

# SHSviews<sup>18</sup>

October-December 2007

UNESCO Social and Human Sciences Sector magazine

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# Dialogue

between researchers and policy makers  
– what is the role of UNESCO?

## The world moves, UNESCO too

As UNESCO prepares for the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference at its Paris Headquarters, another international event in France is also drawing the world's attention – the 6<sup>th</sup> Rugby World Cup. Confined for a long time to a select few countries, this sport has grown to global proportions to encompass all continents today. While the spirit of the game has remained the same, the sport itself has undoubtedly evolved; new rules have been introduced and new traditions formed.

One can see similar dynamics in the history of UNESCO. The ideals and aspirations for which the Organization was established over sixty years ago remain as relevant today as ever before, but the continuous transformation of the political, economic and social realities has necessitated a periodic reevaluation of UNESCO's priorities and strategies of action. The participation of the Sector for Social and Human Sciences in the World Sports Forum, which is being held in tandem with the Rugby World Cup and features debates on issues affecting sports today such as doping, racism, gender equality and globalization, is an indicator that the Sector is keeping well abreast of the evolving societal challenges around the world.

UNESCO is at the forefront of safeguarding humanity's common tangible and intangible heritage, but is equally, and inseparably, forward-looking. The belief in an achievable better future brings the Member States together at the upcoming General Conference to agree upon a programme and budget for the next biennium and a new medium-term strategy for the next six years.

This will be an important occasion to evaluate our success in meeting the objectives set six years ago and, taking into account the lessons learned, to align the future work of the Organization with the priority needs of the Member States. Within broadly unchanged key priorities, SHS will be committed to a stronger focus on rigorous knowledge for effective action and on improved cooperation with other UNESCO programmes.

The Sector has a special duty to keep pace with the rapidly transforming social realities and the newly emerging policy challenges. As you will see from the dossier of this issue, UNESCO's most programme serves as a forum for ideas generated in policy institutes, think tanks, academic establishments and governments around the world, and facilitates the translation of these ideas into effective policy applications. In this capacity, we provide a unique international platform where governments, researchers and civil society come together to cast words into action and shape abstract ideas into concrete policy solutions.

Our commitment to communicate effectively with you about the activities of the Sector has become an integral part of our future strategy. Gradual change in the content, style, – and name – of the *SHS Views* magazine responds to this commitment. But we can and will improve further. The next issue of the *SHS Views* magazine, which will come out in January 2008, will have a new structure, reflecting the SHS strategic programme objectives for 2008-2013, and will offer new features and more space for readers' views. ¶

**“We provide a unique international platform where governments, researchers and civil society come together to cast words into action.”**



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Pierre Sané  
Assistant Director-General  
for Social and Human  
Sciences

To help protect the environment, *SHS Views* is printed on 80% recycled paper.



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

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Ethics and Bioethics Day for West and Central Africa

**In order to produce a source book on bioethics in Africa, the Senegalese network “Droit, Ethique, Santé” is organizing the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ethics and Bioethics Day for West and Central Africa, from December 6 to 8 2007 in Lomé (Togo).**

As the consequences of scientific progress and technology in developing countries take their place at the heart of the international agenda, the Senegalese network “Droit, Ethique, Santé” is organizing the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ethics and Bioethics day for Central and West Africa. On the agenda: managing and evaluating risks in Africa.

From December 6 to 8 2007, researchers, practitioners, philosophers, decision makers and representatives from international organizations will come together in Lomé, Togo, to map risks in Africa, to talk about institutional mechanisms and risk management, and to debate cultural diversity. The meeting will also address efforts in favour of vulnerable members of the population, biosecurity and questions relating to information, education and training to enhance risk management.

The meeting should lead to the publication of the first authoritative scientific overview of these fundamental questions in Africa. It will also formalize the framework of the network.

The objective of the network, which was created in 2003 as a result of a UNESCO initiative, was to open a space for debate by serving as an interface between researchers, political actors, decision

### TOOLS

The guidebook “*Educating Bioethics Committees*” is designed to help the members of the various committees established in response to UNESCO’s initiatives by enhancing their knowledge on philosophy, law, science and medicine. The guidebook is already available in English, Arabic and Chinese and will also be published shortly in Spanish, French and Russian. ¶



For more information, please see: [www.unesco.org/shs/ethics](http://www.unesco.org/shs/ethics)



Risk management will be a central topic of debates in Lomé.

makers and civil society in order to take better account of ethics, inter-disciplinary research, and the promotion of the right to health for all.

The Lomé Days are therefore a follow-up to the action plan to establish a Forum for reflection, dialogue and action on ethics, bioethics and life sciences. Having been sketched during the first Days in Dakar in 2005, the action plan was finalized in 2006 at the Days held in Yaoundé (Cameroon), where the Forum was set within the pan-African bioethics network PABIN.

The convenors expect the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ethics and Bioethics Day for West and Central Africa to contribute to enhanced awareness of the principles and procedures of bioethics with particular reference to evaluating and managing the risks linked to the use of biotechnologies and to biomedical research in Africa. ¶

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On the “Droit, Ethique, Santé” network:  
[http://www.refer.sn/rds/article.php3?id\\_article=262](http://www.refer.sn/rds/article.php3?id_article=262)

# Bioethics: towards a more effective UN

**The Interagency Committee on Bioethics, which was established by a UNESCO initiative in 2003, will hold its 7<sup>th</sup> meeting in Brussels (Belgium) on November 28-29 2007.**

As the various agencies of the United Nations system are called upon to prove their capacity to create synergy between their respective activities, the Interagency Committee on Bioethics, meeting in Brussels (Belgium) for the seventh time at the end of November 2007, confirms its dynamism.

In its four years of existence, the Committee has become a key place for reflection and information sharing, enabling each UN agency to focus on its specific competence. By leveraging its activities in bioethics, the system as a whole thus gains efficiency.

### Pinpoint the problems

The Committee therefore regularly examines topical subjects and issues in order to identify cases where concerted or joint efforts would be beneficial and where major gaps and constraints affecting cooperation need to be addressed.

In particular, the Committee played a crucial role during the elaboration process of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 2005, by enabling a range of organizations to make substantial contributions to the project.

### Provide a framework

Having, from the very beginning, identified intellectual property as one of the areas where increased cooperation between the organizations represented is necessary, the Committee proposes to go further by putting on the agenda of the Brussels meeting preparation of a document on intellectual property from an ethical point of view.

The issue paper is not intended to take a distinctive position on intellectual property but rather to provide a global systematic framework highlighting the major economic, political and human implications of intellectual property in the area of bioethics.

The key objective is to raise awareness among all UN member states and to offer a general framework within which to explore, to develop and stimulate debate on the ethical aspects of property rights.

The Interagency Committee on Bioethics is coordinated by UNESCO, the UN lead agency for ethical issues, and includes representatives of *inter alia* the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the United Nations University (UNU). It also comprises, as associate members, the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the Arab League Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). ¶

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### TOOLS



After various sessions debating the risks and potential benefits of applied research on atomic and molecular technology, COMEST has just published a brochure with policy recommendations



© M. Reussard / UNESCO

The UN Interagency Committee, just like the International Bioethics Committee of UNESCO (pictured), plays a crucial role.

on ethics and nanotechnology. ¶

This 16 page document is available only in English and can be downloaded from UNESCO's website at the following address: [www.unesco.org/shs/ethics](http://www.unesco.org/shs/ethics)

## Ethics in Science: a fight for peace

An informal meeting of COMEST members took place at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, from July 22 to 24 2007. This was a good opportunity to better evaluate this consultative group's first decade in terms of activities, objectives

and procedures. At the start of the meeting, experts stressed that "ethics in science and technology have a crucial role to play right at the heart of UNESCO's mandate for peace and the eradication of poverty". While it is becoming

more and more common to take into account the social dimensions of sustainable development, emphasis was also put on COMEST's mandate and objectives, which relate to "the responsible use of

natural resources and the fair distribution of technology and its benefits." ¶

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# Teaching bioethics: a world programme to be tested in 2008

**After two years of work, development of a core bioethics curriculum to support teaching of this complex subject throughout the world is almost complete.**

In July, experts, mainly from developing countries, met at UNESCO Headquarters to discuss the draft proposal prepared by an ad hoc committee, gathering bioethics teaching experts from the International Bioethics Committee (IBC), the World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST), the World Medical Association (WMA), and the Academy for Sciences in the Developing World (TAWAS).

While the United Kingdom and Bulgaria have already laid down guidelines for bioethics teaching, considerable disparities remain at international level. Hence the usefulness of the UNESCO-led proposal.

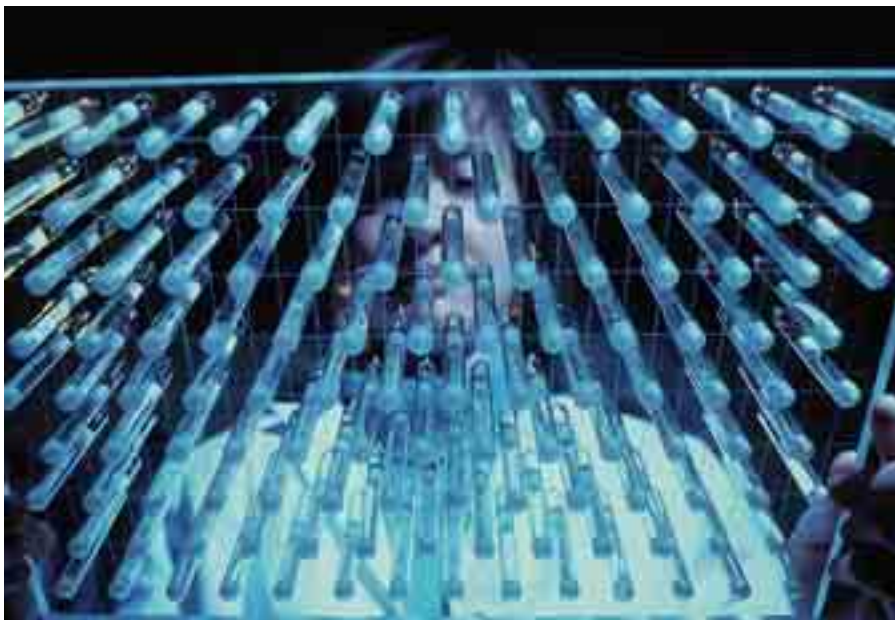
## **Towards a Common Curriculum**

The ad hoc committee's draft proposal, which is based on the principles of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights adopted in October 2005, comprises 17 units, each with a similar format. After two introductory units (What is ethics? What is bioethics?), 15 units follow the bioethical principles formulated in Articles 3-17 of the Declaration.

## **10 pilot universities**

The thirty experts, from Argentina, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, India, Indonesia, Kenya, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, the Philippines, Qatar, South Africa, Surinam, Togo, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom, scrutinized the draft and suggested revisions and additions.

There was general agreement about the importance of UNESCO's action to develop a core bioethics curriculum, based on the Declaration and therefore outlining a global consensus on the fundamental principles of bioethics. At the same time, the experts stressed that learning materials need to be adapted to very different cultures and traditions. The proposal therefore needs enrich-



A common curriculum: a response to the diversity of study programs at the international level

ment with more contributions from experts from developing countries.

On the basis of the meeting, the committee will develop a revised programme. At the same time, a team of experts in Buenos Aires with experience in developing multimedia resources for ethics education (using, for example, video fragments to illustrate bioethics issues) will start to make additional resources based on the proposal.

