

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF NGOs MAINTAINING
OFFICIAL RELATIONS WITH UNESCO
(14-16 December 2005)**

RESOLUTION

At the end of its work, the International Conference of NGOs maintaining official relations with UNESCO, meeting in Paris from 17 to 19 December 2005, adopted the following resolution.

Referring to:

- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- the Millennium Declaration for Development;
- the Dakar Framework for Action and for the implementation of the objectives of Education for All, as a priority for UNESCO;
- UNESCO's 2002-2007 medium-term strategy and to the work and conclusions of the 33rd session of UNESCO's General Conference;

Recalling

- the United Nations Decade for the promotion of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World 2001-2010;
- the United Nations Decade of Literacy 2003-2012;
- the United Nations Decade for Education for Sustainable Development 2005 – 2014;

all these decades having UNESCO as the leader organisation.

Taking into account the results of the work of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) that has just taken place in Tunis (November 2005) concerning in particular the reduction of the digital divide and governance of the Internet;

Welcoming the adoption by UNESCO's 33rd General Conference of:

- the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions
- the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights
- the Convention against Doping in Sport

Reaffirming:

- **the irreplaceable role of NGOs** as well as that of all civil society actors in contributing, in a spirit of solidarity, to the implementation of the values, ideals and programmes developed by UNESCO, in particular in order to achieve the objectives of Education for All;

- **the quality of the expertise acquired** by NGOs, not only at reflection level but also in terms of the experience developed in the field in close contact with the populations, expertise widely acknowledged within the framework of the United Nations reform process;

Mise en forme : Puces et numéros

Recognizing,

- the very essential work of reflection, impulsion and coordination carried out by the Liaison Committee in the course of the past mandate, in particular within the framework of the preparation of the Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions;
- the role played by the Joint Programmatic Commissions and working groups in furthering the reflection process and drawing up proposals.

The International Conference of NGOs:

Taking into account

- the priorities and programmes adopted by UNESCO at its 33rd General Conference;
- the Liaison Committee's activity report including the activities developed by the Joint Programmatic Commissions and working groups;
- the wealth of the debates that took place during the plenary sessions as well as the results of the work developed in the workshops

Recommends that the Liaison Committee:

- pursue its action in favour of the NGOs' collective commitment, in close collaboration with the competent UNESCO Sectors and Units;
- renew the mandates of the Joint Programmatic Commissions and Working groups on the basis of the recommendations put forward below and, if necessary, set up new ad hoc commissions or working groups;
- transform the "Youth Groups" into **Joint Programmatic Commission**
- enhance the visibility of its action by making use of any aid that NGOs working in the media field can provide in order to maintain close and fruitful collaboration between NGOs enjoying official relations with UNESCO, national or local NGOs and the Organisation, while respecting its priorities and programmes.
- strengthen dialogue with the other NGO coordinating bodies within the other intergovernmental agencies.

Mise en forme : Puces et numéros

Invites the Joint Programmatic Commissions, the Working groups and the Task Forces NGO-UNESCO that are to be set up to conduct their work particularly on the basis of the recommendations adopted below, and to proceed with their evaluation in order to assess their impact.

Eradication of Poverty

Within the framework of the objectives set out in UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy, it is essential that long-term collective work be undertaken in order to learn to listen to the world's most destitute, to recognise the value of their know-hows and to make them known.

This collective work must be undertaken based on a study of the causes of poverty and of the numerous actions carried out in the field by local or national branches of NGOs. It is also important to identify positive practices that have a multiplier effect, to analyse the obstacles or failures encountered and to produce, by the end of the "United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, particularly Extreme Poverty" in 2006, a report on "Partnerships, synergies in the fight against poverty", taking into account cultural diversity and the objective of sustainable human development, prerequisites for a true culture of peace.

Human Rights

Faced with multiple violations of all the basic human rights, the collective work of NGOs, in liaison with UNESCO, should be directed more particularly to awareness and promotion.

