UNISIST Newsletter

INFORMATION, INFORMATICS, TELEMATICS

CONTENTS

Information Society Division
Communication and Information Sector

INFORMATION FOR ALL PROGRAMME

IFAP Intergovernmental Council

THE second session of the Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme was held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 22 to 24 April 2003. The meeting was opened by the Director-General who welcomed the representatives of 24 of the 26 Member States sitting on the council along with observers from international non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations and from other UNESCO Member States.

Among the items discussed was the issue of safeguarding of the documentary heritage in Iraq. The Council expressed its support for the position taken by the Executive Board and the declarations of the Director-General concerning the situation in Iraq. It urged the Director-General that any UNESCO assistance should pay particular attention to libraries and archives as custodians of the Iraqi heritage and governmental records vital to the functioning of public administration and the protection of the rights of Iraqi citizens. UNESCO's efforts in this area should be implemented in close cooperation with the competent non-governmental organizations such as the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), the International Council on Archives (ICA) and the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA) which maintain formal relations with the Organization.

The Council also acknowledged the work of UNESCO so far in ensuring that its key priorities relating to freedom of expression, cultural diversity, equal access to education and universal access to information are included on the Agenda for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

All documents of the Council and its Bureau are also available on-line for consultation at: http://www.unesco.org/webworld/ifap

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WSIS

THE second meeting of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom II) of the World Summit on the Information Society held in February 2003 in Geneva was intended to prepare the drafts of the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action, and through a working group open to all states, began work on the structure and basic elements of the WSIS Draft Declaration of Principles and Action Plan. The draft was posted on the WSIS website in March 2003, and will serve as basic working documents for the further deliberation of the PrepCom, particularly during the negotiation process.

UNESCO's concerns, namely freedom of expression, cultural and linguistic diversity, universal access to information and equitable access to education, received strong support and are so far adequately reflected in the working documents, but the Organization should further strive to ensure that Member States confirm these elements as part of the WSIS outcomes.

To this end, UNESCO will host a formal, open-ended intergovernmental drafting group at its Headquarters in Paris in July 2003. Thus, WSIS Intersessional Meeting is being convened by the President of the WSIS Preparatory Committee from 15 to 18 July 2003 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. The meeting organized by the WSIS Executive Secretariat and hosted by UNESCO is intended to review the working documents for the Draft Declaration of Principles and Draft Action Plan and to advance the negotiations on the Summit on the basis of the documents generated by the PrepCom-2 and the results achieved during the intersessional period.

UNESCO is also organizing High Level Colloquium bringing together eminent thinkers including Nobel prize-winners, leading academics and philosophers having an interest in the information society, in order to consider the long-term implications and challenges of the digital revolution and share their vision with WSIS participants.

The Colloquium, with Heads of States and Nobel Prize Winners as interveners and WSIS participants will be held in Geneva, on 9 December 2003.

UNESCO's participation was also requested in future events such as meeting of NGOs and civil society groups of the Arab Region held in connection with the Arab Regional Ministerial Pre-Conference and organized by the Egyptian Ministry of Communications and Information Technology in cooperation with the Arab League in June 2003. This regional conference aimed at reaching a unified Arab stance on the action plan to be presented at the Intersessional meeting, at Prep Com III as well as the Summit.

Asian Regional Pre-Conference
Tokyo, Japan

THE three-day Asian Regional Pre-conference was held in January 2003 and brought together representatives of governments, private companies and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) from all sectors.

UNESCO organized the debate on "Cultural and Linguistic Diversity", one of six panel discussions. Its results can be summarized as follows:

- Cultural Diversity, including multilingualism is a key principle.
- There must be a balance between Intellectual Property Rights and the rights of access, especially for information in the public domain.
- Public domain information should be available to anyone, anytime, anywhere.
- The creation of local contents must be fostered.
- Pacific Island States face special challenges and need different solutions from countries with large populations.
- Linguistic diversity on the Internet will only be achieved with explicit support.
- ICTs must be used to foster oral cultures.

- ICTs must be used more effectively for the preservation of the environment.

The issue of cultural and linguistic diversity in the Information Society was largely covered in the Final Declaration of the Conference as were two others of UNESCO's main concerns, namely the issue of equitable access (including a strong reference to the needs of ensuring a strong public domain of information, an equitable balance between intellectual property rights and the needs of the users, as well as the development of open source solutions) and education in the information society (both the use of ICTs for education and ICT literacy).

Although the concerns of Pacific Island States were well covered, both at side events and the conference itself, in order to further develop their positions for the Summit meeting in December, UNESCO also organized a WSIS Pacific preparatory meeting for its stakeholders in Suva, Fiji in April with the goals of preparing Pacific Island countries and organizations to participate effectively in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). *[Developed under Regional Office].*

LIBRARIES

Seminar on IFLA/UNESCO's
Public and School Library Manifestos and Guidelines

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 5-7 May 2003

SOME 150 experts from 16 Caribbean countries and territories, as well as Brazil, France, Mexico, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Venezuela, met in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, in May 2003.

The primary objective of the seminar was to present the IFLA/UNESCO Public and School Library Manifestos and respective Guidelines, to Caribbean librarians who work or are experienced in policy formulation or training for public and school librarianship. The seminar provided the opportunity for a review of the state of public and school libraries in the various countries through the presentation of country reports. Participants identified specific issues, which need to be addressed if the Manifestos and Guidelines are to be implemented in public and school library systems in the Caribbean. Participants focused on how best to meet the needs of the Caribbean communities. The seminar also provided an opportunity for discussion and guidance on the formulation of policies and training programmes in libraries in the region.