The final proposal could thus be launched in 2008, with accompanying educational resources. The plan is to select ten universities intending to introduce the course into the curriculum so that the proposal can be tested and improved on the basis of experiences in different Member States. ¶

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## **Training of Teachers in Moldova**

Two conferences on "Bioethics education in Moldova" are organized in November and December 2007 in Chisinau (Moldova) to introduce the concept of ethics of sciences and technology in primary and secondary schools

in the country. A result of a close cooperation between the UNESCO office in Moscow, the "Intercultural Dialogue" Center, the National Commission for UNESCO of the Republic of Moldova and the Ministry of

Education and Youth of the Republic of Moldova, this project focuses on teachers as a priority. ¶

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# J. Somavia : decent work is

**As the 20<sup>th</sup> International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is celebrated on October 17 2007, the Director General of the International Labour Organization stresses the challenge of making work decent for all. According to him, the international labour crisis is one of the greatest current security threats and should be everybody's business.**

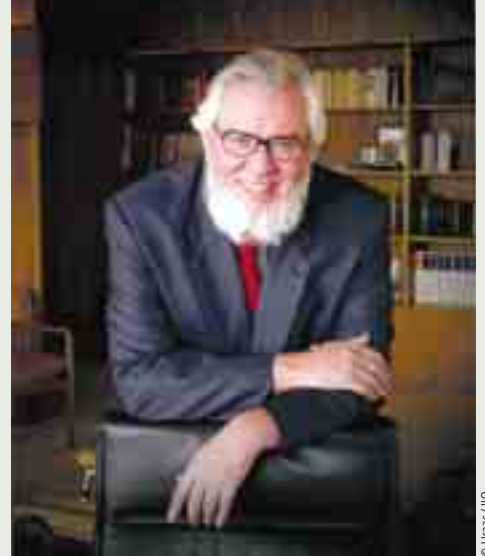
**The International Labour Organization published, last May, a report on discrimination at work. What are the main findings?**

There is, first of all, one piece of good news: more and more legislative texts and measures are being adopted to fight against discrimination at work. As a result, 9 out of 10 countries have ratified the 2 fundamental conventions on discrimination, the United Nations has just adopted a new Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the collection of ILO practical guidelines to fight against discrimination for persons suffering from HIV/AIDS is now used in more than 60 countries. However, despite this progress, hundreds of millions of people still suffer from discrimination at work. All over the world, information campaigns and the means and institutions necessary to fight discrimination are not up to the task. Every day, women earn less than men for equivalent work. Disabled and elderly workers are deprived of the opportunity to explore their potential. Minority groups are also excluded from the hiring process based on their religion or race. New forms of discrimination are also appearing based on age, sexual orientation or genetic predisposition.

**What challenges need to be met to fight discrimination?**

The report presents an action plan that suggests promoting stricter laws and more efficient implementation, and working for equality between men and women by integrated action coordinated at global level to provide employers and employees with the necessary tools to promote equality on the ground. Above all, the report emphasizes the need to continue to act to promote decent work conditions for all, without regard in national policies for gender, race, religion or other distinctions. The persistence of discrimination at work is not just a violation of human rights. It also has larger economic and social consequences, since discrimination holds back development by wasting human talent and emphasizing tensions and social inequalities. Because work is an essential part of everyone's life, eliminating discrimination at work would contribute to empowering individuals, to reinforcing the entire economy and to enrich societies as a whole. Work can help us to eradicate poverty and to reach the Millennium Development Goals by contributing to fair forms of globalization.

## Interview



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**In order to fight poverty, you have given top priority to the Decent Work Agenda. What does it imply?**

Decent work encapsulates human beings' aspirations with respect to work. It implies opportunities to access productive and adequately paid labour, security at work and social protection for families, better personal development perspectives and social integration, freedom to express one's demands, to organize and participate in decisions that affect workers' lives, equality of opportunities and equal treatment for all, meaning in particular for both women and men. And finally, decent work is a source of dignity for the person.

In the global village that the world is becoming, to ensure decent work as a reality for all should be a shared concern of the international community. Indeed, to a certain extent, it already is. What the observable shortage of decent work means is unemployment and under-employment, unproductive and low-quality jobs, dangerous work with unpredictable earnings, rights disregarded and gender inequality, exploitation of migrant workers, lack of representation and opportunities for expression, and inadequate protection and solidarity in the face of disease, disability and old age.

To mention just a few examples: some 200 million people are unemployed today, more than ever before. Worldwide, half of all workers live with less than two dollars a day. 86 million of unemployed persons, more than half of the total, are between 15

# everybody's business

and 24 years old. Even today, one in every seven children in the world is forced to work. Each year, accidents or professional illness cause 2 million deaths a year, an average of 6000 a day.

## To what extent does the shortage of decent work represent a risk for populations?

Beyond the human rights violations it causes, the current worldwide labour crisis is one of the biggest threats to security. Business as usual will confront the world with increased risks of division, protectionism and conflicts. A chronic lack of opportunities for decent work, insufficient investment and under-consumption will lead to the erosion of the fundamental social contract that ties together democratic societies, the contract according to which progress should be shared by all. Similarly, experience in many countries shows that the risks of disorder are higher where the need for decent working conditions is ignored. Conversely, crises are resolved faster where communities unite to work on reconstruction. That is why I am convinced that decent work should be regarded as an important item on the agenda to establish peace in the world.

## How can the objectives of the Decent Work Agenda be reached?

If we agree on the fact that decent work is a precondition for sustainable development and peace, as well as a key factor in reducing and eradicating poverty, we should coordinate national and international actions to implement the Decent Work Agenda.



### Juan Somavia

Before his election in 1998 and re-election in 2003 as Director-General of the International Labor Organization, Juan Somavia had a long and distinguished career in civil and international affairs. A university professor, a lawyer by profession, he served, among other functions, as Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations, Chairman of the Board of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), and Coordinator of the Third World Forum.

For his contribution to peace and human rights, he was awarded the "Leonides Proano Peace Prize". ¶

**"There is not one challenge related to decent work that is outside UNESCO's responsibility."**

To do so, we shall need the assistance of other organizations and we shall also need new means of action.

For employment cannot be created by decree, no more than poverty can be eradicated by fiat. The process is a long and complex one, calling for participation and consultation of all components of society.

Governments, employers and workers have their own role to play in the process of building a constructive consensus. In this respect, while the ILO, as a tripartite organisation, has exemplary experience that should no doubt be more widely shared, the job is not one for one organization alone. It is the responsibility of the international community of stakeholders.

The multilateral system needs to bring teamwork to the challenges our world is facing today. And there is not enough team spirit around.

## How can UNESCO contribute to making decent work a reality ?

I believe there is not one challenge related to decent work that is outside UNESCO's responsibility. We are already working together actively to develop qualifications, but achieving the objectives of the Decent Work Agenda calls for integrated policies in many more areas than education and training. It is a matter of education as well as of human rights promotion, of the struggle against discrimination as well as of the distribution of the benefits of scientific progress, not to mention access for policy makers to the results of social science research with a view to policy design. Could one imagine, for example, discussing climate change without questioning changing modes of work and production? The transformations ongoing in our societies are the result of human activity. These are the areas where we have experiences to share. ¶

Interview by **Cathy Bruno-Capvert**

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

# Gender research for peace

**The Social and Human Sciences programme at UNESCO is seeking to reinforce role of women in peace building through promoting research on women's rights and encouraging linkages with decision makers.**

"Since wars begin in the minds of men, give power to the women!"

Pierre Sané, Assistant Director General for Social and Human Sciences at UNESCO used the occasion of a round-table to recast the famous preamble to UNESCO's Constitution and recall the actions taken by the Organization to reinforce women's role in peace building.

This role was affirmed in 2000 by resolution 1325 of the UN Security Council, which calls for the contribution and participation of women to reestablish peace and security in post-conflict situations.

In this regard, the Section for Gender Equality and Development of the Sector for Social and Human Sciences is working hard to strengthen institutional mechanisms and capacities for the protection of women's rights and gender equality. Among key actions are developing university programmes on these themes and research that aims to define public policy.


## Gender Equality in Africa

A meeting organized on August 29 and 30 in Pretoria (South Africa) was an opportunity to reiterate the relevance of such an orientation. Participants emphasized that it was necessary for UNESCO to commit to the establishment of a research and documentation centre for women in the Great Lakes region and to support research to develop policies on gender dynamics.

Among them: a research and documentation centre on women in Africa planned for Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo); support for a regional studies network on women and gender research; and implementation of a project entitled "Women's rights for peace and security in post-conflict African democracies". Many projects have been initiated or supported by UNESCO in Africa, where sustainable development cannot be envisaged without equality among men and women.<sup>1</sup>

## Projects in Palestine

The Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Centre (PWRDC) is a symbol of UNESCO's commitment to act on the ground, where the need is greatest. Its Board met for the first time on June 19 2007 to sign a new Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and the Ministry of Women's Affairs of the Palestinian Authority. Building on the first memorandum, signed in 2005 to establish the Centre, the document clarifies directions for future work.

Outside the Magreb region, this is the first centre of its kind to be built in the Arab world. It plays an important role as an observatory and a resource centre. It also contributes to the development of human and institutional capacities in governmental and non-governmental organizations and provides support to researchers, 

Established in Ramallah in 2005, the Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Center has already published many studies and has carried out workshops and training seminars.







Zahira Kamal, director of the Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Center.

# and development

➤ students, and the various decision makers involved with women's issues.

Since its establishment, the PWRDC has developed research, a wide range of publications, awareness raising and training workshops.

Expansion will continue with 1 million US dollars of financial aid from Norway and ongoing funding from UNFPA and UNESCO. ¶

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO Declaration on Women's Contribution to a Culture of Peace at the 1995 Beijing Conference.

## FOCUS



## Manilla leads a world women's research network

An international network on Women's Studies and Gender Research was officially launched at a meeting held at the Miriam College in Manila, Philippines, on July 25-26 2007, by the Philippines National Commission for UNESCO and the Sector for Social and Human Sciences. The network responds to the will to increase the systematic participation of an international group of women and gender experts in the work of the Sector for Social and Human Sciences, to strengthen capacity and intellectual collaboration across regions in the areas of women's studies and gender research, and to promote critical reflection on issues and emerging trends on women's rights and gender equality. Participants in the Network, who come from institutions active in teaching and/or research on these issues in Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, Kenya, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, the Philippines, South Africa, South Korea, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom, and

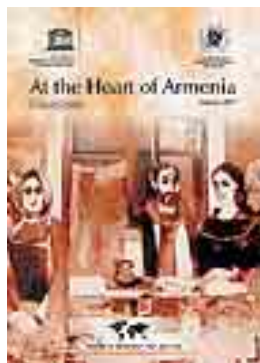
the USA, agreed an ambitious programme of work, including gender mainstreaming of SHS programmes by conducting a gender audit; support for the development of "core" curricular for women and gender studies programmes; and developing methodological tools for translating research findings into policy recommendations and dialogue. The Miriam College will coordinate the Network for the next two-year period. It was agreed that women and gender studies experts coming from Brazil, India, China, Russia, France, French-speaking Canada, French-speaking Africa, Scandinavia, Central Asia, Spain and Eastern Europe will be invited to join the Network in the coming months. ¶

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## TOOLS

**"At the Heart of Armenia"** is a new newsletter, supported by the UNESCO Moscow Office.

It contains scientific and analytical articles written by local experts on gender issues. The Newsletter is published by the NGO "Centre of Democracy and Law" in cooperation with the Human Rights Defender's Institute in the Republic of Armenia. It proposes to raise awareness on gender issues in Armenia and to share information on best practices and lessons learned, particularly in Europe. ¶



The pilot issue can be downloaded from the website of the UNESCO Moscow Office:  
<http://www.unesco.org>

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

# World Philosophy Day celebrated in Turkey

**World Philosophy Day has been celebrated since 2002 on the third Thursday of November each year and has been an official World Day since 2005. This year’s Day will once again comprise many events, the most significant of which will be held in Istanbul.**

November 15, the third Thursday of November 2007, is the “official” date to celebrate World Philosophy Day throughout the world.

