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Medium-Term Strategy

1996 ◆ *2001*

Approved



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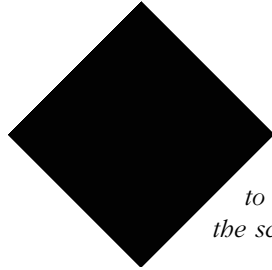
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Foreword



*We the peoples of the United Nations
determined
to save succeeding generations from
the scourge of war...*

Charter of the United Nations

When the General Conference adopted the Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001, it had just celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the day when a conference bringing together 44 States in London adopted the Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. For us, 16 November 1995 was a day charged with intense feeling, when allusions to the past revived the memory of women and men who, throughout the past half-century, had worked in thought and deed to forge the destiny of an organization that today has 184 Member States.

For each one of us, it was an occasion to reaffirm our faith in this institution and again to swear allegiance – the word is not too strong – to the principles enshrined in its Constitution. Alas, those principles are still, for the vast majority of human beings living on our planet, a distant ideal, a mere glimmer on the horizon, while our responsibility towards future generations grows with every passing hour.

We must also be critical: firstly, of ourselves, by asking whether we have done everything in our power, in our States, in the governing bodies, within the Secretariat, in the National Commissions, to build ‘the defences of peace in the minds of men’. Have we done what was necessary – everything that was necessary – in the fields of education, science, culture and communication, to make them contribute ‘to peace and security’?

UNESCO, as an ideal, was born out of the rubble of the most horrifying war that the world had ever known, and out of that great hope embodied in the United Nations system: the beginning of a new epoch in the history of

humanity. War was to give way once and for all to peace based on the concerted action of States to obviate recourse to the use of force to settle disputes. After 50 years – let it be said at once – that objective is far from being attained, now that conflicts within nations are supplanting wars between States.

Indeed, peace has found havens here and there, but its defences are still weapons, and in many instances, they are nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction. We have grown almost accustomed to those words that crop up throughout non-proliferation or banning treaties, almost forgetting the terrifying reality hidden behind them. Mass destruction: how many victims – men, women and children – must there be for a weapon to be qualified as such? Nuclear, chemical and biological weapons whose use was controlled, until the very recent past, by the highest authorities of a handful of countries but which, as we know too well, are today within the reach of a growing number of States and even individuals, whether they be members of a terrorist organization or of a sect.

Yes, peace has been built gradually, thanks to the major advances of international law in many fields. It has advanced, above all, where societies have succeeded in maintaining their cohesion and progress in the observance of human rights, by acquiring democratic structures and making development a joint undertaking; that is, by ensuring that its fruits are shared fairly. But many of these societies are also threatened today by those faceless enemies, unemployment, poverty and exclusion, which become worse each day in spite of emergency measures. Even in places where tolerance used to be the rule, xenophobic tendencies are asserting themselves, and chauvinistic or racist statements, previously considered irrevocably things of the past, are becoming increasingly common, and are in some cases taken up and even elaborated on by certain intellectual élites incapable of seeing beyond the horizon of territorial frontiers.

Is it enough to express indignation at this state of affairs? Is it possible to turn away, unconcerned, from the pictures, the voices, and the printed matter that announce, all day long, the launching of new offensives, cease-fires signed only to be immediately broken, ethnic cleansing and genocide long premeditated and perpetrated with complete impunity? Is it possible merely to take note of statistics showing that military expenditure has fallen by more than 30 per cent in the world in the past ten years without asking where the famous ‘peace dividend’ has gone, while many developed and developing countries continue relentlessly to produce arms or are re-arming, taking advantage of the globalization of the arms market? What kind of peace do we want? A cold peace, like the Cold War, a peace that we ‘keep’ in the shadow of weapons and balances of power, content merely to prevent the worst from happening when the threat arises?

Let us arm ourselves, yes, but against the real threats posed today to international security, whose names are exclusion, poverty, rural decline, urban decay, mass migrations, environmental degradation, new pandemics, and arms and drug trafficking – the latter being judged, as it happens, by very different

standards, since the blame is laid on those who buy arms as opposed to those who sell drugs.

Today, we are powerless against these real enemies. Not because we do not know what to do: we have so many reports and so many plans of action at our disposal! We all know that we must put an end to the scandal of present-day inequalities; that the burden of debt must be lightened in order to halt the spiral that makes the poor poorer and the rich richer; that it is necessary to promote lifelong education and vocational training; to foster scientific and technological development so that each country may become the captain of its destiny; facilitate urban rehabilitation at the same time as rural development; ensure respect for the law and freedom of expression, the independent functioning of justice and the incarnation of democratic principles in everyday practice. And although we may not know everything, at least we know what must be done as a matter of urgency – as demonstrated by the World Summit for Social Development held recently in Copenhagen.

It is now time to act, and first of all at the national level, since no purpose is served by adopting declarations, strategies and charters if countries do not provide themselves with specific plans, precise objectives and timetables to be adhered to in order to embark – while there is still time – on those changes of course that have become inevitable. Yes, behaviour patterns and attitudes regarding the consumption of energy and raw materials, production, employment and welfare, too, need to be changed. These changes require time, sustained efforts and a long-term vision. Unhappily, the demands made by the political life of States square ill with medium- and long-term areas of concern. Preference goes to recommending adjustments when dysfunctions and imbalances become too obvious and then taking corrective measures to compensate for the often devastating effects that those adjustments have; and the usual practice is to transpose or even impose models instead of helping each country and each people to design its own blueprint for the future.

But while it is true that history is not over, present-day history – the one we are witnessing – is not a piece of machinery that merely needs to be lubricated when it jams, or can be made to work perfectly through repeated tinkering. We are dealing with the aspirations of thousands of millions of human beings on all continents, whose present circumstances must be made more tolerable at the same time as they are enabled to look forward to a future in which regard will be shown for their dignity and culture and which will sustain them; one which they in their turn will sustain, often with a creativity that others more affluent than they are might envy them.

This urgent need for solidarity in action also implies a sweeping reform of the United Nations. The United Nations system was designed to deal with the problems of the post-war period, but it is ill-prepared to take up present and foreseeable challenges, which are – first and foremost – those of **world development**. Let us have the honesty to acknowledge that what has been achieved by the efforts of the international community over the last 50 years to promote development has fallen far short of expectations. The pledges made

some 20 years ago by the most affluent countries to assist in the development of the poorest countries have not really been kept, at a time when major capital flows and the dynamics that are thought to be inherent in a market system increasingly elude the grasp of States, as do pandemics and environmental degradation.

In much of what we have done, we have invested in failure and the emphasis now being placed on peace-keeping operations – the achievements of which do not always justify the considerable sums spent on them – shows that, once again, what prevails is the logic of emergency. The fact is that international stability and security now go well beyond the military sphere and are contingent on a whole range of economic, financial, political, educational, scientific and technological measures that should be worked out of a common accord and applied at the right time.

We must consequently revise without delay our view of the role of the United Nations system. We spend incredible sums of money on 're-establishing' peace by deploying armies, and then on restoring, repairing and reconstructing what war has destroyed. But it is war itself that must be destroyed by eradicating the economic poverty, social injustice, political oppression, discrimination and exclusion, in all their forms, that are the root causes of conflict. It is time to implement the whole Charter and to move from a view of the role of the United Nations in which peace-keeping was the essential task, to a more balanced concept that gives conflict prevention and **peace-building** all the prominence they merit, which will include setting up human rights observatories and early-warning mechanisms as well as encouraging changes in the role of the military and the conversion of military strength and infrastructures for the benefit of social development and in order to reduce present disparities.

This reform of the United Nations system will undoubtedly be one of the main priorities on the international community's agenda by the end of the century. However, without waiting for the conclusion of this process, UNESCO must, as of today, and by taking full advantage of the new international situation, reinforce its contribution to long-term peace-building.

The specific realm of UNESCO is intellectual life, i.e. asserting the value of the human mind. We should therefore concentrate our efforts on the development of human resources in order to return, after decades of strategies marked by a narrow economism, to the very heart of development, i.e. the human being. We must learn to invest in this intangible asset which is human creativity, and in the acquisition, transfer and sharing of knowledge, which are the key to any process of empowerment, individual or collective. Empowerment can never be achieved through isolation or withdrawal. Cultures are fortified by exposure to others and interaction with them; the human personality is formed through experience of others and by reaching out to them.

To counter the culture of war, let us build a culture of peace, that is to say a culture of social interaction, based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, tolerance and solidarity, and respect for all human rights; a

culture that rejects violence and, instead, seeks a solution to problems through dialogue and negotiation; a culture of prevention that endeavours to detect the sources of conflicts at their very roots, so as to deal with them more effectively and, as far as practicable, to avoid them.

Development for peace and peace for development are the two main strands – closely intertwined – of the Medium-Term Strategy as it has been devised for the years 1996-2001. The main objectives underlying it are, in essence, to reach the unreached, to include the excluded; to facilitate the exercise of civil rights and the participation of everyone in development; and to learn to live together and to build together, despite disagreements and differences.

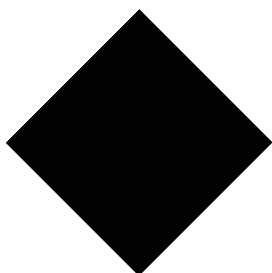
This Strategy is the result of collective thinking carried out on an unprecedented scale. I should like here to express my gratitude to the 159 National Commissions for UNESCO which, by their proposals and initiatives, and their criticisms, too, have enabled the new directions that UNESCO will be following up to the dawn of the twenty-first century to be worked out gradually in a spirit of interaction and sharing.

Sharing – of knowledge, resources and values; sharing – the keystone to democracy and international intellectual co-operation. It is in an atmosphere of sharing and solidarity that I should like to see UNESCO arrive on the shores of a new century and, indeed, a new millennium. We must undertake a ‘refounding’ of the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind. We must begin to write, together, the opening pages of the culture of peace. We need a great deal of spirit to overcome the inertia, the routine and the interests that stand in the way of the reinvention of peace, which is the great challenge facing us today. We shall have to use all the wisdom acquired from experience, but we must also have the boldness of imagination. We shall need above all the memory of the future, so as to spare our children the ‘scourge of war’, free them from fear and dependence, and awaken in them all the forces of creativity.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a tall, thin vertical stroke followed by several horizontal and curved strokes that form a cursive name.

Federico Mayor

Preparing for the twenty-first century



Looking back over 50 years of existence

- 1 ● Fifty years is a long time in the life of an international organization that over the years has witnessed the vicissitudes of a world in the throes of constant change. To attempt an appraisal of UNESCO's action over these 50 years would be beyond the scope of this Strategy and would in any case be a difficult task, given the sheer diversity and the very nature of the Organization's activities.
- 2 ● UNESCO's mandate is that of an organization for 'intellectual co-operation'. Its competence encompasses everything relating to the world of intellectual endeavour. Its role is not, strictly speaking, to build schools but rather to help renovate education systems and instil universal values into them, update programmes and improve textbooks. Its role is not to establish laboratories and research institutes, museums and libraries, or radio and television stations, either. UNESCO does not have a function of 'direct control'; it creates a favourable environment, puts forward ideas, transfers knowledge, and mobilizes know-how, goodwill and, wherever possible, resources. Because such action is in the realm of the intangible, it is in many ways difficult to assess.
- 3 ● Everyone is, of course, familiar with its most spectacular achievements, like the safeguarding of Abu Simbel and Philae, Borobudur, Carthage, Venice, Angkor, and any number of other sites which have been rescued thanks to the involvement of the international community on UNESCO's initiative. There is less public awareness of what UNESCO has accomplished under its major international scientific programmes in the fields of oceanography, hydrology, geology, the environment and, more recently, social transformations – these are programmes which help scientific knowledge to advance and promote its application on a worldwide scale. The same can be said of UNESCO's less obvious yet extremely useful projects for the improvement of museums, libraries, archives and information services, which have made an effective contribution to broadening access to knowledge.
- 4 ● Standard-setting is a field in which the role of UNESCO is widely recognized and numerous

instruments drawn up under its auspices have proved to be landmarks in the development of international relations. These have included, to name only a few, the Agreement for Facilitating the International Circulation of Visual and Auditory Materials of an Educational, Scientific and Cultural Character (1948), the Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials (1950), the Universal Copyright Convention (1952), the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954), the Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1974) – not to mention that milestone in the progress of humanity, the Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice (1978).

- 5 ● It is indeed difficult to assess the role that has been played, for nearly 40 years now, by UNESCO's network of Associated Schools in promoting among young people a spirit of tolerance and mutual understanding, or the impact of the UNESCO Collection of Representative Works (currently totalling over 900 titles, including some of the greatest masterpieces of world literature translated into various languages) in promoting mutual awareness and appreciation among different cultures. And yet both these undertakings, though inconspicuous, are none the less important.
- 6 ● Even more difficult to apprehend – although it is one of UNESCO's major contributions – is its role in launching, or serving as a sounding-board for some of the new ideas and innovative intellectual approaches that have marked the end of the second millennium. Without UNESCO, the concepts of lifelong education, sustainable and endogenous development, the common heritage of humanity, cultural identity and the cultural dimension of development would no doubt have been restricted to a narrow circle of experts.

7 ● UNESCO's action can only be appreciated by placing it in its historical context. Depending on the period or geopolitical circumstances, more emphasis has been placed on certain approaches, or on certain forms of action, than on others. In the aftermath of the Second World War, UNESCO's approach was above all intellectual, ethical, and standard-setting. Everything had to be rebuilt and started afresh: schools, universities, libraries and museums. And what needed to be reconstructed in the minds of men were *the democratic principles of dignity, equality and mutual respect*. In all its activities, UNESCO gives priority to education, to the revision of textbooks and curriculum content, to the democratization of education, and to the promotion of dialogue and cultural exchanges between countries through exhibitions, festivals, publications and so on.

8 ● Very early on, UNESCO was concerned with helping the intellectual communities to become organized and to group together. Action taken ranged from the conclusion of an agreement for co-operation with the main international non-governmental organization at the time, the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), to the establishment of the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), the Trieste-based International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) (with the help of the International Atomic Energy Agency and support from the Italian Government), the International Centre for Pure and Applied Mathematics (ICPAM), and numerous international non-governmental organizations, such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), the International Social Science Council (ISSC), the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (ICPHS) and various organizations representing artistic disciplines. Similar action also led to the establishment of regional non-governmental organizations.

9 ● Similarly and indeed in keeping with the provisions of its Constitution, UNESCO

encouraged the establishment in each Member State of a National Commission for UNESCO in order to involve local intellectual communities in the planning and implementation of its activities. These National Commissions were to play a pioneering role in the promotion of pan-European co-operation by organizing exchanges of information and 'joint studies' between experts from East and West. UNESCO can pride itself on having organized, at the height of the Cold War, conferences which brought together representatives of Eastern and Western Europe and North America. Throughout the period of Europe's division into political and military blocs, these conferences provided a forum and a training ground, one might say, for intergovernmental East-West dialogue on educational, scientific and cultural policies.

10 ● From the 1960s onwards, the entry into UNESCO of the newly independent countries, with their specific needs and expectations, marked a turning-point in the life of the Organization and prompted it to intensify its action in favour of development. The establishment of the United Nations Special Fund, and in 1966 of the United Nations Development Programme, strengthened this trend. UNESCO helped the fledgling States to establish teacher-training colleges, engineering schools and technical institutes, and to train the thousands of teachers that were so badly needed. The establishment in 1963 of the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) (which was to train successive generations of national education administrators) and the launching of the Experimental World Literacy Programme in 1966 and of numerous national literacy campaigns are just a few examples of the much-appreciated contribution made by UNESCO to the worldwide development of education systems, which underwent an unprecedented expansion up to the early 1980s.

11 ● This period also witnessed the rapid development of regional co-operation. The series of regional conferences organized by UNESCO in

the fields of education, science and technology, and culture and communication gave officials an ideal opportunity to consult each other in order to find solutions to common problems. These conferences led to specific programmes of co-operation, such as the regional literacy programmes, the educational innovation for development networks, and the regional news agencies (the Pan-African News Agency, the Caribbean News Agency, etc.) which sprang up in the various regions thanks to the impetus given by UNESCO.

12 ● The emergence of these new States on the international scene was to highlight the importance of the Organization as a forum for discussion and dialogue – and occasionally for confrontation – and as a platform for the expression of hopes and wishes of all kinds. For these young nations, it was a matter of urgency to rediscover the full dimension of their past and to reassert their own cultural identity. As a response to this concern UNESCO undertook the *General History of Africa* project, which was followed closely by similar projects on Latin America, the Caribbean, Central Asia and various aspects of Islamic culture, and it is now publishing an entirely new edition of the *History of Mankind: Scientific and Cultural Development* entitled the *History of Humanity*.

13 ● Since the late 1980s, and especially the early 1990s, thanks to the prospects opened up by developments in the international situation, UNESCO has embarked upon a new chapter in its history. Putting an end to the controversy caused by the debate on the introduction of a New World Information and Communication Order, UNESCO restated its constitutional ideals of the promotion of human rights and the free flow of ideas. It was consequently able to engage resolutely in the defence of peace at the Yamoussoukro International Congress on Peace in the Minds of Men (1989), and of democracy at the Prague International Forum 'Culture and Democracy' (1991).

14 ● UNESCO has also drawn closer to its United Nations partners, with which it has established

programmes of co-operation which go beyond mere co-ordination and are aimed at developing truly joint action. It thus took the initiative, together with other United Nations agencies, of organizing in 1990, at Jomtien, Thailand, the World Conference on Education for All, which was the starting-point for an unprecedented mobilization of the international community on behalf of education. This co-operation has been continued at the major international conferences organized by the United Nations in recent years. On each occasion UNESCO has made well-received contributions, in the form of position papers or plans of action, to the preparation and follow-up of the conferences. These have included the Toronto World Congress for Education and Communication on Environment and Development, which was part of the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992; the World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy, adopted in Montreal and endorsed by the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993; the Action Framework for Population Education on the Eve of the Twenty-First Century, adopted in Istanbul and endorsed by the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in 1994; the contribution made by Audience Africa, convened by UNESCO in February 1995, to the World Summit for Social Development (1995); and also the Toronto Platform for Action on women and the media, whose recommendations were included in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995).

- 15 ● At the same time as it has strengthened its partnership with the United Nations system,

the Organization has endeavoured to reaffirm its specific nature. Various initiatives have been taken to give fresh impetus to intellectual co-operation within the framework of UNESCO, whether by convening groups of eminent persons who have met to discuss themes such as education for the twenty-first century, the relationship between culture and development, and bioethics, or by exploring new forms of partnership between intellectual communities, such as networks for inter-university co-operation (the UNITWIN Programme), the Common Market of Knowledge (MECCO Programme), the Bolívar Programme aimed at strengthening interaction between universities and industry, or the involvement of scholars along the highways of intercultural dialogue (Silk Roads).

- 16 ● What has been achieved during these first 50 years may seem modest in comparison with the vast scale of needs and expectations. However, if one sets the size of the task it has been allotted against the scantiness of the means available to it, UNESCO can be proud of its achievements. Of course, 50 years is not long enough to bring about an equal sharing of knowledge or to usher in an era of understanding between all peoples. Peace still has to be created. In the final analysis, and from the point of view of future generations, one of the principal successes of UNESCO must surely be to have managed to fashion an unequalled network all round the world, from East to West and from North to South, made of intellectual collaboration, shared experience and the habit of working together, which constitutes a priceless asset with which to face a future far less certain than that foreshadowed by the euphoria born at the end of the Cold War.