The Seminar revealed that IFLA/UNESCO Manifestos and Guidelines for public and school libraries have had a limited impact on the operations of libraries in the Caribbean. Exposure to the guidelines and measures recommended in these documents can have a positive effect on the future direction of library services to the public and to schools, and on the orientation and performance of personnel at all levels in these libraries.

The meeting provided a good opportunity for participants to exchange experiences and gain a better understanding of the latest developments in public and school librarianship in the new information era, and for the promotion of the IFLA/UNESCO Public and School Library Manifestos and Guidelines and the Information for All Programme.

Participants discussed in group sessions four topical public and school librarianship issues and formulated recommendations that were presented in plenary. These are summarized below:

Information as the Core Business of Libraries
Partnerships between the public and school libraries are essential if communities' needs for information are to be met seamlessly and effectively. Librarians need to utilize all opportunities to put the library at the centre of the world of information and knowledge.

Development of Library Associations
The establishment and/or strengthening of Library Associations as efficient and effective organizations will facilitate sensitizing and raising awareness of governments and communities that the school library is fundamental to national economic development, and should therefore be afforded access to digital resources at reasonable costs in order to facilitate independent learning and democratization of information.

Human Resource Development
The application of expert information and knowledge organization skills of librarians within sectoral applications and in support of the rural areas must become a central area of professional practice and enable them to develop excellent research capabilities to facilitate needs analysis, strategic planning and iterative evaluation of services and exploitation of factual data for enhancement of information services and advocacy activities.

Cooperation and Networks
Cooperation should be enhanced through the use of ICTs for networking of sectoral information sources through list serves which are linked to existing regional infrastructures, and librarians should commit themselves to marketing the UNESCO Manifestos for the Public and School Libraries and the respective Guidelines to librarians as well as to stakeholders.

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MEMORY OF THE WORLD

Memory of the World Programme, Register Sub-Committee

THE inaugural meeting of the Register Sub-Committee of the International Advisory Committee (IAC) of the Memory of the World programme took place at UNESCO's Headquarters in March 2003. The Sub-committee, which comprises international archives, library and heritage experts, convened for a two-day session.

This new body was established by the IAC at its fifth meeting in the Republic of Korea in 2001 and its main task is to recommend inscription on the International Register of documents which have had a wide influence on peoples and events. Its role include the monitoring of the various Registers (national, regional and international) to ensure that they remained in good order and it can recommend the removal of an entry on a Register should conditions such as major deterioration of storage conditions, decay and loss of material or refusal of access without good reason be found to occur.

The Sub-committee examined over 40 new nominations that have been proposed for inscription on the International Register and its recommendations will be discussed during the IAC meeting to be held in Gdansk, Poland from 28-30 August 2003. The decision of the IAC will be transmitted to UNESCO's Director-General for endorsement. All registers contain material of world significance and a document may appear on more than one Register.

The list of nominations as well as collections on the international register can be consulted at: *http://www.unesco.org/webworld/mdm.* At present, the Register lists 68 collections of world significance.

The impact of the Memory of the World Programme can be seen through the number of nominations received from Member States such as Croatia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan and Uruguay, which have submitted proposals for the first time.

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Central Asian Initiatives
for Safeguarding Documentary Heritage

MEASURES to improve the preservation of the documentary heritage were the focus of discussions during a meeting of National Committees of the Memory of the World Programme in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan at the Kazakh National Library in Almaty in April 2003.

Discussion also focussed on strengthening regional networking to foster cooperation in preservation and access to documentary heritage among the four countries and to prepare nominations from each country for inclusion in Memory of the World Register.

Participants agreed to implement four-year programmes for training of documentary

heritage professionals as well as for collections preservation and access assessment.

It was also decided to develop a website that would support the proposed Memory of the World network and facilitate the programme in Central Asia. The integration of multilingualism within the Central Asian regional development of the Programme was also recommended.

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Australian Memory
of the World Committee

I N the National Library of Australia on Wednesday 30 April 2003, the Australian representative on UNESCO's Executive Board presented certificates marking the first inscriptions on the Australian *Memory of the World* Register.

Outstanding collections and documents which have been deemed by UNESCO to comprise precious and irreplaceable parts of Australia's national memory have been added to the recently launched Australian *Memory of the World* Register. They are:

- The Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony Griffin Plan of Canberra
- The archival records of the Australian Agricultural Company, the nation's oldest surviving commercial entity
- The Cinesound Movietone collection of weekly cinema newsreels from 1931 to 1975: a living record of Australia's life and times
- Constitutional documents: an assembly of key items charting the development of Australian democracy
- The *Endeavour Journal* of Captain James Cook
- The Mabo Case Manuscripts.

The Cook journal and the Mabo manuscripts are also inscribed on the International *Memory of the World* Register and so are automatically included on the National register. The other items were assessed by the Australian Memory of the World Committee, through a rigorous process, to meet the criteria for inclusion on the National Register.

Inscription certificates will be presented to the institutions responsible for safekeeping of this heritage. They include the National Archives of Australia, National Library of Australia, National Screen and Sound Archive (ScreenSound Australia), the High Court, Parliament House and the Noel Butlin Archives Centre, Australian National University.

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Slave Trade Archives

National Archives of Argentina

Within the framework of this project, UNESCO is undertaking a number of projects to safeguard the memory of the centuries-long trans-Atlantic trade in human beings. In Latin America and the Caribbean significant progress has been achieved to date.

Reconstructing one of the darkest pages of Argentina's history, that of the African slave trade to the Rio de La Plata, is the aim of the contribution of the National Archives (Archivo General de la Nación) of Argentina to the Slave Trade Archives project. More than 500 documents have been digitized with UNESCO's financial support by the institution.

These documents have been chosen from among 5,000 documents collected by the National Archives on the Slave trade for publication in the near future on the Internet. This initiative forms part of the overall Slave Route Project launched by UNESCO in 1994. A Committee created with the mandate of examining the global question of the slave trade and its impact on the economic and political situation in a number of countries, concluded that it was essential to preserve archival materials and to digitize the original documentary sources for greater access and awareness.