However, setting a fixed date for the international celebration does not preclude all interested parties engaging in philosophical reflection before or after the famous Thursday. Just as thought cannot be held captive, UNESCO’s initiative is an open-ended proposal that all can interpret in their own way.

The 2007 flagship event will take place in Istanbul on November 22 and 23, upon the invitation of the Turkish authorities. Istanbul is where the 21<sup>st</sup> World Philosophy Congress was held in 2003 based on the theme “Philosophy and world problems”. The city also hosted the 15<sup>th</sup> International Philosophy Olympics last May.

## Lecture and Round Tables in Istanbul

This gathering is jointly organized by UNESCO and the Philosophical Society of Turkey. It will begin with a keynote lecture, which will ask the question “Dialogue: between whom and, on what?”, following which, the event will be precisely an opportunity to promote dialogue among diverse audiences in a series of round tables with the participation of philosophers from all over the world.

In the country of birth of numerous thinkers who have marked the history of philosophy, the round tables will offer a focus for discussion of current themes such as “The philosophical foundations of peace and human rights: where do we stand?”, “Critical perspectives on current trends in subjectivism and relativism and their conse-

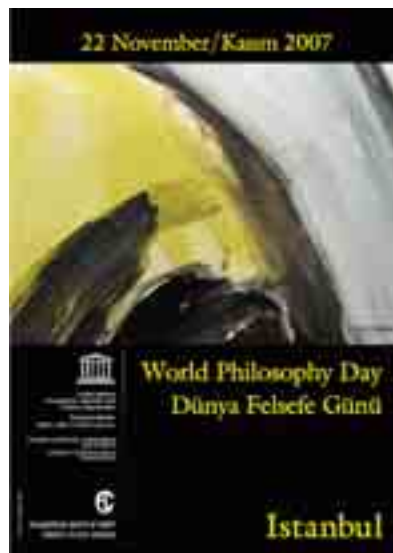
quences”, and “The role women philosophers could play in shaping the future of humanity”. A roundtable will be dedicated to the question “How can international intellectual cooperation better strengthen the United Nations system?”

Other activities are also scheduled such as tributes to the philosophers Alan Gewirth, Richard Rorty and Iris Marion Young, and *cafés philosophiques*, several exhibitions and a book fair. This will be the ideal opportunity to launch the first state of the art world review of philosophy teaching and learning, conducted by UNESCO at the request of its Member States.<sup>1</sup>

## Conferences and activities around the world

At UNESCO headquarters, a report on “Philosophy in the world at primary school level” will be presented a few days earlier in a conference on “Philosophical practices at primary school: status and concrete proposals” to mark World Philosophy Day on November 14 2007. The conference will open with a presentation of the UNESCO Intersectoral Philosophy Strategy. The participants will then break into four workshops and meet up again in a plenary session to synthesize their thoughts.

In most of UNESCO’s Member States, as in previous years, a range of events will take place, involving National Commissions, UNESCO’s field offices, universities, research centres, specialized NGOs and other interested parties. ¶



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<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy, a School of Freedom. Teaching philosophy and learning to philosophize: status and prospects*, UNESCO Publishing, in English and French.

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## 1<sup>st</sup> General Conference in Latin America

After one year of operation, the regional Latin American and Caribbean Coalition of Cities Against Racism held its First Annual General Conference, in Montevideo, Uruguay, on September 25-26 2007, with discussion on several institutional and thematic questions. Besides several panels on various issues related to discrimination in the region, the Internal Statutes were officially adopted, the Steering Committee of the Coalition was elected and a plan of action for implementation

by all 200 Coalition members wishing to fight against ghettos in their cities was presented. ¶

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## Coalitions Against Racism: 13 cities sign up in Canada

On June 1, 2007 in Calgary, 13 municipalities from across Canada met on the occasion of the Annual General Meeting of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to sign a Declaration affirming their commitment against racism and discrimination and their wish to unite to share lessons learned: Brooks, Alberta; Calgary, Alberta; Drayton Valley, Alberta; Edmonton, Alberta; Gatineau, Quebec; Halifax, Nova Scotia; Lion's Bay, British Columbia; Montreal, Quebec; Oshawa, Ontario; Thunder Bay, Ontario; Toronto, Ontario; Windsor,

Ontario; and the Region of Wood Buffalo and Fort McMurray, Alberta. David A. Walden, Secretary-General of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, stated, "these municipalities will share examples of concrete activities that contribute to the creation of more equitable communities where everyone participates fully. They are now part of UNESCO's International Coalition of Cities against Racism and Discrimination". ¶

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# An initiative to support the Horn of Africa

As announced in *SHS Views* 15, an independent Forum on the future of the Horn of Africa will be officially launched at the international conference planned in Djibouti from 12 to 15 November 2007, following a workshop organized from 8 to 10 November to define approaches and methods for the Forum. This initiative, titled "*Greater Horn Horizon*", aims to offer a suitable framework for researchers, intellectuals, opinion leaders and policy-makers to exchange ideas, research findings and views on present and future challenges for the most easterly region in Africa.

The Forum was born out of the wishes and concerns expressed by numerous intellectuals from the Horn of Africa (Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda). It seeks to contribute to the development of mutually accepted policy responses to the pressing challenges faced by the region. More specifically, it aims at:

- building a strong consensus on a long-term vision in favour of stability, sustainable development and regional integration;

- generating studies and analyses which may contribute to the formulation of proactive policies responding to the new challenges in the region; and
- encouraging universities and research institutions to develop future-oriented studies on the main trends in the region.

Located in Djibouti, the Forum intends to support the Intergovernmental Agency on Development (IGAD) and the governments from the Horn of Africa in responding to current and future challenges through multidisciplinary policy research and strengthening of dialogue among researchers and with policy-makers. The initiative's major objective is to facilitate the formulation and implementation of regional integration policies conducive to development and peaceful coexistence in the region.

### Beyond guilt

The main originality of this initiative is its focus on scenario-building and anticipatory approaches in the analysis of regional issues. It will encourage exchanges that will go beyond the usual analysis of the past and current situations and explore the different and possible scenarios for the coming decades. Demarcating itself from the "blame-game", this *Initiative* seeks to focus its research on the commonalities of the peoples of the region, enhance public awareness of the need to think regionally, and improve capacities for developing common and policy-orientated strategies. Other foreseen activities of the *Greater Horn Horizon Initiative* include: bi-annual research-policy seminars to discuss issues related to regional integration; publication and wide dissemination of studies and policy-papers; organization of capacity-building training workshops; and the launch of a website including a quarterly web-journal. ¶

For more details, please contact: **Max Schott**, [m.schott@unesco.org](mailto:m.schott@unesco.org), tel. +33 1 45 68 38 01



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A refugee camp in Sudan

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# Dossier

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## The dialogue



## what is the role of UNESCO?

This dossier was compiled by Irakli Khodeli and John Crowley, Editor in Chief of the *International Social Science Journal*. For more information, please contact:  
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### A research service online [www.unesco.org/shs/most](http://www.unesco.org/shs/most)

In the framework of its knowledge-for-policy platform, UNESCO is launching this autumn 2007 a novel policy research tool. With free online access on the Organization's website, it seeks to foster new modes of decision-making based on actual evidence originating directly from real-life situations. The tool will enable users to produce custom comparative reports by drawing from policy relevant material according to specific thematic categories and geographical locations. This service will first be available in English and French, before being extended to the rest of the United Nations working languages.





## between researchers and policy makers

Today's policy makers face the difficult task of tackling complex issues in a rapidly changing social environment. Whether it is meeting internationally agreed human development objectives, such as the Millennium Development Goals, or coping with the challenges of fast-paced social transformations, policy makers increasingly rely on the knowledge and expertise generated in academic research communities. Conversely, social scientists and researchers depend on feedback from policy makers to make sure that their work remains relevant to the real-world issues that affect their communities. Unfortunately, dialogue between these two worlds does not occur naturally, as demonstrated by the vast archive of ineffective policies designed in total disregard for existing social science knowledge. UNESCO, with its unique intellectual mandate, has taken up the task of bringing together researchers and policy makers in order to build the capacities of Member States to meet their core responsibility of ensuring the welfare of their citizens. The initiative is called the Management of Social Transformations, or MOST for short, and it is carried out by the Social and Human Sciences Sector. ¶

# A round table of Ministers for social development

**From 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> of July, as nineteen Ministers of Social Development convened for a roundtable at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, “research – policy linkages” became the catchphrase in the speeches, the presentations, the interviews and the casual conversations among the participants. It was clear that all agreed on the need to closely link the worlds of scientific research and policy making. To really understand the meaning of these linkages and their importance for various countries, back to the ideas expressed by the Ministers during the roundtable.**

The roundtable of Ministers was organized alongside the eighth session of the Intergovernmental Council of the MOST Programme (IGC). The Ministers from Argentina, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Greece, Iran, Kenya, Malaysia, Montenegro, Morocco, Pakistan, Senegal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, St Lucia, Syria, Uganda and Venezuela took turns to give their unique insights into how their respective countries could benefit from a closer relationship between research and policy-making.

There was a general agreement that the need for stronger policy-research linkages is directly connected with the social transformations occurring in the globalizing world, which call for states to intervene ever more closely in the fabric of their societies to promote public health, to target social benefits, to address entrenched poverty and inequality. But effective intervention requires detailed knowledge of social and economic reality and the ability to anticipate the appropriate policy responses. Under these circumstances, the importance of an unimpeded flow of ideas between the social science researchers and decision makers is hard to overrate.

The question of what we mean by social development inevitably came up – the concept is different for every country, and so are the government structures in charge of advancing social development. However, as Dr. Zola S. Skweyiya, the Chairperson of the IGC and the Minister of Social Development from South Africa remarked, regardless of regional and national specificities in development needs, “the concern for social development is common to all socially conscious governments”. Johan Scholvinck, the Director of the Social Policy Division of the United Nations Department for Economic and Social

**121 billion**

the estimated annual costs of meeting the MDGs in all countries in 2006

**1,158 billion**

the global military expenditure in 2006



Affairs (UNDESA, New York), stressed that “the artificial separation between social and economic matters, which wrongfully excludes key topics such as poverty and unemployment from the social development debate within the UN system, must stop”.

Whatever the precise meaning and scope of social development may be, the Ministers agreed that “a holistic, integrated approach” is needed. Mr. Ali Mosselhy, Minister of Social Cohesion of Egypt, warned the participants that an integrated social policy “was no longer an option”, but in fact a necessity. According to Mr. Zola S. Skweyiya, the “unprecedented challenges” of globalization are making the integrated approach to social development indispensable. Researchers and policy-makers have no choice but to address new trans-border social challenges in a holistic manner.

**Who is responsible?**

The roundtable participants noted that research-policy linkages are mutually enriching and that researchers can benefit significantly from the knowledge of the current policy issues and processes. Quite often, if left to its own devices, social science research becomes abstracted from the real-world problems that initially motivated it and to which it remains relevant. Research-policy linkages can, therefore, serve as important guides for scientists to decide what priority areas could most benefit from their research.

