for consultation and cooperation with non-governmental international organizations concerned with matters within its competence”;

Recalling the provisions governing partnerships with civil society and the private sector contained in the Millennium Declaration adopted on 8 September 2000 by the United Nations General Assembly;

Mindful of the in-depth analysis of the relations between the United Nations system and civil society, including parliamentarians and the private sector, contained in the report of the Panel of Eminent Persons entitled “We the peoples: civil society, the United Nations and global governance”, known as the “Cardoso Report”, of 11 June 2004;

Aware of the growing desire of citizens around the world to participate in discussions aimed at providing answers to today's major challenges at the local, national and international levels;

Affirming the crucial importance of forming multi-stakeholder partnerships and alliances in order to achieve the internationally recognized development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

Emphasizing the need to more effectively pool the resources, experience and expertise of the various stakeholders in order to implement better coordinated and more effective action;

Affirm our commitment to the five overarching objectives defined in UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013:

- Attaining quality education for all and lifelong education
- Mobilizing science knowledge and policy for sustainable development

- Addressing emerging social and ethical challenges
- Fostering cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace
- Building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication
- Support UNESCO's approach, which makes gender equality and Africa cross-cutting priorities for all of UNESCO's activities;
- In each of these areas, we are committed to supporting UNESCO through our respective means of action by:
  - helping to keep citizens better informed and to promote greater public awareness;
  - encouraging project ownership by beneficiaries, the inclusion of a broad range of partners and the preservation of diversity of opinions;
  - participating in discussions and consultations held in the context of programme preparation;
  - promoting the ratification of standard-setting instruments adopted at UNESCO and the adoption of relevant legislation and appropriate budgets;
  - providing feedback on the programmes and activities implemented and acting as a bridge, wherever possible, between citizens and UNESCO;

Invite UNESCO to continue to act as an interface between the various spheres of civil society and to create the necessary forums for dialogue with a view to promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships at the international, national and regional levels through its field offices and in liaison with the National Commissions for UNESCO;

Adopt this document on this 25th day of the month of October 2007 in Paris, France.

**DIRECTIVES CONCERNING**

**THE USE OF THE NAME,**

**ACRONYM, LOGO AND**

**INTERNET DOMAIN NAMES**

**OF UNESCO**

**From 1 November 2007, the use of the name, acronym, logo and Internet domain names of UNESCO shall be subject to the following provisions (ref.: Resolution 34 C/86):**



# I. Name, acronym, logo and Internet domain name of the Organization

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## I.1 Definitions

The full official name is: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The name may be translated into any language.

The acronym is formed from the initials of the full name in English: UNESCO. It may be written in any characters.

The emblem or logo, which is used as the official seal, is shown below:



The Internet domain name of the Organization is “unesco.org”.

## I.2 Protection

To the extent that the name, acronym and logo of UNESCO have been notified and accepted by the Paris Union Member States under the Article 6 ter of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, adopted in 1883 and revised at Stockholm in 1967, UNESCO has recourse to Paris Convention Member States’ domestic systems to prevent the use of the name, acronym or logo of UNESCO where such use falsely suggests a connection with UNESCO.

UNESCO may take measures against misuse of its name or acronym as Internet domain names under the Uniform Dispute Resolution Policy of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), or the procedures defined by national authorities and/or other competent bodies.

## I.3 Rights of use

Only the General Conference and the Executive Board, i.e. the governing bodies, the Secretariat and the National Commissions for UNESCO have the right to use

the name, acronym, logo and/or Internet domain names of UNESCO without prior authorization, subject to the rules set out by the Directives.

### **1.4 Authorization**

Authorizing the use of the name, acronym and/or logo of UNESCO is the prerogative of the General Conference and the Executive Board. In specific cases as set out by the Directives, the governing bodies empower, by delegation, the Director-General and the National Commissions for UNESCO to authorize such use to other bodies. The power to authorize the use of the name, acronym, logo and/or Internet domain names of UNESCO may not be granted to other bodies.

Any decision authorizing the use of the name, acronym, logo and/or domain names of UNESCO shall be based on the following criteria: (i) relevance of the proposed association to the Organization's strategic objectives and programme; and (ii) compliance with the values, principles and constitutional aims of UNESCO.

The use of the name, acronym, logo and/or domain name must be expressly authorized in advance and in writing, and must comply with the specified conditions and procedures, in particular with respect to its visual presentation, duration and scope.

## **II. Forms of use**

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### **II.1 Graphical standards of the name, acronym and logo**

The UNESCO logo should be reproduced according to the graphical standards elaborated by the Secretariat, and should not be altered. Wherever possible, the full name of the Organization (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) should appear beneath the logo in the language(s) of the document, so as to affirm the Organization's membership in the United Nations system and its specific fields of competence.

UNESCO's logo may be associated with the logo or logos of subsidiary bodies, intergovernmental programmes, other organizations or specific events (linked logo). To make the link with UNESCO precise and concrete, the linked logo should,

wherever possible, include a phrase or an indication of how the entity or event in question is thus linked.

## ***II.2 Registration and use of Internet domain names***

### ***At the international level***

All generic extensions (gTLDs) shall be linked to the sole name of UNESCO's active international domain: "unesco.org". The referenced Internet site at that address is managed by the Secretariat. Only a staff member duly authorized by the Director-General may register domain names under the existing or future generic extensions.

### ***At the national level***

National extensions (ccTLDs) afford an opportunity to highlight the presence of UNESCO in each country. Internet domain names should be, wherever possible, registered under national extensions or sub-extensions by the National Commissions and point towards the Internet site of the National Commission where it exists, or towards the "unesco.org" site, in order to avoid registration by third parties.

### ***Policy on combined domain names***

As the possibilities for registering Internet domain names associating the six letters of UNESCO's name with any letter(s) or symbol(s) are practically unlimited, the Organization shall not officially recognize any site operating with such domain names. To reference the Internet sites of bodies or of projects linked with the Secretariat or National Commissions, practices consisting of giving the names of official domains should be fostered. The Secretariat, National Commissions and/or other competent bodies shall take all appropriate measures to prevent third parties not expressly authorized from registering and using such combined domain names.

