

April – June 2008

UNESCO Social and Human Sciences Sector magazine

CONTENTS

PP. 3-5 Promoting principles, practices and ethical norms: Promoting ethics education around the world • The “ABC” project reinforces its support in Africa • Debate on research on the human embryo in the Arab world / **PP. 8-13 Directing research for action in the service of populations:** Social sciences to fight against AIDS in Africa • eCOWAS: Towards an Institute on Regional Integration • Social development: 2nd Regional Forum in South Asia • Prolongation of the Diambars project • Youth at the First Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations / **PP. 14-19 Contributing to the dialogue of civilizations and cultures:** Seminar on the cost of poverty in Jamaica • Rethinking Latin America • Dance for Life: A project of the Programme for the Education of Children in Need / **PP. 28-29 Publications** / **PP. 30-31 Readers’ forum** / **P. 32** Launching of an international coalition of cities against racism • **Calendar**



INTERVIEW pp. 6-7

Sylvie Kayitesi Zaïnabo

**“Poverty
is a denial of
human rights”**

GLOBALIZATION p. 16

To leave half of humanity
living in poverty is expensive
and will be more and more
as time passes

CULTURE OF PEACE pp. 14-15

Conference in Cairo on Human
Security in the Arab States

DOSSIER pp. 20 to 27

**Focus on
Canada**

Poverty is not a fatality

“Man is the remedy for Man”. This African proverb underlines the moral demand for mutual support and solidarity to fight against the different forms of exclusion and injustice. The thousands of people who took to the streets last month in Africa, Asia or Latin America to express their anger against the ever-increasing costs of basic commodities, whilst at the same time reviving the phantom of world starvation, invite us to fulfill this duty. They are the living proof of the urgency to fight against poverty if we do not want to see the planet sinking into a string of revolts entailing every kind of danger.

Thus, it is important in this year of commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to refer to article 25 which stipulates that everyone has the right to a standard of living which provides minimum decent living conditions as well as health, food, and education.

Hence, we then understand that poverty, which causes as many deaths every week as those caused by the tsunami of December 2004, can be considered as a denial of the most fundamental human right, the right to life.

To fight against poverty therefore leads us to militate against all acts detrimental to human dignity. It is time, as José Saramago, Portuguese winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature says, to put in place a system of “global justice” capable of ensuring that there would be no human being dying of starvation or from any disease curable for some but not for others.

It is true that poverty is far from being a fatality as it can be seen in Europe, South Korea and China which bring to mind that corruption, level of education, health conditions, trade, market access and the migration process constitute factors of poverty or development and it is possible to put an end to it by making the economic system work for the most vulnerable populations.

It would be desirable to humanize globalization by using the levers that constitute investment, reform, national and international policies, in the same way that UNESCO tries to. This is how, for example, the Social and Human Sciences Sector, through its Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme provides Member States of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), with support to reread and negotiate Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) in the light of human rights.

Our main objective is indeed to “put science to work in the struggle against poverty and ensure that science resolutely serves peace”.

Sixty years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, efforts have to be made to ensure that every human being is considered as part of humankind. The one defined by the enjoyment and exercise of inherent and inalienable rights. ¶

“60 years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, efforts have to be made to ensure that every human being is considered as part of humankind.”



Pierre Sané
Assistant Director-General
for Social and Human
Sciences

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EDUCATION

Promoting ethics education around the world

UNESCO invites students of medical and life sciences to participate in an innovative project within the framework of its programme for the promotion of ethics education around the world. They will study the fundamental principles and implications of the different articles of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights. The results of this experiment will help UNESCO to define a core bioethics course.

From 21 to 25 April 2008, students of medical and life sciences from the Philippines will engage in a dissecting exercise of a unique kind – under their microscopes, there will be neither frog nor mouse to examine – but the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights.

Organized by the University of the Philippines in Quezon City, this training workshop should allow them to analyze the fundamental principles of the Declaration and reflect on their implications on real-world scenarios that they will likely encounter in their professional careers. On the agenda: case studies and discussions and plenary lectures on the different article of the Declaration which was adopted unanimously by the UNESCO General Conference in 2005.

Besides gaining knowledge about the ethical issues that commonly arise in clinical settings, the participants will receive credit towards continuing medical education. Undoubtedly, they will also feel very proud to have participated in a pilot project. The results of this workshop will contribute to the finalization of the proposal for basic training in bioethics with a global outreach to ensure relevance to all regions, as it will be flexible enough to avoid imposing a particular model, and on the contrary, to reflect the diversity of situations.

Developed within the framework of the Ethics Education Programme, and implemented by UNESCO since 2004, this proposal will be debated during the meeting of the ad hoc committee on teaching of ethics planned at UNESCO Headquarters on 4 and 5 June 2008. Some days later, within the framework of the same programme, a regional expert meeting will take place in Morocco and will be an opportunity to examine the different ethics education programmes that exist today in Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco, Mauritania, Tunisia and Syria.

After a series of meetings which have already taken place in Istanbul, Budapest, Moscow, Split, Teheran and Muscat, a meeting

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Medical students will be invited to consider the implications of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights

which will be organized on 16 and 17 June 2008 with the Moroccan National Commission for UNESCO, will be the occasion to facilitate the establishment of a network of ethics teaching experts for mutual capacity building through knowledge and information sharing.

It will also serve as an occasion to plan future activities and cooperation, such as piloting the core bioethics course as developed by UNESCO.

It will contribute to filling out the world map that UNESCO is developing of activities and ethics education programmes existing today around the world through encouraging the setting up of networks promoting ethics education, with the active collaboration of national experts in ethics. ¶

“Health does not depend solely on scientific and technological research developments but also on psychosocial and cultural factors.”

Preamble of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights, 2005.

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NATIONAL BIOETHICS COMMITTEES

The “ABC” project reinforces its support in Africa



UNESCO will increase the number of missions to Africa to support the development of National Bioethics Committees

Three years after the adoption of UNESCO's Universal Declaration of Bioethics and Human Rights, the number of countries expressing desire to establish national bioethics committees continues to grow.

In order to assist those who wish to create and develop mechanisms to provide advice and guidance to policy-makers on the ethics of science, and more especially bioethics, UNESCO set up, in 2006, a technical support programme for its Member States.

Nicknamed “ABC” for Assisting Bioethics

Committees, this project has, in 2008, undertaken exploratory missions and training workshops in Africa, a priority region for UNESCO.

On this continent, firmly veering towards scientific and technological development, exploratory technical missions have already been undertaken in Gabon, Ghana, Mauritius, Madagascar, Malawi and Togo.

They have resulted in the creation of National Bioethics Committees in Madagascar and Togo in 2007, and in Mauritius in March 2008, while similar structures will be soon inaugurated in Malawi, Ghana and Gabon.

While pursuing the work in close collaboration with these countries during the next three years, in order to reinforce the capacities of these new structures, the project ABC will conduct, in 2008, similar missions in other African countries. ¶

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Human cloning in the work plans of the IBC

The Bureau of the International Bioethics Committee (IBC) of UNESCO has finalized the work programme of the IBC for 2008-2009.

As the unique global forum for promoting bioethical reflection, the IBC will continue to contribute for the next two years to the promotion and dissemination of UNESCO's *Universal*

Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights.

To this end, the Committee's work will focus on two important principles contained in the Declaration: social responsibility and health, and the respect for human vulnerability and personal integrity. The IBC will also examine the recent

Report by the United Nations University entitled “Is Human Reproductive Cloning Inevitable? Future Options for UN Governance,” in order to explore the needs and possibilities for new international initiatives in this area, and to submit its analysis to the Director-General of UNESCO before the end of the biennium.

Its 15th ordinary session will take place at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, on 27 and 28 October 2008. ¶

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Meeting on pharmaceutical research in Damascus

In cooperation with the Ministry of Higher Education and the Supreme Council of Sciences of Syria, the UNESCO Cairo Office will organize an expert meeting on “Pharmaceutical Research and Ethics” in Damascus, Syria in July 2008.

The aim of the meeting is to sensitize legal practitioners, ethicists and researchers in the pharmaceutical industry in the Arab states on pharmaceutical research ethics. Since the adoption of the International Declaration on Human Genetic Data in 2003 by the UNESCO General Conference, the world does indeed make use of an ethical framework on the use of genetic samples and tissues, but this is not the case everywhere. Pharmaceutical

research represents a domain where these principles are indispensable to ensure that expanding research on human genetic data does not violate human rights and human dignity, especially in developing countries where poverty makes large parts of population particularly vulnerable to the threats of unethical research experiments. Through similar meetings, UNESCO hopes to further knowledge on these ethical principles, not only among the experts and scientists concerned, but also among the general public. ¶

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TOOLS

Within the framework of the project on “Bioethics and the Media”, carried out jointly by the Russian Union of Journalists and the National Committee on Bioethics Committee of the Russian Federation, a handbook intended for the press has just been published by the UNESCO Office in Moscow.



Based on the ethical standards of journalists and the Universal Declaration of the Bioethics and Human Rights, this publication recommends principals to be followed when dealing with mass media in the domain of bioethics. ¶

To download this document: www.unesco.ru

Debate on research on the human embryo in the Arab world



© Jérôme Chain / CNRS

A researcher from the CNRS (France) examines human embryonic stem cells.

Raising questions related to the beginning of life, research on the human embryo is a delicate subject which was the subject of debate in Cairo (Egypt) during the conference organized by UNESCO where a report on the current regulations in sixteen Arab states was pronounced.

An expert meeting on “Ethical and Legal Issues in Human Embryo Research in the Region”, took place from 12-14 February 2008 organized by the UNESCO Office in Cairo, in collaboration with the World Health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (WHO/EMRO), and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO).

The meeting brought together 20 experts from the region, as well as five international experts with an aim to exchange information on existing regulations concerning human embryo research and to promote a harmonized approach to human embryo research regulations in the region.

Raising ethical questions relating to the beginning of life, research on the human embryo is a delicate issue and touches deeply the cultural and religious values in every society. For this reason, governments use regulatory measures to balance scientific ambitions within religious, philosophical, cultural and social perspectives. In the Arab Region, for example, Islamic teachings play a significant role in shaping the ethical approaches to human embryo research.

Rejection of human cloning

The fact remains that the approaches are still numerous, as in testing the results of a study on national regulations in the domain of bioethics, integrating research on the human embryo and human cloning, which was made public during this meeting.

The survey, carried out under the initiative of UNESCO in sixteen Arab states, reveals that while some countries have more extensive legal provisions in this area than others, there is a general prohibition on human cloning, creation of human embryos for research purposes and commercial exploitation of human embryos.

During the debate which followed the presentation, a diversity of views was expressed. Experts in Islamic religion and law confirmed that Islamic tradition does not categorically oppose research on human embryos, but differences exist in the experts’ opinion and the legal practices in the region concerning a wide range of issues, such as the creation of human embryos for research purposes, as well as the acceptable source of the embryos donated for research or reproductive purposes.

Next meeting in 2009

At the closure of the meeting, participants adopted a set of recommendations that urges countries in the region to identify research practices that raise ethical questions and to establish regulations in these fields of research, including the licensing and monitoring systems.