Problems and challenges of the twenty-first century

- 17** ● The world of 1995 is certainly very different from the one imagined 50 years ago by the authors of the Charter of the United Nations. It is also different from the one anticipated, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, by all those who predicted the advent of a 'New World Order' bringing with it peace, justice and solidarity between nations.
- 18** ● Today's world does afford many grounds for hope. A number of obstacles encountered by the United Nations in carrying out its mission have been removed. In addition to the end of the ideological confrontation between East and West, the elimination of apartheid in South Africa, the launching of the peace process in the Middle East, the national reconciliation initiatives in Central America, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, the promise of peace in Northern Ireland, the constantly growing demand for democracy and human rights and the initiatives of the international community in the areas of conflict prevention and peace-building are all reasons for looking forward to a better future.
- 19** ● Various newly emerging or confirmed trends are also providing reasons for hope, such as the undeniable improvement in the material situation of a number of developing countries, particularly in South-East Asia and in Latin America; the downturn in the total number of illiterates in the world; the measures taken in many countries, particularly in the educational sphere, to try to control the growth of their population; the benefits for all societies of certain scientific and technological advances, for example in biomedicine and agriculture, the gradual liberalization and universalization of trade in goods and services and the accompanying technology transfers.
- 20** ● The creation of the World Trade Organization and the moves towards regional and subregional integration in all parts of the world reflect the globalization and interdependence resulting from the internationalization of the economy and the spread of scientific and technological progress. Quite apart from their economic and commercial objectives, these moves towards integration could result in new forms of co-operation and partnership in the fields of culture and education, the sharing of ideas and the transfer of knowledge, leading to greater understanding among peoples in a spirit of tolerance and respect for differences.
- 21** ● The ever more rapid development of information and communication technologies, which increasingly affect all aspects of our lives, opens up encouraging prospects for broader access to education, the circulation of data, closer scientific co-operation and more intercultural exchanges. But to achieve this we must act quickly, before groups with financial interests use the 'information superhighways' for their own profit alone, thus seriously disrupting the international economic system. We will also have to face up to the many challenges raised by these new technologies, and be prepared to deal with the drastic changes in existing social and cultural as well as economic situations that they will bring about. As we learn how to make use of all the possibilities they offer we must try to be aware of the risks they involve and limit any damage they may cause. Although the industrialized nations will no doubt see more and more 'superhighways', there are local communities in many countries that are still without 'byways'.
- 22** ● At the same time, our world is still searching for satisfactory responses to the persistence or reappearance of threats to its security. Admittedly, we have witnessed the settlement, under the aegis of the United Nations, of most of the regional conflicts, many of them instigated or sustained by ideological confrontation. Other adverse trends have developed, however, the most obvious of which are the uncontrolled

proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and the increasing number of intra-State wars and conflicts, for which multi-ethnic, multicultural or multireligious societies provide the most fertile soil. During the Cold War, many of these conflicts were contained by force or violence – but were not resolved. This Pandora's box, which is now wide open, is certainly the most dangerous legacy of the era which has just ended.

- 23** ● These conflicts, which on occasion have led to systematic policies of 'ethnic cleansing' or even genocide, especially when they are stirred up by the ubiquitous media, which give short shrift in their news bulletins to such concepts as peace, justice or joy, are symptomatic of the ominous rise all over the world of intolerance, violence, ultranationalism and xenophobia, in a word, the fear of differences of any kind: differences of skin colour, language, ethnic origin or sex. In most cases, these conflicts or tensions – ethnic, social, cultural, religious or linguistic – draw on the many sources of individual and community frustration created by the spread of poverty, exclusion and social injustice.
- 24** ● Other threats to world security and social cohesion have also developed on this breeding ground of human destitution; they include intolerable inequalities both between and within nations; the growth of poverty, unemployment and exclusion, even within industrial societies; the unprecedented flow of migrants; the increase in the number of refugees and displaced persons; the inexorable flight from the countryside; the emergence of what can only be described as ghettos on the outskirts of large cities; the disintegration of the fabric of society, as seen in the marginalization of young people and women, whose duties and responsibilities are still too often enumerated before any mention is made of their rights; urban violence; the alarming pollution of the globe; the depletion of natural resources; new pandemics and the spread of drugs; terrorism and organized crime.

25 ● The prevailing impression as the century draws to a close is, certainly, one of globalization, with the attendant risk of standardization, and growing interpenetration in all areas – economic, social, cultural and ecological – an impression sustained by telecommunications and computer technology, with the dense networks that they are weaving around the world. But the new world taking shape is no doubt much less homogeneous and hence much less 'governable' than it appears. The perceived interdependence makes it difficult to grasp the variety of situations in the real world. There is no longer one South but many, and the North is beginning, in some ways, to resemble the South. Expansion is increasingly being accompanied by exclusion, and although progress on human rights is virtually universal, the word 'genocide' can again be heard, which proves, unfortunately, that one's worst fears can still materialize.

26 ● This world in transition is in search of new points of reference and stability and, above all, new methods of regulation. The United Nations system is consequently needed more than ever to try to bring order into an international society which is becoming global and yet fragmented at the same time. It is required both to resolve the crises developing on all sides and to be present amid the great changes taking place in the contemporary world. That means that it must take both emergency and long-term action.

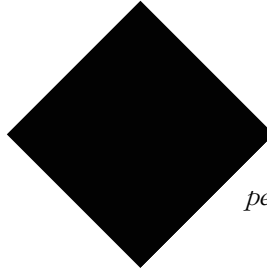
27 ● It must be admitted, however, that emergency action has enjoyed a higher priority than long-term action in recent years. 'Peace dividends' have not helped the cause of development to the extent that might have been hoped. It is true that some of the dividends have been channelled into emergency humanitarian assistance or peace-keeping operations. Nevertheless, although these operations are essential in many respects since they save human lives, they do nothing to tackle the underlying causes of the crises, which require long-term

solutions and massive resources to put them into effect. Crises and emergencies are most often due to economic destitution, social injustice, political oppression, discrimination or cultural exclusion. These are the problems that must be tackled as a matter of urgency if there is to be no need for 'emergency' operations in the future.

28 ● This period of general transition is no doubt conducive to an intellectual and political

aggiornamento by virtue of the uncertainties it has generated and the questions it raises. Perhaps for the first time in the history of the United Nations, the international community can provide itself with the means to give full effect to the Charter. It will need determination not only to **keep** the peace but to **build** peace on a foundation of development based on equity, justice and liberty. UNESCO has a crucial role to play in the accomplishment of that task.

The purposes of UNESCO



Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.

Constitution of UNESCO

Contemporary relevance of the Constitution

- 29 ● Viewed in this context, what should UNESCO's own purposes be? At the time of adopting a Medium-Term Strategy which will take UNESCO up to the threshold of a new century, it is worthwhile going back to the beginnings of our Organization and re-reading its Constitution. It contains an ethical and political message which is amazingly relevant to the present day. In spite of the upheavals which the world has experienced over the last 50 years, UNESCO's Constitution, and more especially its Preamble and Article I, have not become outdated.
- 30 ● Taking as its starting-point the observation that *since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed*, the Constitution assigns the Organization the purpose (Article I) of contributing to *peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world without distinction of race, sex, language or religion*.
- 31 ● UNESCO's special position within the United Nations system is defined in the above terms. Called upon, like all the other organizations of the system, to contribute to *the objectives of international peace and of the common welfare of mankind for which the United Nations was established*, UNESCO shares with the United Nations a more specific mandate, namely, the construction of the defences of peace *upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind*. Whereas peace-keeping and peace-making are the tasks of the United Nations, it is UNESCO's duty to lay the foundations of peace by working in its fields of competence – education, science, culture and communication – to contribute to the acquisition, transfer and sharing of knowledge and to foster the values of liberty, dignity, justice and solidarity.
- 32 ● This mandate is rooted in an astonishingly up-to-date analysis of the processes that lead to war or to peace. On the downward slope that leads to war, we find that *ignorance of each other's ways and lives* has been a common cause of *suspicion and mistrust*

between the peoples of the world. Other factors are *the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men* (it is worth noting that UNESCO is the only organization in the United Nations system whose Constitution refers to the notion of democracy), and the exploitation of *ignorance and prejudice*, not to mention the fallacious doctrine of *the inequality of men and races*. On the road to peace, we find *full and equal opportunities for education, the unrestricted pursuit of objective truth and the free exchange of ideas and knowledge*.

- 33 ● The founding fathers were naturally obsessed by Nazism and particularly by racism, since racism had been used by the Nazis to justify their bid for domination. The views of UNESCO's founders are nevertheless perfectly relevant when it comes to seeking the reasons for today's conflicts of a different kind. In many cases, wars are no longer conducted between States, nor even necessarily between armies. They tear society itself apart, taking root in discrimination, exclusion or simply perceptions of others. These internal wars, which often have an ethno-cultural basis (or pretext), require a patient and imaginative new approach, in which prevention is seen as the only possible answer.
- 34 ● Prevention in fact is the main focus of attention in the Constitution, which advocates *the free flow of ideas by word and image*, the development of *educational activities* within countries with a view to *equality of educational opportunity, the spread of culture* and an effort to *maintain, increase and diffuse knowledge*.

35 ● In order to advance towards peace, the Constitution thus advocates a two-pronged approach, seeking firstly and directly to ensure that education, science and culture serve human rights, international understanding and the ideals of justice, freedom and solidarity; and secondly, to involve education, science and culture indirectly by developing them in order to contribute to social progress and the *common welfare* of humankind and to the struggle against discrimination and inequalities. The founding fathers saw these two approaches as indissociable, something which gave rise, over the years, to occasionally differing interpretations of UNESCO's purposes, with some people stressing the Organization's ethical or even ideological concerns while others emphasized the technical nature of the Organization and the practical assistance that it could provide to Member States.

36 ● Given the perspective of time, the Constitution of UNESCO appears visionary in many respects, since it is based on an intuition whose full validity the international community is only now beginning to recognize: the fact that peace and development are indissolubly linked, like the two sides of the same coin. Whereas, in the past, peace and security, economic and social development, human rights and security were considered to be separate issues, the demonstration of their interdependence is without doubt one of the major conceptual innovations of recent years and should, in future, lead to a profound reshaping of the approaches, strategies and working methods of the United Nations system as a whole.

An organization with an ethical vocation

- 37** ● In this new context, UNESCO's ethical mission will certainly feature more prominently. Firstly because the end of ideological confrontation has removed a number of obstacles to its fulfilment, but also because, in a world seeking new points of reference and in the throes of what some have referred to as a 'crisis of values', there is an increasingly urgent need felt for an international forum in which the whole world can engage in a process of reflection that is both global and free.
- 38** ● Social upheavals and the difficulty of harnessing the extraordinary achievements of technological progress in a harmonious way, together with the weakening of traditional morals and of feelings of solidarity, are making ethical issues loom larger and larger: ethics in the world of business and in the media, ethical concerns connected with the environment and information technology, biotechnology or humanitarian aid.
- 39** ● Much of this questioning touches on domains relating to UNESCO's competence. What kind of education do we need, for what kind of society and to shape what kind of citizen? What are schools for? To emancipate, or to hand down a heritage of violence and exclusion? Who should determine the priorities for scientific research and on the basis of which social objectives? What are the cultural implications of transformations brought about by advances in information and communications technology? How do we decide what should be 'out of bounds' for research in biology and human genetics? What is the level of responsibility and solidarity which should be demanded of individuals and groups in relation to both present generations and future generations?
- 40** ● The answers to these questions, and many others, are not to be found within the narrow confines of professional practice or national borders. The main problems affecting the future of the human race are tending to become more interconnected, and at the same time more widespread. Dealing with them requires a minimum of common understanding and shared values. In a multipolar world of heightened individualism and a possibly unprecedented splintering of perceptions, it is more than ever necessary to work for the acknowledgement, or rather the emergence, of a common substratum of values which would make ecologically, socially and culturally viable coexistence possible on a world scale.
- 41** ● That is why UNESCO must strengthen its role as a forum of reflection within which politicians, specialists in various disciplines, intellectuals of all persuasions and leading figures in civil society in all its diversity can, in complete freedom, exchange experience and opinions, not for the purpose of drawing up standards and codes of conduct or laying down moral do's and don'ts, but to identify possibilities, set points of reference, put forward alternatives; to advocate a range of forward-looking options in cases where emergency situations normally counsel palliative measures only.
- 42** ● This ethical approach, which must be encouraged and revitalized, should focus on specific subjects of direct relevance to the competence of the Organization, and base itself on the most up-to-date knowledge and a clear appraisal of accepted practice throughout the world. Then we shall be able to say that UNESCO's moral authority matches its intellectual authority.

UNESCO and international intellectual co-operation

- 43 ● UNESCO is an organization dedicated to the development of international intellectual co-operation. It is neither a university nor a research laboratory. Its role is to forge a community of ideas, knowledge and purpose; it is also to contribute to the progressive forging of a universal vision reflecting, and drawing benefit from, the sum of the differences. It does so by performing a wide range of functions.
- 44 ● As an **intellectual forum**, it can help the international community to gain a better grasp of the changes occurring in the world today and to devise innovative strategies to meet emerging challenges in its fields of competence. It fulfils this 'laboratory of ideas' role through a number of forums pooling knowledge from the different disciplines and from the various regions of the world. Examples of such forums are the International Commissions it has recently convened on 'Education for the Twenty-First Century' and 'Culture and Development', the International Bioethics Committee, and the Philosophy Forum, which organizes a pluridisciplinary meeting on a different topic each year. During the six-year period UNESCO will strengthen its 'intellectual watch' function by endeavouring, in particular, to anticipate foreseeable needs in its fields of competence up to the year 2020 and to outline the major thrusts of the action that should now be taken to meet them satisfactorily.
- 45 ● There is no point in formulating innovative strategies if they are not implemented. One of UNESCO's major assets is that as an intergovernmental organization it is in a position to **call upon political leaders**, at the highest level, and induce them to determine objectives and plans of action and to undertake firm commitments regarding the measures to be taken to achieve those objectives. Examples of this kind of approach were the Jomtien Conference on Education for All and the Summit meeting in New Delhi three years later, in 1993, at which the leaders of nine high-population countries – accounting for three-quarters of the world's illiterates – committed themselves to a substantial increase in the share of their gross national product allocated to education. The function of 'calling upon political leaders' requires action aimed at building awareness of new challenges and innovative approaches in UNESCO's fields of competence and a contribution to the formulation of national and international strategies in those fields.
- 46 ● This mobilizing function also accounts for the Organization's standard-setting action, that is to say the preparation and adoption of international conventions and statutory recommendations. The six-year period should be devoted above all to consolidating UNESCO's achievements in this field, by encouraging more effective implementation of these instruments and reviewing the procedures for their implementation (two such instruments are the Convention of the Hague for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and, possibly, the Universal Copyright Convention). In the same way UNESCO, in co-operation with other intergovernmental organizations, will give assistance to Member States that wish to modernize their legislation in the Organization's fields of competence and prepare legal texts based on a comparative study of national legislations.
- 47 ● UNESCO also performs a **clearing-house** function for information on the state of the art and trends in education, science, culture and communication. It provides for the worldwide collection and dissemination of

specialized information relating to its fields of competence, while encouraging countries to build up the infrastructure and skills needed to produce, store and process that information. Efforts have been made in recent years to produce synoptic reports which, while providing scientifically sound information, are accessible to a non-specialist reading public and will be useful to decision-makers, in particular. This is the purpose of the series of world reports UNESCO has begun to publish (on education, science and communication), which should cover all its fields of competence by the end of the six-year period. It is in this context, too, that plans are under way for the preparation of a series of works constituting an 'end-of-millennium review' of education, science, culture and communication, which will be both retrospective and prospective in content.

- 48 ● By virtue of its Constitution, UNESCO is also required to contribute to the **advancement, transfer and sharing of knowledge**. It does so by supporting research, training and teaching activities carried out the world over. It provides such support in a wide variety of ways – through the improvement of educational programmes, the preparation of teaching materials, the training of teachers and researchers, the establishment of co-operative research networks, the twinning of universities and UNESCO Chairs, not to mention the unique part played by its intergovernmental scientific programmes. This is one of UNESCO's crucial functions in that it is aimed at expanding the endogenous capacities of its Member States, especially the developing States.
- 49 ● Lastly, UNESCO may be expected to play a greater role in future in **co-operation for development**. The new guiding principles for operational activities in the United Nations

system have placed emphasis on what are known as 'upstream' activities, in other words those that take place prior to project implementation as such; these include cross-section analyses, policy and strategy formulation, programme development, feasibility studies and project evaluation. This function of providing expertise and advice, on which the United Nations system should henceforth concentrate its efforts, falls very much within the competence of an organization for intellectual co-operation. It should play an ever greater part in UNESCO's work, provided, of course, that Member States decide to call upon it when negotiating projects in its fields of competence with financing institutions.

- 50 ● All UNESCO's functions in the fostering of international intellectual co-operation are useful and even indispensable. They are, moreover, intricately bound up with each other and mutually reinforcing. But no doubt the last two – because they are aimed at directly supporting and mobilizing the capacities of Member States – will need to be reinforced in the years to come, for it is through such action, close to the field, that UNESCO will be able to foster awareness, participation and commitment on the part of all, at all levels, in order to chart the new courses for action that are necessary and indeed urgent today.
- 51 ● UNESCO can do nothing and is nothing without its Member States. The role of this Organization, and particularly of its Secretariat, is to encourage, stimulate, advise and facilitate. It can support the efforts of its Member States and galvanize their will to act. Without those efforts and without that will it has no chance of succeeding, and the strategies it intends to implement over the next six-year period will have little impact.



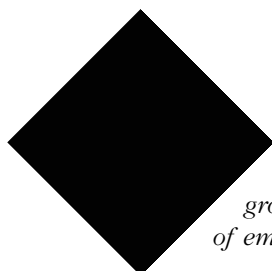
*UNESCO's
strategies*

- 52 ● The aim pursued by UNESCO within the framework of its Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001 will be to contribute, through action in its fields of competence, to the attainment of the two objectives common to the United Nations system as a whole, namely, development and peace.
- 53 ● Peace and development are inseparable, peace being as indispensable to development as development is to peace. This is the realization underlying the two recent reports by the Secretary-General of the United Nations – the *Agenda for peace* and the *Agenda for development*. They emphasize that the best means of preventing conflict and building peace is still resolute action to promote development. It is better to act early and before the event, by attacking the roots of human insecurity, than to be obliged, after the event, to deal with its tragic consequences. Meanwhile, development itself must be rethought, with the emphasis in future being placed on an approach that integrates its different dimensions – peace, the economy, the environment, social justice and democracy – and makes the notion of ‘human dignity’ a central concern. Since the end of the Cold War, a series of major conferences are being held within the United Nations system on topics such as childhood, education for all, the environment, human rights, population, social development, the status of women, the habitat, etc. They have made it possible to deal gradually with all aspects of development, to devise appropriate strategies and programmes of action and to encourage United Nations agencies, programmes and funds progressively to form a ‘common thrust’ in the field. Their strategies, including UNESCO’s, will have to be adjusted to this new context.
- 54 ● It will be necessary, in particular, to revert to the central purpose of the whole United Nations system, which is development for peace, in justice and equity, and for social progress, a better standard of living and larger freedom. This purpose has tended to be obscured by the emphasis placed in recent times on peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance. Seen in this light, development has obvious priorities, which include encouraging economic growth and job creation; combating poverty and the concomitant processes of social exclusion; improving living conditions, especially in rural areas; slowing down the growth of the disparities that exist both among and within nations; promoting the establishment of a more equitable international economic environment; and easing the burden of debt and the effects of certain structural adjustment policies that affect the well-being of large sections of the population in developing countries.
- 55 ● There is nevertheless one set of priorities that specifically concerns UNESCO, which is to encourage the development of human resources; to assist in the creation or reinforcement, all over the world, both locally and nationally, of endogenous capacities; and to encourage the international community, States, and official and private institutions to invest in human creativity, that is to say, in the acquisition, transfer and sharing of knowledge – knowledge of the means of eliminating the main obstacle to development, i.e. illiteracy, and of the means of improving education systems in an age when the key resources are intelligence, creativity and adaptability; and the knowledge required to ensure respect for the environment and to control population growth; to ensure access by all to science and technology while halting the brain drain; to reinforce communication capacities and facilitate the free flow of information; and to foster social cohesion and democratic participation.
- 56 ● Peace, for its part, cannot be taken to be the mere absence of war. To be living and lasting, it must have positive substance, as one of those principally responsible for writing the Constitution, the poet Archibald MacLeish, said in his address to the first General Conference of UNESCO in Paris in 1946: *The peace to which the Constitution refers, we think, is a process and a condition, not a static objective periodically achieved and lost. It is a condition of mutual confidence, harmony of purpose, and co-ordination of activities in which free men and women can live a satisfactory life. (...) in which war is affirmatively prevented by the*

dynamic and purposeful creation of a human and social order between the peoples of the world, in which the incentives to war are neutralized by the human and spiritual advances created and achieved.