### **III. Role of the governing bodies and of the Director-General**

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#### **III.1 Role of the governing bodies**

##### **III.1.1 Authorization**

The General Conference and the Executive Board authorize the use of the name, acronym or logo of UNESCO by means of resolutions and decisions, notably in the case of intergovernmental programmes, programme networks, bodies under the auspices of UNESCO (for example, category 2 centres), official partners, global or regional prizes, and special events in the Member States.

The governing bodies should ensure that their resolutions and decisions stipulate the terms of the authorization granted, in accordance with the Directives.

The governing bodies may ask the Director-General to put specific cases of authorization before them and/or submit to them an occasional or regular report on specific cases of use and/or of authorization, notably concerning the granting of patronage, partnerships and commercial use.

##### **III.1.2 Protection**

The governing bodies should ensure that the regulations governing the intergovernmental programmes, programme networks, and bodies under the auspices of UNESCO are in harmony with these Directives.

In specific cases, the governing bodies may ask the Director-General to monitor the proper use of the name, acronym and logo of UNESCO, and to initiate proceedings against abusive use where appropriate.

#### **III.2 Role of the Director-General**

##### **III.2.1 Authorization**

In the context of programme execution, only the Director-General is empowered to approve for any activity or entity of the Secretariat, including inter-agency activi-

ties, the creation of a specific logo that should always be associated with the logo of UNESCO.

The Director-General is empowered to authorize the use of UNESCO's name, acronym or logo notably in connection with patronage, the appointment of goodwill ambassadors, and other personalities promoting the Organization and its programmes, such as Artists for Peace or Sports Champions, and also contractual arrangements and partnerships, as well as specific promotional activities, provided that in each case the grantee uses a phrase or indication of how the entity or activity in question is thus linked.

The Director-General may decide to put specific cases of authorization before the governing bodies.

### **III.2.1.1 Criteria and conditions for the granting of UNESCO's patronage**

UNESCO's patronage may be granted to various kinds of activities, such as cinematographic works and other audiovisual productions, publications, the holding of congresses, meetings and conferences, the awarding of prizes, and, also, other national and international events.

Criteria applicable to all activities under patronage:

- (i) Impact: Patronage may be granted to exceptional activities likely to have a real impact on education, science, culture or communication, and significantly enhance UNESCO's visibility.
- (ii) Reliability: Adequate assurance should be obtained concerning those in charge (professional experience and reputation, references and recommendations, legal and financial guarantees) and the activities concerned (political, legal, financial and technical feasibility).

Conditions applicable to the granting of patronage:

- (i) UNESCO's patronage is granted in writing exclusively by the Director-General.
- (ii) In the case of national activities, the decision regarding the granting of UNESCO's patronage is made on the basis of obligatory consultations with the National Commission of the Member State in which the activity is held and the National Commission of the Member State in which the body responsible for the activity is domiciled.

- (iii) The Organization and the National Commission(s) concerned must be able to participate actively in the preparation and execution of the activities concerned.
- (iv) The Organization must be afforded an appropriate degree of visibility, notably through the use of its name, acronym and logo.
- (v) Patronage may be granted to individual activities or to activities which take place regularly. In the latter case, the duration must be fixed and the authorization renewed periodically.

### **III.2.1.2 Contractual arrangements**

Any contractual arrangement between the Secretariat and outside organizations involving an explicit association with those organizations (for example, in the framework of partnerships with the private sector or civil society, co-publication or co-production agreements, or contracts with professionals and personalities supporting the Organization) must include a standard clause stipulating that any use of the name, acronym or logo must be approved previously in writing. Authorizations accorded under such contractual arrangements must be limited to the context of the designated activity.

### **III.2.1.3 Commercial use**

The sale of goods or services bearing the name, acronym, logo and/or Internet domain name of UNESCO chiefly for profit shall be regarded as “commercial use” for the purpose of the Directives. Any commercial use of the name, acronym, logo and/or Internet domain names of UNESCO, alone or in the form of a linked logo, must be expressly authorized by the Director-General, under a specific contractual arrangement.

### **III.2.2 Protection**

The Director-General ensures that the terms and conditions of patronage, the nomination of goodwill ambassadors and other personalities promoting the Organization, such as Artists for Peace or Sports Champions, and also contractual arrangements and partnerships with outside organizations, are in line with the Directives. The Director-General is responsible for instituting proceedings in the case of unauthorized use or registration at the international level of the name, acronym, logo and/or Internet domain names of UNESCO in generic extensions (gTLDs).

## **IV. Role of the Member States and their National Commissions**

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### ***IV.1 Competent bodies***

The National Commissions for UNESCO, except where another body has been designated by the Member States, are the competent body to deal with questions relating to the use at the national level of the name, acronym, logo or Internet domain names of UNESCO in national extensions or sub-extensions (ccTLDs), in accordance with national laws.

### ***IV.2 Rights of use***

National Commissions have the right to use the name, acronym and logo of UNESCO in conformity with these Directives. If they do so, UNESCO's name, acronym and/or logo are always associated with their own name and, if they so desire, with their specific logo. The use by National Commissions of UNESCO's logo is strongly encouraged.

### ***IV.3 Authorization***

In the framework of the intergovernmental programmes, the programme networks or the Clubs, Centres and Associations for UNESCO movement, the National Commissions, in keeping with their role as liaison bodies recognized by the Constitution, or the other bodies designated in conformity with point IV.1 above, have the right to authorize the use of UNESCO's name, acronym or logo, but only in the form of a linked logo – which shall specify the identity of the programme or movement concerned and must therefore be in compliance with the specific regulations of the given entities, networks or programmes. This concerns, inter alia, the national committees of intergovernmental programmes, biosphere reserves, associated schools or UNESCO Chairs, as well as Clubs, Centres or Associations for UNESCO and their national coordinating bodies.