All participants recommended that a follow-up meeting be convened in 2009, with the same partners and regional actors, which will bring together all regional stakeholders to assess the implementation of the Recommendations and to establish an effective regional policy. ¶

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CALL FOR PAPERS

On the occasion of the “First Forum on Bioethics in Research in the Arab and Eastern Mediterranean Region” which will take place in Cairo (Egypt) from 12 to 14 August 2008, a call for papers has been put out

by the UNESCO Office in Cairo, the World Health Organization for Eastern Mediterranean countries (WHO/EMRO), the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and the University

of Maryland (USA). Proposals should reach the organizers before 15 May 2008. ¶

For more information:
www.emro.who.int/



Sylvie Kayitesi Zainabo: “Poverty is a denial of human rights”

Former Minister of Public Service and Labour of Rwanda, Sylvie Kayitesi Zainabo, Chairman of the Rwandan Commission for Human Rights was elected head of the Network of African National Institutes for Human Rights in 2007.

In her interview she discusses human rights in Africa as well as the situation of refugees and displaced persons, victims of internal conflict which undermines the continent and puts the population at risk, preventing them from living in harmony and peace. Sylvie Kayitesi Zainabo invites everyone to fight against poverty, seen as a denial of human rights, in order to give the most needy access to food, a decent dwelling, education and health facilities.

The National Human Rights Institutions have an important role to play within the global network of organizations in charge of promoting those rights. What do they represent and how do they function in Africa?

The National Human Rights Institutions have indeed an important role to play within the global network of organizations in charge of promoting human rights. As governmental institutions, they represent real bridges between civil society and governments.

Moreover, these institutions have been established in every country under the guidance of the “Paris Principles” established by the resolution N°1992/54 of the United Nations Commission confirmed by the UN General Assembly resolution N°48/134 on October 20 1993.

According to those principles, a national Institution has the capacity to protect and promote human rights and has to remain independent from established government bodies to be efficient.

One should note that until 2007, only 32 out of 53 African countries had National Human Rights Institutions. Among them, only certain have complied with the “Paris Principles” and other have not done so yet. Furthermore, those at the preliminary stage of their development face several challenges since they not only seek to gain the trust of the populations, but also they endeavour to be more efficient compared to other human rights advocacy organizations.

What is the role played by the African Human Rights Institutions Network that you chair since 2007?

This network was created in 1996 after the adoption of the “Paris Principles” at a time when several structures of this type were being established in African countries.

Its purpose is to support the establishment and reinforcement of National Human Rights Institutions across the continent, aiming at improving the work carried by each of them at the national level. The network itself provides a greater visibility of African institutions on an international level. It has only very recently been called as such. Since at the beginning, this coordination and promotion organization was called “Coordinating Committee for African National Institutions”. It was only last year, in October 2007 that it changed its name to become a “Network” after a General Assembly held during the 6th Conference of African National Human Rights Institutions.

You are the President of the Human Rights Committee of Rwanda, are you the first woman elected to that function?

No. Several other women have occupied this position before. Since its creation, this organization has been chaired by several women: the President of the Human Rights Committee of Uganda, then the Executive Secretary of the Human Rights Committee of Nigeria in replacement of the President of this Committee. ➡

“The National Human Rights Institutions have an important role to play within the global network of organizations in charge of promoting human rights. As governmental institutions, they represent effective pathways between civil society and governments.”



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Sylvie Kayitesi Zainabo

Born in May 1962, Sylvie Kayitesi Zainabo holds a degree in law from the National University of Rwanda. Strongly committed to the rights of women and children in her country, she was *Associate Protection Officer* at the High Commissioner for Refugees from 1996 to 1999 when she was appointed State Secretary at the Ministry of Lands, Human Resettlement and Environmental Protection and then Minister of Public Service and Labour of Rwanda. ¶

➡ **How does your network structure itself to provide help and assistance to the 12 millions of men, women and children, who flee conflict zones in Africa, a continent which holds the unfortunate record of having nearly half of the world's displaced persons?**

The Network has a clear perception of the issue of displaced persons in the world and more specifically in Africa. A proof is the organization of the 6th Conference of African National Human Rights Institutions which aimed at strengthening the role of national institutions in protecting refugees, displaced persons within their own country and stateless persons. This conference offered an opportunity to define strategies to provide a better care system to this vulnerable group of the population. The Institutions who are members of the network agreed to assist persons displaced within their own countries through their protection policies.

“Besides the question of refugees and displaced persons, Africa faces many other challenges that affect the enjoyment of their rights by their populations”

Other than the problem of refugees, what are the principal human rights challenges Africa has to face?

Other than the problem of refugees and displaced persons within their own countries, resulting from internal conflicts, Africa has to face many other challenges affecting the enjoyment of their rights by their populations. Notably, poverty is perceived as a human rights denial. Indeed, the poor do not have resources to have access to food, decent dwellings, education and health care.

Strengthening women's rights is another essential issue which should be raised. The role played by women in the reconstruction process of post-conflict countries and in the socio-economic development of their countries is indeed crucial.

Does the reform of the UN System modify your relationship with partners like UNESCO?

The Network of African National Human Rights Institutions is becoming more and more visible within international institutions thanks to its presence within the Bureau of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and its permanent secretariat which enables it to advertise its activities on the international stage, thanks to the organization of numerous international conferences.

Today, we thus collaborate with other national institutions around the world but also with the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (ICC), the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, the East African Countries' Community and many other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

Concerning its relationship with UNESCO, we are really looking forward to strengthening them especially within the framework of the human rights education programme as we are convinced that National Human Rights Institutions are strategic partners for the implementation of this programme. ¶

Interview by Nfaly « Vieux » Savané

RESEARCH

Social sciences to fight against AIDS in Africa

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Sub-Saharan Africa comprises 22.5 million people suffering from HIV/AIDS, of which 61 % are women.

A symposium organized at the end of March 2008, in Benoni (South Africa), by the South African Human Sciences Research Council and the South African Liaison Committee for the most programme, highlighted the importance of making social science research work to fight against the AIDS pandemic.

According to estimates by the World Health Organization, of the 33.2 million people infected with the AIDS virus worldwide in 2007, 22.5 million lived in sub-Saharan Africa, 61 % of whom were women.

These figures alone are sufficient to denounce the injustice suffered by the African population, including unequal access to information, to health care and to scientific progress. They also reveal the urgency of implementing public health policies and well-informed social support to be able to stem the pandemic. Faced with HIV/AIDS, bringing the results of social science research closer to the spheres of the political decision-makers is, indeed, as equally essential as to facilitate access to treatment of the poorest. But how can it be done better and faster?

To find elements of response, the South African Human Sciences Research Council and the South African Liaison Committee for the Management of Social Transformations (MOST) programme of UNESCO brought together, from 26 to 27 March 2008, in Benoni (South Africa), researchers, policy-makers and representatives of civil society.

Two major tools

This meeting made it possible to reflect on the importance of the findings of research in social sciences and the best way to translate them into policy and practice. The question of sharing experiences, the role played by think tanks and systems of traditional medicine were brought up. Pierre Sané, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences in UNESCO, presented the dual challenge, according to him, of the AIDS pandemic: to make available the findings of existing research and develop appropriate partnerships. Making research work for government policy to facilitate access for decision-makers to scientific evidence is, indeed, one of UNESCO's priorities, which strives, since its creation, to promote exchange and cooperation between the scientific and political worlds, through, inter alia, two major tools.

Founded by the Organization in 1949, the International Social Science Journal (ISSJ) was the first journal of popular science gathering research results produced throughout the world in different disciplines. Today, it provides a forum for reflection and discussion

by publishing various articles written by prominent members of the international scientific community. Since November 2007, a second tool has been created: the web server of MOST, a true online database providing access to the results of a multitude of international studies conducted in the field of social and human sciences. ¶

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Immediately following UNESCO's 34th General Conference, which re-affirmed the importance of creating the conditions for a genuine dialogue between researchers, policy-makers and the members of civil society, the server developed under the aegis of the most

Programme offers free and customized access to policy-relevant material (case studies) according to specific locations (city, country, region) and/or themes related to social transformations (urbanization, migration phenomena, human rights, sustainable development, etc.)

This tool will be gradually enriched by research from around the world, notably through the network of UNESCO Chairs in social and human sciences. ¶

To access the server:
www.unesco.org/shs/most

PROJECT

UNESCO at the 3rd Forum of the “Espacio Vanguardia Latina”

UNESCO will participate in the 3rd Forum Espacio Vanguardia Latina, to be held at the Headquarters of the Inter-Development Bank (IDB) in Washington, DC (USA), from April 29 to 2 May 2008. This annual meeting, organized by the association of Espacio de Victulación (EVAC), will bring together 150 of the brightest Latin-American students from Latin America and the USA. EVAC supports student projects on the theme “Rethinking the Americas”, to contribute to the transformation of Ibero-America into a society inclusive to humanistic values. On this occasion, they can discuss and dialogue with members of the academic community, policy-makers and social actors on Latin American influence in the USA, the prospects for Latin America, or on the theme “The Americas, a hemisphere in motion: initiatives,

networks and proposals for a catalyst for change”. On this occasion, they will be invited to prepare proposals for main lines of action that are both concrete and achievable. This forum aims not only to offer a meeting place for the sharing of ideas between young people of the Americas, but also to promote the development of networks and joint initiatives. The first UN Agency to develop specific programmes for youth, UNESCO has been contributing to the success of the Forums since 2006, by facilitating the identification of young participants, through UNESCO’s National Commissions of the countries concerned. ¶

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ECOWAS: Towards an Institute on Regional Integration

The series of workshops held since 2005 under the auspices of the MOST programme of UNESCO, on the theme of “The Nation-States and the Challenges of Regional Integration in West Africa”, have come to an end, with Nigeria hosting the 15th and final national seminar in late February in Lagos. Without waiting for a regional conference to put this project together, another is already on the way: the creation of a West African Institute...

Approved unanimously by the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Commonwealth States of West Africa (ECOWAS) on 18 January 2008 in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), the proposed creation of the Institute of West Africa (IAO) should soon be submitted for adoption by the Executive Board of UNESCO.

There is a need to combine multiple research and multidisciplinary networks on regional integration, in order to improve mutual understanding between the countries of the sub-region and to better measure the potential obstacles to their cooperation. This is the aim of this project which has been brought up continuously during a series of seminars between 2005 and 2008 among the 15 ECOWAS countries under the auspices of MOST, UNESCO.

Beyond calling for immediate action to put their knowledge together, the IAO’s main objective is to meet another requirement that is to enable policy-makers to make strategic choices to promote economic growth, protection of human rights and human security through evidence and analysis produced by outstanding specialists.

It is through this that social, economic and cultural development of all the West African countries will be accelerated and will be a benefit to the whole population.

Since Cape Verde has offered to host the Headquarters of the Institute, and to ensure

the freedom and autonomy of its functioning – in collaboration with ECOWAS and organizations such as Ecobank, Trust Africa or IDRC, IAO should be able to strengthen the dialogue between researchers, policy-makers and the diversity of players in the private and civil society.

It has already a Steering Committee, created on 29 February, 2008 in Lagos (Nigeria) during the 15th and final national seminar “The Nation-States and the Challenges of Regional Integration in West Africa”. The Steering Committee should, as from 2008, open the site of the IAO and develop a detailed plan for the start-up of the Institute’s activities, in approving the preliminary research, consultation and communication activities, by mapping out strategies on the search for extra-budgetary funding and by informing governments, scientific communities and partners of regional integration on the progress of the setting up of the Institute. ¶

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TOOLS

Four publications containing the acts of the seminars which were held in 15 Member States of ECOWAS on “Nation-States and the Challenges of Regional Integration in West Africa” are available at Karthala publishing and may be ordered directly by internet (www.karthala.com)

in electronic version or hard copies. The proceedings available concern Benin, Mali, Niger and Senegal. Those related to the seminars held in Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea and Togo will be published shortly. ¶



MOST

Social development: 2nd Regional

The Ministers of Social Development from South Asia participated in the Second Regional Forum organized within the framework of UNESCO's programme for the Management of Social Transformations (MOST) on 5 and 6 March 2008, in New Delhi (India).

