



Newsletter – International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010)

June 2004

EDITORIAL: A NEWSLETTER FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE!

This is the first issue of our special newsletter dedicated to the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010). Following on from the International Year for a Culture of Peace (2000), the International Decade aims to create the basis for sustainable peace in different parts of the world. The underlying philosophy of this approach is that peace is more than a security issue: the Culture of Peace has been defined as “a set of values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life” (A/RES/53/243). This, however, necessitates efforts in a number of different fields; accordingly, the *Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace* has defined eight areas of action.

UN resolution A/55/47 designated UNESCO as lead agency for the International Decade. In addition to its own events and projects, the Organization engages in a dialogue with non-governmental actors: as all relevant UN resolutions have recognized, a true Culture of Peace can only be constructed when it is underpinned by efforts emanating from civil society. In the spirit of this, the website www.unesco.org/cp provides networking opportunities for all participants in the global movement for a Culture of Peace, including a “Decade calendar” and an “Exchange Market of Resources”. The most recent UN General Assembly resolution on the International Decade (A/RES/58/11 – November 2003) encouraged UNESCO to continue with its activities to develop communication tools for NGOs. Issuing such a newsletter is part of this endeavour; from now on, we are planning to send it out four times a year via email.

Our newsletter aims to be a source of inspiration for all members of the global network: admittedly, the Culture of Peace concept is wide-ranging and vast – and there are hence many different ways in which

one can promote it. For this reason, the newsletter includes news on recent events, but also various examples of practical work for a Culture of Peace. You will find information on the activities of UNESCO itself, on the work of other UN agencies, as well as examples from the initiatives of non-governmental organizations registered on our website. Future issues will have a specific thematic or regional focus, thus illustrating different aspects of the International Decade and its action areas.

Space constraints limit the number of examples in each newsletter. We therefore encourage everyone to continue using our website: by virtue of its interactive features, Culture of Peace actors can update their profiles and enter information on their events and projects. In addition to this, international NGOs have the opportunity of providing updates in a simple interactive newsletter (also entitled “Peace is on the Move”).

UNESCO is committed to the construction and promotion of a Culture of Peace – a task that requires continuous efforts with a particular focus on future generations. The Culture of Peace Coordination office at UNESCO’s Bureau of Strategic Planning acts as a focal point for different activities, gathering information as well as supplying materials and advice. We therefore look forward to hearing from you and to co-operating with you in the framework of the International Decade!

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Keynote Article:

Phase III of UNESCO's Culture of Peace Project in Guatemala

In 1996, Guatemala emerged from 36 years of civil war, whose cultural and material results are still felt in everyday life. This is the context of the "Culture of Peace Project", which was developed as a result of the peace accords between the government and the URNG (1996) and the recommendations of the Commission for Historical Clarification (1999). The UNESCO initiative is based on the *Declaration and Programme of Action for a Culture of Peace* and carried out as a funds-in-trust cooperation with the Italian government.

Having commenced in 2000 (which the United Nations declared as the "International Year for a Culture of Peace"), the project is now in its third and final phase, which will conclude in 2005. This phase envisages the consolidation and reinforcement of action taken in previous years.

The project's key aim is to influence Guatemalan society through both formal education (i.e. the national educational system) and non-formal education processes, especially in cooperation with actors from civil society. In doing so, the project seeks to establish new non-violent forms of cohabitation, facilitating democratization and national reconciliation. For this task, two partners exist: firstly the Ministry for National Education, where the current process of educational reform is supported and combined with other elements that are related to the Culture of Peace; and secondly protagonists from civil society, who act as opinion leaders in their respective field (e.g. the Guatemalan human rights attorney, youth networks, the police, mass media and other organizations).

Taken as a whole, the initiative aims to promote the construction of a culture of respect and tolerance. It draws upon the reinforcement of human rights, of dialogue and the acceptance of multiculturalism – the latter a distinctive feature in a country with a number of different ethnic groups. The project thus helps overcome the confrontation and violence which still characterise daily life, as well as improving the relations between the civil society and the state. The range of action taken in this framework is very wide and includes the following activities:

- Support for the inclusion of citizenship education in pre-primary, primary and elementary school curricula as well as helping educators in teaching it;
- Support for the professionalization of teachers employed by the ministry;
- Strengthening youth organizations that work for peace and non-violence;
- Assisting the "Intersectoral Dialogue Tables" on key national problems;
- Helping the media diffuse civic and democratic values;
- Encouragement for research and publication on the prevention of violence.