When granting their own patronage to national activities, National Commissions can authorize organizations working in UNESCO's fields of competence to use UNESCO's name, acronym and/or logo always in association with the National Commissions' own name and, if they so desire, their own logo, according to the

provisions of point IV.2 above. The same applies to contractual arrangements and promotional activities which they enter into or conduct in their own name, at the national level.

National Commissions may establish time limits and/or conduct periodic reviews related to authorizations granted by them. National Commissions have the right to withdraw their authorizations.

#### **IV.4 Protection**

National Commissions, or other bodies designated in conformity with point IV.1 above, are responsible for the consequences arising out of the authorizations granted by them.

To achieve the objectives of these Directives, the provisions of national legislations and/or of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property are to be taken into consideration.

The Secretariat and the Member States, through their National Commissions or other designated bodies, should closely cooperate, in order to prevent any unauthorized use of UNESCO's name, acronym, logo or Internet domain names at the national level, in liaison with competent national bodies and in line with these Directives.

## **V. Amendment of the Directives**

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These Directives may only be amended by the General Conference.



# **The Millennium Development Goals**

**Source : United Nations Portal**

## **GOAL 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger**

New data, based on the latest estimates of the cost of living in developing countries, may change our view of the scale and distribution of global poverty (see box). But the continuing economic growth in all developing regions suggests that the downward trend in poverty continued through 2007. The goal of cutting in half the proportion of people in the developing world living on less than \$1 a day by 2015 remains within reach.

Since 1990, extreme poverty in the developing world has been measured by a standard representing the poverty lines found among the poorest countries of the world. Originally set at \$1 a day, the international poverty line was subsequently revised to a \$1.08 a day.

Poverty reduction cannot be accomplished without full and productive employment and decent work for all. The number of working poor is unlikely to be reduced without increases in productivity.

Over the past 10 years, productivity has risen by at least 4 per cent annually in Southern Asia, Eastern Asia and the Commonwealth of Independent States. As a result, there were fewer working poor in all three regions. In contrast, the generally low and volatile changes in productivity in sub-Saharan Africa have limited the decline in working poverty in that region.

## **GOAL 2: Achieve universal primary education**

In almost all regions, the net enrolment ratio in 2006 exceeded 90 per cent, and many countries were close to achieving universal primary enrolment.

The number of children of primary school age who were out of school fell from 103 million in 1999 to 75 million in 2006, despite an overall increase in the number of children in this age group.

Children affected by conflict or political unrest – those who most need structure and a semblance of normality in their lives – are more likely to be deprived of an adequate education.

For children to reach their full potential and countries to develop, the gains made in universal primary education must be replicated at the secondary level. In 2008, 54 per cent of children of the appropriate age in developing countries attend secondary school.

### **GOAL 3: Promote gender equality and empower women**

Gender equality is a human right and at the heart of achieving the Millennium Development goals. It is a prerequisite to overcoming hunger, poverty and disease. Having an equal voice in the decisions that affect their lives — from within the family to the loftiest realms of government — is a key element of women's empowerment.

Girls' primary enrolment increased more than boys' in all developing regions between 2000 and 2006. As a result, two out of three countries have achieved gender parity at the primary level. Despite impressive gains, girls account for 55 per cent of the out-of-school population.

Women's participation in paid, non-agricultural employment has continued to increase. In some regions, women are slowly gaining access to paid employment at a level on par with men, or, in the case of the CIS, exceeding it.

Despite greater parliamentary participation, women are largely absent from the highest levels of governance. In January 2008, women accounted for 7 of the 150 elected heads of state and 8 of the 192 heads of governments of United Nations Member States.

### **GOAL 4: Reduce child mortality**

In 2006, for the first time since mortality data have been gathered, annual deaths among children under five dipped below 10 million. Nevertheless, the death of millions of children from preventable causes each year is unacceptable. A child born in a developing country is over 13 times more likely to die within the first five years of life than a child born in an industrialized country.

The lack of progress in child survival has been mirrored by neglect of many basic health services in parts of the developing world.

The leading causes of childhood deaths – pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria and measles – are easily prevented through simple improvements in basic health services and proven interventions.

In 2006, about 80 per cent of the world's children received routine measles vaccinations. While this jump in coverage is impressive, additional efforts will be required to ensure that every child is immunized and to achieve the goal of reducing measles mortality by 90 per cent by 2010.

### ***GOAL 5: Improve maternal health***

Maternal mortality remains unacceptably high across much of the developing world. In 2005, more than 500,000 women died during pregnancy, childbirth or in the six weeks after delivery.

At the global level, maternal mortality decreased by less than 1 per cent per year between 1990 and 2005 – far below the 5.5 per cent annual improvement needed to reach the target.

The proportion of pregnant women in the developing world who had at least one antenatal care visit increased from slightly more than half at the beginning of the 1990s to almost three fourths a decade later.

The unmet need for family planning – the gap between women's stated desires to delay or avoid having children and their actual use of contraception – has declined in most countries that have discernible trends. In all regions, this unmet need is highest among the poorest households.

### ***GOAL 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases***

Every day, nearly 7,500 people become infected with HIV and 5,500 die from AIDS, mostly due to a lack of HIV prevention and treatment services. Despite these staggering numbers, some encouraging developments have sparked small victories in the battle against AIDS.

An estimated 15.5 million women and 15.3 million men were living with HIV worldwide in 2007, compared with 14.1 million and 13.8 million, respectively, in 2001.

Recorded malaria cases and deaths plummeted by more than 70 per cent between 2000 and 2006.

In 2006, there were an estimated 1.7 million deaths due to tuberculosis and 14.4 million people infected with the disease, including approximately 9.2 million new cases.

### ***GOAL 7: Ensure environmental sustainability***

From 1990 to 2005, the world lost 3 per cent of its forests, an average decrease of 0.2 per cent a year. Deforestation, primarily due to the conversion of forests to

agricultural land in developing countries, continues at an alarming rate – about 13 million hectares a year.