Barbados Museum and Historical Society

A similar project is being undertaken by the Barbados Museum and Historical Society which seeks to determine the extant knowledge of the location, quantity and conservation of original documents related to the slave trade and the heritage of the enslaved in the Caribbean region. Through a research survey form designed to assist Caribbean heritage institutions in identifying historic documents encompassing the documentary heritage of enslaved peoples of the Caribbean, the project has revealed an interesting aspect of one of the defining moments in world history.

It also provides details of the conservation and collections management problems facing slave trade archives in the region including manpower and financial constraints. In addition, it has highlighted the fact that some countries have no original documents relating to slavery within their archives, but rely instead on copies or microfilm. This results in limited access for the local researcher, professional or amateur, whereas for the people of each country, documentation that might enable them to better understand their past is largely lost to them. Projects such as this will go some way towards enabling greater awareness of identity and access to information with which to shape, understand and engender that identity built from societies created out of 500 years of enslavement in the Americas.

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DIGITAL HERITAGE

Regional Expert Meeting
on the Preservation of Digital Heritage
for Central Europe

THE Expert Meeting held in Budapest, Hungary in March 2003 formed part of UNESCO's campaign to preserve the world's digital heritage. The meeting was attended by

22 experts from six Central European countries and included representatives from Ministries, National Commissions for UNESCO, National Libraries and Archives, Museums, Universities, producers, preservers and users of digital heritage materials.

Participants discussed digital preservation challenges in Central Europe where, similar to other regions, an increasingly large proportion of information is being produced in digital form accessible only through machines.

The Meeting examined two key draft documents: a revised draft Charter on the Preservation of the Digital Heritage currently being prepared by UNESCO, and the UNESCO draft technical guidelines on the preservation of digital heritage.

There was strong support for these initiatives to prepare a Charter and Guidelines on the Preservation of Digital Heritage. The Charter was seen as an important means of focusing global attention on a key issue and encouraging problem-solving measures. The Draft was found to be well-balanced, reflecting the interests of Central European countries, and was supported, with a few modifications proposed.

The meeting was deemed a success as participants gained a better understanding of digital preservation, including the nature of the problems and the limitations of solutions proposed as well as current efforts to address the problem. It provided an excellent opportunity at first hand to learn about the digital environment in Central Europe, to exchange views and experience and learn from each other.

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Cultural Heritage in Iraq

SOME 30 leading experts met at UNESCO Headquarters in April 2003 to attempt a preliminary evaluation of the state of the country's heritage. The meeting sought to determine the urgent measures required to safeguard this heritage, which dates back thousands of years.

The Director-General of UNESCO, Koïchiro Matsuura, in his address to the international experts, appealed to all States to adopt legal and administrative measures to prevent the importation of cultural, archaeological or bibliographical objects from Iraq and also called upon museums, art dealers and private collectors to exclude these objects from commercial transactions.

Mr Matsuura also intends to request the Secretary-General of the United Nations to submit the question of illicit traffic to the Security Council for the adoption of a resolution imposing an embargo, for a limited period, on the acquisition of all Iraqi cultural objects and the return of any goods to Iraq that had already been acquired or exported.

UNESCO called for the urgent establishment of a database combining all of the archives, lists and inventories relating to the Iraqi heritage, which would enable customs and police authorities, as well as art dealers and all concerned parties, to identify and check the status of a particular object, noting that the database could only become operational after a precise appraisal of the objects that had been stolen or destroyed.

The Director-General thanked the numerous States that expressed their readiness to contribute to emergency measures taken by UNESCO by means of expert help or financial support. He welcomed the initiatives of Italy, which was the first to offer a contribution of $400,000 for the protection of the Iraqi heritage. This initiative was followed by many others, growing daily in number, from States including Qatar, France, Germany, the United Kingdom and Egypt, from institutions such as the United Nations Foundation and the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), from scientific

networks and from individuals. The Director-General expressed his delight with such initiatives, which will boost the Special Fund for the Iraqi Cultural Heritage that he has recently established.

The experts issued the following statement:

The meeting deplores and is deeply shocked by the extensive damage to, and looting of the cultural heritage of Iraq caused by the recent conflict. It calls on the coalition forces to observe the principles of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols.

The meeting agreed on the following recommendations to those responsible for civil order in Iraq:

- That all museums, libraries, archives monuments and sites in Iraq be guarded and secured immediately by the forces in place.
- That an immediate prohibition be placed on the export of all antiques, antiquities, works of art, books and archives from Iraq.
- That an immediate ban be placed on the international trade in objects of Iraqi cultural heritage.
- That a call be made for the voluntary and immediate return of cultural objects stolen or illicitly exported from Iraq.
- That there be an immediate fact-finding mission under UNESCO coordination to assess the extent of damage and loss to cultural property in Iraq.
- That there be the facilitation of international efforts in assisting cultural institutions in Iraq.

ARCHIVES

Open-Source Software for Archivists

UNESCO is funding the development of an open-source software to create "finding aids", (a term used by archivists to describe catalogues). Being developed in cooperation with the International Council on Archives (ICA), efforts are concentrating on further analysis the functional, application and technical requirements of the tool and provide an analysis of the needs of archives users and of archivists.

A feasibility study for the project was made earlier by ICA experts who found that it would be highly desirable to develop a modular, open-source software tool that could be used by archives worldwide to manage the intellectual control of their holdings through the recording of standardized descriptive data.

The expert group assigned to undertake this task will also analyse existing archival software solutions and establish cost models for either use, customization or development of a tool, if possible, using software development expertise in developing countries.