The Second Regional Forum of Ministers of Social Development from South Asia was held in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, from 5 to 6 March 2008 as a sequel to the First Regional Forum held in Bhurban in Pakistan in 2006. Co-organized by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, the Indian National Commission for UNESCO, in cooperation with the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICCSR) within the framework of the activities implemented by UNESCO's programme for the Management of Social Transformations (MOST), this Second Forum was attended by ministers and high-level officials from Afghanistan, Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka as well as South Africa, in the presence of Mr. Pierre Sané, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences of UNESCO, and Professor T. C. A. Anant, Representative of the ICCSR. Together they exchanged their experience and thoughts in four main sessions on:

- Transparency, Right to Information and Social Development;
- Introduction to Social Science Research-Policy Linkage;
- From Research to Policy: Itinerary of an Indian Legislation; and
- The Right to Information Act and the Regional Forum of Ministers of Social Development: the Way Forward.

While the participants appreciated UNESCO's efforts in building a framework to institutionalize the mechanisms of sharing best practices to facilitate social development, they also emphasized the need to link research and political decision-making for the creation of social solidarity.

A common objective

Zole Skweyiya, South African Minister of Social Development and President of MOST Programme, spoke on the critical role that the regional forum can play as the anchor of social development in the region, and underlined the importance of international research networking as a tool to systematic research and consequent policy formulation.

The objective of the UNESCO's Management of the Social Transformations Programme (MOST) as elaborated by the Assistant Director-General of UNESCO, Pierre Sané, is precisely to reduce the critical gap between social science and policy, giving scientific meaning to policy concerns and providing political meaning to the knowledge produced by social science. Research and policy decisions must work together with the aim of moving our societies forward towards progress,



Arjun Singh, Indian Minister for Human Resources Development takes the floor at the Forum

using the social solidarity mechanism. States can effectively intervene to promote better public health, target social benefits and address problems of poverty and inequality with the knowledge of the particular social and economic circumstances of their countries.

Arjun Singh, Indian Minister for Human Resources Development, observed that since the countries in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) region share a similar historical and

“Cooperation among countries in social science research should be strengthened through: exchange of best practices, scientists and information and horizontal cooperation projects networking social science research institutions.”

New Delhi Declaration, 2008.

cultural legacy as well as similar challenges, collaborative efforts would be needed to empower and give a sense of responsibility to the people. According to him “the future belongs to South Asia” and social development should be more inclusive. H. E. Mr Wasil Noor Mohmand, Deputy Minister of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and the Disabled of Afghanistan, who was participating for the first time in the Forum, while defining his country's conditions as transitory, described policies for creation of employment, poverty eradication, familiarizing youth with new technologies, etc.

Lyonpo Thinley Gyamtsho, Minister of Education of Bhutan where the centenary celebrations of the Wangchuck dynasty are about to take place, and where parliamentary democratic elections will take place for the first time, proposed the creation of Gross National Happiness to enhance the all-round social development of its population. Rasheeda Ali, Deputy Minister of Planning and National Development of the Maldives spoke of how the vibrant media [▶](#)

Forum in South Asia

➔ and the growing civil society, coupled with the efforts of the government address issues of development based on social mobilization, community development and the development of human resources.

Authority for all

The Sri Lankan Minister identified human security as a priority in the region and called for active participation in governance to ensure social development. The focus of the presentation from Nepal was the Right to Information Act, which was a cornerstone in the way towards achieving democratic transformation. Finally, Shahid Malik, representative of Pakistan, considered that research, enabling the development of indicators and data on social issues that have an impact on national policies, is an important component of social development. The Freedom of Information Ordinance 2002 was Pakistan's solution to the transparent functioning of the government.

On the question of the Right to Information, the Indian panellists outlined the trajectory of the movement that led to the formulation of the landmark Right to Information Act in India. Ms. Aruna Roy, Magasasay Award winner and Shekhar Singh, Founder member of National Campaign for People's Right to Information insisted that the right to information is an inalienable fundamental

“Promote and facilitate through exchange of Best Practices, early adoption, in accordance with national priorities, of appropriate legislation, conferring right to information for all citizens from the governments and public authorities, to eliminate arbitrariness and corrupt practices and improve governance at the regional, national and local levels.”
New Delhi Declaration, 2008.

human right which “empowers the people of the country, even those living on the edge of survival and the edge of hope”.

The Chief Information Commissioner of India, Mr. Wajahat Habibullah explained the Right to Information Act of 2005 and analyzed how the RTI regime in India has evolved into a grievance regularizing mechanism used to beat corruption. He also recalled that, “a true democracy requires informed citizens and transparency in information dissemination is vital for its effective functioning”. According to him, the essence of the RTI Act was already present in the words of Mahatma Gandhi, “The real Swaraj (self-rule) will come not by acquisition of authority by a few but by acquisition of authority by all.”

The Ministers signed the New Delhi Declaration of Ministers of Social Development from South Asia on 6 March 2008. To institutionalize the Forum, it stressed the need to implement the Plan of Action outlined at Bhurban and New Delhi and called for a mid-term review meeting to follow-up the activities development by the different countries. ¶

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Indian Council of Social Science Research

Established in 1969 by the Indian Government, the role of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) is to review the progress of social science research, to indicate the areas in which research should be promoted, and to adopt measures favouring development. To this end, it coordinates research activities, encourages interdisciplinary research, produces journals, surveys, monographs, reports and funds the publication of doctoral theses. It also sponsors social science research programmes and projects and administers research grants.

The ICSSR acts as an intermediary between government and the research community and finally gives development and maintenance grants to research institutes in the field of social science. The permanent faculty of ICSSR numbered more than 500 in 2005. In 2005-06, ICSSR provided 27% of the resources to these institutes, 19% to the state government, 7% to other government entities and 25% to independent research projects. Participating in the Second Forum of Ministers of Social Development

in South Asia which was organized in India in March 2008, the representative of the ICSSR emphasized the dual linkage research has with policy. According to Professor A. C. T. Anand, research provides evidence for policy-making as well as a scientific tone to policy response. He drew attention to a large number of socio-economic studies at the regional level, which have highlighted the wide diversity of economic, social and political conditions in different parts of the country and within different regions of the world. He observed that

research which is not immediately focused or derived from issues of current policy concern is often the basis for future policy. He called for a dialogue with various structures of the state on one hand and the academia and civil society on the other. ¶

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT

Prolongation of the Diambars project supported by UNESCO

A press conference held at UNESCO's Headquarters on 21 February 2008 was the occasion to evaluate the success of the initiative launched in 2000, with the support of UNESCO, by the Diambars Association, and to examine the prolongation of some projects in 2008.

Eight years after the creation of the Diambars Association, its founding members and UNESCO representatives met at UNESCO's Headquarters in Paris (France) on 21 February 2008, to draw up a progress report of the first 5 years of operation of the first "sport-studies" Institute, created in Saly (Senegal).

The centre, founded by Diambars, welcomes more than 80 pupils today, selected on their sporting abilities, to follow 5-years' training, totally free of charge, during which three-quarters of their syllabus is devoted to school work and the remaining time to football. This alone is a source of motivation. Results are however even more positive both in the educational and sportive domains.

South Africa and Tanzania

Indeed, 12 of these students have already been selected to join the Senegalese junior national football team and the success rate of the "Brevet des collèges" diploma is 82 % whereas the national average is approximately 45 %. According to one of the founders of Diambars, Bernard Lama, "The most important thing is that everyone can acquire an education, knowledge and know-how which will help their social and professional insertion." Especially as this project frequently concerns "young people having broken away from the educational system, some having even dropped out and others illiterate" says Saër Seck, President of the Diambars Association of Senegal.

The project should thus be extended to other countries, and to start with, South Africa, where an institute is being created based on national specificities, to propose a



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Among the beneficiaries of the Diambars project, 12 have already been selected to join the Senegalese team and 82 % have passed the "Brevet des collèges" exam.

sportive and educational training of high quality. A feasibility study should be also undertaken in Tanzania to study the methods of installation of a similar institute. The first of the young people having attended the Diambars Institute in Saly will graduate from high school in 2008.

Leader of the United Nations system for physical education and sport, UNESCO lent its financial support as well as its expertise to this project in order to promote high quality education, based on values such as collaboration, integrity, fair play and discipline, while contributing to the development of a community of competent teachers able to use their skills within the existing structures at a national level. ¶

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Burundi: Athletes and officials to gather together against doping

A high level meeting on the International Convention against Doping in Sport should be held before July 2008 in Bujumbura, Burundi.

To be organized by the Ministry for Youth, Sports and Culture and the National Olympic Committee of Burundi, in collaboration with UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences Sector, the aim of this meeting will be to ensure that everyone is informed, and especially the members of the National Assembly, the Senate and the Ministries concerned, about

the Convention in order to ensure its rapid implementation. By bringing together political stakeholders, athletes, professionals in the world of sport and lawyers, the meeting should also encourage discussions on the implementation of this Convention within the penal code of Burundi, less than a year after its ratification by the National Assembly of this country. ¶

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Doping in sport: The us Senate involved

One year after the International Convention against doping in Sport came into force, the President of the United States of America, George Bush, decided to submit it to the American Senate for approval. In his statement of 11 February 2008, the Director-General of UNESCO, Koïchiro Matsuura, welcomed this decision, stating that "The rapid ratification of the Convention by the U.S. Senate, in this Olympic Year, would send a powerful message to athletes around the world that such behaviour will not be

tolerated." He also recalled that the convention is "a vital weapon in the struggle to eliminate a destructive practice that undermines everything that sport stands for." The convention has been ratified by 79 States as at the end of March 2008, and it incites States Parties to adopt measures in line with the principles stated in the World Anti-Doping Code adopted in 2003. ¶

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Youth at the First Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations

The first Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations (AoC), which was held in Madrid (Spain) on 15 and 16 January 2008, brought together approximately fifty youths affiliated to various international organizations, of which 12 were recommended by UNESCO. As a result of the debates, in which political and religious leaders took part, a solidarity fund was created with a view to supporting youth projects for intercultural dialogue.

The first Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations (AoC) – 15-16 January 2008 in Madrid (Spain) – brought together policy-makers and actors in civil society from all over the world, among which 50 youths affiliated to different international organizations, of which 12 were recommended by UNESCO. They participated in sessions devoted to youth, media dialogue between cultures and religions. This was an occasion to discuss and exchange on different projects on these themes, implemented by young people in the 40 countries represented.

International initiative for youth

This 1st edition of the Forum enabled the creation of a solidarity fund to support youth projects focussing on intercultural and interfaith exchanges, visibility of youth in the media and the construction of a lasting peace. The launch of an international initiative for the employment of youth, which would include the development of pilot projects in 5 countries of the Middle East, was also announced.

