

Liaison Committee Meeting N° 3
28 April 2006

9 h 30- 13 h

Present:

President, Mrs/Mme Françoise SAUVAGE: *International Federation of University Women*

Mr/M. Fulgence KONE: *Catholic International Education Office*

Mrs/Mme Monique FOUILHOUX: *Education International,*

Mrs/Mme Yseult KAPLAN: *Soroptimist International*

Mr/M. Jean-Luc De PAEPE: *International Council of Philosophy and Human Sciences*

Mr/M. Bernard DERVAUX: *Rotary International*

Mr/M. Diego GRADIS: *Traditions for Tomorrow / Traditions Pour Demain*

Excused:

Mr/M. Nigel WATT: *Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service*

represented by **Mrs/Mme Simona COSTANZO SOW**

Mr/M. J.N.T. van ALBADA: *International Council on Archives / Conseil International des Archives*

Mr/M. Zobel Behalal: *Pax Romana*

UNESCO

Mrs/Mme Marie-Ange THEOBALD

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The Committee welcomed Mrs Marie-Ange Théobald, newly appointed head of UNESCO's NGO Sector.

A quick session of around-the-table introductions enabled Mrs Théobald to become acquainted with the members of the Liaison Committee. In her presentation, Mrs Théobald spoke of her previous responsibilities at UNESCO. Before being in charge of the UNESCO Clubs, Parliamentarians and New Partnerships section, she worked in the Europe section, in the Member States division in the Sector for External Relations and Cooperation, in the Philosophy Division, at the General Directorate. She is also in charge of implementation of the headquarters agreement between UNESCO and France, for the ADG/ODG.

Mrs Théobald said she would like to see cooperation with the Liaison Committee pursued and strengthened and said that she would be available to members in order to achieve this.

1. Meeting of the Executive Board NGO Committee on 30 and 31 March 2006

Mrs Sauvage highlighted the action undertaken by Ambassador Lakatos in revitalising this Committee on NGOs.

The new formula for tripartite work had facilitated greater NGO participation in the debates. Some forty NGOs were present and many of them took the floor. The purpose of their speeches was to give evidence of NGO cooperation with UNESCO through a number of concrete examples.

At the end of these two days of meetings, 3 major decisions were made and approved by the Executive Board:

- For the sexennial report, a committee of 18 members will be set up: it will comprise 6 representatives from the Member States, 6 representatives from the UNESCO Secretariat and 6 NGO representatives designated by the Liaison Committee.
- At the next 3 sessions of the Executive Board, a forum and a round table will be held within the framework of the two-day meeting of the Committee on NGOs.
- For the forthcoming session, in October, the forum will be concerned with youth and the round table will be on theme of education.
- Monique Fouilhoux drew attention to the fact that the formula was not really new since, in the years 97-98, Committee meetings already lasted two days.
- Members of the Committee drew special attention to a number of delicate points in the running of these two days including: the position of the participants in the room – the quasi monopoly of the floor by the Member States and the belated announcement of the agenda for the two-day meeting.

2. The Sexennial Report Committee

Regarding the Sexennial Report, the Liaison Committee proposed that the President, Mrs Sauvage, the Secretary General, Mr Koné, and Mme Fouilhoux should be among the 6 NGO representatives. Committee members were asked to suggest the names of the 3 other NGOs that could attend the meeting.

Monique Fouilhoux recalled the 2 stages in the work on the Sexennial Report:

- 1st stage: elaboration of a questionnaire to be sent to all the NGOs.
- 2nd stage, this autumn, discussion on the architecture of the report and appointment of a small group for the final drafting of the report.

4. Remarks on the '60 minutes to convince' devoted to civil society.

Françoise Sauvage and Simona Costanzo (CCIVS), who attended this meeting, emphasised how interesting it had been.

Among the entities called upon to speak were the UNESCO Clubs, the new partnerships (the private company with the International Chamber of Commerce) and parliamentarians.

Mrs Théobald recalled the different component parts that the notion of civil society covers at UNESCO and in the UN System.

Simona Costanzo emphasised the collective action of NGOs and relations with the Member States. "60 minutes to convince" had appeared to run out of breath somewhat, because 60 weeks is a long time!

5 . *General update on the JPCs and Working Groups.*

- The last meeting of the JPC “Science and Ethics” was cancelled and postponed until 6th June.
- JPCs “Dialogue between Cultures” and “Youth” have jointly organised a meeting.
- The JPC “Human Rights” has directed its reflection to the reality of women’s lives.
- The JPC “Sustainable Development” has initiated a multisectoral reflection.

6 . *Exchanges on the Commissions’ procedures protocol*

A commented and annotated read of the document given out at the meeting with a view to a final text being adopted at the meeting on 9 June next:

- The question of the archiving of documents and texts produced was posed.
- It was suggested that calls for meetings be drafted on a document featuring – in a box – the JPC concerned.
- It is planned to provide an attendance list for each meeting.
- Some corrections were made to the document that Monique Fouilhoux had finalised for diffusion to the whole team. Comments should be sent with eight days and the final text drafted by Monique must be sent by 20 May in preparation for the meeting on 9 June. This text will be submitted to the NGO section prior to its diffusion.

7 . *The International NGO Day on 8 December 2006*

Within the framework of preparations for this event on 8 December 2006 whose theme is “the concept of human dignity”, the Liaison Committee invited Mrs Albernaz to participate in this moment of reflection. Fulgence Koné had met Mme Albernaz previously for a first approach to this work. At that time it appeared timely and interesting to combine the two events, namely the International Philosophy Day and the International NGO Day, both of which have the same theme.

From these talks, the following main elements emerged:

- the International Philosophy Day will be held this year on 16 November in Morocco and the theme for reflection for the Day will be “Human dignity and cultural diversity”.
- A questionnaire will be sent to the NGOs to this effect in order to elaborate a contribution by the NGOs to this reflection process.
- The Liaison Committee will be seeking out NGOs that could make a major contribution to this reflection process.
- A brainstorming session will be organised within the JPCs concerning this type of contribution.
- The conclusions of the meeting in Morocco can be used for this day of reflection on 8 December.

All this work must be continued and other contacts must be made in relation with Mrs Albernaz and the Social and Human Sciences Sector.