The group is also requested to make recommendations for sponsorships, partnerships and maintenance with the public and private sector and to make recommendations as to requirements for distribution, maintenance, updating, improvement, support, training and communications with users.

The report with recommendations on feasibility of either adoption of an existing software tool or the development of a new tool is expected to be available in the second half of 2003.

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AUDIOVISUAL ARCHIVES

Second National Mexican Seminar
on Sound and Visual Archives

THE Second National Seminar on Sound and Visual Archives organized by 'Radio-educacción' and the *'Centro Nacional de las Artes'* was held in Mexico City from 19 to 23 May. The objective of the seminar was to raise awareness of the endangered audiovisual heritage, which runs the risk of disappearing without leaving a trace. With inputs from international and national experts from radio and television, archivists were encouraged to reflect, in plenary sessions and workshops, on issues concerning the safeguard of heritage collections, their preservation and transfer from analogue to digital media.

UNESCO was invited to deliver the keynote address. The event evoked a great deal of interest among archivists and the press. It is evident that the press was unaware of the extent of the potential danger to the audiovisual heritage.

Judging from the issues that were high-lighted and the response of the audience, there will obviously be a growing demand for workshops of this type as they allow not only interaction with international experts –several representatives of the CCAAA NGOs (currently seven NGOs meeting under the umbrella of UNESCO) were also invited– but also the opportunity to discuss problems with colleagues to find appropriate solutions.

This seminar itself was a follow-up to the 1st International Conference on Sound and Visual Archives in Latin America, which took place in 2001 to examine technical issues of concern to audiovisual archivists.

A similar seminar is planned for Jamaica in November 2003 for the English-speaking Caribbean and other seminars are also being discussed. It is essential to develop a mechanism that corresponds to needs of developing countries without being too financially imposing and the development of a common training strategy for audiovisual archivists in developing countries is being discussed. It is hoped that the long-term result will be a blueprint containing a practical curriculum, a register of experts and training kits available in different formats that can be applied in developing country situations.

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JTS 2004:
Preserving the Audiovisual Heritage - Transition and Access

THE sixth technical symposium to examine issues of concern to audiovisual archivists will be held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada from 24 to 26 June 2004. The symposium will be organized jointly by the participating members of the CCAAA (Co-ordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations) with AMIA (Association of Moving Image Archivists) coordinating the event.

The three-day event will be held at the Isabel Bader Theatre (See: *http://vicu.utoronto.ca/ bader/index.htm)* on the theme **Preserving the Audiovisual Heritage – Transition and Access** which was developed by the JTS 2004 Programme Committee.

Each of the preceding conferences developed themes relating to conservation and preservation from the viewpoints of the major types of collections: film, television and sound. More details can be found on the website: http://www.jts2004.org/ (under construction at the time of printing) with a launch date scheduled for later in 2003.

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XV International Archives Congress

THE International Council on Archives is pleased to announce the XVth International Congress in Archives scheduled to take place from 23-29 August 2004 organized in collaboration with the Austrian State Archives. Held every four years, the conference provides a timely opportunity for archivists from all over the world to exchange ideas and find solutions to common problems.

The 15th session will have a new look as ICA and the organizers will run concurrent sessions providing a forum for more interactive participation, workshops, round tables and formal presentations. The theme of the upcoming conference is **"Archives, Memory and Knowledge"** and will further examine issues such as advocacy in support of archives, evolving legal frameworks for archives, education and training, standards and best practices as well as preservation.

The detailed conference programme is expected to be online from September 2003.

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TELEMATICS

ICT and Education

UNESCO and FAO are currently exploring methods for closer cooperation in the development of Distance Education Modules (DEM) on Information Management.

This is regarded as an excellent opportunity to share know-how in distance education tools while avoiding a duplication of efforts. FAO has considerable experience in the design of DEM, which UNESCO particularly wishes to further expand for librarians and information specialists as it is interested in gaining experience in distance education tool while making LDCs education stakeholders benefit from open access distance learning tools. The FAO module has a fairly simple interface and requires a very basic configuration. The whole software and learning is charge-free. The resource kit will be designed as a reusable learning content managing system, which will be further exploited as a tool kit. FAO has agreed to the design of a nutshell toolkit from a UNESCO/FAO joint DEM pilot for librarians and be applied to any other general matters.

UNESCO is providing free software (Greenstone and CDS/ISIS) and reference documents. FAO is promoting the use and dissemination of these tools to agriculture information specialist worldwide as part of the resource kit.

The core product will include software, methodological, and a reusable pedagogical framework for use among educational bodies in LDCs as well as within UNESCO as a training tool on UNESCO's priorities.

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Open Courseware for Higher Education

WHILE the digital educational divide further widens, UNESCO and its partners are launching a new project to foster access to open educational knowledge in Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The project is a follow-up to UNESCO expert forum on the impact of open courseware for higher education in developing countries held in July 2002.

The project consists in establishing an online repository of existing educational non-commercial resources –Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Open CourseWare (OCW)– available for free consultation, use and adaptation by any educational institution or individual learner, anywhere in the world, with a special focus on the LDCs and Small Island States.

The project is intended for educational experts to share and efficiently use teachers' expertise and contributions by building on previous experiences, thus establishing a continuing dialogue concerning the creation and use of open courseware. Support services such as specialized software and methodology, localization (including translation) and on-line assistance will also be available.

The project will encourage the participation of users through feedback, comments and translations. The on-line community will serve to ensure interactivity and cooperation between providers and users. Priority will initially be given to higher education educational materials but the repository will be extended as soon as possible to other types of education, especially those relating to basic and vocational education as these have a significant impact on development.

In addition to offering experts from LDCs the opportunity to take part in the globalization of education, the project is designed to boost international cooperation by developing and using OERs and to encourage their development so as to improve efficiency, impact and to share innovation.