In addition to the loss of biodiversity, between 18 and 25 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions each year are associated with deforestation, making it a key factor in climate change.

Since 1990, the number of people in developing regions using improved sanitation facilities has increased by 1.1 billion, with significant improvements in South-Eastern and Eastern Asia. Nevertheless, in order to meet the target, the number of people using improved sanitation facilities must increase by about 1.6 billion in the next seven years.

In 2006, an improved drinking water source was available to 96 per cent of the urban population in developing regions, but only 78 per cent of rural inhabitants.

The lack of improved sanitation and water facilities are two of the four defining characteristics of urban slums. Simple, low-cost interventions could significantly improve the lives of many slum dwellers.

### ***GOAL 8: Develop a global partnership for development***

Total aid remains well below the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national income (GNI) of the members of the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD. For the developed countries as a group, official development assistance fell to 0.28 per cent of their combined gross national income in 2007.

To accelerate their development through enhancing production and trading capacities, developing countries need technical and other forms of assistance such as the development of infrastructure.

Providing Internet connectivity to the developing world will help realize goals for health, education, employment and poverty reduction. By the end of 2006, 1.2 billion people were connected to the Internet – just over 18 per cent of the world's population. But the digital divide is still wide.

**Report of the Secretary-General  
in response to the report of the Panel  
of Eminent Persons on  
United Nations-Civil Society Relations**

**General Assembly  
Fifty-ninth session**

## **Executive Summary**

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The present report has been prepared in response to the report of the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations (A/58/817 and Corr.1). It offers comments on some of the Panel's recommendations from the perspective of the United Nations Secretariat and, in some cases, makes specific suggestions regarding their implementation, which the General Assembly may wish to take into account.

The Secretary-General commends the report of the Panel to the attention of the General Assembly. Expanding and deepening the relationship with non-governmental organizations will further strengthen both the United Nations and the intergovernmental debates on issues of global importance. The Panel makes a compelling case for the United Nations to become a more outward-looking organization. Another important theme is the need for the United Nations to "connect the global with the local". Building on the Panel's proposals, the present report makes a number of concrete suggestions and actions in connection with increasing the participation of non-governmental organizations in intergovernmental bodies, the accreditation process, improving the involvement of non-governmental organizations from developing countries and strengthening of the institutional capacity of the United Nations for engagement with non-governmental organizations.

## I. Introduction

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1. My report of two years ago, “Strengthening the United Nations: an agenda for further change” (A/57/387 and Corr.1), reflected on the growing importance of non- governmental organizations (NGOs)<sup>1</sup> to the work of the United Nations:  
“The expanding worldwide networks of non-governmental organizations embrace virtually every level of organization, from the village community to global summits, and almost every sector of public life, from the provision of microcredit and the delivery of emergency relief supplies, to environmental and human rights activism”.
2. As I pointed out in that report, the relationship between the United Nations and NGOs is as old as the Charter itself. Yet the system for facilitating this interaction needs to be strengthened. This is why I appointed, in February 2003, a panel of eminent persons, chaired by the former President of Brazil, Fernando Henrique Cardoso. The Panel has worked diligently over the past year — taking stock of existing practice, consulting widely with interested parties and proposing better ways of managing United Nations-civil society relations. The Panel’s report (see A/58/817 and Corr.1) was launched on 21 June 2004 and contains 30 specific proposals for reform and improvement.
3. At the outset, it is important to stress that the United Nations is and will remain an intergovernmental organization at which decisions are taken by its Member States. The Panel’s valuable suggestions can be taken in the context of the ongoing process of modernization and institutional change that the Organization has undergone in the past decade. Expanding and deepening the relationship with NGOs will further strengthen both the institution and the intergovernmental debate. This is an opportunity for the United Nations to enhance its impact in a world that is remarkably different from the one in which it was founded nearly 60 years ago.
4. In its very first proposal, the Panel argues convincingly that the United Nations should become a more outward-looking organization, making more of its role as a global convenor of diverse constituencies relevant to an issue. I fully agree that expanding United Nations consultations with

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1 For the purposes of the present document, the term “non-governmental organization” is used in accordance with traditional United Nations parlance, consistent with the reference made in Article 71 of the Charter of the United Nations.



different constituencies and facilitating their input into relevant debates of global significance can only enhance the quality and depth of policy analysis and actionable outcomes, including in the form of partnerships. Multi-stakeholder partnerships can help the United Nations to devise innovative answers to critical questions. In the same way, the deliberations of United Nations meetings can become richer and more diverse, yet grounded in reality. More effective engagement with NGOs also increases the likelihood that United Nations decisions will be better understood and supported by a broad and diverse public.

5. Another important theme of the Panel's report, which I welcome, is the need for the United Nations to "connect the global with the local". The Millennium Development Goals have been instrumental in bringing cohesion to the functioning of the United Nations system at the country level and in aligning its operations with the development agenda emerging from the major United Nations conferences and summit meetings. Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals will depend on a collaborative approach made possible through partnerships with Governments and NGOs on the ground. Focusing attention on the Goals also provides an opportunity for local country-level realities to impact on global deliberations.
6. I commend the report of the Panel to the attention of the General Assembly and express the hope that its recommendations will receive the careful and positive consideration that they deserve. The present report offers comments on some of the Panel's recommendations from the perspective of the United Nations Secretariat and, in some cases, makes specific suggestions regarding their implementation, which the Assembly may wish to take into account. The report is structured around the following seven headings:
  - Increasing the participation of NGOs in intergovernmental bodies;
  - Establishing a trust fund to increase the participation of representatives of NGOs from developing countries;
  - Improving the accreditation;
  - Improving the United Nations Secretariat's dialogue with NGOs;
  - Enhancing country-level engagement with NGOs;
  - Exploring the enlargement of the Partnerships Office;
  - Managing the change process.