The participants debated whether the responsibility for ensuring harmonious research-policy collaboration should rest with the national governments, or shared by the countries of a particular region. The representatives of Ecuador and Argentina agreed that it was the responsibility of each country to apply its own policies

towards social development. By contrast, Mrs. Syda Bhumba, Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development of Uganda, illustrated how the social problems in East Africa were better tackled by regional cooperation, in the context of the efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The discussions on improving cooperation on social development issues *within* the UN family were of special interest. The participants noted that such organizations as the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD, Geneva), and the Institute for Comparative Regional Integration Studies of the United Nations University (UNU-CRIS, Bruges) have tremendous expertise and experience in social development policy and should be effectively integrated in the research-policy networks. ➔

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**How can the policy makers in your region benefit from the research that you are conducting in your university?**  
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**BERNARD JOUVE, UNESCO Chair “Urban Policy and Citizenship”, University of Lyon, France:**

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“The purpose of our Chair is precisely to analyze the socio-political processes and legal mechanisms by which new demands from civil society challenge the classic operation of urban institutions, which had hitherto been centred on local elected officials and their technocrats. The Chair thus gives elected officials a special place within the overall structure. They can thus use its work to inform their thinking on policy content for their respective institutions. Awareness-raising workshops for elected officials and lectures are also organized so as to favour enhanced circulation of local experiences.”¶  
\*\*\*\*\*

# 3 questions to... Heide Hackmann

**For the Secretary General of the International Social Science Council, 4 areas require better policy-research coordination**

**In what areas, in your opinion, would better integration of social science knowledge lead to tangible improvements in the policy process?**

This will vary enormously between countries. Some have strong traditions of social science involvement in policy whereas others could definitely do with policy processes that are more informed

by the social sciences, especially in social policy and development. However, there are four areas that, more or less everywhere, urgently demand better integration of the social sciences.

*Climate change:* How can we get an organized, coordinated response under way, and do so quickly? How, in this process, do we make sense of geopolitical diversities, global inequalities, and how do we reconcile public opinion and the willingness of politicians to act?

*Conflict management:* Experiences in countries like Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan,

Israel/Palestine – and many others – demonstrate the poor link between what we know and what we do, and how we end up in situations much worse than necessary or anticipated. How is what we know used; how should it be used; and what is it that we do not know?  
*Poverty:* High on the list of MDGs, yet despite some progress, advances in many parts of the world are exceedingly slow. Why? How do we help change this?  
Health, perhaps most dramatically illustrated by the HIV/AIDS epidemic: Again the question is why people do not ➔

### ➔ One priority: the peoples of the world

Several Ministers from the developing countries stressed the importance of domestic research systems, which have a direct exposure to the problems of social development on the ground. The Ministers urged the most Programme to assist in capacity-building initiatives in their countries in order to strengthen the research-policy nexus of the national research systems.

Towards the end of the roundtable session, several points emerged around which all the participants could form a consensus. First, that “putting people first” should be an unequivocal priority in policy making for social development.

Second, that the wider the doors of the policy making institutions are open for the input from civil society organizations, the higher the effectiveness of the policies formulated to address the real-world problems.

And finally, that in the globalizing world, governments no longer have the option of solving social problems alone – effective policy making is impossible without relying on the experiences of other governments and the knowledge generated in the scientific communities. ¶

Mebrak Tareke

# 14

the number of sub-regional integration arrangements in Africa



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## The eighth session of the Intergovernmental Council of most

The eighth session of the Intergovernmental Council (IGC), held in Paris, from 16 to 18 July 2007, was dedicated to the second biennial review of work under most Phase 2 (2004-2013). The IGC, which consists of 35 Member States and convenes every two years, drafted recommendations on further strengthening the most Programme.

The set of recommendations concerning the substance of the Programme focused on ways to strengthen and expand spaces of dialogue, such as the Regional Fora of Ministers of Social Development, while

the recommendations on the structure and governance of the Programme urged the Director General of UNESCO to “reinforce the most Programme and to provide it with all the necessary support, with the view to enhance its ability to promote the research-policy nexus in relation to social transformations.”

In view of its ambitious objectives, the IGC urged the General Conference of UNESCO to allocate appropriate financial and human resources to the most Programme. ¶

➔ act on what they know and how best we can address the problem.

### What should social scientists be doing that they do not currently do to contribute to the research-policy nexus?

Social science is not a form of engineering: there is no simple translation of “findings” (what social scientists try to establish) into “measures” (what politicians try to accomplish). More generally, social scientists and policy makers should recognize that being relevant and



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**“There is a need to reflect critically on policy”**

making a contribution to the research-policy nexus are not just about research outputs but also recapturing the space to reflect critically on policy.

### How can funding agencies and professional bodies enhance the circulation of social science knowledge between research and policy?

Social scientists and politicians often mis-communicate. Much can be accomplished by stimulating interaction between them. In this we need to think beyond the format of contract research



# “Think tanks”: at the interface between science and action

Linking the worlds of research and policy is one of the key objectives of the Social and Human Sciences Sector at UNESCO. All over the world, what are often called think tanks share the same objective.

Opinions vary as to the first think tank: the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (rusi), founded in 1831 in United Kingdom and the Brookings Institution, established in the United States in 1916, are among the candidates. Furthermore, the term “think tank” is not universally accepted and, indeed, has no equivalent in many languages.

### Diversity of Resources and Influence

Terminology highlights the difficulty of framing an exact definition to refer to. “A research group organized around a particular issue with a view to influencing the policy making process”, captures some key features, but fails to do justice to the impressive variety of organisations working in this field around the world.

One indicator of diversity of think tanks is their financial resources, which range from about 1.5 million euros for Confrontation Europe, based in Brussels, Belgium, to well over 100 million us dollars for the Heritage

Foundation in the United States. While large think tanks such as NIRA in Japan take up a wide range of issues, including economics, politics, society, administration, social welfare, education, and international affairs, others, such as the Ecological Foundation in New Zealand, concentrate on a single policy area. Many think tanks are affiliated with political parties from all points on the political spectrum, such as the *Fondation Jean-Jaurès* of the French Socialist Party, the *Heinrich Böll Stiftung*, associated with the German Green Party, and the *Fundacion para el Analisis y los Estudios Sociales*, linked closely to the People’s Party of Spain.

Despite these differences, think tanks around the world share a goal: the creation of a space for dialogue. All of these organisations strive to link research actors, including researchers and intellectuals with political actors: elected, activists, diplomats and trade unionists. Through seminars and conferences, the think tanks provide a space where ideas confront experiences, where

the worlds of thought and action intersect, and where civil society has the ear of politicians. By empowering their citizens, think tanks reduce the democratic deficit and restore to public debate the key role in political decision making that it deserves.

### To Overcome Differences

Do they have a real influence on national policies? The direct links that some think tanks maintain with governments suggests that they do. But can such links inhibit the expression of the pluralism of ideas? According to Michel Maso, the director of the *Fondation Gabriel Péri* in France, one of the ways to overcome divisions would be to promote interaction between different think tanks throughout the world; one such international encounter, a conference involving the *Péri* foundation, the German *Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung* and Chinese research institutes, is planned for the end of 2008. ¶

Bettina Reveyron

and explore alternative forms of interaction: seminars, academies, life-long training, exchange and pairing programmes. Joint “show and tell” events – in which social scientists show what they have found, and politicians communicate why such knowledge is often inadequate for solving the practical problems politicians try to solve – bring the two parties into the same room and sensitise them to each others’ concerns and problems. ¶

Collected by John Crowley

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**How can the policy makers in your region benefit from the research that you are conducting in your university?**  
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**FOUZIA RHISSASSI, Vice-Chairholder, UNESCO Chair “Women and their rights”, Ibn-Tofail University, Kenitra, Morocco:**  
\*\*\*\*\*

“At present, although not necessarily previously, everyone is aware that key issues for Morocco centre on scientific research and especially action research. Universities now have a dual mission: to participate in socio-economic and cultural development, and to work towards implementation of favourable structures and dynamics to create an elite able to direct such efforts. The UNESCO Chair has thus contributed to a dynamic through the cross-cutting theme ‘women and their rights’; it has developed, for regional authorities, indicators and monitoring systems for the struggle against poverty and women’s exclusion; and it is currently finalizing an activity and research programme with women prison inmates, with a view to facilitating re-entry into society.”¶  
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# Emerging Regional Priorities

**In Russian, most means a “bridge.” The Management of Social Transformations Programme of UNESCO is indeed about building bridges between governments and social science communities to foster the exchange of knowledge on policy areas as diverse as the fight against poverty, the strengthening of the State’s role in social development, the advancement of human security, regional integration and population ageing.**

The world is changing at an unprecedented pace. Major global trends such as globalization and scientific and technological advancement are fast transforming social, economic, political and cultural landscapes. The impact is uneven not only across the globe, but also within each society. Governments, therefore, face the growing responsibility to manage social transformation for the benefit of their citizens, by implementing policies that mitigate risks and optimize benefits for all.

Effective policies have to be based on solid knowledge. This is the fundamental idea behind the most programme of UNESCO. By building and strengthening linkages between the social science research community and government policy makers, the programme plays a unique role in mobilizing the brain power of universities, policy think tanks, relevant civil society organizations and government institutions for well-informed, scientifically corroborated, evidence-based policy making.

While it is universally accepted that social science research should inform public action to a greater degree, in practice priorities vary enormously. A close look at the major trends that affect societies in the different regions reveals priority policy areas where sustained dialogue between social science and decision makers could be particularly beneficial.

## Africa: growing stronger in unity

Imagine a continent of people with the same historical experience and a shared sense of common destiny. Despite profound diversity in cultural and physical landscapes, the same currency is used in every corner of the continent and monetary policy is coordinated by the same central bank. People have the right to move across borders, settle down, live and work where they wish. Every citizen of the region enjoys equal rights under the constitution, holds the same type of passport, and sends elected representatives to the same regional legislative body. Welcome to Africa, year 2023!

This vision of a united African continent is laid out in the Abuja Treaty for establishing the African Economic Community, which embodies Africa’s will to transform itself from a continent of individual least developed and developing economies to a strong, united bloc of nations.

Today, however, the political map of Africa is divided into more than 50 separate countries. This is despite the fact that the sovereign borders that the African peoples and governments inherited upon independence from their colonial rulers during the 1950s and 1960s present an inadequate framework for addressing pressing problems that do not recognize state lines – extreme poverty, conflict and insecurity, the spread of preventable diseases, and environmental degradation.

The reality of sovereign states, on which the multilateral system is based, is here to stay for the foreseeable future. On the other hand, there is a viable, time-tested solution to overcoming the problem of bounds of national sovereignty – regional integration. This process is bringing together sovereign states into economic and political unions in many parts of the world, including Africa.

How can regional integration help Africa defeat poverty and promote human security? The answer lies in the empirical evidence that regional integration optimizes the capacities of individual governments to meet the welfare needs of their populations.

First, integration can enhance the bargaining power of individual states in international economic relations to obtain more favorable terms in global trade negotiations. Second, by pooling available resources and exploiting comparative advantages, regional integration can facilitate common solutions and optimal use of resources, drawing on local academic institutions with potential for knowledge generation and sharing.

Moreover, regional integration can create economic and political linkages between member states that will render violence too costly a way to settle differences. This point is crucial for Africa, where conflicts have diverted resources from development efforts and prevented countries from participating fully in regional economic community activities. Empirical evidence suggests that regular political contact among members can build trust and facilitate cooperation, including on security. [↗](#)

# 10% and 22%

the share of world population aged 60 years or over in 2005 and 2050, respectively

# 81 million

the number of extremely poor persons living in the Latin American and the Caribbean region

## ➤ Arab States: development through social empowerment

In the affluent parts of the Arab region, the birth of a new life is likely to be assisted by a health professional. Both the mother and the baby have a very high chance of survival. The new person is most likely to have a healthy childhood, easy access to school, good conditions for attaining quality higher education and enough financial capacity throughout his life to never experience poverty and hunger. This person will likely live well above the age of 70.

In the same region, but in a much less developed country, a child delivery will probably not be assisted by medical personnel. The newborn faces a high risk of not surviving infancy, and even higher risk of not reaching the age of five. The child, if it survives, will probably have no access to primary school, not to mention university, and will live a life affected by the debilitating conditions of poverty and social exclusion. The newborn child will be lucky to reach the age of 50.