- 57 ● It is this 'condition' – today we would say this 'culture' of peace – that UNESCO, faithful to the inspiration of its Constitution, and working in its fields of competence: education, science, culture and communication, is in duty bound to promote with renewed approaches and determination.
- 58 ● The present situation is conducive to this. The end of the Cold War and of the balance of terror affords humanity what is perhaps a unique opportunity to think in different terms about the conditions of its collective security. The traditional notion of peace, hitherto understood in international organizations as peace among States, or among peoples, is now tending to be extended to civil peace among communities and social groups within States. The concept of security has also changed, going well beyond the military sphere. World security and stability today demand strategies for a resolute fight against underdevelopment, poverty, ignorance and exclusion rather than sophisticated means of destruction.
- 59 ● In response to this new historical context, UNESCO is now striving to promote the idea of a 'culture of peace', which was formulated for the first time at the International Congress on Peace in the Minds of Men at Yamoussoukro in 1989 and subsequently elaborated on and refined, particularly at the 44th session of the International Conference on Education (1994).
- 60 ● In the culture of war, conflicts are resolved by physical or symbolic violence. The culture of peace, on the contrary, is inseparable from recourse to dialogue, mediation, and recognition of others as being equal before the law and in dignity, whether in relations among States, social communities and groups, between governments and the people they govern, or between men and women. The culture of peace may thus be defined as all the values, attitudes and forms of behaviour, ways of life and of acting that reflect, and are inspired by, respect for life and for human beings and their dignity and rights, the rejection of violence, including terrorism in all its forms, and commitment to the principles of freedom, justice, solidarity, tolerance and understanding among peoples and between groups and individuals.
- 61 ● However, the culture of peace cannot be identified with abstract pacifism or with a passive tolerance that would call for the cessation of hostilities and violence without proposing measures to redress situations of injustice, inequality or oppression. As it is a moral code 'in action', the culture of peace implies a determined commitment to work for the construction of a world *acceptable to all*, to quote Archibald MacLeish. It implies the creation of an environment for living that is consistent with human dignity, in which all those who are excluded, isolated and marginalized would find an opportunity for genuinely becoming part of society. It implies the elimination of poverty and its attendant ills, more equitable sharing of both prosperity and knowledge, and the possibility for everyone to receive an education or to return to education. It also implies consolidation of democratic processes, because only democracy can ensure the right to the rule of law and the respect of all rights.
- 62 ● This, in essence, is nothing less than what the Heads of State and Government, meeting in Copenhagen in March 1995 at the World Summit for Social Development, wrote into the General Declaration adopted at the end of the meeting. It is also the objective that UNESCO will pursue, under its Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001, through all its fields of competence. In the Organization's efforts to promote development and peace, there is close complementarity and even an intimate interrelationship. If they have been described separately, the aim is to throw into sharper relief the specific nature of the action that UNESCO has to carry out, in accordance with its constitutional purpose, to build peace *in the minds of men*.

Strategies for contributing to development



The true development of human beings involves much more than mere economic growth. At its heart there must be a sense of empowerment and inner fulfilment.

Aung San Suu Kyi

Promoting lifelong education for all

63 ● Education is a fundamental human right and a key to development. It is a vital tool for ensuring the full development of the potential of each individual and for combating the problem of underdevelopment at its very origin. It is also the most effective means of mastering demographic trends and environmental degradation, and developing attitudes of tolerance and mutual understanding essential for democracy and peace both within and among societies. Education should therefore be made available to all members of a society *without regard to race, sex or any distinctions, economic or social*, as stated in UNESCO's Constitution.

64 ● As in the past, UNESCO will continue to place 'Education for All' at the forefront of its contribution to development but – and the qualification is essential – this means **life-long** education for all. Basic education must still be considered an absolute priority, as it forms the essential first step towards further learning. Basic education plays a critical role in forming an individual's system of human and social values, awareness of rights and responsibilities, and life skills necessary for

interacting with both the natural and the social environments. For this reason, UNESCO will continue to attribute the highest priority to the pursuit of Basic Education for All in its broader context as defined by the Jomtien World Declaration, encompassing not only early childhood and primary education, but also literacy and life skills training for youth and adults. Efforts will focus on 'reaching the unreached' – that is, all those who have no access to basic education.

65 ● But it may be assumed that a number of those who were once 'reached' – be it through primary, secondary or higher education – feel 'unreached' now. Contemporary societies are undergoing accelerated changes, which place increasing demands on individuals to acquire new knowledge and skills in order to cope with both the challenges of social transformations and the changing requirements of the world of work. The absence of adequate education and training opportunities responsive to these demands has contributed to the growing marginalization, unemployment and functional illiteracy among young people and

adults observable in both industrialized and developing countries. Education must therefore be made responsive to the changing needs of society and focus on empowering individuals throughout their lives.

66 ● In this context, education can no longer be conceived of as a one-chance affair, restricted to a specific period of a person's life. It should be seen as a continuing process whereby individuals are offered learning opportunities not just once but a number of times throughout their lives. No longer can human beings be expected to prepare themselves during the initial phase of their lives for a fixed set of occupations, which will constitute their future. That is why fostering access to lifelong education for all will be a top priority for UNESCO within the Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001.

67 ● Acknowledging that education is increasingly necessary but less and less available, the ad hoc Forum of Reflection convened by the Executive Board of UNESCO in 1993 put forward the concept of 'learning without frontiers'. It invited the international community and UNESCO to devise open-learning systems 'enabling all people throughout the world to obtain access to all forms and levels of education within the context of lifelong education'. 'Education', it recommended, 'should be both "global" and "comprehensive", preparing individuals for work in a world increasingly shaped by science and technology and fostering a spirit of tolerance and social harmony with a respect for nature and cultural pluralism'. While laying stress on community action and local initiatives to ensure the relevance of education, the Forum called for the use of all available instruments and channels of information, communication (libraries, television, radio and other media) and social action to inform and educate people. It also suggested the creation of a world network of centres of open education and training. During the Medium-Term Strategy period, the 'learning without frontiers' concept will inspire UNESCO's action in promoting lifelong education for all at all levels.

68 ● Advancing towards lifelong education for all implies moving towards a 'learning society' in which each person is a 'learner' and at the same time a 'source of learning' and in which each individual will have the opportunity to learn what he or she wants when he or she wants. As a society progresses along this path, the distinctions between primary, secondary and higher education tend to get blurred, as do the existing differences between formal, non-formal and informal education and training. What matters most is provision of universal access to learning and the recognition and certification of the results of such learning. It may be anticipated that more extensive use will be made of education and training modules (print, audio, video and multimedia), nascent at this stage, that are tailor-made to suit the changing needs of diverse learner groups. The utilization of new technologies must of course be approached with realism and circumspection, as they are not in themselves a panacea for educational ills. Besides, inequalities in access to education, information and new technologies coincide. Furthermore, the educational process cannot be reduced to mere access to information. It requires that the information be sorted, organized and interpreted so as to integrate it into a coherent set of knowledge and knowhow. Hence, the utilization of new technologies to serve educational purposes must be adapted to the needs and socio-cultural circumstances of the diverse learner groups. Attention should therefore be given to exploring the most appropriate technologies to reach the poor, remote and marginalized groups, and all those who need to update or upgrade knowledge and skills, without neglecting the relevance of the content of education. It should be ensured that technologies do not represent a threat to the cultural specificity of the user community, but become useful supports for scientific and humanistic education.

69 ● In a changing learning environment no longer restricted to the classroom, what is urgently needed is a critical review of existing education systems, with a view to their renovation and reform. Educational opportunities will need

to be expanded and programmes adapted to the particular needs and circumstances of each society. The educational process will have to be seen as a truly societal and not a sectoral responsibility, involving various ministries, the private sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and various other social sectors, including the media and local communities. Alternative low-cost education delivery systems, both formal and non-formal, must be designed to meet the diverse educational needs of different categories of learner groups. UNESCO's action in the coming years will aim precisely to assist Member States in developing and implementing forward-looking strategies for the renewal of education adapted to their particular circumstances.

Basic education for all

- 70 ●** The first thrust of UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy will focus on fostering basic education for all. It will concentrate on expanding access to basic education, giving first priority to those whose needs are patently greater, to reaching the unreached and providing learning that goes beyond traditional frontiers; the elimination of illiteracy among both youth and adults will be a major objective. It will also aim to improve the quality, relevance and usefulness of the education provided.
- 71 ●** The goal of education for all can be met only through renewed political commitment on the part of Member States, enhanced international solidarity and innovative approaches. Enrolment in the world's schools and other formal education institutions has increased from an estimated 250 million children in the early 1950s to over 1,000 million today and the number of literate adults in the world's population has nearly tripled from around 1,000 million in 1960 to over 2,700 million today. Yet there are still close on 960 million adult illiterates and over 130 million children of primary-school age not enrolled in school in the world today.
- 72 ●** In expanding access to basic education, UNESCO will strengthen programmes reaching out as a first priority to girls and women, especially in rural areas, as they form the largest single group of excluded people. The second priority is to address the learning needs of different categories of disadvantaged, vulnerable groups who, for various reasons, are either unreached by, or drop out of, the existing education systems – minorities and indigenous groups, street and working children in urban areas, those isolated by island, mountain and other geographical barriers. Yet another category consists of children and youth with special learning needs; in the light of the recommendations of the Salamanca world conference, increased emphasis will be placed on enabling education systems to admit those with special needs on the basis of the principle of 'inclusive' schooling. In this connection, initiatives in early childhood development programmes will be encouraged, in view of their demonstrated effectiveness in preparing children to succeed and stay at school. Emphasis will be placed on community- and family-based programmes, since the learning capacity and value orientations of children are largely determined by family and community influence. UNESCO will also mobilize the educational community to ensure that children are educated in keeping with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 73 ●** Priority will continue to be given to the nine high-population countries – Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, Indonesia, India, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan – which account for just over half of the planet's population, with 72 per cent of the world's illiterates and over 50 per cent of its out-of-school children. These countries have pledged to work together in selected areas and have given fresh impetus to their respective efforts to provide education for all. Special attention will also be given to other countries with high illiteracy rates or major obstacles to expanding educational access, such as the least-developed countries and sub-Saharan Africa.

- 74** ● Primary education continues to be the major thrust of systematic endeavours in most societies to meet the learning needs of children. Efforts should therefore be continued to expand the existing systems and improve their internal efficiency. In this regard, UNESCO will encourage policies and strategies aimed at decentralizing education systems through, *inter alia*, devolution of authority to local bodies and increased participation by local communities and NGOs. In addition, strong emphasis will be placed on literacy, post-literacy and adult basic education designed to reach the hundreds of millions of young people and adults deprived of the opportunity to acquire a grounding in basic education.
- 75** ● But it is increasingly recognized that these millions who still have no educational opportunities and those who have dropped out of the education system cannot be reached by merely expanding the formal education system. Conventional education systems, often faced with declining financial resources, are increasingly unable to respond to the rising demand for education. In many developing countries, the total national budget would be insufficient to finance quality basic education for all. Therefore, in line with the ‘third channel’ strategy envisaged by the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, March 1990), efforts will be made to design new, alternative low-cost education delivery systems – both formal and non-formal. They should be adapted to the needs and possibilities of different categories of learner groups, taking into account their specific cultural, linguistic and environmental contexts, for, in most cases, it is precisely these groups that find the existing delivery systems unsuited to their needs, life patterns and aspirations.
- 76** ● High priority will be given to the development of delivery systems founded on local initiatives and community action, involving more active participation by local bodies, community organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Greater use of untapped local sources of learning (local craftsmen, technicians and other professionals), including information sources and media channels (written press, community radio, television, libraries and other multimedia channels), will be encouraged, thus opening up the community to the outside world. These diverse delivery systems will complement the formal system in attaining the objective of basic education for all.
- 77** ● Expanding access should go hand in hand with improving the quality and relevance of basic education. Children and adults will stay away from educational programmes or drop out (or be pushed out) of them so long as these programmes are perceived to be of little use in daily life. Conversely, quality programmes with proven relevance encourage greater access. Educational programmes have to be responsive both to the challenges of social transformation and to the ongoing reconfiguration of scientific and technological knowledge. Many developing societies are, moreover, burdened by transplanted education systems unresponsive to current requirements. Efforts will focus on promoting the acquisition of life skills, scientific literacy and human and civic values adapted to the culture and the socio-economic requirements of society.
- 78** ● A re-examination of the pedagogical processes by which learning takes place must be encouraged. In many cases, renovation of education must begin with special programmes to train, upgrade and motivate teachers and other education agents, using innovative approaches, including open and distance education. The training should give prominence to learner-based participatory teaching/learning processes geared to the abilities and life patterns of diverse learner groups.
- 79** ● A serious effort should also be made to monitor and measure the success of educational endeavours, to see how much has been learned, examine how learning is best achieved, and evaluate the extent to which learning indeed meets the development needs of both the individual and society. UNESCO

will support efforts to improve learning achievement and monitor the internal efficiency of various education systems so as to reduce educational wastage.

- 80** ● Finally, assistance will be provided to Member States in improving the quality of the learning environment, which involves adequate sanitation and nutritional standards, appropriate textbooks and teaching/learning materials, learning spaces, school libraries and furniture, instructional supervision systems, community and family participation, etc.

Renovating education systems

- 81** ● The second thrust of UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy will be directed towards renewing and diversifying education systems as a whole. This involves the diversification and expansion of structures and a better linkage between general and vocational education, so as to prepare young people and adults not only for the world of work but also for responsible civic life. It also implies the development of alternative educational opportunities and delivery systems, both formal and non-formal, so as to give every individual access at any time, or a number of times, to education and training compatible with his or her needs and cultural identity.

- 82** ● In this perspective, the renovation of secondary education must be aimed in particular at promoting the acquisition of values and attitudes conducive to democratic citizenship and life in a pluricultural society. Efforts must also focus on updating curricular programmes for science and technology and strengthening science and technology streams responsive to the emerging demands of societal development. UNESCO will serve as a focal point of information and technical expertise and encourage worldwide collaboration among specialists in developing contents relevant to the changing needs of society.

- 83** ● In technical and vocational education, UNESCO will foster partnerships between the education sector and industry, agriculture, labour and the private sector. Such partnerships will aim to promote opportunities for learning skills relevant to the world of work, with a view to narrowing gender and economic disparities. The strategy will focus on strengthening national research and development capacities and on the international sharing of experience, with particular attention given to ensuring equal access for girls and women. To this end, the International Project on Vocational and Technical Education (UNEVOC) will be expanded in co-operation with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other partners.

- 84** ● 'Lifelong' and 'life-wide' education for all implies that useful work skills can be acquired beyond and outside the world of technical and vocational schools. Factories, farms and shops should increasingly work together in offering opportunities for individuals, whether working adults or full-time students, to update their existing skills or develop new ones responsive to the needs of the world of work. Alternative delivery systems, including media channels and multimedia modules, should be designed to facilitate learning at the workplace, at home or elsewhere. Efforts should also focus on developing procedures and mechanisms which recognize and validate learning acquired through these alternative forms of learning or self-learning, including on-the-job experience. Such certification, linked to employment and self-employment requirements, is essential if learning offers are to match the needs of the world of work and help people to lead satisfying personal and professional lives. Encouraging the development of the most effective delivery systems and certification processes and mechanisms will accordingly be a major objective of UNESCO.

- 85** ● In this context, the role of teachers should be reviewed, taking into account the rapidly changing learning environment, which will soon become one without walls and without

frontiers. The new information and communication technologies – CD-ROM interactive multimedia systems, television and radio satellite broadcasting, computer networks – are breaking down the monopoly of knowledge long held by formal education systems. Consequently the teacher should increasingly be seen as a facilitator for self-learning and a guide to the information explosion, rather than as an unquestioned or sole source of information. In addition, the use of both traditional modes of communication and the newer modes that technology has now made possible and feasible should constantly be examined as affording potential for more effective teaching/learning methods. Improving the working conditions and status of teachers is particularly important in this regard. The existing partnership with the organizations of the teaching profession and the 1966 Joint UNESCO-ILO Recommendation will continue to guide UNESCO's strategy in this field.

86 ● The role and functions of higher education systems and institutions should also be re-examined in the light of the profound transformations occurring in society today. As suggested by the 'Policy paper for change and development in higher education', issued in early 1995 following worldwide consultation on new roles for higher education, UNESCO's strategy in higher education will be guided by three watchwords: relevance, quality and internationalization, and will be geared to three objectives: enlarging access to higher education systems; improving their management; and strengthening their links with the world of work.

87 ● The Medium-Term Strategy will focus on assisting Member States in enhancing the contribution of higher education to societal development. Emphasis will be placed on encouraging the development of alternative forms of lifelong education and skills training programmes at the highest level, and on enhancing the role of higher education in the renewal of education systems.

88 ● The worldwide transfer and sharing of experience among institutions of higher education is essential for advancing knowledge and facilitating its application to development. Inter-university co-operative networks and twinning arrangements will be encouraged to serve as major channels for fostering a more equitable sharing of knowledge and know-how. To this end, the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme launched in 1991 will be further developed. The interdisciplinary character of research and training activities undertaken within this programme will be enhanced in tandem with other UNESCO initiatives, such as the UNISPAR Programme (university-industry-science partnerships). The development of quality teaching, training and research in selected domains considered to be of critical importance for development will be a major objective of the UNESCO Chairs scheme. The UNESCO Chair-based centres of excellence established in different parts of the world will enable students and researchers in developing countries to engage in advanced research and training in their own regions.

89 ● Fostering new relations between higher education, the State and civil society, including, in particular, the world of work, will be another major objective. The aim is to redefine the role and functions of higher education in the light of the specific demands of society and engender a new conception of higher education. The search for alternative delivery systems, including open and distance education, and the development of flexible ways of updating knowledge and of providing advanced training will be encouraged so that institutions of higher education may serve as centres of lifelong learning permanently accessible to all. UNESCO will work closely with Member States in forging strategies to develop this new vision of higher education, particular attention being paid to reflection on policy issues relating to financing, governance, management and staff development. Research and development in the educational sciences will also be

strengthened so as to enhance the contribution of higher education to the renewal of education.

- 90 ● UNESCO is committed to promoting the academic mobility of students, teachers and researchers in higher education. To this end, UNESCO will pursue the development of an international system of degree recognition based on existing regional conventions and the International Recommendation addressing this matter. Enhanced academic mobility, together with the centres of excellence, should help to stem the brain drain experienced particularly by developing countries.

- 91 ● It is evident from the above that education has urgently to be rethought in terms of life-long education; in this endeavour, UNESCO can only act as a catalyst. It will promote successful innovative practices and help Member States to network and learn from each other, and strengthen their endogenous capacities to plan and implement educational reforms. Furthermore, UNESCO will continue to strengthen international solidarity and political commitment, as well as worldwide reflection on new developments conducive to educational advancement. In this respect, it will draw inspiration from the findings of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century set up in 1993.

Assisting in the advancement, transfer and sharing of knowledge

- 92 ● Soon after the addition of the 'S' to the Organization's acronym in 1945, it was made clear that this should be understood in the plural, since the social sciences had a place in UNESCO's first programmes, along with the exact and natural sciences; teaching and research in the different social sciences were encouraged from a very early stage, as were exchanges of information and documentation, and co-operation between specialists on a regional and international scale. Since then, both realms of sciences, for which UNESCO has a unique mandate in the United Nations system, have occupied an important place in the Organization's Medium-Term Plan and biennial programmes and budgets.

Training, research and co-operation for the advancement of scientific and technological knowledge

- 93 ● The Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001 aims to promote the advancement of scientific

and technological knowledge, and to increase and accelerate the transfer and sharing of such knowledge by:

- improving the quality and relevance of both disciplinary and transdisciplinary university teaching and training, updating curricula to meet existing and future needs;
 - fostering research and improved co-ordination of advanced training and research activities;
 - establishing or strengthening linkages between the production and services sectors, and higher education and research institutions;
 - strengthening the national, regional and international bodies and networks responsible for collecting and disseminating scientific and technological information;
 - supporting and broadening all forms of regional and international co-operation between scientists, scientific institutions and specialized non-governmental organizations.
- 94 ● Regarding the basic sciences (mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and biotechnologies) and the social and human sciences, emphasis will be placed on the development of human resources – the primary goal of the

whole Medium-Term Strategy – and on the building up of national capacities, with a view to helping to reduce the current disparity in science between the industrialized world and the developing countries. Particular attention will be given to the strengthening of university teaching and basic research in the least-developed countries.

