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Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture

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THE SLAVE ROUTE PROJECT

Third Session of the International Scientific Committee

(Cabinda, Angola, 6-9 November 1996)

WORKING DOCUMENT

The Secretariat invites the Scientific Committee to devote its third session to two main questions :

1. The implementation of the recommendations of the second session of the Committee
2. A scientific debate within the Committee on the work and research being undertaken at present

I - **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MATANZAS SESSION**

1. Extension of the Scientific Committee

At its session in Matanzas, the Committee recommended to the Director-General of UNESCO to replace those members whose absence at the two last meetings was not justified. The Committee had, in this context, recommended to the Director-General to examine the possibility of increasing the number of members, taking into account the fact that some geographical areas and several significant disciplines were not adequately represented within the Committee. On the basis of the consultations undertaken by the Secretariat with National Commissions for UNESCO, existing national committees for the “**Slave Route**”, Permanent Delegations to UNESCO and a number of scientific institutions, the Director-General proceeded, in the light of these recommendations, to the appointment of the following new members of the Committee:

N°	Names	Countries	Speciality
1	- BEBEL-GISLER Dany (Mrs)	France/Guadeloupe	. Sociologist and linguist - Research worker at the CNRS
2	- BEKOE Abraham S.	Ghana	. Director, Department of Statistics, Research and Information, Ministry of Tourism
3	- BENOÎT Norbert	Mauritius	. Historian
4	- CASTRO HENRIQUES Isabel (Mrs)	Portugal	. Historian
5	- COSTA E SILVA, H.E. Mr Alberto da	Brasil	. Africanist - Ambassador
6	- DUNCAN Quince	Costa Rica	. Sociologist
7	- GUÈYE Mbaye	Senegal	. Historian
8	- LAW Robin	United Kingdom	. Africanist
9	- LOVEJOY Paul E.	Canada	. Historian
10	- LETNEV Artem	Russian Federation	. Historian
11	- LUANDA Nestor N.	Tanzania	. Historian
12	- NOWAK Bronisław	Poland	. Historian
13	- RUFINO DOS SANTOS Joel	Brazil	. Sociologist - Former President of the "Fundação Cultural Palmares"
14	- SCOTT Rebecca (Mrs)	United States	. Historian
15	- SVALESEN Leif	Norway	. Historian

2. Establishment of networks of scientific institutions

During its session in Matanzas, the Committee had approved the proposal made by the Secretariat to create a network of scientific institutions and to delegate to these institutions the implementation of specific activities of the “**Slave Route**” Project. To this effect, the Committee had approved, on a regional basis, the list of institutions to be included in this network. Based on the priority actions approved by the Committee in Matanzas, and drawing inspiration from the aims of the biennial programme and medium-term strategy of UNESCO, the Secretariat recommends that, in an initial phase, the network should be structured to take account of the two major areas of concern to the Project: the historical question and the **documentary sources** (archives, oral traditions, etc.) of the slave trade, and the question of the **African Diaspora** in the Americas and the Caribbean.

The Secretariat accordingly suggests that, given the wide scope and diversity of the activities to be carried out, the advanced state of a number of research projects and also the existence of informal research networks, the setting-up of the first two scientific networks should now be initiated as follows:

- . A Network concerning historical questions and documentary sources, coordinated by Mr Élisée Soumonni and Mr Paul Lovejoy
- . A Network in three sections related to the diaspora, coordinated by Mr Joseph Harris (North America), Mrs Nina de Friedemann (South America) and Mr Rex Nettleford (the Caribbean).

(See in annex proposals by Mrs de Friedemann, Mr Lovejoy and Mr Harris).

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The Committee is invited to examine the pertinence of these networks and to extend them if necessary on the basis of the list of institutions approved in Matanzas. As agreed in Matanzas, the supervision, co-ordination and follow-up of the activities of these networks will be ensured by the Secretariat of UNESCO and the International Scientific Committee, notably through its subcommittees. As regards the funding of activities, these networks are invited to define strategies for the mobilization of resources, but initial funding will be granted by UNESCO to the extent resources are available.