Moreover, following the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights, the NGOs should ensure the promotion and dissemination of the stated principles, in close relation with the collective work undertaken on "Science and Ethics"

Science and Ethics

The collective work should be developed along two basic lines of focus:

1. Pursuing the work of promoting NGO awareness in the field of bioethics (in particular in the field of bioethics education) and in the environmental field (notably water education, energy education, the role of women);
2. Broadening the work of reflection, in particular in the general field of science ethics by working on the question of a code of conduct for researchers and on certain aspects of the "Knowledge Society"

Education

Education for All

In order to better contribute to the implementation of the Dakar goals, the collective reflection should be further pursued alongside the structures set up by UNESCO (CCNGO, working group, High Level Group, etc.) for the purpose of:

- providing support for the studies, evaluations, publications, exchanges of experiences and good practices, in order to do more and to publicise the programmes carried out by NGOs;
- intensifying exchanges of information between the various different components of the NGO Collective Consultation on EFA, in particular through better use of the NGO Liaison Committee's Internet site, in relation with the sites developed by UNESCO.

Education for Sustainable Development

Following the launching of the Decade for Education for Sustainable Development and the adoption by UNESCO of an Action Plan aimed at its promotion and development, the collective work developed by the NGOs should be intensified and diversified. In particular, it should focus on the four components of sustainable development: the economic, the social, the environmental and the cultural.

This work must have two major thrusts: to pursue the reflection on education for sustainable urban development and to conduct a reflection on education for rural development in relation with the work carried out on Education for All.

Higher Education

The Recommendations adopted by the UNESCO/NGO Collective Consultation on higher education in April 2005 must serve as a framework for future work, in particular by reaffirming the vital contribution that this sector can make to the implementation of Education for All.

Furthermore, following the adoption, by the 33rd General Conference, of the "OECD/UNESCO guidelines on Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education" as a Secretariat document, everything should be done to ensure that expert NGOs are associated as much as possible with the actions implemented by the Member States and the different actors.

Cultural Diversity: Dialogue between cultures

Following the approval and official signing of UNESCO's Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, the Liaison Committee should invite NGOs to ensure its promotion and to campaign for its swift ratification by the greatest possible number of UNESCO's Member States so that it can come into effect as quickly as possible. This should be done in conjunction with the effective application of the convention adopted in 2003 for the preservation of intangible heritage, which has still not come into effect.

The collective work should be pursued and developed in order to promote "living together" through the creation of an online network of the competencies developed by NGOs and to foster and strengthen effective dialogue between cultures.

"International Decade for the Promotion of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World" (2001/2010)

The collective work should be pursued on the basis of the programme of action defined by the United Nations Resolution A/53/243 for the Culture of Peace. The commitment made at the International Conference of NGOs in December 2001 to give impetus to projects contributing to the universality of a culture of peace definitively replacing the culture of war should be pursued and strengthened within the framework of a concerted approach with UNESCO and the other United Nations agencies.

Taking better account of young people

Within the framework of intergenerational dialogue, the collective work should be developed along two lines of focus:

- to develop a collective reflection process among youth NGOs on the problems of young people, in close relation with UNESCO and aimed in particular at recognising their role as interested parties in defining and implementing international policies and programmes concerning them.
- to make all the NGOs aware of the absolute need to associate young people in the decision-making process, and to consider them as active citizens and influential actors in the development of our societies and in the construction of a fairer world, in order to achieve the above-stated objectives.

Information and Communication Technologies

Following the Tunis Summit, it is important to take into account the fact that Civil Society – comprising first and foremost the representatives of international NGOs – has entered a phase of organisation and consolidation which should be pursued in order to establish a representative and democratically expressed worldwide force.

Moreover, given the expansion and universal dissemination of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and their increasing influence in all sectors of human activity, the collective work of the NGOs should henceforth come within a largely transversal perspective aimed, in particular, at pleading for the effective reduction of the digital divide.

To this effect, the collective reflection, serving the NGO community, should be conducted in the following fields:

Information and mobilisation of NGOs in order to ensure the follow-up to the Tunis Summit;
Declension of the theme "ICTs for.....", in accordance with the other collective activities;
Capacity building within Civil Society in the perspective of future international consultations.

UNESCO/NGO Relations: strengthening partnerships

Within the framework of the follow-up to the round table on UNESCO's 60th anniversary, further reflection must be carried out on the question of partnerships between UNESCO and the NGOs, taking into account the work carried out by the United Nations.

This reflection should be carried out within the framework of the forthcoming preparation of the Sexennial Report. In this perspective, the Liaison Committee must ensure that the NGO collectivity is associated with the whole process of elaborating and producing the Sexennial Report, particularly in order for the evaluation carried out to be truly qualitative.

In conclusion, the Conference reaffirms its wish to work with UNESCO within the framework of strengthened dialogue and in the spirit of the ideals and values of its Constituent Act.