



The Rabat Proposals
Meeting of Experts on the 'Roads of Faith' Project

Rabat, Morocco, 23 June 1995

PREAMBLE

1. From 19 to 23 June, under UNESCO's auspices, a meeting of experts on the three monotheistic religions was held in Rabat (Morocco) in order to study the 'Roads of Faith' project approved by the General Conference at its twenty-sixth session (6 November 1991). Experts and observers attended that meeting.
2. The participants paid unanimous tribute to His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco. They congratulated him on having made his kingdom a welcoming and tolerant country and on having agreed to place that meeting under his distinguished authority.
3. Professor Adelhadi Tazi, member of the *Académie du Royaume du Maroc* (the Academy of the Kingdom of Morocco) chaired the proceedings, assisted by two vice-chairpersons, Mgr. Frana and Mr Chouraqui, Professor Manns, Professor Thiam and Professor Werblosky constituted the drafting committee.
4. The experts acknowledged with gratitude UNESCO's initiative in launching the 'Roads of Faith' project, which set out to promote dialogue among all believers, and particularly among the children of Abraham. They also expressed their thanks to their hosts in the Moroccan National Commission for UNESCO for their warm and gracious hospitality.
5. Considering the similarities in their common spiritual heritage, the experts observed that the events currently shaking the world, together with the daily violence and misunderstandings, were a keen incitement to dialogue with a view to building world peace.
6. A broad and candid exchange of views enabled experts and observers to express divergent positions in a spirit of mutual respect. An atmosphere of calm prevailed during the discussions, notwithstanding the legitimate pluralism of the convictions expressed.
7. As children of Abraham, the experts understood the need to find unity within legitimate diversity and to transform their distrust, divisions and disputes into collaboration. They bore the same message of fellowship, tolerance and mutual respect, and the reconciliation of their memories was therefore urgent. As they embodied half of humanity, they could join forces for the construction of peace, and thereby assist others who were striving to walk the roads of faith.

This information is provided by

UNESCO
Culture of Peace Programme
Networking & Information Section
7, Place de Fontenoy
75352 PARIS 07 SP
FRANCE
Tel (+33.1) 45.68.12.19
Fax (+33.1) 45.68.55.57
e-mail: cofpeace@unesco.org
URL: <http://www.unesco.org/cpp>

PRACTICAL PROPOSALS

1. The experts unanimously believe that the fundamental goals of the 'Roads of Faith' project are valid, feasible and indispensable. The new drive for peace calls for a new language of reconciliation that must translate into a culture of peace.
2. They wish this favourable assessment to find expression in the preparation of a major project associating the representatives of the three monotheistic religions and all people of good will.
3. They submit to the Director-General of UNESCO the following recommendations:
 - (a) The establishment of institutes for reciprocal learning about the three Scriptures. In these institutes the three monotheistic religions and their distinctive cultures would seek new forms of dialogue reaching beyond the conventional context of the comparative history of religions. The experts teaching in those institutes would identify with their respective traditions and share the same ideal of peace.
 - (b) A preliminary study of identical initiatives already in existence in the world would make it possible to fulfil needs and to find the institute's specific vocation. UNESCO could, moreover, encourage co-operation with all who are working for the same ends.
 - (c) A new language is needed, leading to a revision of textbooks used in schools, including denominational schools, in order to eliminate clichés and irreverent allusions to other religions.
 - (d) The possible establishment of multidenominational schools to instruct children in respect and peace from an early age.
 - (e) The promotion within theology faculties of chairs in the three Scriptures and their distinctive cultures, to be held by experts belonging to these religions.
 - (f) A study to seek out ways in which a free and willing contribution might be made by the media to an authentic portrayal of religions as instruments of peace.
 - (g) UNESCO could take the initiative of producing brochures for the general public giving an account of the principal religions.
 - (h) In its collection of representative works, UNESCO could give more prominence to publications relating to intercultural and religious dialogue.
 - (i) The efforts made in the context of the Roads of Faith should culminate in a journey to Jerusalem, the mother city of all peoples. A pilgrimage to the holy city by the three monotheistic religions should have exemplary value for all and should be a means of disseminating spiritual, cultural and artistic wealth.
 - (j) Art being a universal language, the experts approve the Lumen-Or project, a choreographic fresco for peace, together with its educational implications.
4. A preliminary feasibility study is clearly necessary in order to work out an efficient and realistic approach to some of the ideas submitted.
5. A minimal structure should be established to ensure continuity in the initiatives taken to achieve these objectives. That continuity could be secured by a committee, for which UNESCO would

provide the secretariat, consisting of experts who were practising followers of the three monotheistic religions. The experts respectfully request His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco to sponsor this co-ordination group in order to lend it credibility.

6. The 'Roads of Faith' project has seen fit to commence with representatives of the children of Abraham. In a second phase, it could be expanded to include other spiritual movements.
7. The experts encourage UNESCO to invite Jewish, Christian and Muslim religious leaders to redouble their efforts to transcend past differences and embark on a new and active quest for peace.

The younger generations have a right to peace and the religions must be the beacon to guide them along the Roads of Faith. Owing their existence to the same Creator, human beings need to discover their true face, their human dignity and their spiritual vocation. A dialogue in depth cannot fail to be rewarding.

Finally, the meeting of experts in Rabat requests the General Conference meeting in October to take account, as far as possible, of the foregoing proposals.