



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



**The Slave Route**

**First Meeting of the Renewed  
International Scientific Committee  
of *The Slave Route Project***

**UNESCO, Paris**

**22 – 24 February 2006**

**FINAL REPORT**

by

**Mrs. Aisha Bilkhair Khalifa and Mr. Jocelyn Chan-Mow  
(Rapporteurs)**

## **I. OPENING SESSION**

Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura, the Director General of UNESCO opened the meeting with an overview of the UNESCO's efforts to reinforce the Slave Route Project. He addressed the dual challenges of both resizing the International Scientific Committee (ISC) of the project and establishing a balance between regional representation and disciplines. He précised that the need to harmonize the work of the ISC with the other consultative organs of led him UNESCO to develop statutes, which were approved by the Executive Board of UNESCO in October 2005.

The Director-General, in his opening speech, pointed out the dual challenges of both resizing and establishing a balanced International Scientific Committee (ISC). He introduced the new statutes of the Committee which were approved by the Executive Board of UNESCO on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2005.

Also he recognized the achievements of the Slave Route Project (SRP), whose research has paved the way for many countries to examine a tragic chapter of their history while equally highlighting and celebrating the contribution of slavery to their societies.

The Director-General reminded the audience that 2004, the International Year to Commemorate the Struggle against Slavery and its Abolition, helped to raise awareness on the horrors of slavery. The momentum raised by the commemoration resulted in great hopes and expectations from the Member States affected by this tragedy. The activities undertaken in 2004 reflected UNESCO's commitment to the ethical foundation of SRP objectives.

Furthermore, he congratulated the members of ISC for their participation, stating that their support enabled UNESCO to play an important role at the UN Durban Conference in 2001 (South Africa). At this conference the slave trade and slavery was recognized as a crime against humanity. In addition, the Director-General indicated that at the last summit of the Heads of State of the African Union in Khartoum in January 2006, the efforts of UNESCO's Slave Route Project was highly appreciated and recognized.

The Director General made on the basis of an external Evaluation, two important observations:

- The strong consensus that UNESCO plays its role as an organization of intellectual and scientific cooperation by leading this project which is at the heart of its ethical mandate in favor of intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding.
- The necessity to follow up the momentum generated by 2004 in order to expand research activities into areas previously neglected and to link the subject of slavery with contemporary issues.

In order to reinforce the interdisciplinary nature of the project, the Director-General established a task force composed of the heads of all Programme Sectors and Divisions of UNESCO. More recently, an Intersectoral working

group was also established to discuss the new strategy of the project and define common action for its implementation.

Mrs. Katérina Stenou thanked the former members of the International Scientific Committee for their valuable contribution to the advancement of the project and emphasized the fruitfulness of Slave Route Project contributions.

#### **MEMBERS OF THE ISC (ALPHABETICAL ORDER)**

1. Aisha Bilkhair Khalifa (United Arab Emirates)
2. Anne Remiche-Martynow (Belgium)
3. Benigna Zimba (Mozambique)
4. David Richardson (United Kingdom)
5. Isabel Castro Henriques (Portugal)
6. James Anquandah (Ghana)
7. Jean-Michel Deveau (France)
8. Jocelyn Chan Low (Mauritius)
9. Kiran Kamal Pasad (India)
10. Laënnec Hurbon (Haïti)
11. Luz-Maria Martínez Montiel (México)
12. Marta Beatriz Goldberg (Argentina)
13. Miguel Barnet (Cuba)
14. Nestor N. Luanda (Tanzania)
15. Nicolas Ngou-Mvé (Gabon)
16. Paul E. Lovejoy (Canada)
17. Quince Duncan (Costa Rica)
18. Rex Nettleford (Jamaica)
19. Sheila S. Walker (United States of America)
20. Ubiratan Castro Aroujo (Brazil)

#### **II. ELECTION OF BUREAU**

In accordance with the statutes of the International Scientific Committee for the Slave Route Project, ISC unanimously agreed to adopt its rules and procedure. Also, ISC welcomed Professor Sheila Walker's (USA) proposal pertaining to Articles 5 and 11 calling for the composition of the Bureau and appointing two rapporteurs. The proposed composition of candidates are as follows:

##### **1- President of the Committee:**

Professor Rex Nettleford (Jamaica)

##### **2- Vice-Presidents:**

Mrs B. Zimba (Mozambique)  
Mr Jean-Michel Deveau (France)  
\*Mr Miguel Barnet (Cuba)

##### **3- Reporters:**

Ms A. Bilkhair-Khalifa (United Arab Emirates)  
Mr J. Chan Low (Mauritius)

\*Taking into account the large African Diaspora population in Spanish speaking countries in Latin America, ISC members from the region suggested that the Bureau designate one representative from that region. Consequently, the Bureau appointed Mr Miguel Barnet (Cuba) as a third Vice-president.

### **III. EXCHANGES BETWEEN MEMBERS OF THE ISC (presentation of their respective activities)**

During this session members of the ISC shared their ongoing activities in their respective countries and regions and made suggestions for future activities:

- It was suggested that the second Phase of the project activities be focused on resistance and survival strategies of Africans as they are the agents of their own liberation and visibility. Furthermore, the concept of "Engaging the Silence" as a flagship theme should be considered as priority.
- The flagship theme of "Engaging the Silence" should be examined at large, taking into account its history, ancestral heritage and traditional communities.
- The need to reflect on the different exploitation systems such as India's caste system in order to have a clear vision of the specificity of the slave trade and related slavery.
- The need to better study the differences and similarities between the transatlantic slavery system/model and the one in the Indian Ocean.
- Invite international researchers and academic communities to join their efforts in developing the slave route map with ISC.

### **IV. DOCUMENTS EXAMINED DURING THE MEETING**

#### **IV.1 ASSESSMENT OF THE 2004, INTERNATIONAL YEAR TO COMMEMORATE THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SLAVERY AND ITS ABOLITION**

Mr Moussa-Iye (Chief of History and Culture Section, in charge of the Slave Route Project, Culture Sector), explained that UNESCO launched a series of consultations, which helped it define priority themes (1) **Scientific research**; (2) **Living Memory** and (3) **Encounters and Dialogue**. In addition, UNESCO produced promotional documents such as: 2004 Logo, a 63-page brochure printed in three languages (French/English and

Spanish/Portuguese) entitled "Struggle against Slavery", a four-minute video clip (French, English, Spanish and Portuguese), a Website, a traveling exhibition "Lest We Forget: The Triumph over Slavery, a poster-calendar 2004 distributed to 7,500 schools in 172 countries.

2004 Slavery abolition year was launched on 10 January 2004 by the Director-General at **Cape Coast**. At the same time, the Assistant Director-General for Culture and the Head of the UNESCO Office in Haiti launched the Year respectively in **Havana** (Cuba) and **Port-au-Prince** (Haiti). Two other regional launches took place in **Mauritius** (17 February) and in the **Bahamas** (21 May) during the Director-General's official visit to both countries.

Among the early signs of positive reception of the year there were clear indications that this initiative was appreciated not only by UNESCO, but also by the national authorities, regional institutions, academic circles as well as civil society. It is worth to acknowledge the mobilization and solid cooperation of these organizations, especially by providing assistance to 16 National Scientific Committees.

#### **LESSONS LEARNED AND CONCLUSION**

The new impetus provided an opportunity to revitalize the project. The need for improvement of intersectorality and reviewing the mechanism for consultation and orientation was necessary.

Following the presentation of Mr. Moussa-Iye, ISC raises series of points for reflection:

- It was pointed out that the most urgent matter that the project is facing is the lack of funding in order to maintain the momentum. Also, it was emphasized that France could be approached to contribute financially to the SRP.
- ISC wishes to establish an international database on slavery and the slave trade that is categorized and classified by title, author, field etc.
- The ISC should help students to develop understanding on topics relative to slavery by producing pedagogical tools.
- The oral memory remains scattered and ISC must carry on with its efforts to restore it. This component should be addressed with some urgency as most of this knowledge is jeopardized because of the displacement of population and communities from cities to other areas or simply by the death of knowledgeable elders.
- A serious consideration is to be paid to the Timbuktu archives, which contain precious information on the transaharian slave trade.