The Secretariat of the Alliance, which seized the opportunity to announce its willingness to strengthen international student exchanges, approved the creation of a youth session within the website of the Alliance. Its objective is to promote the dissemination of information on youth projects and initia-

tives working for the promotion of the dialogue between cultures and religions.

Finally, a “media” fund was created to finance original productions, on the sidelines of mass media productions.

A follow-up meeting between the partners of the youth component of the AoC (including the Youth section of UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the European Youth Forum, the Youth

Forum of the Islamic Conference) was held in Istanbul (Turkey) at the end of February 2008, to identify avenues for joint actions. UNESCO will take part thus in joint initiatives such as the creation of an internet portal, putting information related to the AoC themes online for the young, including allowing access to publications, research notes, and information on funding sources and training.

Intercultural and interfaith dialogue

Launched by the United Nations Secretary-General in 2005, and supported by the Turkish and the Spanish Governments, the AoC provides, through a network of partners or “Groups of Friends” established by Governments and multilateral organizations (including UNESCO) its support for the development of projects aimed at promoting understanding and reconciliation among nations and peoples at the international level.

The Alliance believes in such a perspective, and considers youth as a player in the intercultural and interfaith dialogue. In the 2006 report of the high-level group of the AoC, youth is considered as “a source of mobilization, but also as autonomous actors and partners”.

AoC works closely with international organizations or national youth councils so as to include youth in its work and decision-making

Nathalie Grandjean, young Swiss delegate considered that the ideas and the discussions of young people “have been widely shared with the leaders of today, who have, in turn, given us advice and helped us to identify projects which deserve more support”. ¶

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Inter-Agency Cooperation: What does UNESCO do?

Leader within the United Nations system for Youth, UNESCO intends to contribute to the empowerment of the 15-24-year olds. Developing indicators, such as the Youth Development Index (YDI), addressing the urgent needs of young people living in poverty, promoting their rights, lending support to its Member States in the formulation of youth policies and to youth organizations, are among the numerous initiatives to which UNESCO, co-sponsors of UNAIDS, participates. ¶

For more information: www.unesco.org/en/youth

CULTURE OF PEACE

Conference in Cairo on Human Security

At the end of 2008, a major international conference on human security in the Arab States will be organized in Cairo, Egypt, by the League of Arab States, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNESCO.

UNESCO, the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the League of Arab States will organize, at the headquarters of the latter, in Cairo (Egypt) an International Conference on Human Security in the Arab States from 3 to 4 December 2008.

This high level meeting, in which UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences will participate, is held


within the framework of a project prepared by these three organizations with the financial support of United Nations Fund for Human Security which has allocated US\$214,500.

Its objective: to help political stakeholders, academics, civil society actors and the populations as a whole to better understand and to grasp the concept of human security in order to improve human security in the countries concerned, through strategic cooperation and the development and implementation of appropriate public policies.

For the partner organizations of the project, human security should indeed be an issue concerning everyone. It is probably because "human security is far more than the absence of violent conflict. It includes human rights, good governance and access to economic development, education and health care" as the United Nations Human Security Fund explains.

An idea which continues to evolve

During two days, in the Egyptian capital, representatives of 22 Member States of the League of Arab States, academics and civil society actors from the region as well as international researchers and experts, will thus be invited to debate on what this concept, which appeared in 1994 in the Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme and has kept evolving ever since, means to them.

More than a decade later, the extension and application of this concept to different contexts and cultures continues to be discussed as demonstrated by the many international and regional meetings already held on this subject by UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences Sector since 2001. The objective is to contribute to the development 



Human security is far more than the absence of violent conflict...

ARDESC investigates on cultural rights in the Maghreb region and Egypt

Within the framework of the activities of the Arab Research-Policy Network on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ARDESC) developed in collaboration with the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), UNESCO's Office in Rabat has recently launched a study on cultural rights in the Arab States, one of the research priorities of the network. This study, carried out by the Arab Institute for Human Rights of Tunis with the participation of the Observatory of Diversity and Cultural Rights of Fribourg, covers

all the states of the Maghreb region and Egypt and offers a general inventory of the situation and research at every level (legislative, administrative practices, public policies, jurisprudence, linkages between research and political stakeholders). It will thus offer an analysis of the conceptual approach to cultural rights of six countries and enable to evaluate the political and practical implementation of laws, emphasizing the major issues of the region, the obstacles to the observation of those rights

and examples of good practices. After a technical meeting, organized in Rabat 28-29 April 2008 to finalize the contents, the results of the study will be publicized during a regional conference to be organized later in 2008 to which experts in cultural rights of the High Commissioner to Human Rights, the Observatory of Diversity and Cultural Rights and the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights will be invited. The study will then be published and circulated to the appropriate partners. The ARDESC network, created

in 2006, groups together national human rights institutions, NGOs as well as UNESCO Chairs, universities and research centres in Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia. ¶

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ty in the Arab States

➔ and validation of ethical, normative and educational frameworks for the promotion of human security and conflict prevention at the source.

These meetings have brought to light overlapping points and the existence of distinctions between regional and cultural areas on the issues, challenges and priorities covered by the idea of a human security. There is no doubt that the Cairo conference will move things forward even more. And the more so since the participants in this conference will also be invited to reflect together on a possible plan of action for the Arab region on the basis of a conceptual document prepared by Antoine Sfeir, Director of the *Cahiers de l'Orient* (France).

Five studies commissioned especially from regional experts will be discussed. Poverty eradication, democracy and human rights, environmental issues or the management of conflict and post-conflict situations in the Arab States will be at the heart of the debates of several sessions while an entire session will be devoted to international experts to give their points of view.

Indeed, the December 2008 conference will further the debate opened during a previous meeting organized by UNESCO in Amman, Jordan, in March 2005 in cooperation with the Regional Centre for Human Security at the Jordan Institute of Diplomacy.

For two days, experts of the Arab region and international experts had already discussed the themes of human security and peace in the region, and their relevance within this cultural, political and economical context. Together, they endorsed a document on the ethical, normative and educational frameworks for the promotion of human security in the Arab States¹. The proceedings of this Conference were then published in English and Arabic².

The conclusions and recommendations of the 2008 International Conference will also be translated into several languages and published in order to fuel the future strategic orientation documents planned within the framework of this project. ¶

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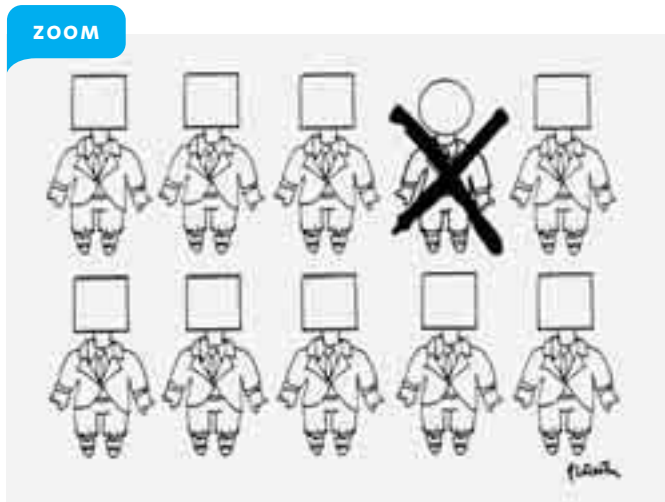
OCHA website: <http://ochaonline.un.org> (in English)
LAS website: <http://www.arableagueonline.org> (in Arabic)

¹ *Promoting Human Security: Ethical, Normative and Educational Frameworks in the Arab States* Bechir Chourou 111 pp., UNESCO, 2005. SHS/FPH/PHS/2005/P1/H/2

This document can be downloaded in English and Arabic at the following address:
unesdoc.unesco.org

² *Human Security in the Arab States* Strategic orientation document presented at the international Conference on Human Security in the Arab States, 14-15 March 2008, Amman, Jordan. 164 pp., UNESCO 2007. SHS/HS/2007/P1/05

This document can be downloaded in English and Arabic at the following address:
unesdoc.unesco.org



Day against Racism at UNESCO

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, an event organized at UNESCO Headquarters on 19 March 2008, gave rise to reflection on the rights of migrants. Co-organized by UNESCO and the French association "Pari(s) de Vivre-Ensemble", and in partnership with *Respect Magazine*, this event, which brought together several hundred people, many of them young, took place in three phases:

The first was the opening of a photographic exhibition *D'un visage à l'autre. Regards croisés sur l'histoire de France et d'Algérie, d'hier et d'aujourd'hui* [From one face to the other. Intersecting perspective on French and Algerian history, past and present] by Guillaume Lecoque, captioned by students of the 9th grade class at the Collège Léon Blum in Villiers-le-Bel, France (95).

The exhibition was rewarded with the Even Prize for Intercultural Education. A documentary film *La vie avant la mienne* [The Life Before Mine], produced by 8th grade students who interviewed their parents about their origins, their reasons for taking the path of exile and their experiences in France was screened, followed

by a debate *L'école et l'immigration* [School and Immigration] moderated by Patricia Sitruk, Director of the *Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration* (National Museum of Immigration History) in Paris.

The evening provided the opportunity for notable personalities from different backgrounds and field-based practitioners to brainstorm together. They examined issues related to cultural diversity at school, the transmission of history and the role that can be played by parents, teachers, scientists and civil society to ensure that schools, being special meeting places, can help safeguard and promote diversity in 21st century societies.

In this year of the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UNESCO will launch in July, on the occasion of the 3rd International Forum of Human Rights to be held in Nantes (France), an international coalition of cities against racism and discrimination, which will federate the regional coalitions set up for the occasion throughout the world since 2004. ¶

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GLOBALIZATION

To leave half of humanity living in poverty is expensive and will be more and more as time passes

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Children from a poor neighborhood in Quito (Ecuador)

A seminar held in Kingston (Jamaica), in March 2008, has led outstanding Latin American researchers to review the multiple costs of poverty in the Caribbean, and more especially to present options available to the international community to cope with a phenomenon that affects nearly one in two people around the world.

To leave people living in poverty costs more than to develop public policies to help them out.

This was the underlying idea of a seminar on the cost of poverty in the Caribbean, organized by the International Institute for Social, Political and Economic Change, Kingston, Jamaica, from 17 to 19 March 2008.

The meeting, supported by UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences programme, has provided an unprecedented opportunity to take all necessary measures on the consequences that almost half the world's population lives below the poverty line.

For two days, multiple speakers, including eminent researchers from Latin America,

have scrutinized poverty and its different aspects.

After presenting the situation in the Caribbean, a region particularly affected by poverty, the overall cost of which represents a profound denial of human rights was revealed, as well as the social, economic, environmental and psychological costs, which always lead to the same findings: poverty is expensive.

Arnold K. Ventura, member of the cabinet of the Prime Minister of Jamaica, recalled the solidarity effort required at all levels and the need to include the poorest in finding solutions for themselves, by putting access to science and technology at the centre of his analysis.

The meeting was also an occasion to present the action undertaken by UNESCO to make its contribution through international efforts in the fight against poverty, notably by the support that the Organization provides to its Member States in reviewing and discussing the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) in the light of human rights.

At the opening session, Pierre Sané, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for the Social and Human Sciences said that poverty is the denial of the most fundamental of human rights, challenging the participants with the question: "Can we talk about global development when globalization seems to be the source of inequality?"

In this year of commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, he found that one of the major challenges of the 21st century is to realize the right of every person that prevails on the social and international level, an order in which the rights and freedom is set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized, as cited in Article 28.