- 95 ● While co-operative research projects will be carried out to ensure the effective transfer of knowledge and advanced training of specialists in the key areas of basic sciences that have important implications for development, emphasis will likewise be placed on the transfer of social science research findings and information to decision-makers, so as to constitute a solid base for socio-economic policy-making. In this respect, improving endogenous skills in social policy-making and the management of social transformations is a priority.
- 96 ● The need for a new generation of engineers, relying increasingly on environmentally sound technologies and engineering processes compatible with sustainable development, requires renewed emphasis on the evaluation of engineering education, teaching and delivery systems, the in-service retraining of engineers, and the relationship between engineering education and industry. The University-Industry-Science Partnership (UNISPAR) Programme will identify and disseminate the most effective ways and means of improving the transfer of research findings to industry, and of promoting partnerships between universities, research centres and industries for the retraining of practising engineers. In addition, the development and dissemination of teaching aids will help in setting new goals for engineering education, and will draw attention to the importance of technology management.
- 97 ● UNESCO's action in the area of energy will lay emphasis on energy conservation, increased use of renewable energy sources and the development of appropriate

technologies. In particular, the World Solar Programme will promote regional and international co-operation in training and research on the provision of energy and related services, particularly for rural and remote areas, while preserving the environment and fossil fuel reserves and saving foreign currency.

- 98 ● The strengthening of existing networks involved in the collection, storage, retrieval and dissemination of information relating to the natural and the social and human sciences, as well as the sharing of data bases and the publication of directories, are an important component of UNESCO's strategy aimed at accelerating the transfer and sharing of knowledge. A special effort will be made to make access to scientific information in electronic networks easier for research workers in developing countries. The *World Science Report* will be published during each biennium; while describing the major trends in the natural sciences around the world and examining specific issues at regional or global levels, it will be a useful tool for decision-makers in formulating science and technology policies.
- 99 ● It is UNESCO's responsibility to make people understand the importance of philosophical reflection for a new approach to analysis of such major issues of our time as peace, equity, ethics, belief, universality, etc. The Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001 will therefore aim not only to transmit the world's philosophical heritage, but above all to encourage its updating on the basis of advances in the various fields of knowledge. This will involve organizing public interdisciplinary meetings, inviting philosophers to participate in reflection on the major issues of our time, supporting the extension of a free and critical approach in philosophy teaching in Member States (through UNESCO Chairs in particular), and fostering dissemination of the philosophical works of all cultures (making use of modern telecommunications and publishing techniques).

Environment, population and social development

- 100** ● In 1946, UNESCO's first Director-General, Julian Huxley, stated that *the application of scientific knowledge offers the principal means of improving man's living conditions*. This statement has since proved to be correct, although it has been realized that science and technology could be diverted from their goal of contributing to human welfare; hence the importance of ethical considerations regarding the implications of the application of certain scientific discoveries and technological innovations, and it is here that the contribution of social and human sciences plays a prominent role.
- 101** ● The Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001 seeks to foster closer collaboration and promote greater synergy between the natural sciences – basic and applied – and the social sciences in the search for appropriate solutions to some urgent development problems. The strategy seeks to reconcile two requirements: that of facilitating transdisciplinary approaches which could respond to the complexity of social issues and that of strengthening the various scientific disciplines. It provides an appropriate response to the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), to the implementation of *Agenda 21*, and to the other major United Nations Conferences (Population and Development, World Summit for Social Development, Fourth World Conference on Women and Habitat II).
- 102** ● It is through UNESCO's intergovernmental and international programmes in environmental and social sciences, and through increased co-operation between them (while at the same time preserving their identity), and by combining research, training, education, information and consciousness-raising, that relevant solutions to the key issues of socially and environmentally sustainable development may be proposed. All the activities planned over the six-year period 1996-2001 aim at enhancing scientific understanding of the natural and social environment, improving long-term scientific assessment (e.g. climate change, biodiversity changes) and building up scientific capacity.
- 103** ● UNESCO's Programme on Management of Social Transformations (MOST) will focus on the advancement and sharing of knowledge and information, and on their utilization in policy-making in priority areas of development and social transformation: population and migrations, human settlements and combating social exclusion, social cohesion and integration in multicultural societies, and participation of citizens and grass-roots movements in development efforts. Large cities are where the problems of exclusion, violence, drug addiction and inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts are most conspicuous, but also where these problems could be mitigated through the appropriate management of social transformations in a context of democratic, participatory and efficient city governance. The improvement of the living environment also plays an important role in this respect, with, for example, the provision of decent shelter, green areas, drinking-water supply and waste treatment and recycling.
- 104** ● This is why the Strategy includes a project on 'Cities: management of social transformations and the environment'. Solutions to the problems raised by living conditions in urban areas fall within UNESCO's fields of competence in the natural and social sciences, culture and communication. The habitat and its improvement are an important aspect of the national economy (building of homes and infrastructures, pollution control and waste processing, which all provide immense scope for the application of environment-friendly techniques). Endeavours to ensure at least a minimum level of quality of life should also be sensitive to the cultural values of the communities concerned.
- 105** ● This project will draw on the results and experience accumulated under UNESCO's Man

and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) over the last two decades with respect to many ecological aspects of city development. It will also be concerned with the application of MOST Programme research findings on city management. The project's overall strategy will aim at: supporting national and/or local initiatives intended to apply practical solutions to social and environmental problems in urban settlements with the full participation of city-dwellers and communities; ensuring that urban policy-making takes more account of cultural factors; contributing to the advanced training of planners and managers, awareness activities and exchange of experience regarding social and environmental management of cities; and disseminating the relevant information to decision-makers, local associations and the media. The Organization's action will focus on establishing partnerships with municipalities, non-governmental organizations, mayors and twinned cities' associations, in order to develop practical projects serving UNESCO's ideals – for example the integration of the excluded, development, peace and democracy.

106 ● UNESCO's environmental programmes cover the major components of the earth system, with the exception of the atmosphere. During the 1996-2001 period, these programmes will co-operate more closely than in the past in addressing the interactions between the oceans, terrestrial ecosystems, freshwater systems and the lithosphere, and the sustainable use of the resources they provide, taking into account socio-economic needs and constraints. Their social science components also need to be broadened or strengthened, as regards both their design and their implementation in Member States, in order to ensure consistency with the approach linking environment and development issues. Finally, the procedures of their respective governing bodies will be made more flexible, using modern means of consultation, to enable them to respond more rapidly to strategy shifts and devote a larger share of financial resources to field activities.

107 ● The Medium-Term Strategy will require increased co-operation within the United Nations system, not only to avoid duplication of work, but also to achieve genuine collaboration for the benefit of Member States. This will be ensured in the spirit of inter-agency co-ordination following UNCED and the other United Nations conferences. The strategy will also entail the forging of new partnerships among the public, private and non-governmental sectors.

108 ● In addition to better linkages between UNESCO's intergovernmental environmental programmes, aimed at enhancing the interdisciplinarity and relevance of their respective activities, a project is proposed on 'Environment and development in coastal regions and in small islands'. This project, with clearly defined objectives and expected outputs, limited in terms of geographical coverage and duration, and combining research, advanced training and the application of research findings to the management of resources, constitutes UNESCO's response to the follow-up to both UNCED and the United Nations Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Barbados, April-May 1994). While building on the current Coastal Marine (COMAR) Programme, with inputs from UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme, International Hydrological Programme (IHP) and International Geological Correlation Programme (IGCP), the project will also have social science, educational and cultural components. Attention will be paid, for example, to population dynamics, to the interaction between population movement and environmental change and to the role of culture in the management of the environment. It will aim in particular to assess and monitor constraints and conflicts in land and resources use, natural and environmental disasters (development of vulnerability indicators), climate and sea-level change. It will also help improve and apply techniques for mitigating coastal instability, harnessing

renewable sources of energy, rehabilitating degraded land and aquatic areas, and recycling wastes.

109 ● In the earth sciences, UNESCO's strategy will be to pursue the fostering of co-operative research under the International Geological Correlation Programme, but also to promote the understanding of geological global processes as an essential input to the geosphere-biosphere global change system, the emergence of a 'global culture of prevention' through the assessment and mitigation of risks arising from natural hazards, and the accessibility of geological information to the engineering and scientific communities.

110 ● Under the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme and within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity, UNESCO's strategy will help Member States ascertain the soundness of their conservation policies, but also use their biodiversity asset for sustainable development, relying on UNESCO's network of biosphere reserves for research, training and demonstration activities, and on collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for the development of the areas surrounding the protected core of the reserves. It will also address the major issues of deforestation in tropical humid regions and desertification in arid and semi-arid zones (within the framework of the Convention on Desertification), with special emphasis on responses based on rigorous scientific knowledge and assessment and capacity-building. Together with support for ecological research on a restricted number of ecosystems (e.g. mountainous areas, islands covered by the above-mentioned project), the strategy will involve the building up of human and institutional capabilities with the development of a network of UNESCO Chairs providing training combining ecology, economics, social sciences and appropriate technologies.

111 ● In water sciences and under the International Hydrological Programme (IHP),

the Medium-Term Strategy will emphasize improved knowledge of freshwater resources availability and water use technologies for decision-making, particularly in vulnerable environments (e.g. in arid and semi-arid zones, and as part of the activities aimed at mitigating desertification and rehabilitating degraded lands). Water resources management is a top priority under this strategy and specific activities will aim at establishing sustainable practices in such environments as the humid tropics, arid and semi-arid zones, small tropical islands and urban settlements, and incorporating them into education and training programmes. Research on the availability, quality and rational utilization of groundwater resources will be another priority.

112 ● UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), in collaboration with its partners in the United Nations system and concerned non-governmental organizations, will promote and facilitate oceanographic research with a view to reducing the uncertainties relating to the role of oceans in climate change, carbon dioxide balance and availability of resources. IOC will be given the functional autonomy proportionate to the magnitude of its role. A Global Ocean Observing System will be established to provide the data needed for research on global environmental change, forecasts on ocean/climate interaction and ocean resources management. Monitoring and research on marine pollution will focus on quantification of the impact of human activities on the marine environment, both in coastal zones and the open ocean. Likewise, research on marine physical and biological parameters and processes will be supported and co-ordinated, with a view to better understanding the role of the oceans in food production and the supply of non-living resources. Finally, in addition to improving access to ocean data derived from research and monitoring, the strategy will include education and training activities, as well as technical assistance to Member States for their research and monitoring programmes, at both national and regional levels.

- 113 ● The relationship between population, environment and development should be addressed in an integrated way in order to progress towards development of a kind that ensures a better quality of life for all. In this regard, landmark international conferences have underscored the importance of promoting widespread awareness of these issues among decision-makers, educators and students in both formal and non-formal sectors, and among the general public. The most notable among these were the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the 1993 International Congress on Population, Education and Development (ICPED), the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the 1995 World Summit for Social Development.
- 114 ● In *Agenda 21* and the Programme of Action of the United Nations Conference on Population and Development, UNESCO has been entrusted with the task of leading international efforts to foster environmental and population education and communication. The transdisciplinary project 'Environment and population education and information for development' (EPD), approved by the General Conference at its twenty-seventh session, is the tool UNESCO will use to implement this task. It is primarily an inter-agency co-operation project which builds on the ongoing co-operation programme with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in population information, education and communication (IEC), the joint UNESCO/UNEP International Environment Education Programme (IEEP) and the joint UNESCO/UNDP Special Collaboration Programme in environment and population education and information.
- 115 ● The Medium-Term Strategy will aim, in the first place, to generate and update the scientific knowledge base required to understand the relationship between population, environment and development issues, focusing on both the social, economic and cultural context and global concerns. Support will therefore be given to research and development activities and to networking centres of excellence and research institutions, in order to assist *inter alia* in the preparation of relevant educational materials and the training of personnel.
- 116 ● Secondly, the strategy will aim to strengthen Member States' capacities to improve and reorient, on the basis of scientifically sound knowledge, national education and training activities in both the formal and non-formal sectors. Emphasis will be placed on developing teaching/learning materials and methods that take cultural factors into account and are adapted to the needs of various target audiences. Information and education will also be the basis of activities dealing with health education, the prevention of drug abuse and AIDS, which are closely linked to environment, population and development issues, and call for solutions bringing together scientific knowledge and socio-cultural awareness. As the problem of drugs is also one of ethics it requires the Organization – as an intellectual forum – to adopt a comprehensive approach, bringing expertise in all its fields of competence to bear on this problem.
- 117 ● In addition, Member States' capacities will be strengthened with respect to the generation of information materials that are scientifically designed and adapted to different cultures, and their wide dissemination through information systems, services and networks. At the same time, technical support will be provided to Member States in the implementation of specific projects funded by UNFPA, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other donor agencies. Throughout, emphasis will be placed on strengthening the transdisciplinary approach necessary to deal with environment, population and development issues; this implies close interaction with the Organization's relevant strategies concerning education, science, culture and communication; particular attention will be given to the

needs of the nine high-population countries, the Member States in the Africa region, and the small island States.

- 118 ● Thirdly, the strategy will aim to reach and mobilize decision-makers, opinion leaders and

media professionals in order to increase their awareness of environment, population and development issues and to encourage them to disseminate the appropriate messages, thus contributing to the necessary changes in behaviour and attitude.

To enhance cultural heritage, promote living cultures and encourage creativity

- 119 ● For many years and in particular in the framework of the World Decade for Cultural Development (1988-1997) which it declared in conjunction with the United Nations, UNESCO has been endeavouring to promote a new approach to culture as it relates to the entire range of human activities. Despite the difficult nature of the task, the Organization's efforts have already gone a long way towards calling into question the idea of a single model of development, applicable under all circumstances and in all places. Many development policies have in fact failed because they ran counter to long-standing, in some cases age-old cultural traditions, which had provided the societies concerned with the secure foundation they needed to adapt to change.

- 120 ● To arrive at a clearer understanding of the role played by cultural factors in determining the success or failure of development strategies; to heighten awareness of the 'cultural costs' associated with certain development policies; and to define the objectives of 'cultural development' – these are the long-term goals which UNESCO has set about achieving, through methodological research, multi-disciplinary field projects, and the far-reaching exchanges of information and experience undertaken by the World Commission on Culture and Development.

- 121 ● The coming years should be devoted to drawing conclusions from the range of studies, projects and initiatives carried out in the

context of the Decade with a view to obtaining a coherent vision of the role of cultural factors in development processes. In particular, a wide-ranging debate on the conclusions of the report to be presented by the World Commission in 1995 should be encouraged at the national, regional and international levels. Increasingly, the interrelationships between culture and development are gaining recognition; it is time, therefore, for discussion on the issues involved, which merit a larger place on the international agenda, to move outside of the small circle of experts and Specialized Agencies into the public forum.

- 122 ● UNESCO for its part will be substantially reorienting its action to promote both the world heritage and living cultures in order to give due consideration to the increasingly dynamic role which culture is assuming as an economic development objective.

Enhancing our heritage

- 123 ● Memory is vital to creativity: that holds true for individuals and for peoples, who find in their heritage – natural and cultural, tangible and intangible – the key to their identity and the source of their inspiration. Thus, under its Constitution, UNESCO is specifically mandated to ensure the *conservation and protection of the world's inheritance of books,*

works of art and monuments of history and science. This responsibility is even greater today as wars, natural disasters, urbanization and industrialization increasingly jeopardize our heritage. At the same time, the heritage is destined to play a major role in development, especially on account of the growth of tourism, which in many countries constitutes an important source of income and employment.

124 ● UNESCO should therefore intensify its efforts under its Medium-Term Strategy to encourage Member States to take the legislative, administrative, technical and financial measures needed to protect their heritage, while at the same time developing strategies that will help reconcile preservation needs and development requirements. To assist them in these tasks, Member States have a reference framework of international law, consisting of three conventions and ten recommendations, which provide for international co-operation in the areas of standard setting, exchange of information, training of specialized personnel and technical assistance for safeguarding operations.

125 ● The best known of these instruments is the 1972 Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. Implementation of the Convention, which derives its singularity from its position at the interface of nature and culture, will have to be given decisive impetus. More countries must be encouraged to accede to the Convention (to which there were 140 States Parties at the beginning of 1995); at the same time, the World Heritage List, which contains monuments and sites considered to be of 'outstanding universal value', must continue to be made more representative. In that regard further consideration needs to be given to the actual concept of world heritage which, in addition to the traditional categories, should be expanded to include other important markers of the diversity of world culture. The recent addition to the criteria of the Convention of the concept of cultural landscapes is a step in that direction which should be followed

up, without however going beyond the framework established in 1972. The States Parties should also be assisted in the systematic and continuous monitoring of sites included on the World Heritage List, and at the same time the scientific and technical assistance activities required for the monitoring of listed properties should be strengthened. This monitoring calls for very close collaboration with the States Parties to the Convention, and for greater co-ordination of action taken to ensure the conservation of properties covered by the Convention.

126 ● In recent years UNESCO has been increasingly called upon to respond to emergencies. In addition to damage caused by natural disasters, many recent conflicts have resulted in the destruction of hundreds if not thousands of items of cultural property. Prevention is, under such circumstances, a primary concern. UNESCO will therefore be endeavouring to increase the number of States Parties to the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and, at the same time, will continue to study ways of improving the implementation of the Convention. To that end, the active assistance of intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), will be actively sought. Emphasis will also be placed on developing national capacities for disaster prediction and management and on establishing better mechanisms for organizing international assistance, both in evaluating the extent of damage and in defining priority safeguarding measures in areas affected by natural or human-made disasters.

127 ● Combating illicit traffic in cultural property is also a priority. In view of the growing number of stolen objects, especially in the developing countries, and the resurgence of clandestine archaeological excavations, national and international legal protection in that domain must be reinforced. Emphasis will be placed on strengthening the implementation of the Convention on the Means of

Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970). A systematic information campaign intended for Member States will be designed to promote new accessions, encourage the drafting of appropriate national legislation and improve training for the professionals involved (customs officials, police, museum curators). To that same end, UNESCO plans to increase its co-operation with the competent international organizations, in particular INTERPOL, ICOM and the Customs Co-operation Council.

- 128** ● The role of museums has evolved considerably in recent years. Initially dedicated to the conservation of collections and to scholarly pursuits, the museum is increasingly becoming a provider of lifelong education, a centre for community activity and a tourist attraction. To keep pace with these changes, museum infrastructures must be modernized and educational programmes catering for a broad range of interests must be developed. UNESCO, in co-operation with specialized governmental and non-governmental organizations, will encourage Member States to take action on that front.
- 129** ● There is an ever-growing need for financial, technical and human resources for safeguarding operations, especially those which are carried out as part of international campaigns, and for the training of conservation and restoration specialists. UNESCO has a fundamental role to play in mobilizing international solidarity: in the coming years, it will have to give decisive impetus to its promotional activities, encourage the development of specialized co-operation networks and assist in setting up technological partnerships with major industrial concerns.
- 130** ● Preservation of the world heritage is such a vast undertaking that, in the long run, it can only be successful if there is active participation by local communities. New approaches must be developed in the areas of conservation and site maintenance, drawing

on local traditions, techniques and knowledge. The local community, and its young people in particular, need to be made aware of the value of the property to be safeguarded – genuine ‘heritage education’, using both formal and informal means of education, needs to be developed. UNESCO will be working on this, in close collaboration with interested non-governmental organizations and the various ‘heritage towns’ networks already in place.

- 131** ● Lastly, we shall have to help ensure that the heritage is more fully integrated into the economic and social life of the community. UNESCO has already begun that process by providing assistance for urban rehabilitation projects designed to reintegrate historic sites into the daily life of the city. At a time when tourism represents a significant source of revenue for many countries, safeguarding policies need to give greater consideration to the legitimate concern of host populations to share in the economic benefits of tourism. UNESCO’s strategy will therefore be to promote the growth of cultural tourism of a kind that respects cultural identities and encourages a strengthening of international understanding, while at the same time offering solutions to the needs of local communities over the long term. To that end, UNESCO, drawing on the lessons learned from the cultural tourism projects initiated during the World Decade for Cultural Development, will establish partnership arrangements with interested regional and international organizations including Green Cross International, the United Nations Development Programme and regional development banks.
- 132** ● But the cultural heritage is not limited to monuments and works of art. There is an intangible component – oral traditions, customs, languages, music, dance, performing arts – which for many population groups and especially minority and indigenous communities constitutes the essential source of an identity deeply rooted in the past. The intangible nature of this heritage makes it even more

vulnerable and, consequently, safeguarding it is a matter of urgency if we are to maintain the diversity of cultures and consolidate cultural pluralism. UNESCO will reinforce its efforts in that direction, with particular emphasis on languages: of the thousands of languages recorded thus far, a very large number are simply dying out. Once again, the goal is not only to conserve (collecting, archiving and recording) but also to make better known (describing, analysing and circulating information) and above all to give renewed vitality to all forms of cultural expression which can serve as inspiration for contemporary creation.