- ISC stresses the need to obtain the digitalized versions privately owned collections for the benefit of researchers while properly protecting and preserving these records.
- In the next phase of the SRP the focus should be put beyond victimization.
- To pursue research on the identities of the African Diaspora, also, taking into account the rich contribution made by the slave, without overlooking the human rights dimension which is hindering/challenging the existence of some work.
- UNESCO to invite organizations to raise the issues of fund raising and initiate partnerships.
- Many “developing” countries have difficulties of access to the Internet and other technologies. The ISC encourages UNESCO to supply communities with maps, leaflets and other useful learning tools.
- The issue of slavery creates anxiety and resistance in some parts of the world. The recognition of the African slave trade and slavery as a crime against humanity by the whole international community would facilitate to breaking the silence in the Arab region and beyond. Such action will allow for the recording of the African Diaspora in this region which has contributed immensely to the oral traditions, musical expressions, rituals and world views.
- The necessity to launch a practical and systematic approach such as establishing a data base on actions and developments occurring in some countries.
- Oral traditions should be taught in interdisciplinary studies.
- The ISC understands that the services and facilities rendered by national committee and organizations are conducted on voluntary basis. Therefore, members of the ISC were encouraged to appeal to relevant organizations on the local level.

#### **IV.2 THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF SLAVE ROUTE PROJECT (1994-2004)**

Mr Edmond Moukala (Slave Route Project, Division of Cultural Policies and Intercultural Dialogue) presented the external evaluation of the initial ten (10) years of the Slave Route Project (SRP). He explained that this assessment offered an opportunity to examine the mandate, strategies, objectives, relevance, impact, and sustainability of the project and strengthen its fundamental values. The main purpose of the assessment was to:

- Identify key and strategic elements relevant to the objectives of the SRP.
- Highlight the SRP contribution to UNESCO's mandates especially in areas relevant to breaking the silence, enhancing educational tools, and expanding the scope of understanding and tolerance.
- Evaluate the SRP coordination and quality in building and sustaining relationships between UNESCO and other partners.
- Discuss SRP funds and budgets to efficiently implement the project.
- Review the organizational management, Committee's function and mechanism of consultation.

Mr Moukala also discussed elaborated the Andante evaluation method and outlined the composition of the team of evaluators (five people) representing the three continents. The team was comprised of professionals specialized in historical research, human rights, political science, and engineering. The evaluation was conducted in five (5) phases during which four (4) methods of data gathering were used:

1. Observation
2. Questionnaires
3. Interviews
4. Document analysis

Mr Moukala highlighted the difficulties incurred during the evaluations such as:

- conclusively and reliability of the evaluation, which reached only 15-20 % of the targeted stakeholders
- the credibility of some of the responses on the topic is viewed by some to be politically and/or emotionally motivated
- Increased attention on the subject raised many questions on whether the project was the main cause or if it was merely a coincidence
- Several critiques on the SRP management and ownership were formulated
- There was a limited response from UNESCO field officers
- There was an overall positive consensus about the SRP evaluation mission.

The following are the achievements of SRP:

- the SRP served as a catalyst to break the silence on the history of the Slave Trade and Slavery.
- research work produced by SRP, publications and archived documents, were beneficial for intellectuals, research centers and the public at large.
- there is a noticeable difference in the increased awareness to the Slavery themes which were exhibited and illustrated during cultural activities, museum display, tourist sightseeing and various festivals.
- increased number of web sites relevant to slave trade and slavery
- the 2004 commemoration year received extensive media coverage
- Several touring exhibitions and conferences were held during the 2004 commemoration year.
- However, most notable of all achievement is the fact that SRP made a quantum leap by reaching out to the educational system.

Mr. Moukala asserts that SRP faced challenges such as:

- To maintain the momentum generated during the 2004 Commemoration year
- Extend project's activities to other regions, and look for adequate funding for their implementation.
- Response to new Diaspora perspectives and concerns
- Raise public awareness for their active participation
- Produce a strategic plan of action for the Indian Ocean as well as for the Arab and Muslim world

The evaluators recommended SRP to be extended for five (5) years.