While a shared cultural and spiritual heritage unifies the Arab states spread over two continents, there are extreme disparities between countries in most economic and social indicators. However, the gap can be narrowed or even closed through effective policy interventions that lead to sustainable social development across the region. But development policies will only be effective if conceived and applied with active participation of civil society – academic institutions, NGOs, policy think tanks, interest groups, professional associations, and other stakeholders – in the process. And in order to

participate, the marginalized and vulnerable segments of society need to be politically and economically empowered.

Unfortunately, the available data from the Arab region reveals that women are effectively barred from participating in the development of their societies:

- Some 44 million adult women, almost half of the female population, cannot read or write.
- Of the 13 million illiterate young people (aged 14 – 24 years), 8.5 million are women.
- Women's share of seats in national parliaments of Arab states is only about 9 percent<sup>1</sup>.

The severe shortage of women in decision making positions is observed in Arab countries irrespective of their income and economic prosperity levels. It is clear that the widespread disempowerment and marginalization of the female population cripples the prospects of development in the region.

The trend is improving, albeit slowly: four Arab countries that did not have women parliamentarians before 2000 now have them. Some Arab countries have allowed women their basic political right to vote. In Algeria, Djibouti, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia various quota systems and political appointments to ministerial positions are being implemented to strengthen women's political participation.

.....  
**How can the policy makers in your region benefit from the research that you are conducting in your university?**  
 .....

**SONIA MONTECINO AGUIRRE, UNESCO Chair in Gender Studies, University of Chile:**  
 .....

“The academic research conducted by the Interdisciplinary Center of General Studies at the University of Chile informs and shapes public policy in the country, especially in the area of health care. We directly work with the government agencies to generate research-based public policy solutions to fight ethnic and racial discrimination and to reduce the related inequalities in the region. To give you just a few examples, our study on the ‘Participatory evaluation of the programme on intercultural health and indigenous peoples from the Metropolitan Western Office is designed to assist the policy makers at the Ministry of Health, while our project on ‘Formulating a gender equality plan from the indigenous perspective in the metropolitan region will provide information for the National Service for Women (SERNAM).” ¶  
 .....

## Europe and North America: benefiting from ageing populations

Ageing is becoming an increasingly salient feature of our daily lives, as the relative share of older persons in the population increases. United Nations population estimates show that by 2045, the number of older persons in the world (those aged 60 and over) will likely surpass, for the first time in history, the number of children (persons under age 15)<sup>2</sup>.

Contrary to the proclamation of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century French philosopher Auguste Comte, demography may *not* be destiny – demographic trends do change over decades – but it certainly plays a wider and more enduring role in social transformations for every generation than most other social or economic forces. Europe is ageing fastest: the number of persons aged 60 and over surpassed the number of under-15 year olds in 1995. By 2050, Europe will have twice as many older persons as children – a trend that will certainly pose major challenges for the social and economic adaptation of European societies.

Concerns about demographic ageing have already sparked lively debate about the ➤

# 47,1 %

Proportion of population living below the national poverty line in the Arab Least Developed Countries (2000)

➤ optimal ways to reverse the trends or at least mitigate their impact. There are four broad directions: pension reforms; policies to promote higher fertility; immigration of people of working age; and improving the quality of life of older persons to ensure the benefits of their continued involvement in social life.

European governments have realised that demographic ageing, despite the challenges it poses, is also a unique opportunity for their societies; increasingly, older Europeans represent a rich reservoir of skills and experiences. Many governments have already enacted “active ageing” reforms that ensure that European citizens can actively participate in the economy and society in older age.

## Latin America and the Caribbean: upholding human rights through fighting poverty

Economists often use material values such as money or physical possessions to define poverty. Yet, at the individual level and in a real sense of the word, poverty is a denial of human dignity. Most fundamentally, poverty is chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights.

In the Latin American and Caribbean countries, as in most parts of the world, poverty is a major threat to human rights and dignity. According to the latest available figures from the United Nations’ commission on Latin America and the Caribbean,

this region is home to 209 million poor people, defined by economists as having income of 2\$ or less a day, of which some 81 million are extremely poor – those who earn 1\$ or less a day.<sup>3</sup> This means that two out of five lives are affected by the debilitating conditions of poverty.

In an increasingly affluent world, fighting chronic poverty has become a moral imperative, challenging politicians, public officials, and academic establishments to put together all available resources towards this end. The international community has responded to this call by setting the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger as the first of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with specific targets to be achieved by 2015 through equitable economic growth and sustainable human development.

There is good news: while poverty levels remain high, overall progress in fighting poverty is encouraging.<sup>4</sup> A 5.5 point decrease in the percentage of extreme poor from 2002 to 2006 means that 18 million people in this region have managed to escape this condition. Even though the figures raise hopes that the region will meet its poverty commitment, success directly depends on the will of international, regional, national and local actors to continue directing all available energy and resources into this struggle.

.....  
**How can the policy makers in your region benefit from the research that you are conducting in your university?**  
 .....

**DAVID DRISKELL, UNESCO Chair for Growing Up in Cities, Department of City and Regional Planning, College of Architecture, Art and Planning, Cornell University:**  
 .....

“Our community-based action research with young people is benefiting not only the communities where these young people live (through youth-led community improvement efforts), but is also helping policy makers within our region, and beyond. In New York City, our field-tested action research methods are being integrated into school curricula for experiential learning about the environment and community action. At the state level, our research has helped guide the redesign of several statewide youth engagement initiatives. And further a field, our fieldwork in Kenya is being used by UN-HABITAT to guide implementation of an Africa-wide strategy for youth engagement in community action.” ¶  
 .....

## Asia and the Pacific: putting emphasis on human security

The Asia and the Pacific region is unsurpassed in its vastness and diversity, encompassing the two most populous and rapidly industrializing countries (China and India), the second biggest economy in the world (Japan), human settlements in the world’s highest altitudes (Nepal and Bhutan) and close to twenty Small Island Developing States. The region is home to 60 percent of the world population, two third of the world’s extremely poor (800 million persons), and more than half of the world’s youth (850 million persons between the ages of 10 and 24).

Despite significant progress made in Asia and the Pacific as a whole towards achieving the MDGs, it remains home to about three times more underweight children and people living on less than \$1 a day than the world’s two other major developing regions – sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America combined.<sup>5</sup>

Children are particularly hard hit by poverty in this part of the world. On average, a child born in Asia and Pacific is twice as ➤

likely not to reach the age of 5 and to live below the \$1 per day poverty line as one born in Latin America and Caribbean.<sup>6</sup>

In order to attain the MDGs in Asia and the Pacific, the scarce resources at the disposal of the developing countries need to be directed towards crucial areas such as education and health. Yet the countries with the lowest human development indicators are often the ones that spend the lowest share of their resources on health and education.<sup>7</sup>

There is another area, however, in which countries of the region have seriously accelerated their spending – defense. According to a recent study by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the two largest arms importing countries in the world are in Asia. The same study reveals that military expenditures in the region for the last ten years have increased by 45 percent, from \$128 billion in 1996 to \$185 billion in 2006. In South Asia, which includes some of the world's poorest countries, military expenditures have almost doubled in the last ten years.<sup>8</sup> But more weapons have not brought peace: Asia has been the region with the highest number of conflicts for the last three years.<sup>9</sup>

The rationale that underlies prioritizing military expenditure is a narrow, traditional

notion of security. A broader, more comprehensive definition of security that includes threats associated with poverty, lack of state capacity, socio-economic and political inequity and environmental factors has been increasingly gaining acceptance, and has called into question the logic of prioritizing military measures for enhancing security.

At the first glance, the weight of the issues that societies confront around the world is overwhelming. Fortunately, there is an immense body of knowledge and experience accumulated by social science communities and governments on how to address these issues, mitigate the negative impact of social transformations and maximize their benefits.

The MOST programme promotes the optimal use of this knowledge, by building bridges between governments from the same region so that they can share experiences and learn from each other. The regional forums of Ministers of Social Development, occurring regularly in every region of the world and designed to develop interregionally, serve precisely this purpose. Moreover, the MOST programme fosters a fruitful dialogue between the social science researchers and policy makers through such institutionalized

platforms as the International Forum on the Social Science – Policy Nexus. In the future, most will endeavour to continue, deepen and extend these dialogues. ¶

Irakli Khodeli

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<sup>1</sup> Gender representation statistics from Programme on Governance in the Arab Region, UNDP, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> *World Population Prospects: the 2006 Revision*, UNDESA, Population Division.

<sup>3</sup> *Social Panorama of Latin America 2006*, ECLAC, United Nations, Santiago, Chile. (February 2007).

<sup>4</sup> *Social Panorama of Latin America 2006*, ECLAC, United Nations, Santiago, Chile. (February 2007).

<sup>5</sup> *The Millennium Development Goals: Progress in Asia and the Pacific 2006*, United Nations Development Programme ([http://www.undp.org/mdg/undps\\_role\\_regional\\_asia.shtml](http://www.undp.org/mdg/undps_role_regional_asia.shtml)).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *SIPRI Yearbook 2007: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 2007.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

# Social Transformations at UNESCO

While UNESCO's role in preserving and promoting world heritage is well recognized around the world, it is often forgotten that UNESCO is also an observatory of contemporary global changes and a clearing house for analytical work on the ensuing social transformations.

In the face of such rapidly unfolding and far-reaching processes as globalization, UNESCO strives to foster in-depth thinking on social issues to assist its Member States in the management of social transformations for the benefit of their populations. By doing so, UNESCO provides a platform for exchange of ideas and contributes to the emergence of an open dialogue on a wide spectrum of social questions.

It is the responsibility of the Division of Social Sciences, Research and Policy in the Social and Human Sciences Sector to advance the dialogue on social transformations. The MOST programme – the only intergovernmental programme of its kind in UNESCO, builds bridges between the research and policy making communities and thereby enhances capacities for the management of social transformation.

## 8 million

the number of human lives that can be saved annually for \$57 billion investment in basic health interventions

But social transformations are not just about social science. They include promoting the autonomy of youth around the world through policies that take into account the needs of 15-24 year olds. The World Forum on Youth, which will convene on October 12 and 13 2007, will serve as an important platform for young people to voice their opinions and influence the policies that affect their lives (see pages 24 and 25).

Social transformations also relate to physical education and sport around the world. UNESCO, recognizing sport's power to promote peace among the world's peoples, assists governments, NGOs and experts in addressing the evolving

challenges of physical education and sport, and encourages international debate and cooperation on ethical questions such as doping in sport.

Lastly, new patterns of international migration constitute one of the key social transformations of our time. Driven by the age-old search for better living conditions and contemporary global phenomena such as economic globalization and climate change, migration trends compel UNESCO to assist governments in protecting the human rights of migrants, and in ensuring social integration. Under social transformations, UNESCO also deals on several levels with the management of urban space. This means promoting urban policies that respect, protect and promote inclusiveness and social cohesion. ¶

.....  
**How can the policy makers in your region benefit from the research that you are conducting in your university?**  
 .....

**IN-SUK CHA, UNESCO Chair of Philosophy, Seoul National University, Department of Philosophy, Korea:**  
 .....

"We make an impact on public policy in the region by helping governments incorporate democracy education in school curricula. The Asia-Pacific Philosophy Education Network for Democracy, established in 1995 within the UNESCO's programme 'Democracy and Philosophy in the World', plans to publish materials and textbooks for students at primary and secondary level. These are to be trans-cultural in its character so that they can be widely adopted for democracy education by schools in the region. An international study group, which includes specialists from Australia, India, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, the Philippines and Thailand, is currently working on the textbook, planned to come out by 2010." ¶  
 .....