## II. Increasing the participation of non-governmental organizations in intergovernmental bodies

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7. The participation of NGOs in intergovernmental bodies has dramatically increased in recent years, particularly as a result of and during the major international conferences and their 5-year and 10-year reviews. NGOs are now commonly present at the intergovernmental deliberations of many of the organizations of the United Nations system and participate in a broad range of advisory mechanisms and partnerships. A variety of modalities for NGO participation have been developed over the past 15 years.
8. The extent to which NGOs are able to organize themselves around broad networks focusing on specific issues will have a bearing on the form and impact of their involvement in the work of the Organization. There have been many examples in the past of such successful networks, the existence of which has greatly facilitated the consultative process. I welcome proposal 23 in the Panel's report, which stresses that the main constituencies of NGOs should themselves take steps to form groups or broad networks for participation in United Nations activities. Such groups would make it much easier to conduct the issue-based, multi-constituency processes which the Panel recommends in proposal 5.

### A. General Assembly

9. The General Assembly and its main committees have increasingly involved NGOs in their deliberations, both informally, through round-table meetings and panel discussions, and formally, through invitations to the special sessions and conferences convened under its auspices, and, more recently, through the biennial high-level dialogue. Thus, the Assembly is already moving to some extent in the direction described in proposal 6.
10. I share the view expressed by the Panel, however, that the Organization would benefit from extending and standardizing these practices, so that they become a regular component of the General Assembly's work. For example, prior to major events, the Assembly could institute the practice of holding interactive hearings between Member States and NGO representatives that have the necessary expertise on the issues on the agenda. In the coming year, such a hearing could be "piloted" before the high-

level meeting on HIV/AIDS, which is to be held on 2 June 2005. Views could be shared on the progress made in implementing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS.<sup>2</sup>

11. The General Assembly could also agree to convene a two-day, informal, interactive hearing with NGOs prior to the opening of the Assembly each year, centred around an agenda to be determined in consultations among the President of the Assembly, the Bureau of the Assembly and NGO representatives. This practice could be initiated on a trial basis for the sixtieth session of the Assembly and evaluated after five years, to coincide with the 10-year review of the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration.
12. Questions regarding accreditation and the rights and responsibilities pertaining to NGO participation in the General Assembly are discussed in section IV of the present report.

## **B. Security Council**

13. In proposal 12, the Panel encouraged the Security Council to increase its contact with NGOs. The Council has taken a number of steps in that direction in recent years. There has been more frequent recourse to the Arria formula<sup>3</sup> for consultations with NGOs. In 2004 alone, the Council has invited NGO representatives and the business sector to participate in two open debates: one on the role of business in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building and the other on the role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building. Also, Security Council members, during their recent mission to West Africa, interacted extensively with key NGO constituencies throughout the mission.
14. I encourage the Security Council to find ways to strengthen further its relationship with civil society. Additional funding could be made available from either the trust fund referred to in section III of the present report or from United Nations country teams to increase the participation of NGO actors from the field in the meetings of the Council. I have also noted the Panel's recommendation that independent commissions of inquiry be established after Council-mandated operations. I believe that such a formal mechanism could be reserved for special cases. The Council may

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2 General Assembly resolution S-26/2, annex.

3 Informal meetings called and hosted by one of the members of the Security Council with one or more NGOs or other experts, but with no minutes.

wish, however, to adopt the practice of conducting some form of assessment, with input from selected NGOs, following the completion of each peace mission.

### **C. Economic and Social Council**

15. In recent years, the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions have significantly intensified their involvement of civil society, including accredited NGOs, foundations, parliamentarians and local authorities, and with the private sector. This has enriched the proceedings of the Council and its subsidiary bodies. The Council has launched several successful multi-stakeholder initiatives, including the Information and Communication Technologies Task Force. Likewise, the Commission on Sustainable Development engaged civil society representatives throughout its review session of 2004. This practice could be emulated in other subsidiary bodies of the Council and by the Council itself.

### **D. Parliamentarians**

16. The engagement of parliamentarians in the work of the United Nations has taken many forms over the years. Their participation in national delegations and through various parliamentary organizations has helped bring the Organization closer to citizens and their elected representatives. The Inter-Parliamentary Union has played a particularly active role in fostering a more sustained interaction between the United Nations and parliamentarians, a role which was recognized by the General Assembly when it granted the Union the status of observer.
17. I agree that more should be done to strengthen the Organization's links to parliaments and parliamentarians. Proposals 13 to 16 identify a number of steps, which I commend to the attention of the General Assembly. As an initial step, it may also wish to organize or support meetings of parliamentarians, in 2005, to discuss the issues before the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS, which is to be held on 2 June 2005. In addition, the Assembly may wish to recommend, organize or support meetings of parliamentarians at the national, regional or global levels early in 2006, to provide input to the meeting to review the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, scheduled for later in that year. With experience, such meetings could evolve into the global public policy forums mentioned in proposal 15.

## **E. Local authorities**

18. The United Nations has always interacted with local authorities as key partners, especially on development and humanitarian work at the local level. For most of the world's population, it is their local authority that has most direct influence on their lives in areas such as water and sanitation, education and health services. In the past decade, global networks of local authorities have been created, most notably the United Cities and Local Governments, which greatly facilitate the dialogue of organized local authorities with the United Nations and other international forums. Moreover, the United Nations Advisory Committee of Local Authorities was established in 2000 to strengthen the international dialogue with local authorities on development issues, especially in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.
19. The direct participation of local authorities in the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) has also been broadened. This is a welcome trend, and I encourage Member States to continue facilitating the participation of local authorities and their associations in intergovernmental bodies. Again, if the General Assembly decides to hold a hearing before the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS, it may wish to invite local authorities and their associations. The United Nations will continue to explore opportunities to strengthen engagement with local authorities, especially through the work of UN-Habitat, and also through the United Nations country teams and other parts of the broader United Nations system.

