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Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme

Sixth Session

29-30 March 2010

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, Room II (Fontenoy building)

Final report

This document is also available at
<http://www.unesco.org/webworld/ifap>

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Introduction

1. The sixth session of the Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme was held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 29 to 30 March 2010.
2. All States members of the Council were represented: Austria, Brazil, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ethiopia, France, Grenada, Israel, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Mali, Nigeria, Philippines, Russian Federation, Thailand, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, Viet Nam.
3. Several UNESCO Member States that are not members of the Intergovernmental Council were also represented at the session, as observers. Representatives of international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations also participated as observers. The list of participants is available at the following Web address: <http://www.unesco.org/webworld/ifap>.

Item 1 Opening of the session

4. The representative of the Director-General, Mr Abdul Waheed Khan, Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, welcomed the newly elected members of the Intergovernmental Council, in particular the newly elected ones, the observers and the representatives of the international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to the sixth session of the Council.

Item 2 Election of the Bureau of the Council

5. The Council elected the following members to its Bureau:
 - (a) Chairperson
6. Mr Evgeny Kuzmin, Russian Federation, was elected Chairperson of the Council. He thanked the members of the Council for their confidence in him.

(b) Other officials

7. The following officials were elected:

Vice-Chairpersons:	Mr Dietrich Schüller	Austria
	Mr Khaled Al-Razni	Kuwait
	Mr Angelo Timoteo M. Diaz de Riviera	Philippines
Members:	Mr Emir José Suaiden	Brazil
	Mr Andrejs Vasiljevs	Latvia
	Mr Victor Rakoto	Madagascar
Rapporteur:	Ms Anne-Marie Konan-Payne	Côte d'Ivoire

8. The Chairperson congratulated the newly elected members of the Bureau and thanked the outgoing members of the Bureau.

Item 3 Adoption of the agenda

9. The agenda (see Annex I) was adopted after exchanges on item 6, "Consideration of the future modalities of the operation of the Intergovernmental Council":

- *Austria requested the insertion of an item 6(b) entitled “Coordination of work between the Secretariat of IFAP and the Council, particularly in the implementation of UNESCO’s regular programme planning;*
- *Brazil announced that it would propose amendments to the IFAP Statutes regarding the respective roles of the Bureau and the Council;*
- *several members noted the importance of item 6 and the need to plan an in-depth discussion on the issues thereof, at both the technical and legal levels.*

Item 4 Reports

4(a) – Report of the Director-General on the activities of the Information for All Programme

10. The Council took note of the report on the implementation of the Information for All Programme, endorsed the Director-General’s support for the strategic orientations of IFAP while asserting the need to increase the extrabudgetary resources of IFAP.

4(b) – Report of the outgoing Chairperson of the Council on the activities of the Information for All Programme

11. The Council took note of the activities of the Bureau since the last session and noted the commendable progress made in spite of the limited resources allocated, and the efforts made to define more clearly the relations between IFAP and UNESCO and the role and duties of IFAP’s various bodies, with a view to improving their effectiveness and efficiency. The Council congratulated and thanked the outgoing Chairperson, Prof. Karol Jakubowicz (Poland), for his work and particularly welcomed the following outcomes:

- *the development of a national policy model for the information society;*
- *the establishment of the online Information Society Observatory and the publication of “Information Society Policies. Annual World Report”;*
- *the findings of the Information Preservation Working Group;*
- *the draft code of ethics for the information society;*
- *the holding of the First Consultation Meeting of National IFAP Committees, in Moscow, in December 2009, and the production of documents on guiding principles and policies for the National Committees.*

4(c) – Oral reports of the Working Groups

12. The report of the Information Preservation Working Group was presented by Mr Dietrich Schüller (Austria), Vice-Chairperson of the Bureau. Recalling that the preservation of information was a key priority for IFAP, he drew attention to the threats to the preservation of documents on account of specific characteristics that made them vulnerable. Examples included nineteenth-century paper and digital documents which, requiring maintenance and considerable logistical resources, were threatened with disappearance.
13. Emphasis was placed on the need to develop digitization standards – which remained one of the most effective means of preserving information – and low-cost management tools. At the time of its establishment, the Group’s objective was to achieve a balance in storage volume by reducing its cost from €4 to €8 per digital gigabyte to €1 per gigabyte.