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# Further reading



**Women and Urban Politics – Struggles and Strategies for Social Change**  
François Hainard,  
Christine Verschuur  
106 pp. UNESCO/Karthala,  
2006  
ISBN 978-92-3-203885-2  
(only in French and Spanish)



**Think Tanks and Policy in Latin America – Global Dynamics and Regional Realities**  
Adolfo Garcé, Gerardo Uña  
316 pp. Prometeo Libros,  
2006  
ISBN 978-987-574-122-5  
(only in Spanish)



**Tracking Impact. Case studies on the social science – policy nexus**  
International Social Science Journal, No179  
UNESCO/Blackwell Publishing, 2004  
(also in Arabic, Chinese, French and Spanish)



**The Words of Urban Stigmatisation**  
Jean-Charles Depaule (editor)  
278 pp. UNESCO / Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 2006  
ISBN: 92-3-204011-4  
(only in French)



**Local Development and Governance – Transdisciplinary Approaches**  
Luis Carrizo,  
Enrique Gallicchio  
224 pp. Centro Latinoamericano de Economía Humana (CLAEH)  
ISBN 9974 581 34 - 6  
(only in Spanish)



**Social Science and Social Policy – From National Dilemmas to Global Opportunities**  
Reference Paper for the International Forum on the Social Science – Policy Nexus  
30 pp. UNESCO, 2005  
SHS/2005/WS/24  
(also in French and Spanish)

## TOOLS

### The International Social Science Journal

It is a classic challenge to make specialist knowledge available to the non-specialist without distorting it. The natural sciences, which are familiar with popularization, have generally coped better in this respect than the social sciences. There may be deep reasons for this – “epistemological” reasons, as one would say technically – in so far as popularized social science risks being indistinguishable from common sense. They are not insuperable, however, so long as there are discussion spaces and modes of dissemination that are designed precisely

for that purpose. Such is the mandate of the International Social Science Journal. Created in 1949 by UNESCO, the ISSJ is resolutely international and interdisciplinary and works, uniquely, in six languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Within the usual terms of quality-driven academic quarterly, the ISSJ consistently embeds the concern for an audience that wishes to use social science knowledge. Issues are organized around thematic dossiers that make it possible to cover a question while taking

account of its geographical and thematic diversity. They are also open to unsolicited proposals, of which the ISSJ receives over 100 a year, from all parts of the world. The ISSJ also includes debates and professional and institutional matters as well as original documents, whether or not derived from UNESCO bodies, that can stimulate thinking in the social sciences. ¶

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The ISSJ online:  
[www.unesco.org/issj](http://www.unesco.org/issj)

## TOOLS

### The social dimensions of regional integration online

During a roundtable on the social dimensions of regional integration, held at the International Forum on the Social Science - Policy Nexus in Montevideo, Uruguay, in February 2006, a group of experts presented papers that explored the emerging problems in the regional integration processes around the world. In the website of UNESCO Social and Human Sciences Documentation Centre all these papers are available in an electronic format (only in French):

**La dimension juridique du multilatéralisme régional**

Mireille Delmas-Marty  
24 pp. UNESCO, 2006  
SHS.2006/WS/MR/7

**L'intégration régionale multisectorielle et le multilatéralisme**

Louis Sangaré  
20 pp. UNESCO, 2006  
SHS.2006/WS/MR/5

**Construire les régions du monde comme ensembles politiques et sociaux**

Jacques Tenier  
22 pp. UNESCO, 2006  
SHS.2006/WS/MR/5

**Régionalisme, arrangements institutionnels hybrides et gouvernance à la carte ?**

Christian Deblock  
27 pp. UNESCO, 2006  
SHS.2006/WS/MR/4

**La dimension sociale de l'intégration en Amérique du Sud : politiques stratégiques et options sociales**

Paulo Roberto de Almeida  
15 pp. UNESCO, 2006  
SHS.2006/WS/MR/6

**Quel rôle peuvent jouer les organisations d'intégration régionale dans une nouvelle architecture internationale ?**

Philippe Hugon  
22 pp. UNESCO, 2006  
SHS.2006/WS/MR/3

**Processus et politiques d'intégration régionale à l'œuvre à l'ère de la mondialisation : multilatéralisme régional et gouvernance mondiale**

Ninou Garabaghi  
22 pp. UNESCO, 2005  
SHS.2005/WS/MR/1

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

# Young people at the heart of

**In order to narrow the gap between young people and an international organization as complex as UNESCO, with its numerous partners and networks, constant efforts are necessary. The UNESCO Youth Forum, which is an integral part of the General Conference, and regional youth forums are a necessary part of this process.**

Within the United Nations system, the Youth Forum, which was created in 1999, is quite exceptional. It allows young people aged between 15 and 24 to share their experiences and their common concerns and to make themselves and their ideas heard by submitting recommendations directly to the General Conference.

On October 12 and 13 2007, on the eve of the 34<sup>th</sup> General Conference at UNESCO, some 200 delegates from all over the world are expected to be in Paris to take part in the 5<sup>th</sup> Forum. For the first time, these young people will take part in the preparation of two ministerial round tables at the General Conference on "education and economic development" and "UNESCO's role in science and technology in sustainable development", by making recommendations on the two themes.

## **The voice of the world's youth**

Responding to the wishes expressed during the Forum in 2005 for similar encounters at the regional level, participants at the 5<sup>th</sup> Forum will voice the opinions of the hundreds of young people who attended the regional Youth Forums organized by the UNESCO Section for Youth, Sport and Physical Education on the theme "Young people and dialogue between civilizations, cultures and peoples."

As *SHS Views* was going to press, three successful regional fora had already taken place in 2006-2007: the Pacific Youth Festival in Tahiti (July 17-22 2006), the Euromed Forum in Cyprus (November 16-19 2007) and the Asian Youth Forum in the Republic of Korea (June 25-29 2007). Three further regional forums were to follow in autumn 2007: in the Americas, in Africa and in the Arab States.

From September 9 to 15, young people from 37 countries and territories from the Americas (North, South, Central and the Caribbean) are expected to meet in Acapulco (Mexico) to share their enthusiasm and to propose new ideas on how to manage questions linked to young people in their region. Even before this encounter, several concerns had emerged from online discussion: integration in the Americas and multiculturalism, educa-



A young delegate at UNESCO's Regional Youth Forum, last held on June 25 and 26, 2007 in the Republic of Korea.

tion, rural and urban youth projects, young people's policy participation as well as sustainable development.

UNESCO's Africa Youth Forum should take place in Burkina Faso from September 24 to 28. The theme is "Young People and Dialogue among Civilizations, Cultures and People". Two delegates are expected to represent each of the continent's 53 countries. Numerous observers from civil society organizations, regional youth networks, youth NGOs as well as repre-



**“Young people’s participation in decision making will open up the way for more effective policies and programmes.”**

Koïchiro Matsuura, UNESCO Director-General on International Youth Day, August 12 2007.

# UNESCO’s General Conference

representatives from numerous UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations are also expected to attend.

A component of the range of initiatives to promote regional African cooperation and follow-up to the African Youth Charter, this Forum, like the others, urged young people to engage in dialogue and reflection. It thus aimed at raising the awareness of governments, civil society and the private sector about the need to develop, with youth participation, programmes and policies to ensure the contribution and the integration of 15-24 year olds in the development of their societies.

The Youth Forum for the Arab States will take place just after the UNESCO General Conference, from November 18 to 22 2007 in Cairo (Egypt), under the auspices of the Arab League in cooperation with UNESCO and UNDP. It will allow young people from throughout the Arab region to exchange their perceptions of regional concerns. ¶

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Website: [www.unesco.org/en/youth](http://www.unesco.org/en/youth)

Also read the document on youth in *SHSViews* no 17: [www.unesco.org/shs/regards](http://www.unesco.org/shs/regards)

ZOOM



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## A new campaign of hope for children in Brazil

An 8-hour live show, 30 million viewers, almost 8 million us dollars collected. On August 11 and 12, the Brazilian channel tv Globo was organizing its annual event to support to the *Criança Esperança* (Child Hope) programme. The campaign started in 1985 and since 2005 UNESCO has been providing it with essential know-how in terms of methods and evaluation to enable local successes to be extended, sustained and, ultimately, exported.

Thanks to the generosity of the people of Brazil themselves, *Criança Esperança* has provided financial support – for a maximum of two years – to hundreds of neighbourhood projects, thereby enabling them to make key investments. The programme also operates four permanent “spaces” that ensure synergy between projects in the same locality. And above all, *Criança Esperança* embodies the conviction that, in the face of huge problems, capacities for action are greater than anyone would think.

Denis Mizne, Executive Director of the *Sou da Paz* (“I’m for peace”) institute in São Paulo, points out that “Latin America accounts for 42 % of firearm murders throughout the world. Some areas of urban Brazil are among the worst in Latin America”. *Sou da Paz* has been working for a decade to prevent conflict in the favelas of São Paulo, and for the past 18 months has been managing the *Criança Esperança* Space in the city in partnership with UNESCO. These are extremely tough neighbourhoods, with crumbling infrastructure. Yet thanks to dance, to supplemental teaching, to art and to sport, hope springs anew. The community effort that now finds a focus in the Space has achieved striking results: a 76 % decrease in the murder rate in the past 5 years. ¶

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A workshop at the Regional Forum in Cyprus in 2006

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# Rugby World Cup: UNESCO in the scrum

**The city of Saint-Denis, which will host some of the most interesting games of the Rugby World Cup, is organizing a World Sports Forum, under the patronage of UNESCO. From anti-doping to the fight against racism and the position of women in sports, the eight debates will contemplate the possibilities of a different world of sport...**

As *SHSViews* is being printed, the Stade de France is hosting some of the most interesting games of the 6<sup>th</sup> rugby World Cup, from the opening game to the final.

If that was all, we probably would not have mentioned it... But from September 7 to October 20 2007, this event is promising to bring together thousands of young people from all over the world, including the Delegates of UNESCO's Youth Forum, who are invited to come to Saint-Denis at the end of their work, on the evening of October 13<sup>th</sup>.

Whether one is a rugby fan or not, this international event is an opportunity to place a bet on the sure winner: the spirit of sport. In order to do so, the municipality of Saint-Denis, in partnership with the region of Ile-de-France and UNESCO, organized a World Sports Forum, in the heart of the "Rugbycolor" village, located at the doors of the Stade de France.

Integrated in a real "Oval Festival" including four exhibitions and 30 concerts, the World Forum offers an opportunity to discuss, from an angle very similar to that of UNESCO, the social and cultural functions of sport. On eight occasions, sports managers, athletes, elected officials, social science researchers and representatives of UNESCO Member States will share their opinions and experiences of a world in transformation.

The first debate, held on September 7<sup>th</sup> on the theme "The globalization of rugby: opportunity or threat?" was an invitation to discuss cultural diversity a few hours before the French and Argentinean teams met on the rugby field. The following Friday, another debate called to "Get racism out of stadiums!" On September 21<sup>st</sup> the issue of gender equality in sports was raised.

The September 28<sup>th</sup> debate is dedicated to the environmental impact of sport competitions, while the October 7<sup>th</sup> discussion is about promoting a risk-free sport, by actively fighting doping and excessive influence of money in sports. On October 13<sup>th</sup>, the first female to be appointed as UNESCO Champion for Sport, will participate in a discussion asking if "athletes are role models".

On the following day, October 14<sup>th</sup>, the participants and the public will try to understand "Who controls sport – media, sponsors, or states?" And finally, on the last day of the tournament, a debate on "Managing sports globalization across the North-South divide" will consider among many other questions ways to organize sport around the world so that it can contribute to sustainable development.

These debates will be reflected in a report planned to be published in both French and English, as well as in the next issue of *SHSViews*. ¶

For more information on this event, please contact:  
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See also [www.unesco.org/shs/sport](http://www.unesco.org/shs/sport)



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## Brian, 17: "I discovered a new culture."