3. Attribution of the status of "Associated Project"

Given the Project's specific objectives, and the wide visibility it has already received through the media, considerable interest has been aroused within the communities concerned, scientific institutions, non-governmental organisations, artists, researchers, etc. This interest is indicative of the impact of the Project on the public at large, and responds to the aim of giving it a universal dimension.. The Committee, during its Matanzas session, had approved the proposal of the Secretariat which aimed at encouraging initiatives by attributing the status of "Associated project of the Slave Route" to those proposals which best correspond to the aims and objectives of the Project. It was also agreed in Matanzas that the attribution of this status should imply intellectual and logistical support and information, but not, at this stage, financial assistance. On the basis of the questionnaire, as revised following the Matanzas session, the Secretariat is submitting to the Committee, through its Bureau, a document giving an evaluation of the requests received as well as proposed recommendations

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for the attribution of the status of “Associated Project of the UNESCO Slave Route Project”.. This status will enable projects to benefit from the logistical and intellectual support of UNESCO, as well as academic credibility which could facilitate their search for external funding. It will also provide visibility through a reference in the Project’s information documents. In cases where the schedule of the Committee or the Bureau could mean a delay in the commencement of these activities, it is recommended that the Secretariat could henceforth, on the basis of the criteria mentioned above, grant the status of “Associated project” after consultation with the national committee of the country of origin of these activities, and the member of the International Scientific Committee if there is one.

4. Funding of the Project

During the Matanzas session, the Committee subscribed to the opinion of the Secretariat according to which UNESCO was not in a position, through its regular budget, to allocate the entire funding required for the implementation of such a wide ranging programme of activities. The Committee had, on this basis, adopted a strategy which was articulated around activities that require specific funding, such as cultural tourism, the elaboration of fund raising strategies by the network of scientific institutions, the organization of special events, and the aid and support of regional or international institutions for funding and co-operation. The very limited budget of the Project, and the need to give priority to scientific activities, have meant that the Secretariat has been unable to set up, as agreed in Matanzas, a specific structure for fund raising, or to solicit the assistance of fund raising specialists. Moreover,

the experience acquired by the Secretariat, notably with the Silk Roads Project, has shown that having recourse to professionals does not necessarily guarantee positive results. However, the Secretariat has obtained, often through the national committees, financial assistance from a certain number of organizations. For example:

- financial assistance from the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation (ACCT) was obtained, through the national committee of Benin for the Slave Route, for the publication of the Proceedings of the Launching Conference in Ouidah;

- a financial and material contribution from the World Tourism Organization (WTO) for the launching of the joint UNESCO/WTO programme for cultural tourism on the Slave Route in Africa;

- the granting of facilities by airline companies for the organization of the meetings of the Project.

The Secretariat has also mobilized well-known Brazilian artists to organize a gala performance in Brazil in 1997, in order to give publicity to the Project, illustrate its artistic dimension and mobilize financial resources.

In addition, members of the Scientific Committee should do their best, whenever possible, to obtain funding for specific projects approved by the Committee.

5. Cultural tourism

During the course of its previous sessions, the Committee had endorsed the Secretariat's proposal to launch a cultural tourism programme on the Slave Route, in collaboration with the World Tourism Organization (WTO). The aim of this programme is

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to identify, restore, enhance and promote the many places of memory of the slave trade: sites, monuments, buildings, etc. Co-operation with WTO was concerted by the participation of a member of this organization at the session in Matanzas. This co-operation was further enhanced by the adoption by the WTO Commission for Africa (composed of African ministers in charge of tourism) during its last session in Yamoussoukro (Côte d'Ivoire) in June 1996, of a structured programme for cultural tourism on the Slave Route in Africa. As a result of two years of close co-operation with the Secretariat of WTO and African ministers in charge of culture and tourism, the programme has commenced with the identification of the following four priority pilot zones:

- . Zone 1: Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Sierra Leone
- . Zone 2: Ghana, Benin, Nigeria
- . Zone 3: Angola, Congo
- . Zone 4: Tanzania, Mozambique, Malawi

An information document on this programme is presented to the Committee.