The project is supported by UNESCO, the Commonwealth of Learning and an expert team including several international educational associations as well as universities and existing OERs.

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Academy for Computer-Assisted Training and Learning
for Eastern Europe and Central Asia

TRAINING of university teachers in preparing distance online educational materials will be provided by the new "Regional Academy for Computer-Assisted Training and Learning" (RACATAL) to be established in Kiev under a $258,000 UNDP/UNESCO project. The project was launched in January 2003 with the signing of a letter of agreement by representatives of the Kiev National Taras Schevchenko University and UNESCO.

Initially, the Academy will benefit universities and training centres in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine in the framework of UNESCO's ACCESS-net (Association of Computer Centres for Exploiting Sustainable Synergy) through training of teachers and trainers in new technologies such as Learning Management Systems and Electronic Content Building in support of computer-aided preparation of online course materials. It is also expected that the Academy will produce guidelines for the preparation of e-learning university courses such as History, Mathematics, Electronics, Optics and Molecular Physics.

Later, the Academy will expand its activities to other countries in the region. It will address the growing demand for university teachers, specialists and experts and provide a basis for better meeting challenges of emerging ICT-enhanced education in the region.

In addition to research activities to respond to specific regional needs, the Academy will organize regional IT events, such as workshops, seminars and conferences to promote the exchange of information and expertise.

The Kiev National Taras Shevchenko University will play a leading role in operating the Academy and managing its activities, particularly in maintaining its sustainability in the long run, having conducted the 'Regional Academy for Advanced Network Administration and Design' (RAANAD) since 2000, which was set up by UNESCO in collaboration with KNTSU and UNDP. The RACATAL has been playing a leading role in networking capacity building in the region. The university will participate in the project with a financial support of US$ 198,000, in addition to in-kind contributions.

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ICTs and People with Disabilities

A new UNESCO initiative aimed at promoting the use of ICTs by people with disabilities was inaugurated in May 2003 after a two-day expert meeting entitled "ICTs in the service of persons with disabilities", held at UNESCO's Paris Headquarters.

The meeting involved global experts and institutions from the public and private sector as well as from civil society to elaborate a concept paper and plan of action. These documents will serve to develop a framework of policy initiatives and pilot projects in this field to be supported by UNESCO in conjunction with key partners.

The resulting recommendations are being finalized for inclusion in UNESCO's contribution to the upcoming World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva, Switzerland in December 2003.

ICTs offer individuals the ability to compensate for physical or functional limitations, to access knowledge by adapting digital media to the nature of their disabilities, and to enhance their social and economic integration in communities by enlarging the scope of activities available to them. The actions being initiated by UNESCO are expected to contribute to improving the standard of living of over 600 million persons around the world; two-thirds of who live in developing countries, and who suffer from a range of disabilities.

A website to provide a forum for discussion, highlighting news, policies, technologies and other information related to ICTs and disabilities is also being launched. In developing this website, UNESCO has endeavoured to follow the latest guidelines for the creation of user-friendly websites facilitating access by all sectors of the population.

The forum has a huge potential to offer greater visibility to the role of ICTs in addressing disability challenges and it is hoped that it will help foster the necessary international commitment to supporting measures that enhance the lives of disabled persons and ensure their inclusion in all aspects of the information society.

☞ *For additional information please contact Mr Paul Hector, CI/INF, UNESCO, 1 rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex 15, France. Tel: (331) 45.68.42.40. Fax: (331) 45.68.55.83. E-mail: p.hector@unesco.org*

Electronic Theses and Dissertations Worldwide

IMPROVING graduate education by allowing students to produce electronic documents, use digital libraries and understand issues in publishing is one of the main objectives of the sixth international conference of the Electronic Theses and Dissertations movement held in Berlin, Germany in May 2003.

Organized by the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD), ETD2003 was co-sponsored by UNESCO within the framework of its efforts to internationalize methods and techniques for the electronic production and publication of doctoral theses and dissertations.

The NDLTD initiative, born in the USA, is an open federation of currently 130 member universities and supporting organizations, including research institutions and private companies. Its activities are focused on universities, libraries, faculties and graduate students in order to support authoring, indexing, archiving, dissemination and retrieval of electronic theses and dissertations worldwide, with the ultimate goal of increasing the availability of student research documents for scholars and preserving them electronically to empower students through the use of multimedia and hypermedia technologies.

Within the programme, UNESCO is financing the organization of tutorials based on its ETD Guide and is covering the costs of participation of trainees from developing countries and/or countries in transition from Eastern Europe and Africa who are mainly members of university administration including university librarians likely to be involved in the introduction of ETD projects in their institutions.

NDLTD encourages and supports the efforts of universities to unlock their information resources and to advance digital library technology by sharing of experiences, tools, technology and knowledge.

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INFOYOUTH

New INFOYOUTH Member in Democratic Republic of Congo

A national youth information centre is being created in the Democratic Republic of Congo with support from UNESCO and its INFOYOUTH network. Under funding provided by UNESCO, the National Commission for UNESCO of the Democratic Republic of Congo will carry out the preparatory work including creating the centre's website.

The youth information centre, which will be established by the General Secretariat for Youth in Kinshasa, will also provide access to the Internet and operate its own web site. The site will provide information on youth-related issues and facilitate information exchanges both at national and international levels. The site will also serve as a link with the INFOYOUTH Network and will allow the regular updating of data in the field of youth.

UNESCO will also provide support for two workshops for training youth leaders in ICT skills, taking into consideration the specific needs of the Ministry of Youth, Leisure and Sports. The participation of the Democratic Republic of Congo in INFOYOUTH activities is intended to help Congolese youth face the challenges of globalization and sustainable development.