As part of the World Sport Forum, a hundred young people from Saint-Denis (France), chosen for their motivation and engagement in voluntary activities, became the Ambassadors of the city and of the Rugby World Cup. They visited several countries taking part in the tournament and have, in return, welcomed the young Ambassadors of those countries at the opening of the World Cup.

Brian, 17, is one of these ambassadors. On the evening of October 13<sup>th</sup>, he was also welcoming the Delegates of the UNESCO Youth Forum. "I did not know much about North Lanarkshire, rugby or Scotland before this trip. For me, it has been an incredible opportunity to discover a new culture, totally different from mine. I felt immediately at ease, thanks to the kindness of the Scottish and the amazingly warm welcome they gave us. I was particularly

impressed by the importance of rugby in Scottish culture and by the atmosphere during the games. More importantly, I really discovered a new and gripping team sport, which requires enormous solidarity among players and respect for the opponent, and in which everyone has a role to play regardless of fitness or size, since height and bulk can be assets in the game. It really made me want to join my high school rugby team, which I did at the beginning of the new school term. I also promised myself to study English more in depth, not only to obtain good grades but to be able to communicate more easily since the experience also gave me the desire to travel. I hope to be able to greet these young foreigners in Saint-Denis with as much respect as they showed us." ¶

C. B.

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## Antidoping: governments meet in Spain

On the eve of the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Conference on Doping in Sport, held in Madrid (Spain) on November 15-17 2007, UNESCO is organizing on November 14 a coordination meeting for governments. The objective is to establish a consensus on revision of the World Antidoping Code, to encourage

exchange of information between governments and to inform them about the current implementation status of the International Convention Against Doping in Sport.¶

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## PEs in francophone universities

In May 2007, the Conference of Youth and Sports Ministers of the States and governments sharing the French language (CONFES), in partnership with UNESCO, brought together in Dakar (Senegal) 20 African experts on physical education and sport (PEs). They will develop

an academic brochure for PEs teaching which should lead to the creation of new degree courses in francophone African universities from the beginning of the 2007-08 academic year.¶

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## Extension of the “Diambars” project in Africa



proposes to use sport to enhance the academic achievement of young people and to support school enrolment. In 2003, the “Diambars” project established in Saly the first “sport-study” institute in Africa.¶

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The “Diambars” project, which was developed in Senegal with UNESCO support, is to be extended to several other African countries. The project

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# International migration : a summer school in Moscow

**Without waiting for World Tolerance Day – which is on November 16 –, the Migration Research Centre (Russia), the Central European University and the UNESCO Moscow Office organized last July an international summer school to promote migration protection and tolerance.**

The Migration Research Center (Russia), in cooperation with Central European University and with the support of the UNESCO Moscow Office, organized the International Summer School “Migration and Discrimination: Protection of Migrants’ Human Rights and Promotion of Tolerance”, which was held on July 14-19, 2007 in the framework of the project “Migration as the resource of the social development: positive effect and risks”

Russia and the United States of America are currently the only countries towards which migration is increasing.¶ It is therefore crucial to raise the awareness of young teachers and researchers, who are best placed to pass the message on to young students and to young people generally.

The syllabus of the Summer School – which was the first of its kind – was designed to improve participants’ knowledge of the range of migration issues so as to enable them to disseminate it in turn.

Courses, which included lectures by international organization experts, dealt with problems such as globalization and international migration, international law and migrants’ rights protection, the strategies and programmes of the Council of Europe in the field of migrant integration, and Russia’s new migration policy.

The Summer School took place in the “Dobroe” training center in the Moscow region, with the participation of 16 young lecturers, postgraduates and doctoral students in migration and allied subjects from higher education institutions in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. In addition to lectures, the programme included review

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Participating young researchers from Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

of methods in migration studies and sources of information in this field as well as different approaches to the elaboration of educational programmes on migration.

A textbook on “Methods and methodology for study of migratory processes” was also presented. Preparation of the textbook was a preparatory stage of the overall project of which the Summer School was part, the general objective being to strengthen networks of migration experts in CIS countries, and to clarify the role of migration in the contemporary world, international approaches to management and regulation of migration, and possible means to enhance prevention of xenophobia and human trafficking.¶

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¶ Report of the United Nations World Commission for International Migration, 2005

## CALL FOR PAPERS



## This is your magazine

Responses to news from the Sector for Social and Human Sciences and proposals to publish an article or a photograph on a topic relating to UNESCO's social and human sciences programme are very welcome at the following address: [shs@unesco.org](mailto:shs@unesco.org)



# “How Man spread over the Earth”

by Olzhas Suleimenov

Anthropologists, working hand in hand with geneticists and archaeologists, have concluded that the human species emerged in a specific place: the subequatorial zone of East Africa. This contradicts an alternative long-standing idea, namely that humanity appeared in several different parts of the Earth.

If the former thesis is correct, it follows that the expanding human species must have spread over the planet, not immediately but over several tens of thousands of years, crossing both land and sea. It is already possible to identify some of the key stages of the journey, such as the Mediterranean Basin and the former Asia Minor (i.e. the valleys of the Tigris and the Euphrates), where the ancestors of the peoples of today “halted” for thousands of years before pushing on eastwards.

This point is worth emphasizing. For some reason, the longest and most significant migrations have been eastwards. Presumably, the ancestors of the Chinese, Japanese, Koreans and of the various indigenous peoples of the Americas must at some stage have lived in the Mediterranean region.

The monogenetic theory of the origins of *homo sapiens* must have implications for historical linguistics, since the first language and the first written signs (among which representations of the earliest divinities) must have arisen in the same area and subsequently been disseminated by migration throughout the Earth.

At a later stage, tribes settling new territories along their way would have formed sovereign peoples, developed their own languages, signs and scripts. Successive waves of migration would

then have carried them elsewhere, bringing them into contact with other peoples and societies. From such encounters, over centuries, new peoples, with new names, would emerge. Languages would evolve, although vocabularies would retain traces of ancient dialects.


From the theory that *homo sapiens* has a single place of origin, new forms of study may be expected to emerge in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: new linguistics, new palaeographies, new culturologies, sciences that study religion and art in new ways. The basis of world history will be examined afresh.

It is when linguists cease to be astonished at the truly remarkable coincidences discovered in the languages and cultures of Africa, Eurasia, Australia and the Americas that the speech and sign of primitive writing will have started to serve as archaeological documents.

One theme that might excite particular interest in modern science, a theme premised upon humankind's postulated single point of origin, is the reasons for the earliest migrations.

Migration is often driven by fairly obvious factors such as economic reasons, natural disasters, political circumstances and invasion and defeat in war. But which other dynamics may have given impetus to human movement?

These are the questions to be covered in a conference entitled “Large-scale Migration of Peoples in Prehistory and Protohistory”, which is to be held before the end of the first quarter of 2008 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

Hitherto, large-scale migrations have 

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Petroglyphs  
in the Almaty  
region

➔ been studied primarily with respect to fairly recent events in Eurasia. For instance, the reasons for which the Hun surged over northern Central Asia and Europe are still imperfectly understood by historians.

One can only note that, at that time, ethnic groups mixed over an immense territory. Peoples displaced from their traditional homelands settled for several centuries on new lands, crowding out the existing inhabitants. This process affected Persian-speaking, Caucasian, Finno-Ugric, Slav and Germanic groups.

Which historical reasons drove the incandescent hordes of Tatar and Mongol tribes westwards? Hitherto, we have only one scientific answer: “reasons related to economic activity”.

In our opinion, the issue deserves examination in its overall context, taking account of the obvious circumstances of antagonism between the two great powers of the time – the Chinese Empire and the Roman Empire – which constituted the poles of world civilization and politics.

The great Silk Road, which connected the two poles, was also a factor shaping events and driven by them. In addition, the invention of the stirrup in the 3rd century BCE turned the Tataro-Mongols in a people on horseback. New military units (cavalry) and new military tactics developed, ensuring Hun success on the battlefield.

In order to improve understanding the great migrations of peoples throughout history, the conference will also consider the origins of migration since homo sapiens left Africa, covering the Palaeolithic and Neolithic periods. The

paths of ancient migration throughout the world will be explored: from Africa to Australia (100,000 to 70,000 years ago) and later in Asia, in South America and in Polynesia.

The conference will be an opportunity to address several questions. When and why were particular lands settled? How can the story of the migration of peoples be told? Why did large-scale migration occur?

By this conference, we hope to show that the entire planet is humankind’s “homeland” and that borders arise as the result of migration, mixing and contact.

Why hold this conference now? Because of the painful processes of self-identification of people and ethnic groups in today’s world, which lead to border conflict and secession within existing States. Because, also, of the tragic “ethnic cleansing” to which Africa and Europe have been subjected in recent years.

Leading researchers from France, the United Kingdom, Italy, the United States, Latin America, and Eurasian countries such as Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Russia, have already expressed an interest in the conference, which is being organized in partnership with the Institute of Oriental Languages and Cultures and the National Institute of Preventative Archaeology, both based in Paris. ¶

**“We hope to show that the entire planet is humankind’s ‘homeland’ and that borders arise as the result of migration, mixing and contact.”**

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### **Olzhas Suleimenov**

“A geologist by training, a poet by vocation”, Olzhas Suleimenov was born in 1936 in Almaty. A Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters of the French Republic, he is currently Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to UNESCO. ¶

## The rights of migrant workers in Europe and Africa



Although it is one of the most important texts on the rights of migrants, no European country has ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families.

A study proposes an analysis of the reasons for this situation based on a survey carried out in seven countries: Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Norway, Poland and the United Kingdom. The main focus is the initiatives taken by various actors (political parties, civil society,

unions) to promote the Convention, along with the arguments used by governments to justify their refusal to ratify it as well as the role of European institutions.

According to a second report, four African countries have still not ratified the Convention: Cameroon, Benin, Gabon and Niger. The report analyses their migration policy and proposes recommendations to urge them to ratify the Convention. To date, the African continent has 20 million migrant workers. This poses numerous difficulties for the host country: exclusion, xenophobia, and discriminatory rules and regulations. ¶

*The Migrant Workers Convention in Europe*  
Euan MacDonald and Ryszard Cholewinski  
94 pp., UNESCO 2007, SHS-2007/WS/7  
(In English). Downloadable on:  
[www.unesco/shs/migrations/rapport](http://www.unesco/shs/migrations/rapport)

*Migration de travail et protection des droits humains en Afrique*  
Babacar Sall  
49 pp., UNESCO 2007, SHS-2007/WS/6  
(In French). Downloadable on:  
[www.unesco/shs/migrations/rapport2](http://www.unesco/shs/migrations/rapport2)

## Cultural diversity from a comparative social sciences perspective



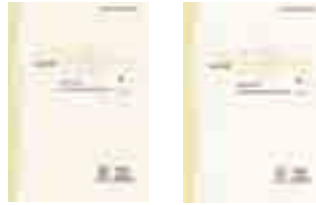
Published in English only, *Democracy and Human Rights in Multicultural Societies* offers an important contribution, from a social science perspective, to the debate on the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, adopted by UNESCO Member States in 2001. The book gives an interdisciplinary view of the political governance of cultural diversity and claims

for cultural recognition, language groups, indigenous peoples and migrant communities, as well as the conditions, forms, and consequences of democratic and human-rights-based governance of multi-ethnic, multilingual and multi-faith societies. ¶

*Democracy and Human Rights in Multicultural Societies*  
326 pp., 37 €. UNESCO Publishing/Ashgate,  
2007. ISBN 978-92-3-104050-4

For more information, please contact:  
**Paul de Guchteneire**,  
[p.deguchteneire@unesco.org](mailto:p.deguchteneire@unesco.org),  
tel.: +33 1 45 68 38 50  
To order this book:  
<http://publishing.unesco.org>

## Addressing human trafficking in Benin and Togo



The UNESCO project against human trafficking in Africa has just published two policy papers on trafficking in Togo and Benin. In both countries, women and children are the main victims of trafficking. Poverty, HIV, AIDS and a lack of proper education force many to set up survival strategies that can make them even more vulnerable, pushing them into the arms of traffickers driven by vast demand for children for adoption, body parts for transplants or rituals, child soldiers or domestics. Both studies praised recent laws passed in the two countries: Benin has regulated the movement of children and repressed child trafficking, while Togo has condemned child traffickers. Both countries also take part in regional plans to fight against trafficking. Nonetheless, many challenges remain. There is a continuing need for a solid legal framework to cover all aspects of trafficking. NGOs and the public sector need more funding to properly fulfill their missions of prevention and rehabilitation. Finally, local, regional and international awareness-raising campaigns and education programmes must be a high priority for future actions. ¶

For more information, please contact:  
**Caroline Bacquet**, [c.bacquet@unesco.org](mailto:c.bacquet@unesco.org),  
tel.: +33 1 45 68 37 01

*Human trafficking in Togo: root causes and recommendations*  
(in French only)  
Policy paper poverty series; 14.4  
69 pp., UNESCO, 2007; SHS/cct/2006/pi/h/4

*Human trafficking in Benin: root causes and recommendations*  
(in French only)  
Policy paper poverty series; 14.3  
68 pp., UNESCO, 2007; SHS/cct/2006/pi/h/5.