The previous two phases resulted in a strengthening of civic education in the framework of curriculum transformation, as well as creating and developing spaces and mechanisms against violence and for the rule of law. The third phase therefore intends to implant this process in society – not only by increasing the coverage of previous activities, but also transferring knowledge to governmental and non-governmental actors. It is through this knowledge transfer that the activities become a truly sustainable contribution to the construction of a Culture of Peace.

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UNESCO and the Culture of Peace:

UNESCO and partners hold international conference on inter-cultural dialogue and the Culture of Peace in Libreville, November 2003

From 18 to 20 November 2003, the Republic of Gabon hosted an international conference entitled "Intercultural Dialogue and the Culture of Peace in Central Africa and the Great Lakes Region". The event took place in Libreville under the auspices of the president of Gabon, El Hadj Omar Bongo Ondimba; it was organized by the UNESCO Libreville Office and the government of Gabon in cooperation with several other institutions. Partners included the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF), the *Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie* (AIF), the *Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie* (AUF), the *Centre International des Civilisations Bantu* (CICIBA), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the French National Commission for UNESCO, the Office of the UN Secretary General's Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region, and Omar Bongo Ondimba University.



More than 140 people from over 20 countries attended the event, with participants ranging from academics to political leaders and civil-society representatives. Speakers included the Vice-President of the Republic of Gabon, Didjob Divungi Di Dinge; the president of UNESCO's General Conference, Michael Abiola Omolewa; the Vice-Rector of AUF, Prof. Aloys-Raymond Ndiaye; the General Secretary of ECCAS, General Louis Sylvain Ngoma; the President of the Gabonese National Commission for UNESCO, Prof. Daniel Ona Ondo;

and General Lamine Cissé, the UN Secretary General's Special Representative in Bangui. Messages from UNESCO's Director-General Koichiro Matsuura and Hans d'Orville, Director of the Bureau of Strategic Planning were read. Subsequent to the opening ceremony, Prof. Ona Ondo – who is also Minister of National Education – chaired the conference. The overall theme was divided into five sub-topics, with all of them being tackled through presentations and discussions:

1. The role of traditional and spiritual chiefs in prevention mechanisms and conflict resolution in the societies of Central Africa and the Great Lakes region (*14 presentations*)
2. The perception of the Culture of Peace concept in the societies of Central Africa and the Great Lakes region (*10 presentations*)
3. Intercultural understanding (*8 presentations*)
4. Citizenship education (*14 presentations*)
5. The role of the media in promoting a Culture of Peace and development in conflict and post-conflict situations (*7 presentations*)

In addition to these five working groups, UNESCO, in cooperation with the Office of the UN Secretary General's Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region, held a preparatory workshop for the first sub-topic in Bujumbura. UNESCO and the AIF also organized an African writers' forum, dealing with the question of "Literature and peace: writing in a crisis-ridden Africa". One of its outcomes was a manifesto calling for an active policy of promoting literature as a way of disseminating the ideas of inter-cultural dialogue and the Culture of Peace.

Each working group drafted a set of recommendations, which together formed the basis of the *Libreville Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue and the Culture of Peace*. Altogether 21 requests were formulated in the Declaration which, among other things, called for the recognition of traditional forms of conflict prevention and resolution as intangible heritage. The document also stressed the role of local and regional languages as potential vehicles for traditional values of tolerance. Furthermore, it suggested the institutionalization of

the African writers' forum on a biannual basis. Particular emphasis was placed on the necessity of teaching inter-cultural dialogue and the Culture of Peace at different levels, including training courses for journalists.

With regard to Gabon-based activities, the conference suggested the creation of an intercultural research and peace education institute at the Omar Bongo Ondimba University, as well as the establishment of an "intercultural dialogue and Culture of Peace" prize, to be under the aegis of

UNESCO and the government of Gabon. The entire text of the Libreville Declaration is available via UNESCO's Culture of Peace website (http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk_sum_refdoc.htm). The Organization's Bureau of Strategic Planning is currently preparing a publication on the event.

