

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

AND

THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (hereinafter referred to as "UNESCO") and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (hereinafter referred to as "OHCHR") within the general framework established by the Charter of the United Nations,

Convinced of the absolute value of all human rights – civil, cultural, economic, political and social – which are universal, indivisible, interdependent, interrelated and of equal importance,

Underlining that the principle of non-discrimination is the cornerstone for the recognition and protection of the dignity of all members of the human family;

Recognizing that extreme poverty is a flagrant violation of human rights and a denial of human dignity,

Considering that the mandate of the High Commissioner is to promote and protect the effective enjoyment of all human rights, enhance international cooperation and coordinate activities aimed at the promotion and protection of human rights throughout the United Nations system (UN General Assembly Resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993) and the overarching goal of UNESCO is to contribute 'to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further respect for justice, for the rule of law and for human rights and fundamental freedoms' (Article 1 of its Constitution),

Reaffirming their commitment within the framework of their respective mandates, resources and approved programmes, to collective endeavour for the realization of activities in the field of human rights and democracy, in particular those aimed at the implementation of: the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993), the UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004); the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (2001); the UN Millennium Declaration and the Dakar Framework for Action adopted by the World Education Forum in 2000,

Inspired by the reform process of the United Nations system launched by the UN Secretary-General, which emphasizes the centrality of human rights in all activities of the system,

Mindful of the elaboration of an overall UNESCO strategy on human rights aimed at increasing the Organization's contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights,

Resolved to cooperate closely in removing current obstacles and in meeting emerging challenges to the full realization of all human rights,



Do hereby agree to the following:

1. UNESCO and OHCHR undertake to act in close cooperation with each other and to consult each other regularly on matters of common interest such as: (a) elaboration of new instruments in the field of human rights; (b) launching of joint campaigns with the view to achieving the universal ratification of international standard-setting instruments in the field of human rights; (c) cooperation aimed at the implementation of human rights standards, in particular of those within UNESCO's competence, (d) cooperation in rationalization, strengthening and streamlining of the human rights machinery and reporting mechanisms with a view to improving their efficiency and effectiveness, (e) devising common approaches to participation and assistance in the work of treaty bodies, especially the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, (f) elaboration of strategies related, *inter alia*, to the right to education and to human rights education, cultural rights and cultural diversity, freedom of expression, access to information and academic freedom, rights of women and gender equality, human rights and bioethics, (g) development of approaches aimed at promoting observance of and respect for the rights of intellectuals, in particular of writers, journalists, artists, educators and scientists, (h) exchange of information and joint actions in the framework of the human rights procedure laid down by 104 EX/Decision 3.3 of the Executive Board of UNESCO, and (i) any other matter of mutual interest.
2. Within the framework of the inter-agency coordination, UNESCO and OHCHR will cooperate in planning and implementing their activities, including, *inter alia*: research and studies on themes of common interest, wide dissemination of their results and their integration in policy-making; organization of regional and sub-regional consultations for the preparation of programmes, curricula and educational materials on human rights, peace and democracy, as well as for combating discrimination and fostering tolerance; preparation of manuals for human rights education, developing research, training and communication and information programmes in human rights, peace and democracy, in human rights and poverty, in human rights and gender, in human rights and sustainable development; and providing advisory services and technical assistance, including exchange of information on human rights procedures.
3. UNESCO and OHCHR will closely cooperate in the implementation of the overall UNESCO strategy on human rights and the integrated strategy to combat racism, discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in UNESCO's fields of competence.
4. UNESCO and OHCHR may establish a joint committee on any question of common interest.

5. Representatives of UNESCO and OHCHR shall be reciprocally invited to attend meetings organized by and/or under the auspices of the other. The fullest and promptest exchange of information and documents shall be made between UNESCO and OHCHR.
6. UNESCO and OHCHR will designate focal points for cooperation and convene a joint task force which will meet at least once every year alternately in Geneva and in Paris in order to evaluate the implementation of their cooperation and elaborate protocols specifying concrete projects to be implemented jointly.
7. This Memorandum of Understanding replaces and supersedes all previous agreements between the parties. It shall be subject to revision by mutual agreement.
8. The activities foreseen herein shall be carried out in conformity with the applicable rules and regulations of the two parties.
9. The present Memorandum of Understanding shall come into force upon signature by both parties.

Signed on 5 February 2003 in Paris in two originals in English.

For the United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization

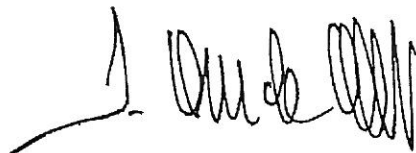
For the Office of the United Nations
High Commissioner for Human Rights

Koïchiro Matsuura

Sergio Vieira de Mello



Director-General



United Nations
High Commissioner for Human Rights