According to him, the inequality caused by poverty is indeed a real challenge, thereby depriving millions of men, women and children of their dignity, recognized as a right for all members of the humanity since 1948. Calling upon the international community to mobilize themselves for "global justice", he recalled the levers that constitute investment, reform, national and international policies, and called for a change in the basic rules to give globalization a human face. ¶

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Pierre Sané visits the British Parliament

"Poverty and Human Rights as a Global Governance Challenge" will be the theme of the session of the British Parliament where Pierre Sané, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences of UNESCO, has been invited to participate

on 9 June 2008, by the Think Tank "One World Trust". He will outline UNESCO's approach to eradicating poverty, whereby it is considered as a denial of human rights which falls under international law. ¶

ACADEMIC NETWORKS

Towards a day of Latin American identity?

Will January 30 figure on the Global Agenda as the Day of Latin American and Caribbean Identity? The proposal was made on February 2008 by the José Martí Project Council, which met in Havana (Cuba) at the 2nd meeting "For World Balance", organized within the framework of this project, in the presence of Pierre Sané, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for the Social and Human Sciences. Recalling that this date corresponds to the publication in 1891, in Mexico, of the work of José Martí "Nuestra América", many intellectuals and policy-makers who are council members, urged Ministers of Culture to support this proposal in order to preserve a common history on the life and work of Martí and the memory of a movement for independence, sovereignty and the development of rights and equality for all. Implemented in 2003

with UNESCO's support, the José Martí International Solidarity Project aims to promote the memory of the first hero of Cuban independence, as an ethical and political reference for the consolidation of sovereignty, social justice, solidarity and law and peace throughout the world. Through him, support networks for regions and poor countries have been developed and projects for cooperation are implemented with international agencies, to reinforce solidarity at a global level. Initiatives in favour of the redistribution of wealth are also encouraged and meetings "For World Balance" are being organized. ¶

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Rethinking Latin America from a point of view of social reality



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An area for reflection for development

The main objective of the project "Rethinking Latin America", initiated in 2002 by the UNESCO Office in Mexico, is to propose a new approach to the socio-economic, political and cultural integration of Latin America.

From 24 to 26 March 2008, a meeting concerning the "Rethinking Latin America" project took place in Quito (Ecuador), within the framework of the agreement signed between UNESCO and the Latin-American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO), which brings together research and teaching bodies in various Latin-American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador Guatemala, Mexico, Dominican Republic and El Salvador).

Linking research and policy

During the meeting the participants discussed the implementation strategy of the "Rethinking Latin America" project for the two years to come. A research series on strengthening the linkage between research and public

policies, the elaboration of innovative proposals on development in the region as well as feeding public debate, will be published.

The project, aims at creating a space for reflection based on scientific dialogue and debate. In the present regional situation, it is essential to renew the discussion on social science research, and to take into account the transnational aspects of contemporary thought and new ideas for the region.

The UN System and UNESCO have a particular interest in this project because it fits into the current process of reform of the two organizations. At the epicentre of these reforms, social sciences play a key role: that of providing a reflection that clarifies and guides decisions related to development policies. The relationship between social sciences and the formulation and conduct of public policies must be renewed significantly; UNESCO's Sector of Social and Human Sciences UNESCO has placed this relationship at the heart of its programme. ¶

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The International Network of Women Philosophers which was created by UNESCO has launched its own website since 8 March 2008. This new tool provides internet users with a virtual directory of some 1200 women philosophers throughout the world, regular information

letters on the latest news in the world of philosophy, and the possibility of joining the network by registering on-line. ¶

The website of the International Network of Women Philosophers: www.unesco.org/shs/philosophy/women-philosophers



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PROGRAMME FOR THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN NEED

“Dance for Life” in South Africa, Brazil

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Pupils in the three schools participating in the “Dance for Life” project will meet in Paris in late 2008 for a single representation.

The Cuban National Art Schools Centre received a first donation as part of the ongoing joint partnership between UNESCO’s Programme for the Education of Children in Need and the Repetto Foundation. The partnership was born out of a common desire to give support to dance schools which would encourage the social and personal development of deprived children and their integration into society through the arts.

As the French painter, Jean Dubuffet, said, “Dancing is the spirit of life and it is only through dancing oneself that you begin to know anything: you have to approach things dancing”. Jean-Marc Gaucher, Chairman of the newly-established Repetto Foundation would not deny this. Nor would the children of the Cuban Popular Art Workshops, who, at the end of January, were the lucky beneficiaries of the first donation co-ordinated by the UNESCO Programme for the Education of Children in Need and the Social and Human Sciences Sector.

The meeting between Repetto and UNESCO

The donation of more than two tons of dance equipment – of a commercial value of more than 116,000 euros – was handed over by Pierre Sané, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences of UNESCO, to the director of


the Cuban National Art Schools Centre, Niurka Martin Santa Maria. This donation is the first step of a partnership which is called “Dance for Life”, a name that could have been inspired by Dubuffet’s thoughts. It came about thanks to the encounter between a Foundation and a company (Repetto) that has for years been the first step for budding dancers, and an international organization (UNESCO) which, for years has been promoting dialogue between cultures through education, science and culture.

To celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Repetto brand, its eponymous Foundation wished to develop a project that would give greater meaning and visibility to the landmark, to make it more human in a way. This led the Foundation to approach UNESCO and its Programme for the Education of Children in Need, on the one hand for its expertise, its credibility and its knowledge of the field and NGOs, and on the other hand for its capacity to visit, evaluate and monitor projects that could be set up with the funds collected.

Three main events

UNESCO, and its Children in Need Programme, could only welcome such an approach, actively encouraging this kind of partnership whereby everyone’s know-how creates an alliance capable of changing the destiny of thousands of deprived children. Furthermore, the fame and visibility of Repetto and its collaborating artists are major assets for the Organization, an important reminder that the commitment of all is vital to reverse the tragic situation of millions of children in the developing world.

The idea? To give support to dance schools across the world which favour the social integration of disadvantaged children through art. As traditional schooling is often not enough, alone, to provide education to excluded children, it is essential to imagine other innovative and alternative routes. Promoting a unique alliance between art and social action is one way: dance constitutes a formidable tool to introduce and support education.

The joint ‘Dance for Life’ project took shape fast. A prestigious godmother, Alicia Alonso, *Prima Ballerina Assoluta*, quickly came on board. As well as being a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, she is the founder and 



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and Cuba

➔ director of the Cuban National Ballet. The first three schools to benefit from this partnership were selected in 2007: EDISCA in Brazil, Dance For All in South Africa and the Cuban Popular Art Workshops. Even if, from start to finish, the most deprived children will benefit from the project, three main events will mark the Dance For Life alliance.

First: the donation of equipment. The Repetto Foundation wished for its brand-name articles to profit those who needed them the most, those who would never have dreamt of having a new pair of ballet shoes. In January 2008, the project kicked off in Cuba, before South Africa and Brazil, where other children will, in turn, receive an important donation of dance equipment this year.

An education tool

Secondly: an auction. To celebrate the 60 years of Repetto, more than 60 well-known artists were asked to customize or tailor-make a dance item, a tutu, a ballerina costume, ballet shoes, etc. according to their whims, feelings and emotions. Thanks to the commitment of numerous designers, a unique, surprising and unusual collection has been put together. It is currently a travelling exhibition, will finish its world tour in 2008, in



Paris, where each item will be sold at auction for the benefit of the Programme of the Education of Children in Need.

A third and last event of this co-operation will be a ballet “without borders”, a chance for UNESCO’s Programme for the Education of Children in Need to show to the general public the extraordinary results of the field projects it gives support to. In October 2008, 10 children from each dance schools in Cuba, South Africa and Brazil, will dance together on the same European stage. This exceptional ballet ‘without borders’ was conceived in Cuba, in December 2007, when the three dance school directors met.

With great enthusiasm, the three directors took up the idea of choreographing a show together, despite the long distances that separate them, to highlight the universal language of dance and of social projects that use dance as an educational tool.

“It is only through dancing,’ as Dubuffet says, ‘that you get to know anything”. ¶

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1 Children from the Cuban school gathered together with the Directors of the three schools, representatives from UNESCO as well as the Repetto Foundation.



2 Pierre Sané, UNESCO’s Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences gives part of the donation of dance material to the Popular Art Workshops of Cuba.



3 The schools of South Africa, Brazil and Cuba will be provided with dance material to help in the learning process.

Dossier

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Focus on



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**Social and Human Sciences
within National Commissions
for UNESCO:**

Canada



A sectoral commission cutting across sciences

shsvIEWS continues its round-the-world journey in a bid to explore the way social and human sciences are perceived within the National Commissions for UNESCO. After the Philippines, in this issue we move on to Canada, where the science-related activities of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO cover the social, human and natural sciences together, with a cross-sectoral approach being the order of the day.

The National Commissions for UNESCO were set up by the founders of UNESCO, who believed they were essential to enable the Organization to carry out its work successfully in each Member State. As a network they are unrivalled within the United Nations system.

As UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura recently put it when opening an information seminar for the new Secretaries-General of the National Commissions, “they are a real treasure trove”.

28,984

The amount, in millions of dollars, dedicated to Research and Development in Canada in 2007
(Source: Statistics Canada)

They are crucial to forging partnerships with civil society, local communities, the academic world, the private sector and many other players. They help in developing the strategic direction of the Organization. They are vitally important to raising its profile and safeguarding its image, and they will be called upon to play an increasing role in the joint country-level programming work of the various United Nations agencies.

A Relatively Independent Forum

While they all share the same values and objectives, each Commission is different. Canada was one of the founding Member States of the Organization and the Canadian Commission has always been able to operate relatively independently of the federal administration ever since it was established.

In 1949, a Royal Commission, known as the Massey-Léveque Commission, was set up to undertake a comprehensive survey of the development of the arts, letters and sciences in Canada. Two years later it submitted a report recommending the creation of the Canada Council for the Arts, which it considered should include a

division to enable the main national groups working with education, scientific research and cultural issues to be involved in the work of UNESCO, as called for under Article VII of the Organization’s Constitution.

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO (CCU) was thus officially established by Order in Council on 14 June 1957.

Enjoying the status of an independent division within the Canada Council for the Arts and operating at arm’s length from the government, it has, since its inception, served as a forum for consultation and debate, enabling representatives of the federal and provincial jurisdictions to work together with civil society organizations on matters of common interest.

This measure of independence is not confined to its relations with the various tiers of government in Canada. Reflecting the notions of freedom and rigour of the arts, as championed by the Council within which it operates, it maintains equally free, rigorous relations with UNESCO.

A Creative Cross-Communication

For 43 years its sectoral commissions corresponded to the five main UNESCO programmes, but in the year 2000 the CCU decided to reduce the number of internal commissions to just three, bringing culture, communication and information under the same commission, and combining natural and social sciences in another.

A reading of the Canadian Commission’s response to the questionnaire drawn up by UNESCO as part of the preparations for its draft strategy for 2008-2013 makes it plain that this move aimed to encourage “innovative solutions to the complex problems of today’s world”.

In this document, submitted in July 2006, the Commission considers that “there is a need to inspire and create new forms of knowledge and promote action, and to make innovative linkages between issues to address common human problems”.