## **III. Establishing a trust fund to increase the participation of representatives of non-governmental organizations from developing countries**

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20. As highlighted in the Panel's report, the increase in the participation of NGOs in intergovernmental bodies is rather unbalanced: NGOs from developing countries are underrepresented. This is partly a result of the lack of resources of NGOs from developing countries to cover travel and

accommodation costs. At the same time, I am encouraged to note that the number of developing country NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council has increased in the past decade. For example, African-based NGOs now make up 11 per cent of the total — up from 4 per cent in 1996. Overall, 30 per cent of NGOs in consultative status with the Council have their headquarters in the developing world, partly as a result of the Secretariat's efforts.

21. The participation of developing country representatives in the recent global conferences has been assisted by generous support from a series of conference-specific trust funds. Such a fund does not exist, however, to finance participation in the Economic and Social Council, its subsidiary bodies and other intergovernmental meetings. Consequently, the level of attendance of NGO representatives from developing countries in standing United Nations meetings is low.
22. I will create a single trust fund that will provide financial support for the travel and accommodation of representatives of accredited NGOs from developing countries to attend intergovernmental meetings, in accordance with proposal 27 of the Panel. Existing trust funds which support participation in specific intergovernmental processes would be subsumed into the new fund. A detailed cost plan, criteria for support and procedures for administering the fund will be developed in consultation with stakeholders. I encourage Member States to contribute generously to this fund.

## IV. Improving accreditation

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23. In its report, the Panel makes a number of recommendations regarding NGO accreditation. To summarize, the Panel proposes that:
  - (a) NGOs be accredited to participate in the work of the General Assembly;
  - (b) A single accreditation process be established for all United Nations forums;
  - (c) A committee of the General Assembly be given the responsibility to review all NGO applications for accreditation;
  - (d) The process of accreditation be streamlined;

- (e) The rights and responsibilities pertaining to NGO participation be reviewed and harmonized.

24. I would like to offer the following comments and suggestions under each of these headings.

### **A. Granting non-governmental organizations accreditation to participate in the work of the General Assembly**

25. Article 71 of the Charter provides that the Economic and Social Council may make suitable arrangements for consultation with NGOs which are concerned with matters within its competence. There is nothing in Article 71 that would preclude the General Assembly from inviting NGOs to participate in its sessions and its work. There is considerable merit in opening the regular work of the Assembly to increased participation by accredited NGOs. This is already taking place informally through panels, round-table meetings, and NGO involvement in the preparatory work of the international conferences, the special sessions and high-level dialogue of the Assembly. One possible option could be to start with accreditation to the main committees, leaving for consideration at a subsequent stage the question of accreditation to the plenary. If the Assembly decides in favour of accrediting NGOs to its main committees, the rights and responsibilities pertaining to participation would then need to be defined.

### **B. Establishing a single system of accreditation**

26. A single system of NGO accreditation for all United Nations intergovernmental bodies, including the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and conferences, based on one set of agreed-upon criteria, would have the benefit of simplicity, consistency and efficiency, as is well argued in the Panel's report. It would also facilitate the involvement of NGOs in the consideration of complex issues whose ramifications span many intergovernmental organs.

27. Concerning the Panel's proposal to consolidate the Economic and Social Council and Department of Public Information processes, closer examination reveals that there is an important distinction to be made between the accreditation process, governing the relationship between NGOs and intergovernmental bodies, and the association process, which grants

NGOs the right to access United Nations documents, facilities and communication materials. One is clearly an intergovernmental process while the other is not. There does not seem to be much merit in attempting to consolidate either the processes or the internal United Nations structures that handle them.

### **C. A committee of the General Assembly responsible for all applications for accreditation**

28. While Article 71 allows the Economic and Social Council to make suitable arrangements for consultation with NGOs, the Charter does not designate a specific mechanism or body for the accreditation of NGOs. Moreover, while pursuant to Council resolution 3 (II) of 21 June 1946, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations is the intergovernmental organ designated to consider applications for consultative status with the Council, the Assembly, if it so decides, could adopt and assume responsibility for a single accreditation system. An existing committee of the General Assembly, perhaps the General Committee, could be designated for this purpose.

### **D. Streamlining the accreditation process**

29. Whether or not Member States decide to accept the three changes outlined above, a number of procedural changes could be made which would significantly improve the efficiency of the accreditation process.

30. The Panel indicates that the current process is slow, costly and subject to a “happenstance of workloads”, with the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, currently made up of 19 Member States, making recommendations on a case-by-case basis for accreditation to the Economic and Social Council. The considerable backlog of applications is overwhelming an already overloaded process.

31. Some efforts have been made to improve the process. For example, an electronic meeting management and documentation system (a paperless committee) was recently introduced, and criteria and requirements for accreditation now appear on the United Nations web site. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations itself has done commendable work in improving its own working methods — streamlining the NGO questionnaire, issuing guidance to NGOs on reporting and monitoring and



restructuring its meeting schedule for greater effectiveness. Similar improvements have been brought to the accreditation process for large global conferences. A number of funds and programmes and specialized agencies have also established new practices for accrediting NGOs.

32. There is nevertheless considerable scope for further simplification. I welcome the suggestions of the Panel, which, if implemented, would go a long way towards simplifying the process of accreditation. In essence, in paragraph 131 of its report, the Panel proposes two key improvements:
  - (a) The United Nations Secretariat should be tasked with conducting a thorough pre-screening of NGO applications for accreditation, according to clear criteria determined by an intergovernmental body;
  - (b) Member States should be provided with consolidated lists of applications for consideration.

### **E. Rights and responsibilities pertaining to participation**

33. Proposals 22 and 23 of the Panel relate to the various categories of NGO status (general, special and Roster) and the differences in the rights of participation for each. These categories have been in existence for several decades, notwithstanding some minor changes introduced in 1996. There would be merit in reviewing the categories and the privileges associated with them — particularly in the light of informal practices which have evolved in recent years. Also, the General Assembly may wish to consider establishing a uniform regime of rights and responsibilities pertaining to the participation of NGOs in global conferences and special sessions of the General Assembly.
34. At the same time, the question of the responsibilities and accountability of the NGOs arises. For example, there are currently large numbers of NGOs in consultative status with the United Nations that are not complying with the requirement to submit quadrennial reports on their activities and how they relate to the overall goals and objectives of the global community. Member States may wish to explore the possibility of drawing up a code of conduct, mentioned in proposal 23 of the Panel, as an instrument to ensure that NGOs commit themselves to the aims of the Charter and act in a manner that reflects the intergovernmental character of the Organization.