14. The following points emerged from the discussion:
- *the need to share best practices in that area, so that developing countries could benefit from related know-how and experience; members were invited to submit names of experts likely to make a valuable contribution to the Working Group;*
 - *the difficulty of taking into account several areas currently insufficiently concerned with preservation in view of the types of medium used, in particular languages transmitted only orally, text messages and electronic mail and, to a lesser extent, the audiovisual sector;*
 - *information preservation should also take into account the notion of prevention of foreseeable risks of voluntary or involuntary destruction of information.*
15. The Council encouraged the Group to continue its work while building capacity, for instance, through private partnerships.
16. The report of the second Information Literacy Working Group, presented by Ms Divina Frau-Meigs (France), was prepared on the basis of the three mandates defined in its terms of reference, namely: (i) policy visibility, (ii) training and capacity-building, and (iii) best practices. Attention was drawn to the lack of financial resources, coordination difficulties with the Secretariat and the low level of involvement of Council members in the work of the Group. Notwithstanding those difficulties, the following outcomes were noted:
- *Publication of public policies with mapping and with an emphasis on indicators;*
 - *Readiness of the Alliance of Civilizations to add an information observatory on its website and to organize two forums on mapping, in Istanbul, in April 2009, and a new workshop on the effectiveness of media training, in Rio de Janeiro, in May 2010;*
 - *Integration of information modules in the context of “intersectoral and inter-programme activities” with the Communication Development Division on media modules;*
 - *Establishment of a sub-group on definitions and scope of information, with a view to further clarifying the role of IFAP in that regard.*
17. The Information Literacy Working Group submitted the following recommendations to the Council:
- *provide statutory resources with greater involvement of the Bureau, to enable the Group to reach out to other civil society groups;*
 - *improve coordination with programmes of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) and the Education Sector to achieve greater synergy with IFAP;*
 - *establish close cooperation with the Observatory, with the assistance of the Secretariat;*
 - *liaise more effectively with the National IFAP Committees; preparation by the Working Group of an annual report on practices “not deemed the best”, which could be circulated by the Secretariat;*
 - *seek art groups working on similar issues, for instance, within the Council of Europe.*
18. The Council commended and expressed unanimous satisfaction with the quality of the discussions; the Council invited the Bureau to provide for the effective operation of all the

working groups and to take into account the observations made during the discussions, particularly regarding representativity, methods and resources that could contribute to improving the operation of the groups.

Item 5 Financial situation of IFAP

19. The Council took note of the financial situation of IFAP and conceded that the lack of resources presented a major risk to the development of the Programme. The mobilization of extrabudgetary resources should begin with enhanced awareness-raising of States members of IFAP on its objectives and outcomes.
20. The Secretariat stressed that only China provided an annual contribution of \$20,000. The representative of the Director-General emphasized that the difficult financial situation of IFAP would have to be improved so that the Programme could effectively fulfil the mandate conferred upon it by Member States and drew attention to the need to mobilize extrabudgetary resources for the Programme.
21. The Council, the Bureau and the Secretariat should therefore contribute to promoting IFAP more effectively in order to mobilize extrabudgetary resources from States and certain institutions, especially in the private sector.
22. The Council stressed the need to follow the Executive board 180 EX/Decision 15 that requested, in its paragraph 13 “the Director-General to identify extrabudgetary funds to contribute to Special Fund for the Information for All Programme, to take appropriate measures in order to facilitate, together with the members of the Intergovernmental council for the Information for All Programme, the raising of funds for the Special Fund, both from Member States and from private sector donors and provide adequate resources by, inter alia, strengthening administrative support”, noting that the measures taken so far fell short of the request of the Member States.
23. The Council invited the Bureau to introduce appropriate mechanisms likely to enhance the visibility of field initiatives carried out in the context of IFAP, including the introduction of a resource mobilization strategy and the strengthening of the role of the National IFAP Committees in that regard.

Item 6 Consideration of the future modalities of the operation of the Intergovernmental Council

24. The Council further recognized that the Statutes, as adopted 10 years ago, were no longer adapted to the current development of IFAP, on the basis of changing circumstances and in the light of the financial situation. It was considered that the issues raised and amendments proposed to the Statutes could not all be effectively addressed at the present session of the Council. The Council therefore decided unanimously to postpone the discussion in order to enable in-depth consideration of all the issues concerning item 6 of the agenda.
25. The Council observed the need to revise the IFAP Statutes in order to clarify the respective roles of the Council and Bureau and improve the effectiveness of the implementation of IFAP.
26. The Bureau was mandated to prepare the Statutes amendment process and delegates were invited to submit their proposals and other amendments to the Bureau, as Brazil had done.

Item 7 Information ethics

27. The Council thanked Professor Luciano Floridi of the UNESCO Chair in Information and Computer Ethics for his statement and contribution to the discussion on info-ethics, and his support for the drafting group on the draft code of ethics for the information society.
28. After examining the draft code of ethics for the information society, the IFAP Intergovernmental Council highlighted the following points raised during the discussion:
- *The issue of the “legal nature of the code” was clarified: it was recommended that the code should ideally be non-binding in nature, viewed and accepted as a set of principles and values, thereby making it easier to be appropriated by States and to be used as a reference framework for the elaboration of national codes.*
 - *The pursuit of the broadest consensus possible by expanding the working group to include all kinds of expertise and taking into account contributions from States, specialized bodies and civil society institutions.*
 - *The need to establish a precise timetable for the process so that the text could be submitted and possibly adopted at the following General Conference. That would be preferable so as to prevent the finalization of similar projects within other institutions from limiting the scope of UNESCO’s initiative.*
29. In conclusion, the Council congratulated the drafting group. It recommended furthering the work without delay and submitting to it within six months an improved version of the Code for approval.
30. The Council invited the Bureau to enlarge the group by including all the necessary expertise, and to take into account the recommendations proposed by the delegates with a view to preparing a **consensus document**, to be approved by the Council virtually.
31. Several members of the Council considered that the document to be adopted should be presented to the next General Conference for endorsement. Other delegates expressed a preference this decision to be taken by the Council at a later stage after defining the format of that document, and the procedures to be followed after its approval.