The followings are the recommendations from the evaluation:

- UNESCO should initiate a programme, including budget and reporting mechanisms for acknowledgements of funds received from contributing partners should be included in the report.
- strengthen communication and sharing experiences
- encourage UNESCO field offices and National Commissions to take a proactive role in the SRP activities.
- national projects and activities should be made visible
- update frequently the SRP page on the website
- update the existing electronic newsletter



- advocate for the collaboration of UNICEF and ILO in discussions regarding human rights and contemporary forms of slavery.

### **Discussion and issues raised by ISC following Mr Edmond Moukala's presentation on The Evaluation of Slave Route Project 1994-2004**

- ISC should focus its research work on the historical form of slavery and continue to condemn contemporary forms of slavery
- The need to define contemporary slavery as a form that does not last for a lifetime, considered as temporary, not legal, that could be overcome. The legitimacy of the old slavery system has to be viewed as a crime as people were deported and asked to abandon their identity. The consequences of historical slavery is very evident in the existential reality of many people in the Caribbean and the New World Africa and Europe.
- The expansion of the SRP is to actively engage researchers to study and analyze the Diaspora experience of Africans in India and Asia in general
- The University of Hull, Wilberforce Institute is organizing a conference addressing contemporary slavery in May 2006. There will a follow up conference about Slavery issues that were not covered in the conference in November 2005. The focus of this symposium is to place contemporary slavery in the context of the slave trade and slavery and look at the dividing line between freedom and unfreedom.

### **IV.3 NEW STRATEGY FOR THE SLAVE ROUTE PROJECT**

Presented by Mr. Ali Moussa-Iye, the new SRP strategy was created on the basis of recommendations made by the 2005 external Evaluators, the Governing Bodies of UNESCO (the Executive Board at its 172<sup>nd</sup> Session and the 33<sup>rd</sup> General Conference), the International Scientific Committee (ISC) at its previous meetings, as well as the various UNESCO's partners during the 2004 International Year.

Equally, the revised strategy aims to achieve the overall goals delineated by the UNESCO Director-General to :

- Improve the governance structure of the Project
- Reinforce intersectorality within UNESCO
- Extend research to new regions
- Mobilize funds and partnerships

The new strategy was designed to reinforce the achievements of the Project by defining new orientations and themes that strengthen the global objectives of the project. On the whole, the SRP has maintained its fundamental course of action, with a particular emphasis on:

- Deepening Scientific research.
- Developing Educational material
- Promoting the contribution of Africa and its Diaspora.
- Promoting living cultures, artistic and spiritual expressions resulting from slave trade and slavery.
- Preserving archives and oral traditions.
- Inventorying and preserving tangible and intangible heritage, spaces and sites of memory.

The need to promote a tourism of memory was underlined. Scientific research still remains the main focus of the project, with special attention given to less studied research themes.

➤ **Pedagogical Objectives:**

The use of new research findings for the improvement of university curricula, education material, and the development of pedagogic material to be used on a voluntary basis.

➤ **Promotion of the contributions of Africa and the Diaspora:**

In terms of socio-cultural influence of Africans and African descendants, the new strategy will also accentuate the transfer of African knowledge, know-how and technology to the rest of the world and highlight the connections between Africa and the Diaspora.

➤ **The preservation of archives and oral history collections:**

The study of oral traditions is an essential component to identify the links between African origin societies and African Diaspora populations; hence, it constitutes an immense field of research.

➤ **Inventory and preservation of tangible heritage**

The new strategy will encourage to:

- The identification and promotion of sites of memory and buildings related to the slave trade.
- The elaboration of regional and sub-regional maps presenting, the main sites, buildings and places.
- The establishment of itineraries of memory to promote cultural tourism.
- The nomination of new sites in the World Heritage list and the modification of the descriptions regarding previously inscribed sites.

The presentation was also an occasion to outline the new directions of the SRP in order to expand its scope and include the geographical zones such as:

- The Arab-Muslim World

- Asia
- The Andes

### **The New Themes of the Slave Route Project**

The new strategy aims to foster dialogue on the long-term effects of slavery and methods to combat racism and discrimination, to support research work on the inherited trauma and psychological consequences of slavery.

- Encouraging the deconstruction of racial prejudices inherited from the slave trade.
- Contributing to the reflection on the management of tragic memories, cultural pluralism and citizenship.
- Reinforcing interagency cooperation within the UN, in particular with UNICEF and ILO.