☞ *For additional information please contact Mr Boyan Radoykov, CI/INF, UNESCO, 1 rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex 15, France. Tel: (331) 45.68.36.66. Fax: (331) 45.68.55.83. E-mail: b.radoykov@unesco.org*

STAFF MOVEMENTS

Mr Philippe Quéau

WITH effect from 1 July 2003, Mr Philippe Quéau has transferred to the UNESCO Moscow Office as its Director after seven years at the Paris Headquarters, first as Director of the Division of Information and Informatics and then of the Information Society Division following the later restructuring of the Communication and Information Sector.

Mr Quéau is the author of several works on the development of communication and information technology. He has contributed to collective works and has written many articles on subjects within his field of specialization. He began his career in 1977 at the *Institut National de l'Audiovisuel* (INA) where he was research engineer, head engineer and, from 1993, director of research.

As Director of the Moscow Office, he will be in charge of activities being implemented in the Cluster Offices of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation.

REGIONAL OFFICES

AFRICA

Consultative Meeting on Training Programme for Local e-Governance in Africa

This consultation meeting was organized by the African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development (CAFRAD) in order to plan the African component of a project on training for local e-governance. The meeting brought together seven experts on local governance and e-governance from six African countries (Ghana, Morocco, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia) and representatives of six potential European and international partners (CAFRAD, IICD, Instituto Internacional de Gobernabilidad, UNDP, UNESCO and University of Rome).

The launch of recent high-profile, pan-African development initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has brought significant global

attention to the concept and execution of good governance, transparency of policies and government processes, both at the centralised and decentralised level.

In view of the overall commitment of the NEPAD Heads of State to stimulate the use of ICT as a driving force to foster social and economic development of the continent, the "e-Africa initiative for good governance: building e-governance capacity in Africa", launched in October 2002 at the "e-Africa First Regional Workshop on Building e-Governance Capacity in Africa" (Johannesburg, 28-31 October 2002), to address these issues at the level of policy and decision makers, stressing the significant development role and crosscutting impact that ICTs can have on all aspects of society.

To this end, the promoters of the e-Africa conference, in consultation with other participants and partners, have recognized the need to mobilize the African and global public administration and ICT communities for e-governance in Africa and have agreed on an overall "Framework for Action on e-governance for Africa". The framework identifies the vision for e-government, the mission that needs to be engaged by partners, strategic goals, the impacts expected, a set of strategic intervention areas and examples of outcomes expected. The Framework for Action was further presented to the "4th Global Forum on Reinventing Government: Citizens, Businesses and Government: Dialogue and Partnerships for the Promotion of Democracy and Development" (Marrakech, 10-14 December 2002).

At the sub-national level, it is recognized that the appropriate use and integration of ICTs in the community can enhance and support social and economical development. The objectives of this focus would be the enhancement of good governance and democracy by ensuring linkages, networking and community cohesion, providing timely, efficient, transparent and accountable services, improving the management of operations and the reengineering of local government systems, facilitating planning and policy making processes, monitoring implementation policies and recording physical and social changes in the community, and consequently improving the quality of life of citizens. The integration of ICTs into municipalities and other local government contributes to informed populations, which are the basis for effective participatory governance.

The challenge remains, however, on how the use of ICTs in local government can be beneficial to all stakeholders, taking into consideration real factors such as the digital divide (infrastructural, hierarchical and economic restrictions) and the importance of creating an "e-inclusive" society.

The proposal of programme of "Training for Local e-governance in Africa", output of the "Consultative Meeting on Training for Local e-Governance" (Tangier, 15-18 January 2003), jointly organized by CAFRAD, IICD and UNESCO, is intended to be an inter-agency African initiative to promote the building of capacities for local governments through the training on the effective integration of ICTs in the governance process.

The first phase of the proposal, agreed by the promoters of the Consultative Meeting and other partners and participants, consists of a preliminary training programme for e-governance capacity in municipalities and other local government in Africa.

The On-line Training Programme may be also integrated in the framework of the activities of the UNPAN On-line Regional Centre CAFRAD in order to be promoted and disseminated to all African stakeholders through the United Nations Global On-line Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN).

A second phase, that may be integrated into the "Framework for Action of the e-Africa initiative" aims to develop and design tools to provide learning opportunities for municipal and local governments Africa-wide, including necessary infrastructure and institutional support. It will be developed taking into account the results of the first phase. In view of technology constraints, the first phase will focus on municipalities with sufficient ICT infrastructure and experience to benefit. Support to the full range of government, including disadvantaged and rural communities, will be considered in the second phase. Consultations with respective international and regional partners will be undertaken in this context.

In order to measure the effectiveness of the Project activities and the outcome produced, a specific set of monitoring, output and impact indicators will be designed, to control and evaluate continuously the performance of the Project activities. A demand-driven semi quantitative monitoring and evaluation system

will be established, including a quality control of activities undertaken.

Training will concentrate on a limited number of local governments which are supported by national development and training programmes. In the countries concerned, face-to-face motivation and preparatory seminars will be organized. The progress of the trainees and their use of the acquired knowledge will be regularly followed in collaboration with local, national and regional support networks.

The basic virtual course will be open to other African local governments meeting prerequisites within the limitations of resources, and the course materials will be made freely available without charge (Open Educational Resources).

A participatory methodology for monitoring and impact evaluation will be developed for the project including in-course correction.

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ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Regional Training Programme on Greenstone Digital Library Software

In May 2003, UNESCO conducted a training of trainers' workshop to promote the development and sharing of digital library collections in Asia using the freely available Greenstone Digital Library software (GSDL). Participants were provided with the capacity to undertake similar programmes in their countries and promote digital library collection development. The training programme was organized and conducted by the National Centre for Science Information (NCSI), Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, India.