## V. Improving the United Nations Secretariat's dialogue with non-governmental organizations

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35. The Panel suggests many ways in which the Secretariat can intensify its own dialogue with the NGO community. It suggests, in particular, a global Internet agora to survey public opinion and raise awareness on emerging issues (proposal 3) and public hearings to review the progress made in meeting globally agreed commitments (proposal 5). The United Nations Secretariat and other United Nations organizations already interact with NGOs in a variety of ways. I intend to review these experiences and the Panel's proposals, in consultation with NGOs, with a view to determining how best to intensify our dialogue with them.
36. The Panel also makes useful suggestions on how to promote and explain the work of the United Nations to a wide set of constituencies. The Department of Public Information currently maintains contacts with a vast network to which it disseminates information about the work of the Organization — most notably at the traditional NGO conference that it organizes each year. Taking into consideration the proposed enhancements to NGO participation in intergovernmental debates, I am asking the Department to see how its work with NGOs could be better linked to the priorities of the intergovernmental organs so as to enhance its relevance and impact. It will also be important to ensure that the Department's outreach activities complement and support those of the substantive departments, funds and programmes.
37. There are several other internal measures that will be taken to improve the Secretariat's dialogue with NGOs. These include, among other things, establishing a central database of NGOs and developing a body of best practices relating to NGO involvement in United Nations activities so that they can be replicated throughout the broader United Nations system. In addition, access to official documentation will be greatly facilitated by the provision of free access to the Official Document System by the end of 2004.

## VI. Enhancing country-level engagement with non-governmental organizations

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38. I welcome the emphasis placed by the Panel on all branches of the United Nations system engaging with civil society at the country level. This is a relationship that has evolved considerably over the past three decades. NGOs now act as fully fledged partners in programme design and implementation and increasingly provide policy advice, analysis and advocacy. In crisis and post-conflict countries in particular, national and international NGOs are vital implementing partners, without which United Nations humanitarian assistance could not be delivered. They are also key participants in peace-building, reconciliation and transitions to civilian administration. Of course, Governments remain the main interlocutors for country-level engagement with the United Nations.
39. The participation of civil society in the development of national policies is critical to ensuring national ownership and relevance. The United Nations Development Group has been facilitating broad consultation with and participation of NGOs and other stakeholders in the poverty reduction strategy paper process — achieving, in a number of cases, pro-poor outcomes with genuine engagement in a fully consultative process.
40. Greater system-wide focus on implementation of the Millennium Development Goals has further strengthened relations with civil society. The United Nations country teams are supporting Governments and civil society organizations in developing and revising the Millennium Development Goal reports in about 60 countries. In addition, the regional commissions are addressing issues of data comparability and policy coherence, to which NGOs have another important contribution to make. In a growing number of countries, civil society groups are spearheading advocacy campaigns for the Millennium Development Goals, both individually and in partnership with the country teams. NGOs are also key actors in making progress on the ground, for example, towards the achievement of the Goals.
41. The United Nations system is also encouraging the engagement of NGOs in the preparation of the common country assessments and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. However, the nature and extent of their participation is uneven, reflecting a need to develop additional capacity in conducting policy dialogue and analysis

and programme implementation. Where capacity is devoted to multi-stakeholder processes, the pay-offs have been significant. Resources and leadership will be needed, however, to ensure that today's best practices become the standard practices in the future.

### **A. Enhancing the capacity of non-governmental organizations at the country level**

42. There are a number of promising measures already under way to enhance the capacity of NGOs at the country level. I intend to strengthen and replicate these initiatives in other locations. The Millennium Development Goal and poverty reduction strategy paper and processes are key opportunities for the United Nations Development Group to ensure that the rhetoric is put into practice — allowing adequate space for all constituencies, including parliamentarians and local authorities, to contribute to the goals of Governments as agreed at the United Nations. United Nations country teams should continue to facilitate the participation of NGOs in campaigning for and monitoring the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and using the goals as benchmarks for the national poverty reduction strategy and poverty reduction strategy paper processes. In almost all countries, various parts of the United Nations system periodically fund workshops and learning exchanges with NGOs — with particular emphasis on poverty reduction strategy paper processes and Millennium Development Goal reporting and advocacy. The United Nations has also supported the formation of umbrella groups of NGOs in many sectors, particularly in primary health care. An NGO champions initiative for resident coordinators and resident representatives was launched in October 2003 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with 32 countries already participating.
43. The United Nations is also making real progress in its efforts to disseminate information about the work of the United Nations to all partners and constituencies. Use of easily accessible web sites, such as the national database in the United Republic of Tanzania, and ensuring the participation of NGOs in knowledge networks and discussion groups are encouraging first steps.

## **B. Enhancing the capacity of the United Nations resident coordinator system to engage with civil society**

44. The Panel recognized the pivotal role played by the resident coordinator system in bringing together key United Nations system partners and civil society organizations in pursuit of national goals. I fully endorse the Panel's recommendations on the need for greater capacity among resident coordinators to identify, convene and broker key partnerships (proposals 10 and 11).
45. I have asked all resident coordinators to identify a qualified professional with relevant development experience to serve as a civil society focal point for the United Nations Development Group, who would coordinate civil society engagement by United Nations agencies in each country, with an additional dedicated staff member to be appointed to the office of the resident coordinator as soon as resources allow (proposals 11 and 25). Equally, resident coordinators will be asked to conduct orientation courses, where required, with a view to developing or enhancing partnerships with multiple constituencies (proposals 7 and 28).
46. I am encouraged by the Panel's recognition that the creation of NGO advisory groups at the country level to guide implementation of United Nations strategies would be beneficial (proposal 11). UNDP launched a pilot committee in Botswana in 2003, and I have asked that more resident coordinators constitute similar committees, bringing together development experts from NGOs, academia, the media and local authorities in a forum for policy advice and participation. I believe this can be an effective means by which we can systematically support government by engaging NGOs and bridging the gulf between the deliberative and implementation aspects of our work.
47. I will establish a trust fund, inviting support from bilateral donors and foundations, to enhance the capacity of NGOs at the country level and to finance additional capacity in the office of the resident coordinator. A working group of the United Nations Development Group, chaired by UNDP as administrator of the fund, will guide the use of the fund (providing, for example, seed money for country teams that propose innovative initiatives) and develop strategies to promote further enhanced engagement with NGOs. The United Nations Development Group will work closely with the expanded Partnerships Office in the Secretariat, which should be a member of the aforementioned working group.