### **During the discussions that ensued, the following issues were raised:**

To better implement the projects, it was required to define the role of various partners of the Slave Route Project such as: National Commissions, International Scientific Committee and the National Committees.

- ISC discussed the type of slavery on which the Project should focus. It recognized the specificity of the slave trade and related slavery, which justify the priorities defined in the new strategy for the Project. While recognizing the historical links and similarity that might exist with contemporary forms of slavery in some cases, the ISC agreed that the focus should remain fixed on this historical slavery, in accordance of the Slave Route Project's main goals and objectives as defined by the various
- The necessity to communicate and exchange projects and pedagogical tools across geographic zone was stressed. The case of Brazil where educational books and other tools and material are available for both private and public schools was highlighted.
- The use of multimedia and the UNESCO website was emphasized. It was suggested that a web portal and an heritage website be set up with connections with various sites that could eventually give rise to a virtual museum.
- The establishment of a data base of researchers and institutions working on the field was strongly recommended. A list of ad hoc consultants should also be drawn.
- The SRP needs to establish partnerships with universities and other institutions having similar objectives.

- It was also pointed out that the research agenda should include the Caribbean slave route given the role of the Caribbean in the transshipment of slaves to North, South and Central Americas. The internal route in Latin America, particularly across Amazonia need also be explored. And other internal routes.
- The possibility of elaborating a General History of Slave Trades and Slaveries to offer a holistic, multidisciplinary and diversified vision to be considered.
- UNESCO should increase its visibility on the Commemorations of 2007 and 2008 by the United Kingdom and United States respectively.
- In light of recent developments in France, UNESCO should explore the possibility of a joint partnership with the French government to set up a Research Centre on slavery and the slave trade.
- The need to promote and highlight the contribution of the African Diaspora into the new world should be encouraged.
- The experience of the enslaved in the host societies should be explored by making greater use of oral traditions and oral memory whose collection and preservation is an urgent necessity.
- The importance of archaeology and museography for research and educational purposes as a means to highlight the cultural contributions and technological innovations of Africans and African descendants to host societies (from iron working to agriculture and pharmacopoeia, etc).
- The study of encounters between Africans of the Diaspora is an important field of research. Such comparative analyses regarding those interactions will greatly enhance our understanding of Africans' encounters with other groups. In this respect, further research in continental Africa will generate a greater awareness of the cultures and origins of slave groups.
- Joint partnerships with African Universities should be encouraged.
- Research on the psychological trauma and health issues relevant to slavery was welcomed. However, it is necessary to look at the psychological trauma of slavery on both the descendants of enslaved Africans and slave owners.
- The necessity of precisely locating the anthropological origins of the slaves was stressed as the information would be of great value for medical purposes. As to pedagogical material, they should include the survival strategies of the slave populations.

- The question of religious intolerance regarding Africans religions was raised during the discussions.

#### **V. PRESENTATIONS BY INVITED GUESTS**

- **Mr Max Guérout**, of the Groupe de Recherche en Archéologie Navale (GRAN) presented an archaeological project relating to the slave vessel, l'Utile, wrecked in 1761 near Tromelin while on a slave trading expedition from Madagascar to the Ile de France.
- **Mr Lee Jasper**, from the London Mayor's Office outlined the plan of activities for the Bicentenary of Great Britain's Abolition of the Slave Trade, a commemoration organized by the Greater London Authority.
- **Mrs Nelly Schmidt**, Historical Researcher at CNRS France, also member of the French memory of Slavery Committee, presented the recommendations that have been submitted by this Committee to the French government.