Greenstone is a suite of software for building and distributing digital library collections. It provides a new way of organizing information and publishing it on the Internet or on CD-ROM. It integrates functions such as metadata, full text search and retrieval, multilingual support, support for multiple document formats and administration. Greenstone is produced by the New Zealand Digital Library Project at the University of Waikato, and developed and distributed in cooperation with UNESCO and the Human Info NGO.

It is open-source software, issued under the terms of the GNU General Public License. The aim of the software is to empower users, particularly in universities, libraries, and other public service institutions, to build their own digital libraries.

☞ *For more details of the training programme, including programme content and delivery, please visit the website: http://www.ncsi.iisc. ernet.in/greenstone.htm*

Ten Steps for Establishing Multipurpose Community Telecentres

"Ten Steps" is the title of a new UNESCO publication to assist communities in establishing sustainable Multipurpose Community Telecentres (MCT). The Guide available online since April on the website of the UNESCO Bangkok Office, is a contribution to providing and strengthening communication and information facilities at the level of local communities.

In the form of ten booklets, *"Ten Steps"* covers aspects of establishing, operating and managing a Multipurpose Community Telecentres. Each booklet presents a step towards establishing a sustainable MCT in simple and easy-to-understand terms. It looks at issues such as holding community meetings, management, staff appointments, services and programmes, building and equipment, the planning process, financial management, operating procedures as well as customer service and promotional issues.

The colourful on-line version will be followed soon by a two-colour version in hard copy. The first two steps will each include a set of transparencies that can be used as is or copied onto large sheets of paper for display at

public meetings where an overhead projector is not available. Case studies found throughout the ten steps provide interesting stories aiming at enhancing understanding of certain points.

UNESCO gives high priority to providing and strengthening communication and information facilities at the level of local communities. Such facilities offer basic tools for introducing and managing community-centred development and change.

Online Observatory of Information Society in Asia-Pacific

An online "Regional Observatory of the Information Society in Asia and the Pacific" (ROISAP), based on national observatories established by members of UNESCO's Asia and Pacific Information Network (APIN), was recently launched by the Ministry of Research and Technology of Indonesia and Widyatama University in Bandung, Indonesia.

The main goal of ROISAP is to raise awareness of the ethical, legal and societal challenges brought about by ICTs. As a public service readily accessible to all, it will provide updated information on the evolution of the information society at the national and regional levels, and to foster debates on related issues.

The Observatory was supported by the UNESCO Office in New Delhi which regards information and knowledge as the most important factor in production and wealth creation. How well an individual, an organization, and an entire society can harness, access, share, and make use of available information and knowledge will ultimately decide their ability to generate economic growth and to enhance their quality of life.

The new regional Observatory complements the UNESCO "Observatory on the Information Society", an international gateway to web resources related to the development of the Information Society worldwide.

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Pacific Islands Regional ICT Consultation

The Pacific Islands Regional ICT Consultation on the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) was held in Suva, Fiji, in April with co-sponsorship provided by UNESCO.

The consultation was attended by approximately 100 representatives of Pacific Island governments, communication and information service providers, media organizations, NGOs and civil society entities actively involved in a wide range of Information Society issues from 14 countries and territories.

The objective of the consultation was to ensure that the unique contributions and needs of Pacific Island countries and peoples including groups with special needs are fully recognized and represented throughout the WSIS process and ultimately reflected in the Declaration and Action Plan to be adopted at the Summit.

Participants considered presentations on national and organizational policies, strategies and action plans relating to ICTs. Other inputs included the Pacific regional framework documents (the Forum Communication Action Plan and the Pacific ICT Policy and Strategic Plan), documentation from the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference held in Tokyo in January 2003, the draft WSIS framework, and papers provided by NGOs and other participants on a wide range of ICT-related issues.

The consultation featured analyses by national and sectoral working groups of the WSIS draft Declaration of Principles and Action Plan. Priority issues identified included the special circumstances faced by small island developing states in becoming knowledge societies, the focus on information rather than technology, the need for improvements in human resources and infrastructure, the importance of traditional media, recognition of diversity and special needs, and the role of non-governmental organizations.

The meeting enabled participants to better understand opportunities and priorities for deriving optimum benefits from ICTs as developmental tools. Attention focused on a wide variety of critical issues, including the often high costs of ICT development, human resource constraints, and the need to ensure that ICT access is made as universal as possible and that women are able to participate fully in ICT activities.

Recommendations were formulated on ICT development issues and were included in a regional guidance document to be used by national governments and relevant regional organizations in preparing their participation in the Summit.

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LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Quito: Digital Inheritance of Humanity

In April, the Municipality of Quito launched a project entitled *"Quito: Digital Inheritance of Humanity".*

The main objective of this proposal is to ensure that the Metropolitan District of Quito is integrated into a fair, democratic and modern society, with an efficient and transparent local government that can interact with citizens and in this way, provide quality services based on Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

This initiative seeks to ensure the inclusion of all social sectors in the digital environment in order to improve the quality of life and to promote a sustainable, harmonic, and competitive development of both people and business.

UNESCO's Regional Office for Communication and Information in Quito, supports the project, which comprises five key components:

- E-GOVERNMENT to improve Municipality services on-line.
- EDUCANET whose goals are the incorporation of ICTs in primary and secondary schools of the Municipality.
- INTERNET FOR ALL, which consists of credit facilities to enable the acquisition of computers by citizens;
- CYBERNARIOS to establish public training centres on ICTs.
- PRESERVATION OF DIGITAL HERITAGE whose objective is the safeguarding of the vast documentary heritage, and the digital information being produced as a result of the massive introduction of ICTs.

It is important to emphasize that several higher education centres, public and private sectors bodies nend entities, and NGOs will continue their efforts with the Municipality of Quito and UNESCO to achieve this important and contemporary project.