## The heritage of migrants in museums around the world

How are museums around the world building a dialogue that exhibits the cultural heritage of migrants and the vital contributions they make? The May 2007 issue of the UNESCO journal *Museum International* explores this question. The issue, which is partly based on an expert meeting organized by UNESCO in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in October 2006 in Rome, Italy, presents emerging migration museums in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom. ¶

*The Cultural Heritage of Migrants*  
*Museum International* 233/1234  
UNESCO/Blackwell Publishing, 2007

For more information, please contact:  
[clt.museum@unesco.org](mailto:clt.museum@unesco.org)



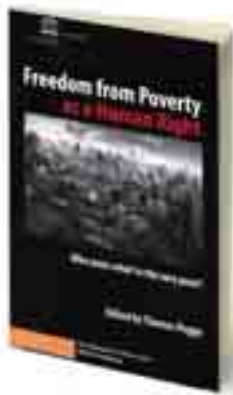
## Which environmental ethics?

This collection of studies on environmental ethics by some of the most eminent international experts in environmental ethics, which has just been published in English in 2006, has just been published in French. The eight specialists commissioned by UNESCO, stress that, despite greater awareness and a growing interest in environmental questions, the ethical aspect of such issues is still all too often neglected at the political level.

*Environmental Ethics and International Policy*  
22 €. ISBN 92 3 104039 1 (English) /  
978-92-3-204039-8 (French)  
UNESCO, 2006 & 2007

To order the book:

# Who owes what to the very poor?



**While UNESCO is conducting numerous field meetings on the development of minimum norms for Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) to comply with the human rights framework, a book edited by Thomas Pogge denounces extreme poverty as a violation of a fundamental human right.**

No one disputes that one to two billion people – depending on the criteria one chooses to use to define poverty – live today under conditions that are hardly human. For the poorest, food, housing, health,

physical safety – not to mention education –, are luxuries beyond reach. No one denies that “something should be done.” The first of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is precisely the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. Moreover, the international community has established a concrete target for evaluating its efforts: to halve the proportion of people living on less than one US dollar a day by 2015.

But why is it necessary to act? How far need we go? Who bears the responsibility? What is the most effective way to act? On these questions, which are crucial for taking the MDGs beyond the realm of rhetoric, no international consensus exists.

The book *Freedom from Poverty as a Human Right*, edited by Professor Thomas Pogge, derives from a series of seminars organized by the Philosophy Section of the UNESCO Sector for Social and Human Sciences. It brings together the views of fifteen specialists who endeavour to clarify what poverty means from the perspective of moral philosophy

applied to the international system. The conclusion is unambiguous: extreme poverty violates a fundamental human right, and those who are able to act against it have a strong moral obligation to do so. For extreme poverty is incompatible with the economic and social rights that have been positively asserted by existing international legal instruments. To deny the existence of a right not to live in extreme poverty is either to reject this legal framework or to claim that nothing at all can be done. In this respect, moral philosophy has profound political implications: it seeks to determine “who owes what to the very poor?”. Addressing this question – which is the subtitle of the book –, moral philosophy affirms and justifies economic and social rights while opening the possibility to act.

But how can the avoidable nature of extreme poverty create an obligation, given that nobody in particular is responsible for extreme poverty and that nobody can remedy it alone? The issue is necessarily to participate in institutions that are able to ensure

that the poorest, like everyone else, have a fair share of the common wealth. These institutions do not really exist... and it is far from certain that the conditions for their creation can be met.

Three forthcoming books in the same series will take this agenda forward by drawing on the lessons from political science, law and economics. The ultimate goal is to establish a conceptual framework sufficiently precise and consensual to serve as a foundation for real action. ¶

For more information, please contact:  
Ferial Aït-Ouyahia,  
[f.ait-ouyahia@unesco.org](mailto:f.ait-ouyahia@unesco.org),  
tel.: +33 1 45 68 38 12,

*Freedom from Poverty as a Human Right. Who Owes What to the Very Poor?*  
Thomas Pogge (Editor)  
22 €.  
406 pp., UNESCO/Oxford University Press,  
2007,  
ISBN 978-9-23-104033-7

## Publication: Rationality or rationalities?

This book, which appeared in March 2007 in a series published with the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), derives from a conference held in September 2002 in Porto-Novo (Benin). The theme of the event, which was organized jointly by UNESCO and by the Porto-Novo Pan-African Centre for Advanced Studies, was “The encounter of rationalities”. CODESRIA, which publishes extensively on Africa, seeks to facilitate research, promote its dissemination and create forums to support exchanges between African researchers. This book considers “rationality today” and offers

genuine discussion by bringing together contributions drawn from the authors’ experiences, projects and views of the future.

The first section deals with the very nature of rationality in philosophical and historical perspective and brings into range the concept’s post-modern essence. The book then addresses the relation between rationality and culture, which points towards the diversity of rationalities. Finally, the concept is considered in terms of its practical applications by a study of theoretical and social practices. This is a complex debate. Because it confronts ideas and perspectives, rather than simply presenting

notions, the volume *La rationalité, une ou plurielle ?* makes a crucial contribution. ¶

*La rationalité, une ou plurielle ?*  
(Only in French)  
Edited by Paulin J. Hountondji  
467 p., 45 \$ (30 \$ in Africa)  
CODESRIA/UNESCO, 2007.  
ISBN : 978-92-9091-094-7

For more information, please contact:  
Carrie Marias, [c.marias@unesco.org](mailto:c.marias@unesco.org),  
tel: +221 8492304

To order the book:  
[publications@codesria.sn](mailto:publications@codesria.sn)



## September

### 10-11 September

Meeting of the group of experts on “development of minimum norms for Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) to comply with the human rights framework: a decision-making tool for funding negotiation.” Paris, France. (c.tekaya@unesco.org)

### 10-13 September

Expert Group Meeting: Creating an Inclusive Society – Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration. Paris, France. (c.von-furstenberg@unesco.org)

### 10-14 September

Ethics teacher training course. Bratislava, Slovakia. (h.tenhave@unesco.org)

### 11-12 September

National workshop on regional integration. Côte d'Ivoire. (d.dieng@unesco.org)

### 19-21 September

Joint meeting between UNESCO and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) on the “stakes of the fight against poverty from a human rights perspective in the states of the WAEMU.” Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. (c.tekaya@unesco.org)

### 24-26 September

Second evaluation meeting of the MOST project “Nation-states and the challenges of regional integration in West Africa”. Praia, Cap Verde. (d.dieng@unesco.org)

### 25-26 September

First Annual General Conference of the UNESCO Coalition of Latin American and Caribbean Cities against Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia. Montevideo, Uruguay. (m.scarone@unesco.org)

### 26-28 September

UNESCO Conference “Ethics of Energy Technologies in Asia and the Pacific.” Bangkok, Thailand. (d.macer@unesco.org)

### 28-29 September

International seminar at the University of Venice: “Urban policies and the integration of migrants.” Venice, Italy. (b.colin@unesco.org)

## October

### 2-3 October

International seminar dedicated to the establishment of the National Bioethics Committee in the Republic of Armenia. Yerevan, Armenia. (a.ampar@unesco.ru)

### 5-6 October

International Conference “The role of the Constitutional Court and Human Rights Defender in human rights protection issues”. Yerevan, Armenia. (a.ampar@unesco.ru)

### 28-31 October

Official launch of UNESCO's ASPAC Coalition of Cities against Discrimination at the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Congress of the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). Jeju Island, Republic of Korea. (posso@iccjeju.co.kr)

### 30 October

Extra-ordinary Session of the Intergovernmental Council of the MOST Programme. Paris, France. (c.von-furstenberg@unesco.org)

## November

### 12-15 November

Ethics teacher training course. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. (h.tenhave@unesco.org)

### 12-15 November

Pacific regional workshop on the Ethics of Knowledge Production. Apia, Samoa. (susan@unesco.org.ws)

### 14-15 November

International conference “Bioethics Committee Activities and Bioethics Education in Belarus.” Minsk, Belarus. (a.ampar@unesco.ru)

### 14-17 November

Conference of Cities. Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. (marlova.noleto@unesco.org.br)

### 15-16 November

Seminar Series “Bioethics Education in Moldova.” Chisinau, Moldova. (a.ampar@unesco.ru)

### 15-17 November

World Conference on Doping in Sport. Madrid, Spain. (p.marriott-lloyd@unesco.org)

### 15-22 November

Celebration of World Philosophy Day 2007. Istanbul, Turkey. (m.goucha@unesco.org)

## December

### 1-2 December

Celebration of World AIDS Day. Moscow, Russian Federation. (a.ampar@unesco.ru)

### 6-8 December

Third Days of Ethics and Bioethics for West and Central Africa on the theme “Ethics, Environment and Health: Risk Evaluation and Management in Africa.” Lomé, Togo. (c.marias@unesco.org)

### 13-14 December

Seminar Series “Bioethics Education in Moldova.” Chisinau, Moldova. (a.ampar@unesco.ru)

### 15-16 December

Joint Bioethics Roundtable of UNESCO and the University of Kumamoto: “Self-Determination in Asia.” University of Kumamoto, Japan. (d.macer@unesco.org)

## CALL FOR PAPERS



## Remembering slavery

Friedrich Nietzsche regarded the capacity to forget as a sign of health. Our times, on the contrary are memory-obsessed. In order to take forward the debate launched in issue 188 (June 2006) on the rights and duties of memory, the *International Social Science Journal* is calling for papers on “remembering slavery”. Themes of particular interest will be the politics of memory, responsibility, and the cultural “traces” of slavery, and comparative analyses will be especially welcome. Manuscripts of up to 8,000 words, in any of the six ISSJ languages, should reach the Editor by December 31 2007. ¶

The full text of the call is available at:  
[www.unesco.org/issj](http://www.unesco.org/issj)

### Simone Porges

She had just retired from UNESCO, after working for the Organization for many years, contributing to the creation of this magazine, ensuring the scrupulous copy-editing of the French edition, and fulfilling many other tasks, for Simone was always

available to help others. It is with great sadness that we have learned of her sudden death in September in Vienna, where she was raised and where she returned to live after retirement. All SHS staff express their most sincere condolences to her family and friends. ¶