#### **VI. PRESENTATIONS BY THE INTERSECTORAL GROUP (UNESCO)**

Members of the Working Group presented their respective activities:

- Ms. Jun Morohashi, Division of Human Rights and Struggle Against Discrimination, Social and Human Science Sector (SHS). She focused on the UNESCO mandate to break the silence against exclusionary acts, intimidation and lack of mutual respect. She also detailed efforts to develop universally recognized standards that clearly define racism, prejudices and discriminations. She finally presented the International Coalition of Cities Against Racism that UNESCO launched in 2004.
- Ms. Jean O'Sullivan, Associated Schools Project Network, Division for the Promotion of Quality Education Branch (ED) reiterated the need to break the silence as mandated by UNESCO through education. Ms O'Sullivan urged the promotion of historical facts as a point of exit for people's inclusion as contributors to human civilization.
- Ms. Ana Elisa Santana Afonso, Chief, Intersectional Coordination and Promotion of Activities Section, Africa Department (AFR) provided a brief description of the role and the mission of the AFR. She asserted that AFR's objective is to strengthen cooperation between UNESCO and its African Member States. Its mission is to facilitate the elaboration and coordination of projects that increase awareness for mobilization of resources and promotional activities that will enhance

relations among Africa countries. Ms Afonso stressed the need to strengthen ties and partnerships within and beyond Africa and to follow up with cooperation, especially as some communities are facing the challenges of globalization.

- Ms. Flora Van Regteren-Altena, World Heritage Center (WHC) addressed elements of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention of 1972 that called for the "identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity." Ms Van Regteren-Altena stressed the need to raise awareness of unforeseen challenges that can become an obstacle in the implementation of the above-mentioned international treaties. She emphasized that while there are many known sites of great significance and relevance to the slave trade, slavery, and the slave heritage, more sites need to be identified and endorsed as UNESCO World Heritage sites.
- Ms. Reiko Yoshida, Division of Cultural Heritage, Intangible Heritage Section (ITH) discussed the issue of perceptions and attitudes toward history and advocated for members of the community to identify and revalorize heritage and invest themselves in its preservation.
- Ms. S. Terada gave a power point presentation on the UNESCO fight against Human trafficking. UNESCO's approach to Human trafficking involves education and training, research, culture and communications, and awareness campaigns. Past achievements include projects related to the traffic of women in South East Asia which involved research on the factors leading to trafficking of girls from minority groups and prevention activities. The other project aims at addressing contemporary slavery in Africa. A number of factors have been identified – including poverty, lack of information, manipulation of beliefs, gap between legislation and policy. Activities for 2006-2007 include a project for Africa with policy progress on human trafficking and training and awareness campaigns.
- Mr. Abdelaziz Abid, Memory of the World programme, Information Society Division, elaborated on the need for the preservation of our documentary heritage. Mr Abid added that such preservation will improve access to the history of slave trade archives that are already existing in 11 countries especially in the age of digitalized data. Therefore, analog data should be transferred to Digital and all newly acquired data should be "born digital." He named projects of interest and significance to the Slave Route Projects such as the Slave Trade Archives project completed under Norwegian funding and UNESCO's promotion of the digital preservation of cultural heritage in the Caribbean.

Mr. Abid expressed his delight at the fact that experts raised concerns about the instability of the Internet during discussions at the

November meetings in the Netherlands (The Hague) in November 2005. He called for international consensus to employ the "UNESCO Charter on the Preservation of the Digital Heritage" as a guideline when collecting, preserving and disseminating information. Mr Abid stressed the magnitude of this task and stated that there is much data yet to be transferred/disseminated, such as: the Timbuktu Archives and other resources in the Indian Ocean World and Sub-Saharan Africa.

The ISC asked about placing the material on-line. They were informed that the intention is to make everything available on line. Following the inquiry on intellectual property rights, they were informed that, in principle the actual documents are in the public domain. However owners of documents are free to decide on the level of accessibility they wish to offer. UNESCO is in favour of free accessibility but the decision ultimately rests with the owning institution. The images available on the website are deliberately not of publication quality. Mr Abid replied that lacking standardization this material will present poor quality. In response to the question of whether UNESCO has addressed the issue of the Intellectual Property of collected material Mr Abid informed the ISC that once the material is posted online it is considered to be in the public domain. However, to avoid unforeseen problems, access to certain areas of the site may be limited or certain members granted access.

## **VII. SUGGESTIONS/REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT OF ISC**

The Chairperson elaborated the tasks and expectations of the ISC and its members for future initiatives of the Slave Route Project and underlined the need to identify focal persons from members of the ISC by regions representing:

- Asia
- Arab-Muslim World
- Andes
- Americas: Central/North Caribbean South America/Brazil
- Africa: West, Central, Southern/Eastern.