Item 8 National Committees for the Information for All Programme

(a) Report on the First Consultation Meeting of National Committees for the Information for All Programme and their operation

32. The Council approved the report and congratulated the outgoing Bureau and the Russian Federation on the success of the activity, which had helped to give new impetus to National IFAP Committees.

(b) Guidelines for the creation and operation of National IFAP Committees

33. The Council examined and approved the “Guidelines for the creation and operation of National IFAP Committees” after taking note of the additions and observations of delegates.
- *The delegate of the Russian Federation proposed an addition to point 3 and to the paragraph on funding. The proposal was to be filed with the Secretariat.*
 - *Another delegate highlighted the need to clarify the issue of relations between field offices, National IFAP Committees and National Commissions.*
 - *The delegate from the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) proposed including **museums** in the documents in addition to archives and libraries.*

(c) Draft decision on the IFAP Bureau's recognition of best accomplishments or projects of excellence by National IFAP Committees

34. The Council decided to adopt unanimously the IFAP Bureau's recognition of best accomplishments or projects of excellence by National IFAP Committees.

35. The Bureau was charged with proposing mechanisms to implement the decision.

Item 9 Presentation of the World Digital Library global initiative

36. The Council commended the quality of the presentation and the following points were highlighted during the discussion:

- *It was recalled that all participating institutions must ensure that the documents provided met the criteria, meaning that they were accessible and free from any rights. Furthermore, it was pointed out that all institutions with cultural heritage were welcome.*
- *The predominance of written work to the detriment of other types of heritage such as audiovisual works, the Internet, etc. was also observed. UNESCO had adopted the Charter on the Preservation of Digital Heritage which, to its credit, clarified the situation and so the question was raised: why not add the best of the web to digital libraries?*
- *The World Digital Library initiative had shown the importance of networking.*

Item 10 Miscellaneous

37. IFLA proposed that the Council support the IFLA Internet Manifesto to promote digitization strategies. The Council decided to transmit the text of the Manifesto for consideration and recommendation to the Information Preservation Working Group, with a view to the Council subsequently submitting it to the following session of the General Conference.

Item 11 Adoption of the recommendations

38. The IFAP Intergovernmental Council thanked the outgoing Chairperson and Bureau on the results achieved and congratulated them. The Council commended the excellent preparation of the present session and the wealth of documents and discussions.

39. The Council noted that several important decisions had been adopted and that proposed decisions would be reworked by the Bureau and submitted virtually for adoption.

Lastly, the Council invited the Bureau in 2010 and 2011 to:

1. *Continue the efforts and initiatives undertaken in view of implementing the aims of the strategic plan in close collaboration with all members of the Council;*
2. *Propose recommendations to optimize the Council's work which could subsequently result in amendments to the Council's Statutes;*
3. *Ensure the effective implementation of the decisions of the Intergovernmental Council;*
4. *Seek extrabudgetary resources with the assistance of the Secretariat to fund Information for All Programme activities;*
5. *Continue the finalization of the draft text on the ethics of the information society, taking into account the opinions of all the members of the Council and all interested UNESCO Member States, and submit it to the Council for approval within six months.*

6. *The Council also invited the Director-General to take the appropriate measures to ensure that the Bureau received all of the assistance necessary to accomplish its work.*

Item 12 Closure of the session

40. The Chairperson thanked all of the members of the Council for their contribution and active participation; the Secretariat for the organization and quality of documents; the Rapporteur for her high quality work, and the interpreters for their support which was essential for the smooth running of the Council session.
41. The Chairperson declared the session closed on 30 March 2010.

ANNEX

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme (Sixth Session)

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, Room II
(Fontenoy building), 29-30 March 2010

AGENDA

1. Opening of the session by the Director-General or her representative
2. Election of the Bureau of the Council (Chairperson, other officers)
3. Adoption of the agenda
4. Reports on the activities of the Information for All Programme
 - (a) Report of the Director-General
 - (b) Report of the outgoing Chairperson of the Council
 - (c) Oral reports of the Working Groups
5. Financial situation of IFAP
6. Consideration of the future modalities of the operation of the Intergovernmental Council
 - (a) Analysis of the IFAP Statutes and Rules of Procedure
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10. Miscellaneous
11. Adoption of the recommendations
12. Closure of the session