Could this be a result of the influence of its Executive Committee, which includes eminent specialists in the social sciences?¹

The Commission is working at the grassroots level to make this creative cross-sectoral approach a reality, particularly given that “ethics, ethics in science, and bioethics, are all equally societal issues as well as scientific issues and must be seen as encompassing the sciences in their totality.”

When matters of common concern to the three sectoral commissions arise, an ad hoc group is set up, such as the one on ethics which eventually led to the publication of the *Building a Culture of Deliberation and Responsibility Information Kit*. In the same spirit, the Coalition of Canadian Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination, nurtured by the science commission, is of equal interest to the commissions responsible for education and for culture and communication. ➡



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↳ “Specialists” do not have a monopoly in this area, either in terms of the debate or – indeed less so – in terms of action.

Twice a year the members of the Commissions – who all belong to one of the Canadian or international networks facilitating the continuous flow of ideas around the world – meet to exchange ideas and views. Government representatives learn about UNESCO’s priorities and how its programmes can help achieve the objectives of the various ministries. The ideas raised also provide pointers for the Commission secretariat and inform the support provided to Canadian NGOs.

In all areas, the watchwords of the Canadian Commission would seem to be a cross-sectoral, cross-cutting approach, underpinned by information-sharing. Indeed, as it affirms: “No scientific research proposition, application or activity is without a social, cultural or political dimension. It is essential therefore that the outcomes of UNESCO’s programme activities in the sciences be expressed in language that is understandable to policy-makers in all spheres, and that these outcomes are communicated to decision-makers.” ¶

Petra Van Vucht Tijssen and Cathy Bruno-Capvert



© C.C.U.

1 Michèle Jean, President of the Canadian Commission, chaired the International Bioethics Committee. Martha B. Stone, Vice-President, is an information sciences specialist and was Director of a division of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). David A. Walden, Secretary-General, is a history and political science specialist.

27.1 %

The proportion of the Canadian population living in metropolitan areas of at least 100,000 inhabitants in 2006

(Source: Statistics Canada)

Three questions put to... Alex Michalos

Professor Alex Michalos, president of the commission on natural, social and human sciences since 2004, will be leaving his post this year. He was a member of two UNESCO expert groups in 2007, and made a particular contribution to the evaluation plan for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014, and to the debate on measuring the diversity of cultural expressions.

The world of scientific research often asserts its independence from policy-makers. How does the commission in charge of sciences help to establish a productive dialogue between these two worlds?

By playing its full role as a catalyst for ideas and a meeting place for the various players, in other words by really encouraging this dialogue. The commission is structured in such a way as to include citizens, policy-makers and scientists in the broad sense of the term “science”, including

researchers in natural, social and human sciences.

At each of its meetings, these various groups are able to get together and exchange their views. The exchange starts out with different mindsets, mandates, objectives and perspectives, providing a springboard for a whole range of innovative ideas. Moreover, the very existence of an official organization such as this commission makes it possible to highlight the role the social and human sciences can play on several levels. ↳

Governance of ethics and bioethics

In Canada there is increasing contact between policy-makers and civil society players on ethics- and bioethics-related issues. For example, as a contribution to drafting the three declarations¹ that were to be adopted by UNESCO in 1997, 2003 and 2005, the Commission organized regular consultations on each draft text with a large number of civil society partners. In parallel, the relevant ministries worked together to prepare Canada's official position, while taking account of the opinions voiced during the consultations. Efforts are currently under way to establish the state of play in the teaching of ethics. This will make it possible to analyse and clarify minimum national standards for diplomas and certificates awarded in ethics and bioethics, and could provide input for UNESCO's online global database on ethics (GEObs). Canada is also preparing to host the Third International Francophone Bioethics Meeting (Troisièmes Journées francophones de la

bioéthique) from 20 to 22 October 2008 in Quebec, focusing on "Bioethics: a new space for governance, diversity and sharing in Francophone countries". Placed under the high patronage of UNESCO and the International Organization of the Francophonie, with the support of the governments of Canada, France and Quebec, it is being organized by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, the Commission on the Ethics of Science and Technology of Quebec, the French National Commission for UNESCO and the International Association of Law, Ethics and Science. According to Michèle Jean, member of the sectoral commission on sciences and former President of UNESCO's International Bioethics Committee, it offers an excellent opportunity to raise international awareness of the challenges of bioethics. The meeting will bring together researchers, academics and members of UNESCO's ethics and bioethics committees with the aim of increasing mutual understanding, promoting research and highlighting the importance

of having fundamental and clinical research and medical practice in Francophone countries underpinned by ethical standards. Touching on the geocultural aspects of bioethics, participants will be able to discuss the notion that pluralism of practice demonstrates the universality of the principles and values embodied in bioethics. ¶

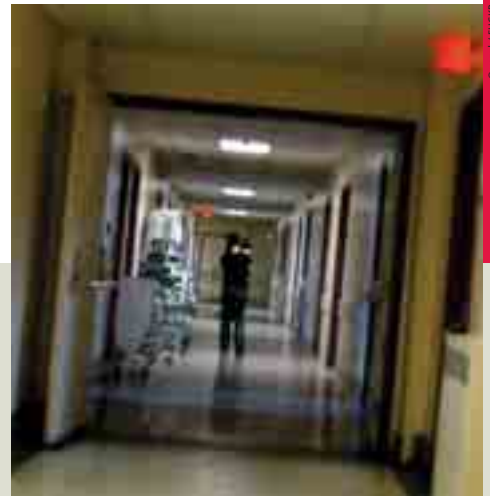
For more information, please contact:
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¹ Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights (1997); International Declaration on Human Genetic Data (2003); Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights (2005).

45.7 %

The percentage of people over 15 years of age who had access to healthcare information during 2001

(Source: Statistics Canada)



⇒ In my opinion, this framework also gives us the privilege of discovering the people and the processes behind declarations, such as the declaration on bioethics and human rights. It is fascinating to study the agreements and disagreements at the international level, to analyse the hopes and fears that lead to agreements being struck between countries and individuals. This moves us all forward. This process is much older than UNESCO or the United Nations system. When we try, as a group, to define how we might better live together in peace, productivity and harmony, we are engaging in one of the most essential, human tasks of our species. The future of the latter, and perhaps even of the planet, depends on the success of this

common commitment. In its own way, the commission makes a modest but important contribution to the long-term success of this venture.

Does the Canadian Commission on sciences work with similar committees on other National Commissions?

It is only relatively recently that cooperation has been developed with other sectoral commissions. It tends to be confined to Europe and North America. The Third International Francophone Bioethics Meeting (*Troisièmes Journées francophones de la bioéthique*) next October in Quebec is a good example because it is the outcome of cooperation between different Commissions, in particular

the French National Commission and their partners. For the Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination, the Canadian case is unusual here in that the Canadian commission, rather than a municipality, played a very active role in launching the coalition at the national level. Its experience is a source of inspiration for other commissions. And it has become clear that this programme gives National Commissions the chance to play an important part in promoting it at the national and regional level. ⇒

The coalition of Canadian municipalities against racism and discrimination

Canada is the second largest country in the world by surface area, and has a sophisticated system of laws and treaties in the field of human rights. Nevertheless, a nationwide effort is needed to try to put an end to racism and discrimination, which continue to hamper the development of vulnerable groups and individuals. Communities that are marginalized economically and socially vary according to area, depending on the historical background and more recent waves of internal or international migration. With this in mind, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO has, for a number of years now, been calling on Canadian municipalities to join the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination (CMARD), and to take part in the international coalition promoted by UNESCO. Local communities and municipalities are the ideal arena for combating racism and discrimination, because local policies often have a direct impact on people's lives. Twenty-five municipalities are currently committed to this Coalition. Taking account of the specific types of discrimination in their area, the signatory

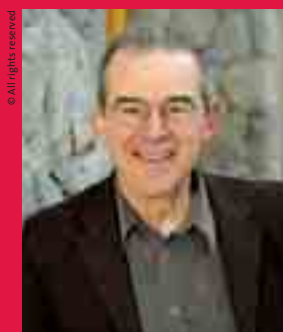
cities devise and tailor their own individual action plans for the gradual achievement of 10 joint commitments. They establish or pursue a dialogue with the communities, including indigenous communities and their partners, in order to identify priorities, share the lessons they have learned, work more effectively and make public their progress reports on fulfilment of the 10 commitments.

Four Steps to Take

Being part of the Coalition helps mobilize a wide range of partners in the search for solutions. There are four stages to the process. The first involves preparing the relevant municipality's decision to join. The second involves consulting partners on the steps they need to take to establish their priorities (16 municipalities are currently at this stage). Thirdly, standing consultation arrangements are set up to facilitate and monitor implementation of the commitments. The fourth stage involves framing a policy or a specific plan to combat racism. Several municipalities have already completed this stage, including Saskatoon, Toronto, Wood Buffalo and Windsor.

In the member municipalities, the specific needs of indigenous communities in urban areas are given greater recognition. Several municipalities have launched initiatives ranging from symbolic reconciliation to setting up special working groups with the participation of representatives from these communities to deal with the specific problems and propose solutions. A CMARD working group met in Ottawa on 25 February 2008 with the pan-Canadian partners identified by the municipalities, in order to consolidate their efforts and establish a community of practice through better networking between municipalities. ¶

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“It is the project that makes the difference.”

➡ **Do you think that it is more difficult to work with National Commissions from other regions of the world than among institutions within the same region?**

Working with institutions or even with National Commissions from the same region can pose as many challenges as cooperation at the interregional level. It should not be forgotten that the National Commissions of the “rich” countries can also find it difficult to obtain funding for their work programme.

Essentially, I think that it is the project that makes the difference. If we share a common vision, it is much easier to work together. Since 1999, the ccu has been providing regular support

to enable young representatives from Haiti, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Jamaica and Venezuela to attend the UNESCO Youth Forum which is held just before every General Conference session. This year we are working together with 15 other National Commissions for UNESCO in a bid to get young people to take part in the youth component of the 32nd session of the World Heritage Committee, which will be held in Quebec City from 21 June to 10 July 2008. ¶

Interview by Petra van Vucht Tijssen

The International Polar Year: a multidisciplinary programme

The International Polar Year (IPY) is a multidisciplinary programme of science, research and observation on the Arctic and the Antarctic. It aims to roll back scientific borders; provide a better understanding of polar processes and the way they interact; improve our ability to detect change; keep Arctic residents involved in research activities; recruit and train the next generation of scientists and experts; and arouse the interest of the public.

Coordinated by the International Council for Science and the World Meteorological Organization, the IPY brings together some 60 countries, including Canada, and tens of thousands of researchers in an unprecedented example of international scientific

cooperation. Canada is the second largest polar nation in the world by surface area and plays a particularly important role in the Arctic region, since the changes there will inevitably be felt at home. Some 60% of the projects already launched by the IPY either benefit from Canadian input or are being partly implemented in Canadian territory.

In this programme, the social and human sciences have a special role to play in helping to define the themes for the polar year, according to Jean-Marie Beaulieu, Polar Science Manager at the Canadian Polar Commission, and also a member of the science commission of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO.