- 133** ● The priority given to revitalization will take the form of actions designed to give young people an increased awareness of the richness of traditional and popular cultures, with particular attention to their contribution to 'modern' cultures. Emphasis will also be placed on the role of women in the transmission and also renewal of traditional forms of expression. The Organization will encourage Member States to design comprehensive policies to protect and revitalize their intangible heritage and to bring them the benefits of technological progress, both for training specialists and for disseminating the most significant aspects of this heritage.

Promoting living cultures

- 134** ● The second aim of UNESCO's strategy will be to promote living cultures, in particular encouraging creativity, which is the force behind all cultural life and, increasingly, behind any vital economic activity. Cultural vitality and creativity cannot be enforced by decree; the only guarantee of either that can be offered is freedom of expression and of creation. Creativity can also be encouraged by an environment conducive to the production, recognition and dissemination of works. The environment in question has been radically

altered in the last few decades by the growth of cultural industries (books, records and cassettes, films and other audio-visual productions) and, more recently, by the new communication technologies, multimedia in particular, not to mention the new possibilities offered by the electronic transmission networks known as 'information superhighways'.

- 135** ● This new technological environment now exerts a decisive influence, especially in the industrialized countries, on artistic creation and dissemination and, consequently, on cultural life itself. The industrial production of cultural goods now accounts for a large part of cultural output. This phenomenon has caused a decline in and, in some cases, the standardization of certain forms of artistic creation; at the same time, it is giving rise to new forms of expression and creating new audiences. It represents an increasing share of the economy of many countries and a growing source of employment opportunities. This new technological environment could be a key factor in the democratization of culture and intercultural contacts. But it could also be instrumental in widening the gap between the industrialized countries and the developing countries unless the latter can develop domestic cultural industries which provide local artists with access to production and distribution facilities.

- 136** ● UNESCO cannot, under its mandate, provide direct support to cultural industries, which generally come under the private sector. What it can do is to encourage those States which so wish, the developing countries in particular, to design national or regional policies whose application could create environments conducive to the development of those industries. Guided by its experience in the formulation of policies on books and reading, UNESCO will extend its efforts to the other cultural industries involving creative activities protected by copyright. It will encourage the establishment of mechanisms to co-ordinate action taken by national administrations and the private,

professional sectors, with a view to developing the appropriate legislative, administrative and fiscal structures, and it will organize international exchanges of information in that field. It will also foster the adoption of regional and subregional co-operation strategies for the production and distribution of cultural goods and for the training of the professionals involved. It will promote the free circulation of cultural goods both within countries and across borders by encouraging countries to conclude regional agreements in that area, with the overall objective of ensuring the broadest possible access to a wide variety of quality goods, representative of the plurality of cultures.

137 ● To achieve these goals, it is also essential to encourage and protect the creative artists themselves. As part of its long-standing collaboration with international non-governmental organizations representing various artistic fields, UNESCO will continue its efforts to promote awareness of contemporary artistic creation, to encourage exchanges of information and experience and to improve training for creative and performing artists and for the various cultural development agents. However, greater emphasis will be placed in future on the value of traditional crafts which, in many countries and particularly in rural areas, represent a significant sector of activity. The goal will be to promote quality craftsmanship which will satisfy local demand and at the same time meet

the expectations of a wider public, through international distribution circuits involving tourism and other activities. In particular, efforts will be made to establish for various types of crafts training courses using the new technologies which will provide an introduction to modern techniques of craft work management and distribution.

138 ● Since its inception, UNESCO has endeavoured to improve the status of artists, their living and working conditions, and the protection of their rights. This approach has renewed relevance now that technological developments and the globalization of cultural and trade exchanges are likely to radically alter the situation of artists and creators. While continuing its efforts to encourage full implementation, to the extent possible, of the Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist, the Organization will reinforce its action in the field of copyright and neighbouring rights, in very close collaboration with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). In addition to activities involving consciousness-raising, information and training, in particular at the university level, particular attention will be paid to the effect of the new technologies on copyright, action against piracy, and the protection of new categories of work and of the moral rights of authors in the framework of the conventions and recommendations adopted under the Organization's auspices.

Promoting the free flow of information and the development of communication

139 ● Although the word 'communication' is not reflected as such in UNESCO's initials, the importance of communication was nevertheless recognized from the very inception of the Organization. Under its Constitution, UNESCO is expressly required to *promote the free flow of ideas by word and image* and to *collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual*

knowledge and understanding of all peoples, through all means of mass communication. Closely related to human rights and, in particular, to freedom of expression, communication is a factor for development and for the social welfare of humankind and also an essential component in the building of a world at peace. The importance of communication

– above all the media – and information in all areas of human activity is beyond dispute, whether it be for spreading news or ideas, transmitting scientific or technological data, making people aware of matters essential to democratic life, or providing a medium for individual or collective cultural expression.

- 140 ●** The new communication strategy adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-fifth session in 1989 will continue to serve as a reference for the Organization's action during the period from 1996 to 2001. It aims, on the one hand, to encourage the free flow of information, at international as well as national level, and its wider and better balanced dissemination, without any obstacle to freedom of expression, and, on the other hand, to strengthen communication capacities, particularly in the developing countries.

The free flow of ideas by word and image

- 141 ●** In line with the first aim of this strategy, UNESCO will continue to promote freedom of expression and its corollary, freedom of the press, by encouraging the action of non-governmental and professional organizations working to defend these fundamental freedoms. It will help to establish conditions, nationally and regionally, conducive to the development of pluralist and independent media, whether public or private. In this connection, the Organization will assist with the preparation of national legislation and administrative, fiscal or other provisions, designed to ensure the freedom and pluralism of information. Member States which so wish will be helped to transform their government radio and television networks and news agencies into public services with editorial independence. Lastly, UNESCO will organize the exchange of experience by making comparative studies of national legislation guaranteeing press freedom.
- 142 ●** At a time when the hitherto separate concerns of communication, i.e. the media, and specialized information are tending to move closer together because the technologies through which they are conveyed are now much the same, the principle of the 'free flow' of information should no doubt be widened to cover all forms of information that contribute to the progress of societies and their democratic functioning. The linking of telecommunications with information technology and the audio-visual media is opening up novel prospects for the progress of knowledge and the development of intellectual co-operation. However, although these technologies hold out great promise for the exchange of knowledge and know-how, for education and training – particularly distance education and continuous training – and for encouraging creativity and intercultural dialogue, there is a considerable danger that they will be of benefit to only a minority of nations and to only a minority of the people in those nations. UNESCO will therefore have to be very aware of the risks of exclusion and of the new disparities, particularly between industrialized and developing countries, which these technologies could engender, now that the spread of messages and programmes across frontiers is increasing. It will be important to see that services of general and public interest, particularly data banks, remain, or become, accessible to as many people as possible.
- 143 ●** Over and above its economic and social impact, the coming technological revolution will have major repercussions on all aspects of the life of societies. The relationship to information, and hence the organization of knowledge and thought, and ways of taking action and taking decisions, of working and relaxing, of perceiving time and space and even of creating language will be changed by it. Under the combined effect of technological advances and the globalization of communication, the maintenance of linguistic and cultural diversity might well become a major issue. A very large number of both industrialized and developing countries run

the risk of becoming mere 'consumers' of imported products and services (whether television programmes broadcast by satellite, audio-visual productions, data banks or electronic games) as their financial and technological capabilities or the size of their internal markets are inadequate to support a national production able to satisfy, even partly, the needs of their people.

144 ● In this very serious situation UNESCO's mandate, both intellectual and moral, urges it to promote reflection on the impact of these technologies, and to foster access to the possibilities they offer for educational, scientific and cultural development. The Organization therefore intends to offer the international community a forum for interdisciplinary debate on the new applications of the information and communication technologies so as to observe their development, consider their likely effects – both beneficial and harmful – on societies and individuals, and gauge their impact in the Organization's fields of competence. Young people, enthusiastic consumers of the products generated by these new technologies, particularly the games, will be closely involved in this general debate, which will call on the broad spread of disciplines and areas covered by the Organization.

145 ● UNESCO will also help its Member States to frame integrated policies and strategies, taking account of the convergence of telecommunications, information technology and the electronic media, which will enable them to adapt themselves to this new technological environment and take advantage of the opportunities it offers. In establishing a dialogue between States and a process of consultation with the main industrial entities concerned, representatives of civil society and professional organizations, UNESCO will above all be setting itself the aim of helping to adapt technological innovations to the priority needs of the most disadvantaged and to encourage the production, distribution and circulation of a wide range of high-quality cultural programmes and products.

146 ● While maintaining this intellectual 'watch-dog' function, UNESCO will look into the methodological, legal and ethical aspects of the processing and distribution of specialized information. The confidentiality of the information in data banks, the security of these banks, the pirating of information and 'computer crime' are posing problems that are increasingly difficult to solve owing to the growing interconnection of computer networks. Another awkward problem is the protection of intellectual property rights connected with the new multimedia products and services available 'on line' via computerized networks. The establishment of technical standards and unified procedures for the processing of information and access to existing international computerized research networks is another way by which the 'free flow' of information can be facilitated. UNESCO will pursue its work in this field in co-operation with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), other intergovernmental organizations, and the professional and academic communities concerned in order to help meet the expectations of present and potential users in many countries.

Building capacities and developing skills

147 ● In line with the second aim of the Medium-Term Strategy, UNESCO will continue to encourage the development of the communication, information and informatics capacities of Member States. UNESCO's efforts will be mainly directed towards extending infrastructure and improving vocational training in developing countries and in countries in transition to democracy. Its catalytic action will be aimed, in particular, at securing international technical co-operation through the intergovernmental programmes set up for that purpose, i.e. the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), the General Information Programme (PGI) and the

Intergovernmental Informatics Programme (IIP). PGI will have to become one of the Organization's main consultative bodies in matters relating to the 'information super-highway', while at the same time proposing innovative activities to enable populations remote from information sources to have access to them.

148 ● The Organization will support what many higher education institutions and professional organizations are doing to include professional ethics in training and further training programmes for communication specialists. The network of UNESCO Chairs in Communication (ORBICOM) and the network of schools of journalism associated with UNESCO will be called upon to play an active role in this work. By encouraging the establishment of networks of co-operation between schools and academic institutions concerned with the training of librarians, archivists and information specialists, the Organization will seek to establish a new range of professional qualifications adapted to the processing of information for decision-making purposes. In the training of informatics specialists and users, priority will be given to training high-level instructors and young users. In all these activities, emphasis will be placed on the integrated teaching of information and communication technologies, particularly through the development of modular programmes suited to different groups of learners and different contexts.

149 ● For many years, and especially since the establishment in 1980 of the International Programme for the Development of Communication, UNESCO has sought to increase the means available to developing countries for the production, transmission and distribution of information and programmes, e.g. national and regional news agencies, radio and television stations, the rural press, and so forth. This will continue to be done, with high priority being given during the six years covered by the Medium-Term Strategy to improving the communication capacities of people living in the most disadvantaged rural and

urban areas. Emphasis will be placed on the development of community media, such as local radio stations and the local press, and on the provision of low-cost technology and equipment using renewable energy such as solar power. The Organization will also support municipalities in setting up communication systems, especially in cities, aimed at improving intercommunal relations and at fostering participation by the public in municipal management. It will also continue to assist producers in developing countries by providing them with equipment that comes up to international professional standards and by facilitating their access to the various regional and international audio-visual markets.

150 ● Another of UNESCO's objectives is to improve the organization and operation of libraries, archives and information systems in developing countries. Their role of educational and cultural 'focus' will grow considerably in the years to come, so UNESCO will aim particularly to bring within their reach the benefits of new technologies so that the knowledge accumulated by them can be managed better and made more accessible. From this point of view, the 'virtual library' concept will be explored more deeply and tried out in different socio-economic contexts. Similarly, the Organization will encourage the twinning of libraries and their grouping into networks for the purpose of fostering co-operation and exchanges of publications or staff between them. The UNESCO Network of Associated Libraries (UNAL) is expected to play an important role in this respect.

151 ● UNESCO's Constitution assigns it the task of *ensuring the conservation and protection of the world's inheritance of books [and] works of art*. This is the aim of the 'Memory of the World' project, launched in 1991, which endeavours to seek out documents, manuscripts, collections and archives, including sound and visual archives, that should be safeguarded. By helping Member States to conserve such works and by mobilizing the knowledge and skills needed for their

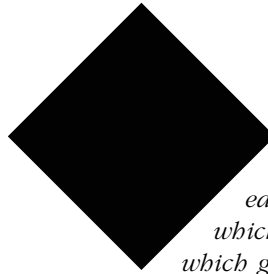
restoration, reproduction and storage and their circulation among a vast public, UNESCO is hoping to help safeguard and bring to the fore an important portion of the heritage of mankind.

152 ● Increased efforts will be needed to develop regional information technology networks since, for developing countries, such networks may be the first steps on the route towards the 'information superhighways' that are beginning to be set up. They should also, in the long term, make it possible to link up regions that are poorly served at present. UNESCO will thus help to ensure that they are technically compatible and linked with existing international research networks.

153 ● The establishment of networks, national, regional and international, the advent of

multimedia products and current technological developments could be a great asset for educational, scientific and cultural development. The Organization will seek, through pilot projects, to promote the application of information and communication technologies in all its fields of competence. The aim of these projects, developed in conjunction with the professional communities concerned, will be to design information services and tools using the possibilities offered by the multimedia approach, to explore the potential afforded by the 'virtual laboratory' concept in opening up academic circles and research centres in developing countries, and to develop partnerships between users and telecommunications operators in order to obtain more favourable conditions of access to the networks.

Strategies for contributing to peace-building



It is diversity itself which must be saved, not the outward and visible form in which each period has clothed that diversity, and which can never be preserved beyond the period which gave it birth... The only demand that we can justly make (...) is that all the forms this diversity may take may be so many contributions to the fullness of all the others.

Claude Levi-Strauss

Encouraging education for peace, human rights and democracy, tolerance and international understanding

- 154** ● Education is at the heart of any strategy for peace-building. It is through education that the broadest possible introduction can be provided to the values, skills and knowledge which form the basis of respect for human rights and democratic principles, the rejection of violence and a spirit of tolerance, understanding and mutual appreciation among individuals, groups and nations.
- 155** ● Since its inception, UNESCO has devoted itself to promoting education in keeping with these principles, to which it has given a normative basis by drawing up the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by the General Conference in 1974. This recommendation, which has been widely accepted, has for two decades inspired the action of Member States and educational communities.
- 156** ● Over the last two years, the international community has endowed itself with a very comprehensive framework of reference and action,

which will guide UNESCO's work throughout the duration of the Medium-Term Strategy and which includes: the World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy (Montreal, 1993); the Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993), which makes reference to the Montreal Plan of Action; the Declaration adopted by the International Conference on Education (Geneva, 1994) which the General Conference endorsed at its twenty-eighth session (1995), when it also approved the Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy; and lastly the Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2005), which the United Nations General Assembly adopted at its forty-ninth session. The General Assembly stressed the special responsibility incumbent upon UNESCO in implementing this Plan, assigning our Organization, jointly with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Centre for Human Rights a *central role in the design, implementation and evaluation of projects under this Plan.*

- 157** ● The long-term goal that UNESCO has set itself is the establishment of a comprehensive system of education and training for peace, human rights and democracy, tolerance, non-violence and international understanding that is intended for all groups of people and embraces all levels of education, whether formal or non-formal. The Organization's strategy will consist in mobilizing both individuals and institutions (governments, educators, the media, families, parliaments, businesses, trade unions, NGOs, etc.) so that everyone may receive an education and appropriate training, especially those who are in difficult circumstances, such as women, children, the elderly or disabled, minorities and indigenous peoples, refugees, displaced persons and those living in extreme poverty.
- 158** ● UNESCO will collaborate, first and foremost, with governments in framing national policies and strategies designed, in particular, to improve curricula and textbooks, teaching methods and the actual functioning of educational institutions, so that they come to lead the field in the exercise of human rights, the practice of democracy, learning to be tolerant and appreciating cultural diversity. The training of teachers is of crucial importance in this respect, as is the teaching of history and languages.
- 159** ● History teaching can be an excellent vehicle of mutual understanding, especially between neighbouring countries, provided that it does not confine itself exclusively to extolling the national identity. Accordingly, UNESCO will provide every support to the initiatives that its Member States may wish to take in carrying out a bilateral, or even multilateral, revision of school textbooks so as to remove any prejudices or stereotypes they might contain *vis-à-vis* other nations or certain groups. Similarly, it will promote historical research, the sharing of historical knowledge and the co-production of textbooks by two or more countries as a propitious basis for mutual understanding.
- 160** ● Language is more than an instrument of communication; it is a vision of the world. The experience of multilingualism, especially if it is acquired at a very early age, can be an excellent initiation into the plurality of cultures and beliefs and encourage understanding between cultures and dialogue between people. Consequently, the Medium-Term Strategy will place fresh emphasis on foreign-language teaching, its expansion and improvement, in particular with a view to strengthening its cultural components. At the same time, greater attention should be given to the question of the place and role to be assigned to the mother tongue in the learning process. This question is of major importance in certain national reconciliation processes, just as it is at the heart of the claims of many minorities and indigenous peoples.
- 161** ● In addition, UNESCO will step up its partnership activities with teaching and research institutions and networks that play a particularly active role in promoting education for peace, human rights and democracy, tolerance, non-violence and international understanding. A case in point is the UNESCO Associated Schools system which for over 40 years has been mobilizing pupils and teachers in the service of the Organization's ideals. On the strength of the very positive results that have already been achieved, the time seems to have come to give decisive impetus to the development of the Associated Schools, which should be conceived in future as 'centres of excellence' for conveying the Organization's ethical message throughout the education system. Their number, which at present stands at approximately 3,000, should be capable of considerable expansion by the end of the period covered by the Medium-Term Strategy, as should the number of countries involved (currently 126). The same applies to the UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations, which now number some 5,000, to the UNESCO Network of Associated Universities, recently set up, and to the UNESCO Chairs in education for peace, human rights and

democracy, some of which will extend their teaching and research activities to the promotion of non-violence and tolerance. Particular attention will be paid in this context to reflection on the concept of education on ethical and moral values.

- 162** ● Alongside educational institutions, the media now exert a predominant influence on the forging of attitudes, judgements and values. ‘Violence on the screen’ is therefore becoming a source of grave concern as it increasingly invades the cinema, television, videos, comic strips and electronic games. There can be no question of drawing up standards

in this respect, for everyone is aware of the threat that such a move would represent to freedom of expression. UNESCO will, however, foster dialogue between those who are responsible for creation, publishing and distribution in order to help them to draw for themselves the line that should not be overstepped given the cultural context and the public to whom these works and products are addressed. UNESCO will also promote the production, in Member States, of advertisements aimed at children to encourage feelings against violence and of radio and television programmes encouraging knowledge of and respect for different cultures, religions and ethnic groups.

Promoting human rights and the fight against discrimination

- 163** ● The growing aspiration of peoples to human rights is an indication that the ideals proclaimed in 1948 by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequently added to by the 1966 International Covenants and the many specific instruments adopted by the United Nations system or by other inter-governmental organizations are making an ever greater impact on people’s minds. One of the essential foundations of the culture of peace is thus gradually taking shape, namely respect for and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to ethnic or national allegiance, sex, language or religion.

- 164** ● With its forceful reaffirmation of the principle of the universality and unity of human rights, which are ‘indivisible, interdependent and interrelated’, the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993) marked a new stage along that route. In the post-cold war world, human rights must become a rallying force for building a just and lasting peace.

- 165** ● UNESCO’s strategy, which ties in with the approaches laid down by the Vienna

Conference, is in two parts. The Organization will continue first of all with its activities to provide information about international instruments related to the protection of human rights and to the fight against discrimination, and about the procedures (legislative and other) for their implementation. It will also continue with the analysis of the factors – like extreme poverty, social exclusion, racism, xenophobia, terrorism, and the production of, traffic in and consumption of drugs – which impede the full and comprehensive enjoyment of those rights. The Organization will concentrate its action on the rights related to its fields of competence (right to education, right to take part in cultural life, freedom of information and expression, and so on), special attention being paid to the situation of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups such as children, the disabled, displaced persons, refugees, immigrants and persons belonging to minorities.