## VII. Exploring the enlargement of the Partnerships Office<sup>4</sup>

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48. As part of my second reform package from 2002, I decided to establish a Partnerships Office to bring the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships and the Global Compact Office under the same institutional umbrella. The Office is in the process of being established and an Assistant Secretary-General position was recently authorized by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for the purpose of providing it with high-level leadership. The Panel's proposal to broaden the scope of the Partnerships Office to include other constituencies merits consideration. Included in an expanded Partnerships Office could be a small unit to develop organizational policy with respect to NGOs, the existing Non-Governmental Liaison Service, an Accreditation Unit and an Elected Representatives Liaison Unit.
49. The Non-Governmental Liaison Service currently provides information and outreach in regard to the work of the United Nations. The Panel points out that the Service is highly respected throughout the NGO community and is perceived as an objective and very useful source of expertise, guidance to the United Nations system focal points and the country teams, and support to NGOs that engage in United Nations meetings and events. However, it is now subject to the vagaries of voluntary funding and faces increasing difficulty in financing its budget from existing funding sources. Incorporating it into the Partnerships Office would give it greater institutional standing and funding stability. However, this would be dependent on the agreement of the 17 existing sponsors and related decisions on funding arrangements.
50. In addition, separate units for accreditation and liaison with elected representatives could be created to complement and support the initiatives mentioned in sections II and IV of the present report. This would be consistent with proposals 16 and 20 of the Panel.
51. Evidently, organizational units dealing with NGOs, elected representatives and the private sector each have their unique identity and purpose, which

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4 The Panel proposed the establishment of an Office of Constituency Engagement and Partnerships. For purposes of simplicity and given that the Secretary-General has recently established a Partnerships Office, the latter term will be used.

would continue to dictate the policies and approaches that are best suited to their particular needs. It is, however, desirable to have an institutional anchor, a greater coherence of approaches and stronger direction provided to the currently dispersed units dealing with the different facets of the Organization's interface with various partners. The Partnerships Office could be a central hub in a decentralized system and provide a single, more visible entry point for NGOs, while substantive departments, funds and programmes retain their own outreach and collaborative arrangements. The Office could also better foster the exchange of experience and collective learning.

52. I do not agree with the Panel's proposal to incorporate the secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues into this structure (see proposal 24). From a substantive perspective, it would be difficult to argue in favour of this particular thematic area over others. The secretariat provides substantive and conference- servicing support to the Forum, which has a clear and direct reporting line to the Economic and Social Council. This makes the secretariat's current location in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs logical and institutionally consistent.

## **VIII. Managing the change process**

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53. Changes foreseen in the present report require careful management and oversight to ensure that genuine improvements to the relationship between the United Nations and NGOs are achieved. To this end, improvements are needed in four particular areas.
54. First, there is a need for a more organized and sustained dialogue with the NGO community, in particular as regards the implementation of the present report but also on the broad range of issues to which NGOs have an important contribution to make. While the Partnerships Office could assume an important coordination role, it is the responsibility of departments, funds and programmes to ensure that the constituencies interested in their areas of concern are systematically consulted.
55. Second, constituency engagement and partnership concerns must be incorporated into the Organization's human resource processes, including recruitment, promotion and annual appraisal (see proposal 28). Staff at

all levels will be offered training to improve their skills in dealing with broader constituencies and factor NGO considerations into their work, using, in particular, the United Nations System Staff College for this purpose.

56. Third, the implementation of these measures will require modest yet essential resources. As far as possible, I intend to build on existing capacities and make better use of existing resources for enhancing the engagement between the United Nations and NGOs. However, enlargement of the Partnerships Office would have some modest budgetary implications in the context of the budget for the biennium 2006-2007. I also appeal to Member States to make generous voluntary contributions to the trust funds which will be established for the specific purposes outlined in sections III and VI of the present report.
57. Finally, I wish to stress that I am committed to providing the leadership necessary for these changes to take effect and I will be stressing their importance to my senior managers and the heads of United Nations agencies, in my capacity as head of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (proposal 29).
58. I will report to the General Assembly periodically on the implementation of the various reforms set out in the present report.



# **The United Nations Global Compact**

**Launched in 1999 at the World Economic Forum  
in Davos, Switzerland, the Global Compact asks companies  
to embrace, support and enact, within their sphere of influence,  
a set of core values in the areas of human rights,  
labour standards, the environment,  
and anti-corruption.**

**Source : United Nations Portal**

***The UN Global Compact's ten principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption enjoy universal consensus and are derived from:***

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work

The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development

The United Nations Convention Against Corruption

***Human Rights***

1. Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
2. Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

***Labour Standards***

3. Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
4. Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
5. Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and
6. Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

***Environment***


7. Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
8. Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
9. Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

## **Anti-Corruption**

10. Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

Source: <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/index.html>





**UNESCO**

Division of Relations with International Organizations  
and New Partnerships

Section for UNESCO Clubs and New Partnerships

7, place de Fontenoy,  
75352 Paris 07 SP

Tel.: +33 (0)1 45 68 12 57

Fax: +33 (0)1 45 68 58 54

Email: [erc.pts@unesco.org](mailto:erc.pts@unesco.org)