Young People, Telework and Teletraining

In a joint venture with UTN (Argentinian National Technological University), closely involved in the social use of ICTs, UNESCO Quito has developed a pilot project entitled *"Young people, Telework and Teletraining".*
Three courses were designed in this project:

- Distance working Introduction: the use of ICTs and their application in tele-working.
- How to create a personal project and Telework Tools: the course guides youth in finding customers or employers using the Internet.
- Telework for business: this course aims to show little and medium business how to develop a plan for Teleworking and how to implement it.

All courses are provided free of charge, and it is expected that 250 youth will take advantage of this initiative which has raised great interest in the region.

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Regional Virtual Universities Seminar for Latin American and Caribbean Universities

A seminar on distance education was held in Quito, Ecuador on 14 February 2003 as a joint venture involving UNESCO's Regional Bureau for Communication and Information for Latin America and the Caribbean (ORCILAC), UNESCO's International Institute for Higher

Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC) and UNIVERSIA, an IberoAmerican portal of Higher Education Institutions, sponsored by the Banco Santander, Spain.

The seminar, which included 15 national reports, was intended to foster better knowledge of best practices for the development of Distance University Learning in Latin American and the Caribbean. Its objectives also included the establishment of permanent international cooperation and dialogue for the development of Distance University Learning programmes through a working group constituted by different institutions and specialists. A CD-ROM containing reports of the situation with respect to Distance Education in the region, along with other documents prepared by ORCILAC, was distributed to participants who came from Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Spain, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Distance University Learning in Latin American and the Caribbean is in an embryonic stage. The use of ICTs in distance education and learning is limited to a few higher education institutions in the region despite an adequate computer and telecommunications infrastructure that would easily lend itself to contemporary education techniques. Greater use of the Internet would allow the creation of so-called "virtual universities", in which, based on cooperation agreements, universities removed from each other could share teaching, research and academic activities. Many universities from developed countries make an extended use of distance learning techniques, and have established several "virtual university" agreements.

Recommendations formulated by the seminar included:
- Development of Distance University Learning to upgrade Higher Education.
- Reduction of the costs of technology to facilitate the transfer of benefits to the student as the active stakeholder in the educational process.
- Creation of common criteria and standards for the accreditation of virtual or traditional Higher Education.
- Identification of reform processes in the educational models and development of research in the application of ICTs and Distance University Learning.

☞ *For further information please contact Isidro Fernadez-Aballí at the above address.*

Cooperation between INFOLAC and the UN ICT Task Force

In May, experts from Latin America and the Caribbean met in Cuba in a joint meeting of INFOLAC, UNESCO's Information Society Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean, and LACNET, the Regional Network of the UN ICT Task Force, in order to initiate cooperation between INFOLAC and the UN ICT Task Force and to join forces for the WSIS preparation in Latin American and the Caribbean Region.

INFOLAC has been involved in all the regional consultative activities undertaken by UNESCO in preparation for WSIS, such as the consultations that took place in Itacuruçá (Brazil), Isla Margarita (Venezuela), Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) and the Regional Ministerial Preparatory Conference for WSIS that took place in January 2003 in Bavaro (Dominican Republic) organized in association with ECLAC.

INFOLAC was established in 1986 by a resolution of UNESCO's General Conference. As a forum for the exchange of expertise and experiences in the area of information services, it is open to all public, private or professional institutions that are involved in the provision of information services in the region.

Since the creation of INFOLAC, UNESCO has assumed the role of Permanent Secretariat and has sustained, together with Members States, this mechanism for regional cooperation in recognition of its potential for promoting ICT development and an information society for all. The UNESCO Office in Quito also provides the LACNET secretariat.

☞ *For further information please contact Isidro Fernadez-Aballí at the above address.*

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

UNESCO is continuing to develop its Electronic Theses and Dissertations project which it presented to participants of the Workshop.

The meeting has led to the identification of partners for three new ETD-Net courses, who are expected to play a major role in developing ETD within Latin America.

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NEW PUBLICATIONS

Requests from Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Portugal, Spain, United States of America, and the Asia and Pacific Region should be sent directly to our documents resource centres whose addresses are indicated below.

Document requests from Africa, Arab States, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean should continue to be sent to: Information Society Division, UNESCO, 1, rue Miollis, 75732, Paris Cedex 15, France.

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All documents may be consulted at the premises of each of the institutions mentioned above. Copies may be obtained on a cost recovery basis at prices set out by the distributing institutions. UNESCO is in the process of digitizing its documents and a full text selection of these can be consulted at: *http://unesdoc.unesco.org/ulis/index.html*

Below is a list of new publications:

• *La Cybergouvernance: Profils nationaux. French version of the Country profiles of E-Governance* by the Commonwealth Network of Information Technology for Development Foundation (COMNET-IT). Paris, UNESCO, 2002. 87 p. (CI.2002/WS/1). This is a joint UNESCO and COMNET-IT study of E-Governance. Also available in English and Spanish. Website: *http://dit-fs1.hq.int.unesco. org/ulis/docs/0012/001276/127601e.pdf*

• UHLIR, **Paul.** *Draft Policy Guidelines for the Development and Promotion of Public Domain Information.* **Paris: UNESCO, 2003. 35 p. (CI.2003/WS/2). Also available in French.**

• *Fifth Meeting of the International Advisory Committee of the Memory of the World Programme. Final Report. Cheongju City, Republic of Korea, 27-29 June 2001.* **(CI/INF/2001/3). Also available in French.**

CD-ROMS

• *Memory of the World. Documentary heritage of the peoples of the World.* **Paris: UNESCO, 2003.**

• *ALMA – African Language Materials Archive. (Afiriki tilijii kanolu elektronik safoolu kafunoomoo).* **Paris: UNESCO, March 2003.**