- 166** ● In that connection, greater attention will be paid to ways of ensuring that women can enjoy their rights to the full and of strengthening their participation, on an equal

footing with men, in all aspects of the life of societies. In the light of the guidelines contained in the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, September 1995), UNESCO will make a particular effort to encourage the development of 'legal literacy' programmes for women, i.e. education about their rights, and increase its action to mobilize people against all the forms of violence and discrimination which affect them.

167 ● Discrimination and intolerance often go hand in hand. UNESCO has taken the lead within the United Nations system in a real 'crusade' against intolerance. The achievements of the United Nations Year for Tolerance, proclaimed on UNESCO's initiative by the United Nations in 1995, and research carried out throughout the world on new forms of discrimination and ways of combating them, will serve as a basis for UNESCO's efforts to involve an increasing number of partners in promoting the idea, and above all the practice, of 'active' tolerance, which implies the desire to get to know other people, to understand what makes others different and to show regard for that difference. In this respect, the adoption by UNESCO's General Conference, in 1995, of a Declaration of Principles on Tolerance was an important step forward in human awareness, being the first time in history that the nations of the world had agreed on a definition of tolerance, on its basic principles and on ways in which it could be strengthened. It will form the basis for the important contribution which UNESCO intends to make, in all its areas of competence, to the implementation of the Plan of Action to follow up the United Nations Year for Tolerance.

168 ● UNESCO also has an active part to play in the actual protection of the rights relating to its fields of competence. It does so through a number of standard-setting instruments which it has adopted, including the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education. It also does so through a specific

procedure (laid down in 104 EX/Decision 3.3 of the Executive Board) by which communications may be submitted to the Organization that relate to human rights violations in its fields of competence. It is an inconspicuous but effective procedure which should be continued and even improved. In addition, UNESCO cannot remain unconcerned by the wave of hatred and violence sweeping over certain communities of educators, journalists, artists and intellectuals, whose most fundamental rights, down to the right to life, are being systematically denied. It therefore proposes, in accordance with its ethical mission and the mandate entrusted to it by its Constitution, to step up its action to alert public opinion to flagrant violations of the rights of intellectuals and to attacks on their lives, dignity and freedom of expression, of research and of creation. This action will be based on the systematic collection of verified information on cases falling within the spheres of competence of the Organization, which will be conducted in close co-operation with interested governments, relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and, most importantly, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the professional organizations concerned. UNESCO will also encourage scientific research into the origins of violence towards intellectuals, its various forms, and methods of prevention.

169 ● UNESCO will also expand its function as a forum for debate about new prospects in human rights and ethics. At the heart of this debate will be cultural rights, a category of rights still inadequately elaborated, although their importance is being recognized on an ever broader scale. The definition and content of cultural rights must be clarified and measures must be identified which could improve their effective implementation. Particular attention will be paid in this context to the cultural rights of persons belonging to minorities and to those of indigenous peoples. The recognition of academic freedoms is another important aspect of the promotion of cultural rights. The Organization will continue

its efforts in this connection and will carry out consultations to explore the possibility of a standard-setting instrument in this field.

170 ● In a world where the fate of each and every person is increasingly indivisible, it is important to encourage awareness of the responsibility and solidarity which link every individual and every group to all the others, particularly the most underprivileged, and to future generations. The critical examination of bioethics that has been begun fits into this context. UNESCO's International Bioethics Committee, as a special centre of ideas and experiences, will continue its transdisciplinary and multicultural questioning of the implications of the discoveries and technological innovations made in the biological and biomedical

sciences, with a view to the preparation of an international instrument on the human genome. In addition to organizing training and providing information, the Organization will act to encourage the creation of ethics committees in Member States and will provide them with advisory services in this connection.

171 ● Similarly, and as a contribution to the United Nations Decade of International Law (1990-1999), UNESCO will strive to make known the principles of international law and encourage exchanges of views on the new prospects opening up in this field in its spheres of competence. The responsibilities of present generations with regard to future generations will also continue to be a focus of reflection.

Supporting the consolidation of democratic processes

172 ● No one now denies that democracy forms the natural framework for the exercise of human rights and is a pre-condition for the establishment of a lasting peace, as long as it is accompanied by equitable economic and social development. The consolidation of democratic processes therefore takes its natural place among the objectives pursued by UNESCO, it being understood that it is for each society, taking into account its own cultural and historical context, to find its path towards democracy on the basis of universally recognized principles.

173 ● Since the end of the Cold War, the Organization has sought to encourage study of the nature of democracy, in the light not only of the remarkable progress made in this area but also of the difficulties and trials which beset democracy almost everywhere in the world. For democracy cannot be reduced to a set of institutional rules, laid down once and for all and applicable without alteration all over the world. Over and above the diversity of its institutional forms, democracy can

only exist and survive if it is nurtured by active and alert citizenship. For this reason UNESCO has striven over recent years to identify the driving forces behind this democratic culture which alone can give substance and sustainability to political change.

174 ● On the basis of experience already acquired, the Organization will do all it can, during the whole period of the Medium-Term Strategy, to strengthen citizenship, particularly in societies in transition. In other words, the aim will be to assist in effecting the transition, in people's lives and in their minds, from formal democracy to democratic practice, which constitutes one of the essential dimensions of the culture of peace. It will encourage study and exchanges of information and experience, especially regionally and sub-regionally, on the nature and functioning of democracy, taking into account the diversity of cultural and historical contexts. It will help Member States, at their request – through training activities and advisory services – to provide

information on the functioning of democratic institutions to national cadres (parliamentarians, local elected officials, civil servants) and to citizens (within the framework, for instance, of civic education programmes for the electorate). The Organization will also continue to foster the development of endogenous capacities for research and training, specifically at the university level, through the UNITWIN Programme and UNESCO Chairs on democracy.

175 ● In implementing this strategy, UNESCO will endeavour to affirm its role as catalyst by reinforcing its partnership with the various actors in the field who are working towards the consolidation of democratic processes. These are essentially governments and the National Commissions, which have taken many innovative initiatives in this regard; agencies of the United Nations system, particularly the Office of the High Commissioner for Human

Rights and the United Nations Centre for Human Rights, the United Nations University and the United Nations Development Programme; regional intergovernmental organizations and interregional, regional and national non-governmental organizations, in particular those working to promote the freedom of the press.

176 ● Freedom of expression and its corollary, freedom of the press, constitute in fact one of the foundations of democracy. One cannot speak of UNESCO's role in the consolidation of democracy without once again mentioning its efforts to ensure the free flow of information and to strengthen communication capacities. Its action to promote press freedom and the development of pluralistic and editorially independent media will consist primarily in suggesting practical responses to the challenges posed by the ongoing processes of democratization in many countries.

Encouraging cultural pluralism and dialogue between cultures

177 ● Since its foundation UNESCO has striven to develop dialogue between cultures as an essential element of any peace-building strategy. By encouraging exchanges between the world's principal cultural areas, in particular between the East and the West, and by helping newly independent countries to affirm their cultural identity, UNESCO has helped to promote broad awareness of the *fruitful diversity* of cultures referred to in the Constitution, and it has contributed to their mutual enrichment. The international co-operation that has developed under the impetus of UNESCO has, among other things, helped to bring out the concept of the 'common heritage' of humankind, to make many cultures better acquainted with one another, and to mobilize intellectual communities for projects that promote cultural diversity and cultural interaction at one and the same time.

178 ● These achievements notwithstanding, no one can today deny that there is a pressing need to strengthen dialogue, not only between the major cultural areas and the various peoples but, above all, within individual societies experiencing far-reaching change that, for many of them, has to do with their increasingly multicultural nature. The internationalization of exchanges and the consequent standardization of norms and behaviour have given rise to a veritable awakening of specific identities: communities everywhere, whether ethnic or national, linguistic or religious, are fighting to preserve – sometimes at horrendous cost – the familiar landmarks that define their identity.

179 ● This dual phenomenon of globalization and fragmentation is not new. But it is complicated today by the fact that the traditional

'frontiers' between the major cultural areas are apparently becoming more mobile; the political and ideological upheavals that have occurred in the wake of the Cold War, the consolidation or emergence of regional economic blocs, the unprecedented acceleration of population flows, both between and within individual regions, mean that a new atlas of cultures is beginning to take shape, although its outlines would be extremely difficult to map. As the zones of multiculturalism are steadily expanding worldwide a growing number of individuals can conceive of themselves only as having a plural identity: there is an increasing awareness that each person has a right to claim a variety of allegiances, wherever that person happens to live, whether permanently or temporarily.

- 180** ● These complex processes, which are often bound up with one another and sometimes contradictory, bring with them a momentum that is fraught with grave dangers – as demonstrated by the numerous intranational conflicts we are witnessing today, which seem likely to undermine the social cohesion of the societies concerned for several generations to come; on the other hand, that momentum may also provide the impetus for a constructive convergence between cultures; and as a result of day-to-day intercultural communication these cultures may thus discover that they have certain values in common. Therefore, as we are confronted with worst-case scenarios focusing on the hermetic barriers and the unstable fault lines that may lead to an impending 'clash of civilizations', it behoves us to identify, in a spirit of dialogue and openness, a set of values that may be shared by all individuals – whatever cultural identity may constitute their prime reference – and thus to lay the foundations of a desire to live together.
- 181** ● By adopting such a perspective of renewed intercultural dialogue UNESCO will, over the period covered by the Medium-Term Strategy, endeavour to seek ways of achieving genuine cultural pluralism in societies that encompass

communities with highly diversified identities. This endeavour will go hand in hand with UNESCO's work to preserve and revitalize the variety of forms of cultural expression, and particularly endangered intangible heritage.

- 182** ● In this respect, the attention of the international community has in recent years focused especially on protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities, and on giving greater recognition to the development needs of indigenous peoples. UNESCO will pursue the efforts it has already initiated in this field, in accordance with the framework of international law drawn up by the United Nations system, in particular the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992) and the Plan of Action of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, proclaimed in 1993. With regard to minorities, UNESCO's action will be aimed essentially at preserving, encouraging and making better known the most representative expressions of minority cultures, and organizing the international exchange of information on the legislative and other means of guaranteeing the cultural rights of persons belonging to minorities. For indigenous peoples, UNESCO's efforts will be focused chiefly on the training of human resources in fields of vital importance for their development: stress will thus be laid on access to mother-tongue education, on the revitalizing of components of their intangible heritage, in particular languages, on the development of traditional skills relating to the protection and use of natural resources, and on the promotion of crafts. These are long-term tasks that will require close collaboration with other United Nations institutions, regional organizations and funding bodies and the establishment of a true partnership with the indigenous peoples themselves, who must be closely involved in the definition and implementation of the action to be undertaken.
- 183** ● Above and beyond these tasks, which must receive priority, concerning as they do those

groups that are no doubt the most vulnerable in multicultural societies, UNESCO will set itself the broader objective of highlighting the contribution that the various social actors, both institutions and others, may make to the consolidation of a cultural pluralism whose mainsprings cannot be fashioned solely through standard-setting activities. To this end, UNESCO will encourage comparative research and the international exchange of experience in the matter of public policies that help to strengthen social cohesion within multi-ethnic or multicultural societies.

- 184** ● Particular attention will be paid to the challenges inherent in the management of intercommunity relations in large conurbations, particularly in developing countries. It is indeed at the local level, where the most acute problems in combating discrimination and exclusion are faced on a day-to-day basis, that – apart from and in addition to institutional mechanisms – encouragement should be given to community associations and types of cultural action that are conducive to constructive interaction between the various communities, in particular among young people.
- 185** ● While focusing its strategy on support for the mechanisms and actors of cultural pluralism, UNESCO will also strive to inject new content into intercultural dialogue,

laying stress on contemporary processes of cultural convergence in a variety of socio-economic contexts. In order to do so it will encourage the creation of new forums for dialogue between different communities, in particular in the zones of contact between major cultural or religious areas, so as to promote the emergence or consolidation of shared values. To this end, it will rely on existing or future networks of institutions and programmes dealing with culture. It will also endeavour to highlight, through intercultural projects, the processes of borrowing and exchange between cultures, and to strengthen the contribution that women and the young, in particular, can make to the renewal of perceptions and the bolstering of solidarity.

- 186** ● This task must also be undertaken at a more global level, if we are to achieve a better understanding of the intercultural momentum engendered by contemporary processes of globalization. In its Medium-Term Strategy, UNESCO will seek to identify the principal factors involved in the current reshaping of the world's main cultural areas. To this end, there will be a need to improve the conceptual and methodological tools currently available in order to account for, and describe, the profound changes under way in contemporary cultures and the new forms of cultural interaction that are at work.

Contributing to conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building

- 187** ● In addition to the long-term action UNESCO is undertaking for peace, it is increasingly being asked to assist, together with the other United Nations system organizations, funds and programmes, in seeking solutions in the three fields of action referred to by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in *An*

Agenda for Peace: conflict prevention, emergency assistance and post-conflict peace-building.

- 188** ● These are new fields of action for UNESCO, which is in consequence required to explore, with due caution, new roles in order to carry

out its specific constitutional mission – constructing peace in the minds of men – by helping to lay the intellectual and moral foundations of reconciliation between parties to conflicts. It goes without saying that in such cases the Organization acts only strictly within its fields of competence and at the request of the Member States concerned or on initiatives taken under the auspices of the United Nations.

189 ● With regard to conflict prevention, UNESCO will strengthen its clearing-house function for the exchange of information on current research and experience concerning the means of ensuring the early detection and peaceful settlement of conflicts. To that end it will co-operate with research centres, institutes and organizations and programmes working on the theme of peace. The emphasis will be on the study of the new conditions for security and on the promotion of innovative methods of conflict management, drawing for instance on the rich store of experience of conflict management to be found in traditional cultures. UNESCO will also assist Member States that so wish to organize the transfer and sharing of experience in the matter, particularly through national or regional culture of peace forums or by establishing ‘Culture of Peace Centres’, where members of different communities in countries where there is ethnic tension will be able to talk together.

190 ● With regard to emergency assistance, UNESCO has become a strong advocate in the international community of the idea that humanitarian assistance cannot be reduced merely to the supply of food, medicine and blankets; that there must be a close link between the concepts of ‘relief’, ‘rehabilitation’ and ‘long-term development’; and that emergency operations must include from the beginning a local training component. This idea has gained ground: there is growing recognition of the principle that the victims of conflicts have an equally inalienable right to education as all other human beings. UNESCO’s strategy therefore consists in

endeavouring to set up temporary educational structures in emergency situations, particularly for displaced persons and refugees. There, too, the Organization’s role can only be as a catalyst: it is not so much to build schools or print school textbooks as to assess priority education needs, formulate strategies to meet them in conjunction with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) and contribute to the formulation of consolidated appeals for international humanitarian assistance co-ordinated by the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (UNDHA).

191 ● While education is one of the high priorities in emergency situations, assistance to the independent media can prove to be fundamental to the reconciliation process. We are only too well aware of the role played by warmongering propaganda and incitement to hatred in triggering and aggravating conflicts. UNESCO will therefore continue, as it has done in Bosnia and elsewhere, to support, together with the United Nations and professional organizations, local media whose independence of the parties to the conflict is internationally acknowledged, which provide non-partisan information and which defend the values of peaceful coexistence and mutual understanding.

192 ● It is most of all during the reconstruction period following the conclusion of peace agreements, however, that vast fields of action open up to UNESCO: peace-building, especially the building of civil peace, can rest only on genuine national consensus, that is on the widespread desire to plan and construct peace together. That implies a considerable effort to sensitize and educate the main actors in civil society, and here education, science, culture and communication all have their part to play. It does not just mean rebuilding the institutions destroyed during a conflict – even if that is a priority objective; it means doing so in such a way that the foundations of a

democratic, pluralist and participatory society are laid at the same time.

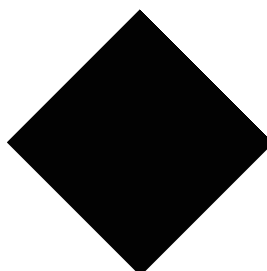
193 ● Here again, education – in its broadest sense – has a key role to play, not only in building the bases of democratic citizenship; not only in alleviating the psychological after-effects of conflict for young people; but also in ensuring that all sections of the population who have been excluded because of their age or sex, their ethnic origin or religious beliefs, their political or economic situation or their geographical position are given a real opportunity to be brought back into social and working life. It is in that context that the concept of ‘learning without frontiers’ will find its most innovative field of application, the idea being to set up systems of intensive and varied training adapted to the needs of each learner that would enable everyone – and most particularly those who, because of the conflict itself, have ‘missed’ the education train – to enjoy a second chance of developing their full intellectual and human potential.

194 ● Communication is also an essential tool for reconstructing civil societies torn apart by conflict: freedom of the press, pluralism and independence of the media, development of community newspapers and radio stations are

crucial to the re-establishment of social bonds and to the reconciliation process.

195 ● The national programmes UNESCO has launched in recent years in countries emerging from conflict (in El Salvador and Mozambique), the programmes currently being prepared (in Burundi, Guatemala, Haiti and Rwanda) and those it may initiate during the period covered by the Medium-Term Strategy are intended to support national reconstruction efforts in the Organization’s fields of competence. Their originality, though, lies in the fact that they seek to create the necessary climate for the establishment of genuine interaction between all the parties concerned. They involve protagonists from all sides, governmental as well as non-governmental, in the implementation of development projects relating to the Organization’s various fields of competence, and in many cases to several at once. The projects all contain an element of training in methods of conflict management and an educational component designed to disseminate the values of human rights and democracy. As such, these national culture of peace programmes are intended to illustrate and put into practice in the field, where the action is, the relation of interdependence between peace, development, human rights and democracy.

UNESCO and its partners



UNESCO in its Member States

- 196** ● UNESCO's action takes place in its Member States, in close co-operation with their institutions and intellectual communities, with the resolutions adopted by Member States at the General Conference setting the general direction which this action takes. The role of the Secretariat, both at Headquarters and in the field offices and units, is to facilitate the implementation of these resolutions by Member States, thus enabling them to fulfil their commitments with respect to the objectives and priorities of UNESCO's programme. For this purpose, the optimization of existing ties between the Secretariat and national institutions, and the development of new ones, is essential if UNESCO's assistance to its Member States is to be efficient and effective. There is no need, in this context, to emphasize the importance of regular contacts being maintained between UNESCO's Secretariat and the various national government authorities, but National Commissions also have a vital role to play as the constitutionally recognized focal points for UNESCO's activities in Member States.
- 197** ● Unique in the United Nations system and specific to UNESCO, a National Commission is established by each Member State under Article VII of UNESCO's Constitution to serve as the central liaison body between the Member State and the Secretariat. The National Commissions participate in programme design, execution and evaluation, by fostering closer collaboration with all relevant government departments and agencies, national intellectual communities, institutions and organizations, and also individuals working in the Organization's fields of competence. The prime function of National Commissions is to facilitate interactive relations among the various current and potential partners in Member States, and to promote awareness among the public at large of UNESCO's ideals and activities.
- 198** ● Within the Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001, the Secretariat will continue to strengthen its co-operation with the National Commissions, which play a crucial role in mobilizing partners in the Member States. The functioning of the National Commissions will

continue to be improved – particularly those in new Member States and the weaker ones in the developing and least-developed countries – through technical and financial assistance. The aim will be to improve the general working conditions of National Commissions (e.g. through the provision of basic office and telecommunications equipment, documentation on UNESCO's activities and access to UNESCO's data bases and documentation services) and strengthen their capacities (through training courses, short-term secondments of staff members and/or staff exchanges between National Commissions). However, the Secretariat's efforts to strengthen the capacities of National Commissions can only complement Member States' own efforts. By virtue of the provisions of Article IV of the Charter of the National Commissions, it is the Member States that have the primary responsibility for providing their respective National Commissions with the appropriate legal status, authority, permanent secretariat, structure and human and financial resources to enable them to function effectively.

199 ● Greater attention will also be paid to enhancing the capacities of National Commissions to play a more active role in 'co-operation for development' activities, in particular by encouraging their increased participation in consultations at national level with other United Nations institutions and agencies, and with other intergovernmental organizations active in UNESCO's fields of competence. The objective is to enhance complementarity between regular programme activities and projects funded by extra-budgetary resources.

200 ● Interregional, regional, subregional and bilateral co-operation among National Commissions will continue to be encouraged through periodic regional conferences and support to regional and subregional pilot projects and also, increasingly, by twinning arrangements between National Commissions, both within and across the regions. In particular, the consultation of the National

Commissions for the preparation of the biennial programmes will follow the model adopted for the preparation of the 28 C/4 and 28 C/5 documents.