The impact of physical change on the

population is the core concern of Arctic and Antarctic research. Indigenous communities are involved in planning the issues to be addressed and in incorporating indigenous knowledge in data collection. This provides an opportunity to make the history of the region more widely known, to analyse the cultural and social processes that have underpinned the endurance and durability of circumpolar communities, and to identify their unique contribution to citizenship and to global cultural diversity. ¶

For more information, please contact:
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www.polarcom.gc.ca

19.8%

The 2006 figure for people living in Canada but born abroad

(Source: Statistics Canada)

Justice and democratic society: a UNESCO Chair of Philosophy

The eighth Chair of the UNESCO network of Chairs of Philosophy was created in 1999 at the University of Quebec in Montreal, where it is affiliated with the Faculty of Human Sciences and the Department of Philosophy. Focusing on political philosophy and the philosophy of law, this Chair addresses the philosophic foundations of social justice and democracy in an era of globalization. The aim is to provide rigorous philosophical input to the debate on the problems of today's world, and to make it available to the wider public. The Chair is an ideal forum for educators, researchers and students. It is also an arena for freedom of expression that accepts a pluralism

of references and schools of thought, and seeks to promote dialogue across borders. As a hub on the North-South axis of the Chairs of Philosophy, it works with the philosophy communities of Canada, Africa and Latin America and provides financial and scientific support for the Intercultural Research Centre which is studying the problems of the Indian communities in Canada.

Intended for philosophy specialists and students and teachers from all disciplines, but also politicians, trade unionists and the public, it offers various activities: conferences, debates and discussion workshops under the high patronage of the Royal Society of Canada – Academy

of Arts and Social Sciences; virtual research seminars in association with the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie; the annual Jean-Jacques Rousseau Award for the best essay in social sciences; seminars and round tables; trans-Canadian networking; grants, etc.

Through the above activities the Chair aims to make a contribution to the debate on change in the post-modern era, to the establishment of a fair, democratic society, and to a culture of peace. ¶

For more information, please contact:
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YouthScape: a Project to make youth more active in their own cities

YouthScape engages young people, especially those who have traditionally been excluded, in changing systems and creating stronger communities. The initiative builds on the lessons learned at The International Institute for Child Rights and Development through research action projects like the UNESCO-Most Growing Up in Cities Canada (GUICC) project engaging young people in Vancouver, Halifax and Gatineau from 2003 to 2006 in the design and planning of their cities.

Supported by the J. W. McConnell Family Foundation, YouthScape currently involves five Canadian cities: Thunder Bay, Calgary, Saskatoon, Halifax and Rivière des Prairies.

The International Institute for Child Rights and Development (IICRD) serves as the national convening agency, to facilitate and support cross-community learning and research, increase local capacity, and establish a national youth engagement community across Canada. The Canadian Commission for UNESCO representative is part of the group of advisors monitoring the process. YouthScape is based on the notion that young people are an asset as agents of change to resilient (*healthy, inclusive, adaptable*) communities, but that these contributions are not always recognized by communities and systems. The initiative seeks to involve public, private, and

voluntary sector partners to renew community organizations, programmes, and spaces in partnership with an explicit and documented engagement of young people. To date, communities have taken unique pathways to broaden the engagement of youth, from a focus on the transportation system, to the broad issue of changing negative public perceptions of young people, to building organizations that are youth friendly and welcoming for young people. ¶

For more information, please contact:
International Institute for Child Rights and Development,
ysiicrd@uvic.ca
www.youthscape.ca

Further reading

LINKS

Metropolis: an international network for comparative research and public policy development on migration, diversity and immigrant integration in cities in Canada and around the world
canada.metropolis.net / international.metropolis.net

Breakfast on the Hill lecture series of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences – series specifically designed to bring research directly to the attention of parliamentarians, government officials, the broader public and the media
www.fedcan.ca/english/boh

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
www.sshrc.ca

Center for Research on Immigration, Ethnicity and Citizenship
www.criec.uqam.ca

Chair in Landscape and Environmental Design of the Université de Montréal
www.paysage.umontreal.ca

Francophone Association for Knowledge
www.acfas.ca

ON UNESCO.CA

Response of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO to the UNESCO Questionnaire on the Draft Medium-Term Strategy 2008-2013 (34 C/4) and Draft Programme and Budget 2008-2009 (34 C/5)
55 pp., CCU, 2006.

Building a Culture of Deliberation and Responsibility Information Kit
86 pp., CCU, 2003.

Annual reports of the Secretary-General
www.unesco.ca/fr/commission/ressources/

Call for a Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination
32 pp., CCU / CASHRA, 2005.

Declaration to join the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination
1 p., signed in Calgary by 13 Canadian Municipalities on the 1st of June 2007.

TO READ

Identification of the Obstacles to the Ratification of the United Nations International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families: The Canadian Case
V. Piché, E. Pelletier and D. Epale.
25 pp., UNESCO, 2006
SHS/2006/MC/9

Indicators for evaluating municipal policies aimed at fighting racism and discrimination
J.-C. Icart, M. Labelle and R. Antonius.
88 pp., UNESCO / CRIEC, 2005.
SHS/2006/WEB/CCAR-DP/3

Ethics in education: the role of teacher codes. Canada and South Asia
S. Van Nuland and B.P. Khandelwal.
345 pp., UNESCO / IIEP, 2006.
ISBN 92-803-1284-7

TOOLS

In collaboration with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, UNESCO provides UNESCO National Commissions and the members of its Secretariat with a practical guide on parliaments and their methods of work. Written also with Parliaments in mind, this guide compiles basic information on UNESCO and the specific domains to which national elected representatives can contribute such as the ratification of normative instruments. Parliaments have indeed become major partners for international organizations.

Among the 200 States existing in the world today, 181 have a Parliament. ¶

Guide de la pratique parlementaire
24 pp., UNESCO/IPU, 2003.
ISBN 92-9142-174-X

To download this guide in English, French or Arabic:
http://unesdoc.unesco.org

For more information, please contact:
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Israel-Palestine: Societies in dialogue



Three publications on the Israeli/Palestinian dialogue, prepared within the framework of the “Civil Societies in Dialogue” programme, ongoing since 2002 with Israeli and Palestinian partners, were presented at UNESCO...

A meeting held at UNESCO Headquarters in March 2008, in the presence of Pierre Sané, UNESCO’s Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, Walid Salem from the Palestinian Centre for the Dissemination of Democracy and Community Development (PANORAMA) and Edy Kaufman from the Jerusalem Centre for Research and Cooperation (CRC), provided an opportunity to present several publications from UNESCO’s “Civil Societies in Dialogue” Programme. Carried out since 2002, this programme aims at assisting leaders of civil society organizations to conceive a common future through dialogue and policy oriented research. Through this programme, UNESCO would like to contribute to a constructive dialogue between the two societies: which is an essential pre-requisite to

sustainable peace. It has thus strongly encouraged the creation of a permanent Forum of dialogue between Israel and the Palestinian Territories, also promoting active collaboration among researchers and universities. Within this framework, a study of cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian civil society organizations was carried by partners from both societies and led to a first publication presenting the main organizations and their readiness to engage in dialogue. A second book offers a critical analysis of dialogue initiatives and cooperation efforts between Palestinian and Israeli NGOs. Finally, a third publication presents a project of guiding principles for dialogue and cooperation to enable the setting up of academic and intellectual cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian Institutions. ¶

Mapping of Mainstream Israeli and Palestinian Organizations Willing to Engage in Dialogue
Prepared for UNESCO’s “Civil Societies in Dialogue” Programme by PANORAMA. 102 pp., UNESCO, 2007.
To download : <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001575/157520e.pdf>

The Evaluation of the Cooperation between Palestinian and Israeli NGOs: An Assessment.
Prepared for UNESCO’s “Civil Societies in Dialogue” Programme by IPCC and ISS. 172 pp., UNESCO, 2007.
To download : <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001561/156120e.pdf>

Proposed Guiding Principles for Israeli/Palestinian Academic Cooperation: Translating the Shared Adherence to Academic Freedom into Action.
Prepared for UNESCO’s “Civil Societies in Dialogue” Programme by PANORAMA and CRC 34 pp., UNESCO, 2007.
To download : <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001564/156437e.pdf>

Ageing makes the headlines of the ISSJ

Manifestation of progress and improvement in the human condition, population ageing has begun to raise concern within the international community and calls for concerted policy measures. It is in Europe – the most rapidly ageing continent – where social and political debate have advanced further than elsewhere. The International Social Science Journal has devoted issue No. 190 to this topic, by presenting the results of a major research project funded by the European Union and offering a critical assessment of one paradigm developed to deal with the comprehensive and cross-cutting nature of ageing as a social and policy challenge. ¶

Active Ageing
International Social Science Journal 190
534 pp., Blackwell Publishing/UNESCO, 2007.
ISSN 0020-8701

Science for political action

Issue No 189 of the ISSJ, entitled “Connecting Research and Policy” has just been published in English. The first section of this issue reports on the work of the first International Forum on the Social Science – Policy Nexus organized by UNESCO in February 2006 in Argentina and Uruguay. The second section addresses the consequences on social identities of the conflicts that shake up political communities, sometimes causing them to break up, resulting in profound social transformations. The articles underline how diverse such identity dynamics are and the crucial role within them of ex-combatants, exiles and ambiguous heroes through case studies carried out in different countries. ¶

Connecting Research and Policy
International Social Science Journal 189
534 pp., Blackwell Publishing/UNESCO, 2007.
ISSN 0020-8701

The deterioration of historic centres under scrutiny

As one of the many UNESCO publications attracting the attention of the participants in the next World Urban Forum which will take place in Nanjing (China) in October 2008, the 60th issue in the “Human Settlements and Socio-Cultural Environment” series has just been published in English. This issue compiles the proceedings of an international seminar entitled “Balanced Urban Revitalization for Social Cohesion and Heritage Conservation” organized from 21-23 January, 2007 by the Division of Social Sciences, Research and Policy and the UNESCO Beijing Office. Acknowledging that the deterioration of historic cities is the result of multiple economic and social factors, this seminar provided the opportunity for academics and urban decision-makers from all around the world, to present cases of good and best practices carried out by mayors and experts worldwide. These examples show that the revitalization of historic centres, based on a balance between social cohesion and economic competitiveness, results in the most harmonious urban development. ¶

Balanced Urban Revitalization for Social Cohesion and Heritage Conservation
Human Settlements and Socio-Cultural Environment Series, Vol. 60.
155 pp., UNESCO, 2008.
SHS/SRP/URB/2008/P1/H/1

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“Integration of migrants’ children by means of education: the Moscow experience”.

A book on the experience of social and cultural integration of migrants’ children in the education system of Moscow has just been published in Russian, with an abstract in English.

This study, carried out by the UNESCO Chair on International (Multicultural) Education of the Moscow Institute for Open Education, in close collaboration with the City of Moscow’s Education Department and the UNESCO Office in Moscow, is the result of interdisciplinary research using historical, legislative and sociological approaches to

present the policy implemented by the Muscovite authorities, in favour of a multi-cultural and multi-denominational society. For the past fifteen years, Moscow has been developing an education policy geared at migrants’ children, who often do not speak Russian, and are not familiar with the legislation, history or cultural values of their adoptive city. Each year, more than a million international migrants arrive in Moscow and more than 30.000 students from migrant families were registered for the school year 2006-2007. In order to facilitate their integration, the city publishes handbooks and has set up preparation groups and specialized schools. The authors of the research hope that these positive practices favouring adaptation to the education system, using different linguistic, social and cultural methods, could inspire other regions of the Russian Federation as well as other countries. ¶

To download this book from the UNESCO Moscow Office website:
http://www.unesco.ru/files/docs/integration_of_migrants_children_moscow_experience_layout.pdf

Migrants in China: project assessment



The UNESCO Regional Office in Beijing, together with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) has just published the results of the project “Together with Migrants” which has been carried out from 2002-2007 in eight pilot sites in China.