Identified resource persons to be called upon when need be. Also, each member of the Committee could be considered as a resource person. He highlighted the necessity of preparing a document on the tasks and the themes to be researched.

The focus of research should be on slaves' life and the slaves as agents of their own liberation and their survival strategies.

Archaeology is a vital source of information while the role of museography in promoting the SRP should be emphasized. Other highlighted objectives include:

- The forwarding of a document to the French Government on the significance of the SRP with a view of establishing a centre of documentation of the slave route project.
- A press release about the ISC and the SRP to be prepared and sent immediately to respective countries and UNESCO representative to inform them of the ISC progress and authority.

During the ensuing discussions, the necessity of linking with Tourism was highlighted. One member suggested that the possibility of the ISC proposing site to be nominated as World Heritage sites be explored.

The importance of networking was again emphasized and ongoing projects were presented including Global Africa: The UNESCO slave route Project DVD and the commemoration of root by the Wilberforce Institute.

The issue of African participation in slave trade as part of exchange between Europe and Africa was also discussed. During the debate it was strongly emphasized, given the complexity of the subject, the research necessitated historical specificity with regards to identifying African participants and drawing distinctions between African-based and European-based slavery systems. The session ended on the need to include Spanish as a working language in the ISC Meetings.

## **VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The ISC wishes to recommend the following actions to be undertaken by or with the support of UNESCO:**

- The elaboration of a General History of Slave Trades and Slaveries to offer a holistic, multidisciplinary and diversified vision of this issue
- The establishment of a comprehensive international database on slavery and the slave trade to assist researchers and existing network on their research work.
- The establishment of a scholarship programme to encourage and support young scholars in developing and publishing the accomplished research work on the issues of slave trade and slavery
- The publication of pedagogical tools, which will incorporate archival documents on slave trade and slavery as well as maps, illustrations, posters, leaflets, to help educators in their teaching and awareness-raising. Special attention to be given to those countries, which have difficulties to access the Internet and other ITC tools.
- The digitalization and preservation of endangered records and collections, including those privately owned by families, for the benefit of researchers must be encouraged. In that regard, special attention should be given to the safeguarding of the archives of



Timbuktu, which constitutes a major source of information on Transaharian slave trade and slavery.

- The urgent need to protect the collection, preservation and exploitation of oral traditions, which are endangered by the displacement and disappearing of those detaining this valuable intangible heritage.
- The pursuit and extension to other regions of the programme of inventory making and mapping of sites and places of memory related to the slave trade and slavery.
- The launching of fund-raising campaigns towards donor governments and organizations to consider financing the major projects of the SLR and to foster partnership with affiliated institutions. In this regard, the possibility of a joint-partnership with the French government to mobilize extra-budgetary funds should be explored.
- The reinforcement of members of the ISC to play a stronger role in advocacy, networking, fund-raising and partnership mobilization in their respective countries and regions and within their field of expertise.
- The reinforcement of the Web Site of the Slave Route Projects, taking advantage of existing multimedia and websites with various links that could eventually give rise to wider dissemination and accessibility of information.
- The urgent extension of the activities of the Slave Route Project to the regions that were neglected, in particular in the Arab region, Andean America and Asia where the silence on the slave trade and slavery issues needs to be explored.
- The necessity to develop research work on the psychological trauma and health issues relevant to slavery was requested. The focus should be on both the descendants of enslaved and slavers
- The need to capitalize on the Commemorations of 2007 and 2008 by United Kingdom and United States respectively to maintain the momentum generated by the International Year (2004) and initiate activities that are likely to mobilize funds and partnerships in the countries concerned.

## **IX. CONCLUSION**

In her closing speech, Mrs. Katérina Stenou underlined the role of UNESCO as the 'tête pensante' of the United Nations. As mobilizing agent of diverse thinkers and approaches, the SRP can be looked upon as a laboratory of the plurality of disciplines and sensibilities. In closing, she emphasized the importance of the project's association with the World Heritage Centre and

the need of developing pedagogical materials and making greater use of the UNESCO website.

She thanked the members of the ISC for their commitment and work.