201 ● The National Commissions will be more closely involved in programme implementation and evaluation, either directly or indirectly as intermediaries when the execution of certain activities is assigned to universities, specialized institutions or non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In this regard, the functions and responsibilities of National Commissions *vis-à-vis* the Secretariat, particularly in field offices and units, will be more clearly defined, so as to avoid duplication of effort and further strengthen collaboration.

202 ● Special efforts will be made during the Medium-Term Strategy period to encourage greater involvement in UNESCO's activities by representative bodies of civil society, in order both to spread the Organization's message and to enhance the effectiveness of activities at grass-roots level. Greater participation by UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations – an objective being to increase both their numbers and their capacity for action – and by accredited non-governmental organizations will be one of the avenues for reinforcing UNESCO's activities. Another will consist in developing, through the intervention of the National Commissions themselves, closer contacts with parliamentarians, town councils, community-based organizations, women's and youth associations, community movements and business and industrial enterprises. This is very important for achieving the desired progress in such areas as basic education for all, lifelong education, preventive education, protection of the environment, human rights and democracy, and the culture of peace, to cite just a few examples. In addition, UNESCO will encourage voluntary services to become more involved in its work by promoting the development of appropriate infrastructures and by giving greater visibility to their activities. The goodwill ambassadors will help to make the

general public more aware of UNESCO's ideals and mobilize support for them.

- 203** ● These partners bring to bear on our action their intimate knowledge of local conditions and problems, their commitment and context-specific expertise, and their ability to mobilize their respective constituencies, thus contributing to the sustainability and multiplier effect of the activities. In the longer term, the feedback received from civil society partners will also help in refining global and national strategies and programmes. Conversely, the

exposure and recognition that these partners receive by being associated with UNESCO will give fresh impetus to their own work. For these reasons, the National Commissions will be encouraged to set up new partnerships with competent national and local NGOs and other relevant representative bodies of civil society. It should also be emphasized that armed forces and security forces are expected to become active partners in activities aimed at defending peace and promoting development, particularly in rural and deprived areas.

UNESCO and its international partners

- 204** ● With regard to its international partners, during the Medium-Term Strategy period UNESCO will focus on making further progress towards building a 'united thrust' of multi-lateral co-operation for development. With this end in mind, UNESCO will continue to strengthen its co-operation with all its current and potential partners: the funds, programmes and Specialized Agencies of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, regional development banks and public and private funding institutions.

- 205** ● UNESCO will make a more effective contribution to United Nations system-wide development co-operation policies and procedures, in particular by participating in meetings at the highest decision-making levels of the system and in inter-agency and inter-Secretariat meetings on policy and programme co-ordination. Emphasis will be placed on improving and expanding inter-agency collaboration and on defining country- and regional-level objectives, policies, plans and programmes. Efforts will focus on sensitizing partners to UNESCO's policies and programme priorities and on developing co-ordinated strategies and frameworks for joint action at regional and national levels based on a clear

division of labour among participating institutions, taking into account the specific mandate and comparative advantage of each partner. The success with which ongoing joint actions are being implemented has opened up new possibilities for avoiding duplication and achieving synergy in order to make the best possible use of available resources.

- 206** ● During the Medium-Term Strategy period, UNESCO will continue to further improve and strengthen the frameworks for joint action such as the follow-up to the Jomtien World Conference on Education for All, the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the New Delhi Education for All (EFA) Summit of the nine high-population developing countries, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and Development, and Habitat II. The Secretariat will continue to participate in inter-agency task forces such as the International Consultative Forum on Basic Education, for which UNESCO provides the secretariat services, and the inter-agency task force for the follow-up to ICPD. Emphasis will be placed on expanding partnerships and improving synergy of action,

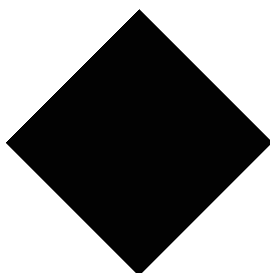
following the experience with the Jomtien Framework for Action: since 1990, UNESCO's collaboration with UNDP, UNICEF and the World Bank has been extended to other areas and other institutions, such as UNFPA and UNEP. Co-sponsor of the New Delhi EFA Summit, UNICEF has since contributed to the Regional Conferences of Ministers of Education in Asia, Latin America and the Arab States. It is also co-operating with UNESCO and other agencies in elaborating a joint programme of educational assistance in Africa. In the same vein and as a follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development, UNESCO is participating with all other institutional partners of the United Nations system in promoting basic education for all, with emphasis on expanding the access of girls and women.

- 207** ● Greater attention will be given to strengthening and expanding ongoing co-operative mechanisms and programmes in priority areas of UNESCO's action. These will include, for example, co-operation with UNFPA, UNDP, UNEP and UNICEF in environment and population education and information; with WHO and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in preventive education against drug abuse and AIDS; with the United Nations Centre for Human Rights in the promotion of human rights and human rights education; with ILO in improving the status and condition of teachers and in technical and vocational education; with the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (UNDHA), UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO and WFP in refugee education; with ITU in communication; and with the United Nations University in higher education and research, and for the implementation of the agreement on the University of Peace. In addition, where appropriate, new partnerships will be developed with other partners, with a view to enhancing the multiplier effect of the activities.
- 208** ● Consultations with regional intergovernmental organizations and development banks, as well as other donor agencies and bilateral funding sources, will be pursued with a view to encouraging increased investment in UNESCO's fields of competence and facilitating better co-ordination and harmonization of activities. New initiatives will be taken and the ongoing consultations pursued, for instance with the Inter-American Development Bank in connection with the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development; with the European Commission for harmonizing financial and administrative procedures; and with the Asian Development Bank on the use of distance education in support of basic education, especially of girls and women, in the high-population developing countries. Regular interactive relations will be maintained with bilateral funding sources in order to facilitate increased investments in priority areas and countries, through special accounts and fund-in-trust arrangements.
- 209** ● At the country level, UNESCO will participate more closely in policy and programme development work with such institutions as UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP, in donor meetings organized under the leadership of UNDP and the World Bank and in 'upstream' activities (needs assessment, sectoral and multisectoral studies, design of projects for extra-budgetary funding) carried out jointly with funding sources and other partners. UNESCO will strengthen working relations with the relevant institutions and donors at the country level through its field offices and units and the National Commissions, while keeping abreast of the priority needs of Member States and mobilizing donor support in meeting those needs. In addition, recent initiatives to mobilize funds from private sources will be pursued, in particular by developing an overall strategy and rules of procedure to guide the generation of support for development efforts of Member States.
- 210** ● UNESCO will continue to enhance, renew and enrich its co-operation with non-governmental organizations as regards both the execution of activities included in its programmes and extra-budgetary projects, and operations undertaken by NGOs themselves.

This partnership, which includes a whole array of international NGOs – be they specialist or learned associations, like the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), or mass organizations, such as youth organizations –, is an essential component of international co-operation for development. More flexible and dynamic approaches to this co-operation will be adopted, particularly with national NGOs, placing the Organization's relations with NGOs on a new, proactive footing. At the same time, support will be extended to isolated or fragile representative non-governmental bodies throughout the world, with a view to facilitating their integration into international co-operative networks.

211 ● The new Directives concerning UNESCO's relations with non-governmental organizations as adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-eighth session should open a new era in co-operation between UNESCO and the organizations that represent civil society. In particular, emphasis will be placed on flexibility and on consolidation of the intellectual and academic communities around the world through the NGOs that represent them. Within this context, framework agreements will be concluded with a small number of key umbrella NGOs that are broadly representative, competent and efficient in specific areas of UNESCO's programmes.

Guiding principles



Principles guiding the choice of activities

- 212** ● If UNESCO is to keep abreast of the rapid changes that may be observed at both world and regional level, it must have the ability to **anticipate**. A future-oriented outlook capable of inspiring action should be a natural attribute of an international organization committed to intellectual co-operation. Without downplaying the importance of activities responding to the most pressing needs, UNESCO must continue to be a place that looks to the future on behalf of the international community. The aim must be to foresee in order to forewarn.
- 213** ● In most areas of concern to UNESCO, the immediate future is already foreshadowed by hard facts (population growth; academic failure; environmental degradation; intolerance and prejudice, etc.); a generation is often the minimum time-span needed to achieve a crucial change and to bring a policy to full fruition. During the period covered by the Medium-Term Strategy, the findings of the main groups of experts and centres for future studies at world level will be channelled into several focal points of debate, analysis and prediction with a view to finding ways in which the Organization might alter or associate itself with probable trends in its fields of competence.
- 214** ● Faced with the gathering speed of change and growing complexity, UNESCO must endeavour to introduce both greater flexibility and transdisciplinarity into its programme design and implementation. Precision is called for in defining objectives and strategies, but when it comes to choosing activities and their means of execution, what is required is flexibility and a **willingness to adapt**: to adapt to changing needs and circumstances and, also, to the distinctive characteristics of countries and groups of countries.
- 215** ● As an intergovernmental organization with a universal mandate, UNESCO must indeed give priority to the formulation of global strategies as a response to world problems. However, such strategies can be effective only if they are sufficiently flexible in their implementation to be adapted to the specific problems of Member States, as expressed at the regional, subregional or even national level.

In this connection, greater attention will be given to developing strategies and programmes responding to the priority needs of the various regions and of certain groups of countries with similar characteristics. As regards regional priorities, the strategy will consist in further strengthening existing regional programmes and networks or in developing new ones to respond to emerging needs. Following the successful example of the regional programmes for the renewal of primary education and the eradication of illiteracy, the regional education innovation and development networks, the regional informatics or scientific information networks and the regional programmes in reading and book development, emphasis will continue to be placed on fostering the pooling and sharing of resources and expertise among the participating countries when tackling similar problems.

- 216** ● UNESCO will continue to devise and apply specific strategies to meet the special and urgent needs of certain groups of countries with common characteristics – such as countries in transition, the nine high-population countries, small island States, the Mediterranean countries, and Portuguese-speaking countries. Specific activities and projects will continue to be developed to respond to the priority needs of these different groups of countries. These will include: consolidation of democratic processes, reconstruction of education systems, management of social transformations, protection of the environment and promotion of media independence and pluralism in the Central and Eastern European countries (PROCEED Programme) and in the Central Asian countries (CAP Programme); preservation of the ecological balance, protection of the environment and management of coastal zones, development of communication, distance education, and cultural development in the small island States; the creation or strengthening of networks of scientific, cultural and academic institutions with a view to promoting intercultural co-operation and

dialogue among the Mediterranean countries (Mediterranean Programme); and development of higher education, informatics and reconstruction of education systems, including emergency assistance, in Portuguese-speaking countries; without forgetting, of course, basic education for all in the nine high-population countries.

- 217** ● A requirement which has achieved increasingly wide recognition is transdisciplinarity. Many of the issues dealt with by UNESCO – environment and development, population, human rights and democracy, not to mention basic education, training and research, cultural development, etc. – pose challenges which cut across the boundaries between disciplines and even between fields of knowledge. UNESCO's action must increasingly be designed in terms of transdisciplinary projects and developed on the basis of a thematic rather than a sectoral approach; it must bring together various areas of knowledge and be capable of finding practical solutions to development problems whose complexity calls for holistic methods. A strong disciplinary base is needed if a transdisciplinary approach is to be effective. UNESCO's efforts to strengthen the disciplines should, needless to say, continue.
- 218** ● At the same time, the various disciplines and even the various fields of competence of the Organization should be encouraged to work together in the pursuit of a number of common objectives. In particular, the intergovernmental scientific programmes should strive for greater complementarity of approach and activity, in accordance with the recommendations contained in the 'Joint Statement by the Chairpersons' of the intergovernmental scientific programmes. Equally urgent is the need to ensure closer interaction between the environmental sciences and the social and human sciences. UNESCO must make decisive progress in that direction if it is not to fall behind what is already standard practice in a number of its Member States.

219 ● Another guiding principle will be the importance assigned to **evaluation**: comparison of results actually achieved with those expected is an essential tool for ensuring that appropriate choices are made when activities are being planned. Programme evaluation activities to be implemented under the Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001 will capitalize on the results obtained during the previous plan period. The 1994-1995 biennium of this period was a turning-point in further strengthening the evaluation function in the Organization: each programme sector had to devote 0.5 per cent of its direct costs to support evaluation activities, and became responsible for the organization of these activities. This significantly increased the number and scope of external evaluations besides enabling an evaluation plan for the biennium to be prepared.

220 ● On the principle that evaluation must from now on be an integral part of programme execution, the systematic evaluation of all the Organization's activities, subprogramme by subprogramme, will be pursued with a view to improving programme design, but bearing in mind also the cost-effectiveness of the evaluation process. Biennial evaluation plans will include an overall evaluation of field offices and units. A house-wide computerized programme monitoring system will be progressively set up which will strengthen the evaluation work, while applying and improving on evaluation standards, procedures and methods. Participation by National Commissions and non-governmental organizations in the evaluation activities will be enhanced. A global evaluation of the implementation of the Medium-Term Strategy at the end of the sexennial period could be considered.

221 ● The fourth guiding principle – **concentration** – has been a central concern of the governing bodies for very many years. The work done in that area over the past few bienniums will continue during the period covered by the Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001. Concentration is not necessarily

synonymous with jettisoning certain themes or fields of activity. It also means consolidating priorities, particularly in budgetary terms and in terms of beneficiaries. It means looking for greater complementarity between the activities themselves, either within a programme or spread across several programmes, ensuring that they are more relevant – that is, more likely to have a real impact – and creating synergy between activities in the regular programme and activities funded from extra-budgetary resources. In order to match ambitions to resources, an effort will be made to give preference to activities with a catalytic effect, likely to be continued and sustained by bodies at the international or national level. An attempt will also be made, when the programmes are drawn up, to distinguish more clearly between recurrent activities – permanent services or functions of the Organization such as information exchange and the monitoring of trends in the fields of competence of UNESCO – and 'projects' as such, which have more specific objectives, beneficiaries and expected results and a limited time-span.

222 ● Finally, during the Medium-Term Strategy period, increased emphasis will be placed on those **implementation procedures and methods** that make a direct contribution to the development efforts of Member States and, in particular, to the development of human resources and endogenous capacities. These will include, for example, the initial and further training of teachers, researchers and specialists; pilot projects for training, research and practical demonstration; advisory services for drawing up policies and implementation strategies; and the identification and formulation of development projects. Particular emphasis will also be placed on strengthening co-operative networks – at subregional, regional and inter-regional levels – so as to facilitate the exchange of information, knowledge and expertise among institutions and specialists, as well as on the preparation of concise policy briefs for decision-makers on specific or

urgent issues. Particular attention will also be given to disseminating successful innovative materials and to providing technical support for their adaptation to particular

circumstances. On the other hand, the number of meetings, conferences, studies, reports and publications of a general nature will be reduced.

Priority groups

223 ● Some population groups and groups of countries are exposed to conditions whose nature and complexity warrant special action on their behalf. By designating women, young people, the least-developed countries (LDCs) and Africa as priority target groups for its action during the six-year period 1996-2001, and by deciding to devote a substantial proportion of its efforts and resources to them, UNESCO intends to make a significant contribution in its fields of competence to improving the circumstances of those groups.

224 ● The international community has already been mobilized for action on behalf of three of them: the LDCs, Africa and women. Where the LDCs are concerned, that effort falls within the framework of the Programme of Action for the Least-Developed Countries for the 1990s adopted by the United Nations following the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s; the mid-term results will be evaluated in October 1995. Africa has also been recognized as a priority by the entire United Nations system since the 1980s with the adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (1986-1990), extended by the United Nations General Assembly under the title of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UNNADAF). With regard to women, the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies, which will remain in force until the year 2000, have provided a framework for a whole series of activities at international level aimed at improving the status and rights of women and

at achieving their full participation in decision-making processes at all levels of society.

225 ● Consultations with Member States have clearly demonstrated the need for UNESCO to develop a specific strategy for young people, a group representing a growing proportion of the population. Such a strategy would be conducive to greater understanding of the problems in their lives, their behaviour and their aspirations; it should also seek to involve young people more directly in the life of the Organization and its programmes, for indeed it is they who will run tomorrow's world.

226 ● As the century draws to a close, these four priority groups still have particularly pressing needs. For example, in the area of education, a recent report has revealed that more than 100 million children worldwide, including nearly 60 million girls, have no access to primary education and that more than two thirds of the world's 960 million illiterates are women; in the LDCs, the number of illiterates is on the increase, and by the year 2000 is expected to reach 170 million, 61.6 per cent of whom will be women. Several overlapping groups often have the same needs: approximately 50 per cent of the population of the LDCs and of the African countries is composed of young people; 33 of the 48 LDCs are in Africa. A special effort will be made within the framework of the Medium-Term Strategy to gather information and data that will make it easier to take account of the situation, needs and expectations of each of these groups, in both

the planning and the execution of activities. Moreover, the projects concerned specifically with these groups and carried out in each of the Organization's major fields of action will attempt to find practical and innovative solutions to some of their particular needs. A special effort will be made to enlist the fuller participation of these groups in the life and work of UNESCO, so as to ensure that they are not perceived solely as beneficiaries but also as actors in international co-operation in their own right.

Women

- 227 ● Since its inception, UNESCO has endeavoured to promote equality of the sexes, both in practice and in people's attitudes, and has also tried to raise the status of women. However, the alarming persistence of huge disparities, the emergence of new forms of discrimination and the 'feminization of poverty' make it more than ever necessary to adopt measures and forms of action to remedy the situation and to work for the achievement of the three objectives of the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995): equality, development and peace. Taking its cue from the platform for action of that Conference, the Organization's Medium-Term Strategy for women will be three-pronged.
- 228 ● Firstly, efforts will be made for the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all policy-planning, programming, implementation and evaluation activities. This will entail the production of refined gender-disaggregated data and analysis on a regular basis in all the Organization's fields of competence. It will also entail the revision of normative instruments to bring them into line with the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the promotion of non-sexist terminology and the development of gender-sensitive indicators to monitor all UNESCO's projects.
- 229 ● Secondly, due attention will be given to making full use of women's vision, competence, experience and potential. UNESCO will encourage the broad and active participation of women at all levels and fields of activity and pay particular attention to women's priorities, perspectives and contribution to the rethinking of both the goals and means of development. In this context, the Organization will ensure greater involvement of women in its programmes by establishing rosters of eminent professional women, supporting professional women's groups and disseminating information about relevant research on women and gender issues. Action will also aim at stimulating women's networks – including the network of focal points for women of the National Commissions – and reinforcing co-operation with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) as well as with other organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations.
- 230 ● Lastly, the Organization will endeavour to develop specific programmes, projects and activities for the benefit of girls and women, geared towards promoting **equality, endogenous capacity-building, and women's full citizenship**. UNESCO will continue to support action to combat discrimination against women in order to make equal rights for men and women a *de jure* and *de facto* reality in its various spheres of competence. It will encourage the studies carried out on this issue and will call for the ratification and implementation of the conventions on the elimination of all forms of discrimination, particularly in education. UNESCO will also promote legal literacy for women at all levels of the school system, and will work towards the full enjoyment of human rights by women. Greater attention will be paid to the eradication of sexist stereotypes in education, particularly in textbooks. Support will be provided for initiatives taken by the relevant

professional organizations with a view to eliminating a portrayal of women that provokes violence and to promoting a more positive and diversified image of women in the media. By means of studies on the causes of violence against women, including prostitution, the Organization will help to foster public awareness of the extreme forms of discrimination suffered by women, particularly in conflict situations.

231 ● The Organization's action in this area will also be aimed at bolstering women's capabilities in all its fields of competence with a view to their full empowerment. Especially in regions where enrolment rates for girls and women are still very low, UNESCO will encourage a review of legislation, policies and programmes in order to identify the obstacles restricting their access to education. In general terms, the emphasis will be on diversifying opportunities for education and training to benefit women and girls without schooling; on improving the access of girls and women to science and technology teaching and to technical and vocational education; and to strengthening women's role in higher education by means of UNESCO Chairs. The Organization will also support the training of women researchers in the fundamental and applied sciences and in the field of communication, information and informatics; particular attention will be paid to ways of facilitating their access to posts of responsibility in the media.

232 ● Special development projects designed to respond to certain particularly urgent problems, such as water resources management in arid zones, the improvement of communications, particularly in rural areas, or access to technologies, training and information, will be implemented during the 1996-2001 period. Whether these projects concern the establishment of community radio stations in rural areas, support in the form of micro-loans to local development initiatives, or crafts production, they will all be implemented by women and will all promote the 'endogenous knowledge' that women possess throughout the world.