The second phase of cultural tourism of the Slave Route will cover the Latin American and Caribbean zone. During the Caribbean Festival in Santiago de Cuba in July 1996, a resolution was adopted on this programme (the text is included in the documents of the present meeting). A workshop to define the principles and strategies of this programme is foreseen within the framework of the Conference on Cultural Tourism in Latin America and the Caribbean, organised by UNESCO in Havana from 18 to 22 November 1996, in co-operation with WTO.

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It should be noted that the expression “Heritage tourism” was also recommended for this part of the programme of activities of the Project.

II - DEBATE WITHIN THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON THE PROJECT

The Committee is composed of eminent specialists from different disciplines, many of whom have been carrying out research work on the main themes of the “**Slave Route**” since well before the launching of the Project by UNESCO, often by their own means within their institutions. During its past meetings, the Committee had examined a programme of activities of the Project. The Secretariat is of the opinion that the Committee should also constitute a forum for information, reflexion and discussion on the work carried out by its members. Accordingly, and in view of the short time available, the Secretariat invited several members of the Committee to make a presentation at this session of the objectives, results and future activities of their research work on some of the major themes of the “**Slave Route**” Project. The Secretariat believes that this will be conducive to an interregional and interdisciplinary scientific dialogue which will serve to enrich, orientate and co-ordinate the programme of activities of the Project. The following members have been invited to make presentations:

- Mr A.S. Bekoe : on **Cultural tourism**
- Mr Luis Beltrán : on the “**Africanía**” project
- Mr Howard Dodson : on **documentary and bibliographical research**

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- Mr Richard Foster : on museums and exhibitions
- Mrs Nina de Friedemann : on the **Africa-America Bridge project**
- Mr Max Guérout : on underwater archaeology
- Mr Joseph Harris : on the **slave trade and its consequences**
- Mr Paul Lovejoy (in collaboration with Mr Law and Mr Soumonni) : on **documentary sources**
- Mrs Luz María Martínez Montiel : on the **“The Third Root” Programme**
- Mr Djibril Tamsir Niane : on the theme of **oral traditions**
- Mr Joel Rufino Dos Santos : on the research work being carried out by the **Palmares Foundation** related to questions concerning the **“Slave Route”**
- Mr Louis Sala-Molins (Mr Sala-Molins will also present the Report on the Antananarivo meeting on Slavery) : on the **“Black Code”**
- Mr Leif Svalesen : on research being undertaken in Scandinavian countries on questions related to the themes of the **“Slave Route”**
- Mrs Sheila Walker : will give a summary of the Conference that she has organised in Austin on the **African Diaspora and the Modern World**

III - INTERNATIONAL COMMEMORATION OF SLAVERY

Considering that the establishment of a day to commemorate the slave trade was likely to be conducive to a new awareness of the underlying causes and the consequences of that historical phenomenon, the 28th session of the General Conference of UNESCO has, on the proposal of the Republic of Benin, voted a resolution on arrangements for an international commemoration and the annual establishment of a remembrance day.

A text was submitted to this effect at the 150th session of the Executive Board. The Secretariat proposed the 23rd of August, the day on which the slaves of Saint-Domingue rose up in rebellion in 1791, triggering off the Revolution of Saint-Domingue and taking the first step towards the first legislative action to abolish the transatlantic slave trade. This date has the advantage of focusing attention on the slaves' own role in the process that led to their liberation.

IV - SESSIONS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

The Secretariat would like to recall that, during the session in Ouidah, it was decided that the Committee would hold one session annually for the first three years in order to launch and sustain the Project. The Committee has, to date, held the following sessions: Ouidah, Matanzas and Cabinda. The Secretariat considers that, for budgetary reasons, the Committee could programme its sessions once every two years. In the period between these full sessions, the Bureau or the subcommittees could meet whenever it is deemed necessary.

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As regards the budgetary aspect, the Secretariat would like to inform the Committee that the costs of organizing each session have been covered to date out of the budget made available by UNESCO for the Project. It would therefore be preferable if each State wishing to host a session of the Committee, a subcommittee or the Bureau could cover the costs involved. The bulk of the available resources could thus be reserved for the implementation of scientific activities, in particular for providing support for the institutional networks.