Written in Chinese and English, this book begins by describing the main challenges facing the country, followed by, in the subsequent chapters, an account of internal migratory phenomena, as well as

the context, goals, partners and strategies developed. In conclusion, the book offers recommendations and reflection on the problems encountered in the implementation of the project, the aim of which was to reduce poverty among young migrant women by familiarizing them on their health, education and labour rights.

As an exemplary model, the project “Together with Migrants” met with a resounding success and led to the setting up of a network for sharing information and support among migrants, while familiarizing both the population and policy-makers on the need to support their integration in urban zones and to improve their living conditions. ¶

2002-2007, *Together with Migrants Research and Action against Poverty in China*
Author and Chief Editor: Ilaria Caraceni
366 pp., UNESCO Beijing, 2007.

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The Migration Museums’ Network publishes a newsletter

UNESCO and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), who have been collaborating for several years, recently decided to reinforce their partnership to promote together through a Migration Museums’ Network, the exchange of information and experiences on the history of immigration and on the migrants’ recollections notably by supporting the build and development of museums on migration in the host countries.

After an experts meeting in 2006 in Rome (Italy), the two organizations thus created an internet website

entirely dedicated to this project where information is available in English, Spanish, French, Italian and Portuguese. They have also just launched an electronic newsletter, the first issue of which, covering the period from March to April 2008, presents the news linked to migration and multiculturalism (events, initiatives, publications). ¶

To subscribe to this newsletter (available only in English), please consult the Migration Museums Network’s website:
www.migrationmuseums.org

IJMS’ current issue: Migration and Integration in the Asia-Pacific Region

Published on the internet thanks to the financial support of UNESCO’s Social and Human Sciences’ Sector, the International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS) dedicated the second issue of its ninth volume to labour migration between the different countries of Asia and Pacific.

Coordinated by Amarjit Kaur and Ian Metcalfe, both professors at the University of New England (Australia), this issue compiles several articles offering a large panorama of migration trajectories in this region of the world, which is facing since the 80’s, a rapid

increase in requests from qualified migrants in specific professional categories.

It also publishes two opinion pages: one questions the end of national models in Europe whilst the other explores the daily life and social integration of immigrants in cities and small towns in Norway. ¶

To read the IJMS (in English only):
www.unesco.org/shs/ijms

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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

“Together, we are the future” by Verónica Vallejo and Daniel Frelén

The 5th UNESCO Youth Forum took place from 12-19 October 2007, a few days before the opening of the 34th session of the General Conference of the Organization. On this occasion, 174 delegates, representing 116 countries, were seated in the same room, behind the name plates of their respective countries. Many were those who represented and spoke on behalf of their country for the very first time. Accompanying the delegates were 87 observers from various youth networks, NGOs and IGOs from around the world.

For two days, the Youth Forum deliberated on the various themes that were to be discussed a week later by the “Parliament” of UNESCO. Young people were also able to voice their opinions on the main themes on the agenda for the next UNESCO biennium. This not only allowed the young people have their thoughts on these issues heard by the

Organization, but it also allowed them to hear the opinions of the Organization itself. The conclusions from the Youth Forum were put together in an 8-page report containing the issues that the young people wanted to evoke at the ministerial round table meetings of the General Conference and that the Sector for Social and Human Sciences had posted on its website dedicated to its activities for youth.

In addition, a certain number of proposals on how to improve the impact of the Forum were drawn up and included in an official letter, addressed and handed over personally to the Director-General of UNESCO. If the main purpose of this letter was to improve the functioning of future Forums, it was found that some recommendations were implemented immediately. The final report of the Youth Forum was added to the documents made available to [↗](#)

The Sultanate of Oman encourages SHS

The Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of the Sultanate of Oman to UNESCO, wrote to us after having read the preceding issue of *SHSViews* to encourage us in pursuing our examination of the work of National Commissions.

Wishing you success in the year 2008 and in all your future work and publications, I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for your continuing efforts and thank you for the Dossier of the magazine that emphasizes the work of National Commissions in the fields of social and human sciences.



↳ the ministers participating in the round table discussions during the General Conference, and for the first time, the President of the Youth Forum was able to participate in the ministerial round table discussion on “Education and Economic Development” to highlight the main points of the final report and to encourage analysis and debate on the proposals stemming from the Forum.

The final report of the 5th UNESCO Youth Forum was also presented during one of the plenary sessions of the General Conference. Despite these efforts, the young participants still felt a certain degree of frustration.

The development of the Forum

Even if the Forum was marked by interesting discussions and solid conclusions on the themes discussed, it was obvious that this event was not all that it could be. In order to ensure full deployment of its potential success, strong support is needed, not only from UNESCO, but also from each of the Member States.

One remark was that the debates were carried out in a short timeframe, which meant that the participants in the Forum were obliged to delegate the drafting and ratification of the final report to the drafting committee. The Assembly decided to set up a committee of recommendations, in charge of drafting a document that contained the proposals on the improvement of the functioning of the Youth Forum. This report calls for a profound change and regrets the lack of sufficient time for the preparation of elected delegates (President, General Rapporteur, the Drafting Committee, etc). In the eyes of all concerned, more time and resources are needed to help improve and develop the Youth Forum.

We missed the delegates at the General Conference... and did they miss us?

Another thing that was missing: the presence of “adult” delegates at the General Conference. On the other hand, there was also a lack of young delegates at the General Conference. Saying that, the young participants were of the opinion that the very idea of sustainable

development, one of the topics covered by the Youth Forum and by the General Conference, will not be possible if young people and “adults” continue to work separately. True creativity and new ideas emerge with new forms of dialogue and exchange. The hope is that the next Youth Forum will take place at the same time as the General Conference. This will allow for the young people to listen to the debates and to play a more active role in their national delegations, while also allowing the delegates at the General Conference to learn something from the Youth Forum.

The majority of the Member States have not allowed young delegates to participate in the debates of their national delegations. At the opening of the General Conference on 15 October 2007, less than a quarter of the delegates from the Youth Forum were present. Yet it would be in everyone’s interest the Member States of UNESCO use the skills of young participants that they assigned to reflect and understand the generation for whom they develop policies. In interacting with them, they will see that these young people have, in fact, something to say.

Young people are not here to replace the previous generations; they are here to seize opportunities to contribute to a sustainable society. It is the responsibility of the older generations to allow young people to participate in the construction of this society. It is also the responsibility of young people to put forward their best foot so as to succeed. Young people are no more the future than their elders are the past. Together, young and old are the present. Together, each can have an impact on the world of today and tomorrow. ¶

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Daniel Frelén

Born in Sweden in 1981, Daniel Frelén is currently working as a Planning Officer for the municipality of Orebro. He is a member of the Executive Board of the organization cisv International. Having participated in the Young Europeans Summit in Rome in 2007, he was chosen as one of the two representatives from the Swedish delegation to the 5th UNESCO Youth Forum, where he acted as General Rapporteur. ¶

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Verónica Vallejo

Verónica Vallejo was born in Ecuador in 1987 and was elected as President of the 5th UNESCO Youth Forum, having been a member of the Ecuador delegation to the 1st UNESCO Forum for Youth of the Americas. She is currently reading law at the Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja and engineering at the Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo, and was winner of the National Competition and Inter-Faculty Competition of Public Speaking. ¶

An international coalition of cities against racism launched during the 3rd Nantes World Forum



UNESCO, as one of the founding members and partners of the World Forum on Human Rights, which is organized every two years by the city of Nantes (France), will take the opportunity at this third meeting, to be held from 30 June to 3 July 2008, to announce the setting up of an international coalition of cities against racism and discrimination.

Considering local authorities as a privileged arena to fight racism and discrimination, the Organization launched a call to municipalities in 2004 which led to the creation of coalitions of cities in the five main regions of the world and to the imple-

mentation, by each of them, of a ten-point action plan to tackle discrimination specific to their region.

The international coalition, the creation of which will be officially announced in Nantes, will bring together these regional networks and will also integrate municipalities that are not part of those coalitions, but who are willing to benefit from this space to exchange experience on the improvement of local politics favouring the integration of all.

This 3rd World Forum on Human Rights organized this year, which is dedicated to the celebration of the 60th anniversary of

the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, offers an opportunity for all these human rights actors to meet and discuss issues linked to the current status of the Declaration, the place of human rights within the current context of globalization within Europe, as well as citizen intervention in the human rights issue. ¶

For more information, please contact:
Kornelia Guse, k.guse@unesco.org, tel.: +33 1 45 68 44 62
Nantes Forum web site: www.spidh.org

Calendar

April

4 April

International Parliamentary Conference "Globalization of Migration Processes: Problems of Legal Regulation".
Moscow, Russia.
(a.ampar@unesco.ru)

10-11 April

Youth Leaders in Ethics of Science and Technology Training Workshop.
Bangkok, Thailand.
(v.sayarath@unesco.org)

24-26 April

Meeting of the Steering Committee of the European Coalition of Cities against Racism.
Botkyrka, Sweden.
(s.lazarev@unesco.org)

27-30 April

National Youth Conference.
Brasilia, Brazil.
(marlova.noleto@unesco.org.br)

28-29 April

Technical meeting of the ARADESC network on cultural rights in the Arab region.
Rabat, Morocco.
(s.saad-zoy@unesco.org)

29 April-2 May

"Vanguardia Latina 2008" Forum.
Washington Dc, United-States.
(b.alcalde@unesco.org)

May

7-9 May

Training Session of Anglophone Mayors and Local Authorities on UNESCO guide "Historic districts for all".
Seville, Spain.
(b.colin@unesco.org)

12 May

Opening Session of the Master on Social Sciences and Humanitarian Affairs. Jerusalem, Israel.
(m.goucha@unesco.org)

22 May

CIGEPS Information Session on Working Paper: Sport for Peace and Development.
Paris, France.
(m.dally@unesco.org)

22-25 May

Launching of the project "Play for Peace".
Istanbul, Turkey.
(m.dally@unesco.org)

26-30 May

Forum of Intellectuals for the Horn of Africa.
Djibouti, Republic of Djibouti.
(n.satti@unesco.org)

28 May

1st meeting of chair holders of UNESCO Chairs on Human Rights.
Moscow, Russia.
(a.ampar@unesco.org)

28-31 May

Iberian-American Summit for Physical and Sports Education.
Havana, Cuba.
(m.dally@unesco.org)

June

4-9 June

European Festival of sports and traditional sports.
Ukraine. (m.dally@unesco.org)

16-17 June

International Conference on Human Security in the Arab Region.
Cairo, Egypt.
(m.goucha@unesco.org)

20 June

Launching of a coalition of cities against racism in the Arab States.
Casablanca, Morocco.
(s.lazarev@unesco.org)

16-21 June

Youth Assembly of the international alliance for citizen participation.
Glasgow, United Kingdom.
(ucj@unesco.org)

18 June

Regional Conference on "HIV/AIDS and Human Rights".
Baku, Azerbaijan.
(a.ampar@unesco.org)

19 June

International Conference on "The First Large Migrations of People".
Paris, France. (b.colin@unesco.org)

23 June

International Youth Forum.
Bandung, Indonesia.
(ucj@unesco.org)

30 June-3 July

3rd World Forum on Human Rights.
Nantes, France.
(v.volodine@unesco.org)