233 ● Lastly, UNESCO will continue to encourage women's full participation in all aspects of the political, economic, social and cultural life of their societies. Emphasis will be laid on the responsibilities of citizenship, women's participation in the processes of democratization currently under way in many countries, and their role in conflict resolution and peace-building. Furthermore, in collaboration with the non-governmental organizations concerned, the Organization will lend its support to networks established to promote solidarity, sharing, the North-South dialogue and the building of a culture of peace.

Youth

234 ● The situation of young people has deteriorated in recent years. They are suffering from the effects of unemployment and underemployment; youth unemployment is becoming one of the major problems of society as this century draws to a close. Many young people too, especially in the most disadvantaged population categories, in rural and in fast-growing urban areas, live in extremely precarious conditions, in some cases amounting to marginalization and social exclusion. For that reason, the Medium-Term Strategy aims first and foremost to strengthen youth training and to contribute to better and broader educational opportunities for young people of both sexes. In particular, efforts will be continued to facilitate the entry into education systems of young people with special needs – those living in shanty towns, street children, those living in remote or inaccessible regions, and young people belonging to cultural minorities or to nomadic, displaced or refugee population groups. This calls for co-ordinated action by all partners concerned – Member States, non-governmental youth organizations, voluntary organizations and representatives of civil society – at international, national and local levels.

235 ● Encouraging young people to play a more prominent role in society and to participate actively in the preparation of programmes and actions that concern them is another objective of the Organization. Support will therefore be given to initiatives by international youth organizations to mobilize young people in support of projects that aim, *inter alia*, to preserve the cultural heritage and its environment, to safeguard audio-visual archives and to develop the practice of intercultural dialogue among youth.

236 ● The Organization will also endeavour to encourage research on the needs and aspirations of young people. In that connection, the influence of the electronic media on the younger generations will constitute a major research theme in the field of communication: in co-operation with non-governmental youth organizations and the relevant professional organizations, young people themselves will be able to speak out on the way in which they perceive 'violence on the screen'. Support will also be given to the endeavours of international sports authorities, specialist bodies and the media to make young people more aware of the ethical dimension of sport and to promote the spirit of fair play among young supporters, especially during sporting events.

237 ● Lastly, measures will be taken in co-operation with the organizations of the United Nations system and with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, particularly in the context of the Associated Schools Project, to strengthen intercultural exchanges, youth volunteer services and youth participation in innovative projects in the Organization's fields of competence. The establishment of a youth observatory and the consolidation of the international information service on youth problems in various societies, the strengthening of networks of institutions, organizations and specialist research centres and assistance to Member States for the formulation and implementation of youth policies and programmes will round off these measures.

The least-developed countries (LDCs)

238 ● In 1980, the average gross domestic product (GDP) in the industrialized countries was 44 times the average GDP for the LDCs; in 1991, it was 59 times greater. Today, all analytical studies recognize that nothing will put an end to the spiral of exclusion in which these countries are caught unless they are better able to choose their own social objectives and to achieve them. Improving the situation of the LDCs calls for a new approach focusing on social development and enjoying the support of the entire international community.

239 ● Constructing a viable future for the LDCs involves strengthening their capacity to mobilize and manage the knowledge that is useful for their development. Through the international 'Management of Social Transformations' Programme (MOST), assistance will be provided for the establishment of reference centres and data bases of cardinal importance to these countries and of relevance to policy-making, such as migration, and local and regional management of economic, technological and environmental changes.

240 ● Another important component of the Strategy concerns capacity-building in the fields of competence of UNESCO: formulation and execution of national plans for the development of human resources at all levels, with emphasis on the universalization of basic education, technical and vocational education and in-service training; special education, training and information activities geared to more effective analysis and measures to cope with the problems arising in the spheres of population, environment and development; establishment of UNESCO Chairs in key fields; and participation of LDC institutions in the various international and regional networks for inter-university co-operation.

- 241** ● In the same vein, and in order to contribute to the transfer of scientific and technical knowledge and know-how, UNESCO will support the efforts of the LDCs in the following priority sectors: renewable energy sources, biotechnology, informatics and information and communication technology. Emphasis will be placed on the application of the knowledge and techniques concerned to the specific needs of the LDCs, on the development of partnerships at regional level and on projects in these priority areas which are to be funded from extra-budgetary resources.
- 242** ● A third component of the Medium-Term Strategy relates to the responsible participation of all citizens in social development and will take the form of support for the efforts of the LDCs to decentralize responsibilities (a form of 'everyday democracy', practised at local and regional level) and to further the kind of education that will make such decentralization feasible.

Africa

- 243** ● In the Revised United Nations System-Wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development in the 1990s, the development of human resources and capacity-building are given top priority. UNESCO, which is the designated lead agency for the implementation of this part of the Plan, has, like the other bodies in the United Nations system, assigned priority to Africa in its activities. After executing in 1994-1995 the 'Priority: Africa' programme, UNESCO gave Africa a chance to speak out when it organized 'Audience Africa' in February 1995, on the eve of the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen. The final report of 'Audience Africa', whose recommendations are addressed to African governments as well as to the Organization, and which is highly lucid, points to the development of a strategy for placing 'Africa in UNESCO's programme' at the centre of its priorities. This
- will be the practical expression of solidarity with the continent to which we were recently enjoined by the Copenhagen Summit.
- 244** ● This strategy will thus seek to encourage the reform and reconstruction of education systems, to improve their efficiency, and to promote access to basic education for all, assigning priority to women, girls and the inhabitants of poor rural and urban areas. Attention will also be focused on a redefinition of policies for the financing of education based on a sharing of costs among the State, the regions, local authorities and families, and promoting community action and local initiatives designed to sustain the diversification of formal and non-formal education.
- 245** ● The Organization will also help the African countries to establish institutions and programmes for scientific and technical education, to expand co-operation at subregional and regional level and to set up regional centres of excellence. It will facilitate the access of researchers and academics to data bases through informatics networks; it will provide support for twinning arrangements between research institutes and laboratories with a view to forming lasting partnerships between the scientific communities of North and South and between those of the South. Action to promote science and technology will also take the form of pilot projects on renewable sources of energy and biotechnologies.
- 246** ● Another aspect of the strategy will be encouragement to the population to participate in the design and execution of development projects and further discussion of current processes of democratization. In this connection, the development in Africa of pluralist and independent media and the establishment and strengthening of community media will be of considerable importance, as will the role of women in education and the transmission of cultural values.
- 247** ● Lastly, the strategy will act as a catalyst and mobilizing force for international technical

co-operation to provide support for the initiatives of the African Member States, in close collaboration with the other institutional partners in the United Nations system, the international and regional financial institutions such as the World Bank and the African Development Bank, and intergovernmental

and non-governmental organizations. The Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Africa will be particularly involved in the effort to further regional and subregional integration as regards the development of education, science, culture and communication.

Decentralization

- 248** ● The principal objective of decentralization is to serve Member States more effectively by responding to their specific needs and particular circumstances, while drawing full benefit from the wealth of knowledge, experience and ideas accumulated or generated throughout the world. It is also intended to ensure the active presence of the Organization at the country level along with other agencies and funds of the United Nations system and relevant intergovernmental, and international non-governmental organizations.
- 249** ● During the Medium-Term Strategy period, the decentralization process will be pursued with pragmatism and flexibility, paying greater attention to increased co-operation with National Commissions and intellectual communities which have a leading role to play in this regard.
- 250** ● Activities aimed at assisting development efforts of Member States at the national level – be they financed by the regular programme or extra-budgetary resources – and activities that are regional or subregional in scope should, in principle, be decentralized – ‘decentralized’ meaning that their implementation should be entrusted either to Member States themselves, through their National Commissions or other national institutions, or to the field offices in co-operation with relevant partners. Decentralized implementation of

activities is obviously a complex process and one that in many cases requires interaction with Headquarters or recourse to international expertise. The overriding criterion in any decision to decentralize an activity, or part thereof, is effectiveness and relevance to the needs and capabilities of Member States.

- 251** ● The decentralization process cannot be sustained without the effective presence of UNESCO in the Member States. One of the most important functions of the field offices is to maintain interactive relations with relevant national partners and with the local United Nations and donors’ representatives, in order to provide technical support and policy advice to Member States, especially as regards identification and implementation of extra-budgetary programmes. Field offices are also expected to assist Member States in the implementation of activities in UNESCO’s fields of competence, in addition to those provided for in their own work plans. In performing these tasks, they are required to co-operate with National Commissions and other relevant partners and, when necessary, draw upon the competence and skills available in other field offices in the region or at Headquarters. At present, the field offices located in each region have both sectoral and, increasingly, multi-sectoral responsibilities. Together, they form a network of expertise serving the region as a whole.

- 252 ● During the Medium-Term Strategy period, efforts will be made to achieve greater decentralization in certain programmes or sub-programmes by assigning specialists with the required profile to existing offices, resorting to local expertise, developing new partnerships in Member States and, where necessary, creating new offices, due account being taken of the cost-effectiveness of small offices.
- 253 ● The evaluation of each field office/unit will be pursued, in the light of the relevant decisions of the General Conference and Executive Board, in particular 136 EX/Decision 3.3, adopted by the Board following an in-depth study on decentralization. An effort will be made on this basis to improve complementarity among the field offices located in a given region, so that they may respond more effectively to the priority needs of the Member States they serve. In so doing, due account will be taken, region by region, of developments in the situation of Member States, in the expertise available and in the new partnerships established with national and civil society partners. The functions and responsibilities of the field offices *vis-à-vis* the National Commissions will be more clearly defined with a view to enhancing complementarity between them. Emphasis will be placed on the intangible aspect of the work of field units as promoters and facilitators of new initiatives in UNESCO's fields of competence.
- 254 ● Greater attention will be given to a more effective delegation of authority to the field offices, and to the allocation of adequate material and human resources. Efforts will focus on improving the quality of staff in the field through regular rotation of staff between Headquarters and the field, in accordance with programme requirements; the recruitment of national professional officers; the creation of associate expert posts; and the assignment of young professionals following their successful training at Headquarters. In addition, the retraining of field staff will be intensified.
- 255 ● The existing electronic communication system will be further developed so as to ensure rapid feedback among the field offices and between the Secretariat – at Headquarters and in the field – and the Member States. By enhancing interaction between Headquarters, the field offices and units, National Commissions and other national and international partners, these various measures are expected to enable the Secretariat to act as a global, interactive network responding effectively to Member States' needs.

Information and publication services

- 256 ● UNESCO's worldwide action relies on the active support of its diverse constituencies and the general public around the world. Promoting sustained awareness among them of the Organization's objectives and activities, and of trends and issues in its fields of competence, is crucial for mobilizing their support. During the period covered by the Medium-Term Strategy, efforts will be made to improve and rationalize, in particular by strengthening their complementarity, the various information and publication services and products with a view to reaching wider audiences and stimulating their interest and involvement in UNESCO's work.
- 257 ● Particular attention will be given to ensuring better co-ordination of the **documentation and information services** operated by the Secretariat at Headquarters (library, archives and sectoral documentation services) and in field offices, and by

UNESCO Institutes and Centres. Specialized data bases will be developed to cover the priority programme areas under the Medium-Term Strategy, and existing information systems will be renovated and made more user-friendly. This will involve on-line access and access through optical disc (CD-ROM) systems to UNESCO's various data banks and bibliographic data bases, such as the *Index Translationum*, which contains over 600,000 bibliographic entries on works of all kinds translated and published throughout the world, and the *Directory of UNESCO Data Bases*, which contains information on nearly 10,000 institutions the world over and on their activities. Drawing on past experience, closer linkages will be established with major information systems and networks operating at international and regional levels, so as to facilitate wider international access to information on UNESCO's activities. Links to the Internet system, providing access to general information on UNESCO's activities and programmes, will continue to be improved; this will enable UNESCO, when the time comes, to derive maximum benefit from the 'information superhighways'.

258 ● Continued efforts will be made to improve the quality and topical relevance of UNESCO **publications** addressed to professional and academic audiences. The Organization's main reference works (such as the *UNESCO Statistical Year Book*, the *World Education Report*, the *World Communication Report*, and the *World Science Report*) will be made directly available through an international data base. The UNESCO periodicals (*Prospects*, *Nature and Resources*, *International Social Science Journal*, *Museum International*) will continue to keep their respective readership up to date in different disciplines and foster exchanges of information and ideas among specialists. In addition, newsletters and promotional brochures issued by Headquarters, the UNESCO Institutes and the field offices will continue to provide the latest information on UNESCO's activities in

specific areas. Regular evaluation of the impact of these newsletters will be undertaken with a view to discontinuing all but the most effective ones.

259 ● The strategy adopted for UNESCO publications will place particular emphasis on improving the image of UNESCO among the general public and sensitizing it to major problems confronting humankind at the turn of the third millennium. The publications will address critical issues of interest to intellectual communities and decision-makers and highlight topics relating to peace, women, the environment and the cultural and natural heritage. Greater attention will be given to increasing the sales and distribution of publications through both conventional and modern channels (Minitel and Internet); this will include a reasonable expansion of the existing international sales and distribution network. In this connection, the recently established Readers Club intended to promote readership will cover other language editions and regions. In the framework of the newly created TRANSPUBLIC Fund, the translation and publication of UNESCO's works in an increasing number of languages (such as Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese and Hindi) by national publishing houses will be encouraged.

260 ● The *UNESCO Courier*, the best known of the Organization's periodicals (with 34 language editions as well as a quarterly selection in Braille) will continue to cover a theme of universal interest each month from a variety of cultural viewpoints and to give an overview of UNESCO's activities. Greater efforts will be made to devise ways and means (e.g. reduced subscription rates and mailing services) to reach larger numbers of students and opinion leaders around the world.

261 ● The Secretariat will continue to rationalize **public information** services both at Headquarters and in the field offices. UNESCO press releases will be widely distributed and emphasis will be placed on a more comprehensive coverage of priority activities and on

developing promotional campaigns in connection with special events. The format and content of messages and the products themselves (print, radio, video) will be adapted to the changing global communication environment characterized by the emerging 'information superhighways'. The Medium-Term Strategy will aim at channelling these messages through National Commissions, and, with their assistance, through NGOs, other professional associations, UNESCO Clubs, Associated Schools and the mass media. Efforts will also be made to reach

constituencies identified as useful information relays, in particular youth organizations, women's associations and representatives of civil society (such as parliamentarians, community representatives, municipalities, chambers of commerce and the private sector), and to adapt the messages to the needs and interests of these specific target audiences. Increased attention will be given to new ways and means of informing the public about the 'intangible' – or less obviously quantifiable – work of an organization devoted primarily to preventive and catalytic action.

Functioning of the Organization

262 ● During the period covered by the Medium-Term Strategy, UNESCO will seek to consolidate the reforms already carried out to modernize the Organization, enhance its ability to adapt, expand its outreach and audience, and increase the effectiveness of the Secretariat. To have real impact and lasting results, improvements in the functioning of the Secretariat must go hand in hand with changes in the methods of work of the governing bodies of the Organization, and should take account of, and anticipate, expected major developments in the structure and governance of the United Nations system as a whole.

263 ● The first main line of action will be to adapt the Secretariat **structures and modalities of planning and action** to the increasingly transdisciplinary nature of UNESCO's programmes. In the past, a number of mechanisms have been developed to provide lines of horizontal co-ordination, interlinked within the main vertical sectoral structure. These mechanisms include, at present, a number of small co-ordinating units for specific fields or target groups (e.g. women,

least-developed countries, etc.), and ad hoc intersectoral co-ordination committees. Since 1994, the transdisciplinary and inter-agency co-operation project: 'Environment and population education and information for development' has been organized, on an experimental basis, as an independent self-administered project operating outside the sectoral structure. Two lessons can be drawn from the results of past and current experience. First, flexibility is necessary since there is no simple formula which works in all cases; second, whatever arrangements are used, it must be made clear, from the beginning, where responsibility lies for each activity.

264 ● The programme sectors must continue to provide the natural framework for the implementation of the programmes. However, a genuinely transdisciplinary mode of work is needed in order to ensure more effective and sustained lateral communication, collaboration and co-ordination between the disciplines for the planning and implementation of activities. The setting up of ad hoc teams composed of staff belonging to various disciplines working

together for a given period of time to implement a specific activity may be one of the best possible organizational mechanisms for reinforcing transdisciplinarity. The underlying philosophy of such an approach will be to mobilize, both at Headquarters and in the field offices and units, all the available expertise needed for activities, programmes or projects, increasingly cutting across sectoral structures or geographical borders. The success of such undertakings depends not only on careful organization, but also on a change of attitude that takes account of the globality of UNESCO's mission.

- 265 ● In the same spirit, measures will be taken to increase the operational flexibility of certain programmes. The idea is to strengthen these programmes' operational capacity and potential impact, while ensuring that they are suitably flexible, but also to mobilize them to a greater extent and more directly in the service of the Organization's work. In this context 'autonomy' does not mean 'detachment', quite the contrary. The International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) has led in this process and the results are on the whole very positive. Now the International Bureau of Education (IBE) and the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE) are also being given functional autonomy, but it is expected that over the period covered by the Medium-Term Strategy, the three bodies will contribute far more to meeting the overall priorities of the Organization's education programme.
- 266 ● It is also proposed that the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and the World Heritage Centre (WHC) benefit from a certain operational flexibility, in administrative and financial terms. A series of measures to this effect will be submitted for the approval of the Executive Board, and their implementation for an experimental two-year period will be the subject of an in-depth evaluation.
- 267 ● It must also be borne in mind that UNESCO's primary function is programme development, implementation and evaluation;

the resources devoted to non-programme activities, notably administration and programme support, must be progressively minimized. Studies are under way to determine whether selected functions performed by these administrative and programme support services could be provided through outside contracts while maintaining the quality of these services and ensuring a reduction in costs.

- 268 ● In the last six years emphasis has been placed on the **modernization of management and administration** and more particularly on simplifying procedures and improving the working methods of the Secretariat. While a large measure of authority has been delegated, especially in conjunction with decentralization, the objective now is to enhance further the capacity of managers to allow them greater flexibility in the use of financial and human resources and thereby encourage greater initiative and innovation. At the same time, the process by which staff at all levels are held accountable for the implementation of their tasks and the use of resources will be strengthened. Closely linked to delegation of authority is the simplification of procedures which has so far proved successful and will be continued over the next six years.
- 269 ● Much of the progress achieved in modernizing working methods has been due to increased use of information and telecommunications technology. The Information Resources Development Plan providing a framework for activities aimed at improving administrative and programme support will be continued. One of the major undertakings will be the development of a housewide Local Area Network (LAN) and of LANs in larger field offices which will enable all staff, both at and away from Headquarters, to communicate with one another, to initiate or act on administrative actions, and to have access to UNESCO data bases. In addition, connection to external networks, such as the Internet, will also facilitate communication and exchanges with UNESCO partners around the world.

- 270 ● The effectiveness of the Secretariat depends to a large extent upon its human resources, which constitute one of the most precious assets of the Organization. It is imperative that staff members be of the highest calibre and that their skills be those required for their tasks. Programme changes must be matched by changes in the skills available in the Secretariat. This means that action regarding post management, recruitment and training must be undertaken within the framework of a clearly defined personnel policy and in line with an overall strategy for the **development of human resources**. During the period covered by the Medium-Term Strategy, particular emphasis will be given to human resources planning tied to the overall programme strategy of the Organization. The aim will be to achieve a proper balance between the necessary core staff and short-term expertise provided by specialists recruited from all world regions, as well as to ensure the enlistment of new talent to meet changing needs. Priority will be given to the streamlining of the recruitment process and to training programmes. Measures will also be taken to encourage the increased participation of staff in personnel policy development.
- 271 ● The role of UNESCO requires it to bring together expertise from wherever it exists to meet the needs of Member States and to help solve national, regional and global problems. Efforts will be made to develop and maintain networks, both formal and informal, of individuals and institutions which can provide such expertise. These networks will be built up from staff members' professional contacts, including participants at meetings they attend, and through professional organizations, NGOs and National Commissions.
- 272 ● The Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001 aims at a lean and flexible Organization in which initiative and creativity will prevail over routine. The key principles that will guide the functioning of the Organization as it moves into the third millennium are transparency, responsibility and accountability. The watchword is less bureaucracy and more reflection and action. The reform of an institution like UNESCO is by its very nature a complex and evolving process. It is directed towards improving tools and methods but also, since all begins in the minds of men, towards changing our work culture.