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UNESCO, UNHCR and INEE work together on Peace Education Programme

Education for peace and non-violence is a cornerstone in the construction of a Culture of Peace. In the field of peace education, a number of different approaches exists, ranging from advocacy (including videos, publications and lectures) to specific support for restructuring the education system itself. Some efforts focus on resource materials, which teachers then integrate into the curriculum, whilst other approaches concentrate on helping teachers internalise the values and attitudes associated with peace education prior to teaching these to the students. Of the various possible approaches, the *Peace Education Programme (PEP)* of UNESCO and UNHCR uses a very direct method: it is skills-based, and provides activity-based lessons that together build the attitudes, values and behaviour of constructive living. Working with the endorsement of the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), the two organizations seek to create a truly comprehensive programme for a range of different educational situations.

In 1997 UNHCR developed the Peace Education Programme as a project for refugees in the camps of Kenya. The programme subsequently spread to eight other African countries as well as several non-African countries. Following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding at the beginning of 2004, UNHCR and the Education Sector of UNESCO now cooperate in the revision of PEP. The materials of its "peace education package" include teachers' kits, guides for the facilitators of community workshops as well as training materials and support materials. They have been digitized by INEE, thereby becoming available to a wider range of agencies working with populations in crisis throughout the world.

PEP is a comprehensive programme – it does not only provide materials, but also includes their

application: the package's materials thus supplement the training and structure.

The programme has been comprehensively tested and used in the field. In the countries where it is currently being applied, the programme consists of both formal and non-formal components. Adults participate in 36-hour community workshops, which are usually conducted over 12 half-days. Children, on the other hand, participate in weekly lessons for all the years of their basic education. PEP aims for all school children as well as 20% of refugee adults and out-of-school youth to participate in the programme.

The skill-based approach adopted by PEP includes the intensive training of teacher. This has proven to be particularly successful in education systems where teachers are under-resourced. Educators learn to apply activity-centred forms of peace education with their pupils, thereby allowing children to practise constructive behaviour in a safe environment. The "community" part of the programme is discussion-based and solution-focused, with direct applications to the problems of the communities. As an indication of its success so far, former participants have developed local initiatives based on the programme philosophy. As skills and behaviours are internalised by the programme's beneficiaries, it becomes clear that peace education is not a short-term or occasional undertaking: it requires consistency to build and reinforce skills that will serve people all their lives.

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The UN System and the Culture of Peace:

WHO: UN Collaboration for the Prevention of Interpersonal Violence

In relation to the Culture of Peace, the general perception of violence is often characterized by a focus on conflict situations such as war or civil war. However, if a true Culture of Peace is to be constructed, efforts against interpersonal violence are equally important: people also die in situations that are not related to wider political crises. Interpersonal violence refers to the violence of everyday life – including sexual violence, homicide, fights between youths, child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, robberies and other crimes. While interpersonal violence does not receive the same media coverage and commitment to prevention as acts of terror and war, it generates similar damage to society.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has made an important contribution through its support for closer co-operation of different UN agencies and programmes on this issue. Recent efforts on the theme of interpersonal violence include the preparation of a *UN Study on Violence against Children* (prepared with OHCHR, UNICEF and WHO as core advising agencies) and the *World Report on Violence and Health* (published by WHO in 2002). In January 2004, WHO and a number of national governments also launched a Global Interpersonal Violence Prevention Alliance (GIVPA). Furthermore, UNIFEM has been managing a Trust Fund for the Elimination of Violence against Women since 1997, whilst UNICEF is campaigning against acid-violence in Southeast Asia. For several years, UNESCO has placed emphasis on non-violence education as an aspect of true quality education.

The first UN inter-agency meeting on the prevention of interpersonal violence took place in November 2001, bringing together representatives of ten UN agencies as well as actors from the non-governmental sector. One of the outcomes of this session was the publication of a *Guide to United Nations resources and activities for the prevention of interpersonal violence* (available via http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/media/en/633.pdf). On the initiative of WHO, a follow-up meeting took place in January 2004, with participants discussing the progress made in this field as well as identifying further scope for collaboration. In the

context of this, emphasis was placed on the necessity of developing a framework for advocacy.

The first draft of the joint framework is currently prepared by WHO. As part of this, collaboration at country level is to be fostered. In doing so, the different agencies can draw upon previous experiences in campaigns against interpersonal violence, for instance cooperation on a survey and prevention project in Mozambique (with the involvement of UNFPA, UNICEF, UNPD, UNESCO and WHO). In addition to these activities – and as agreed upon in the two meetings – a special website on interpersonal violence will be developed. This site will act as a resource portal, providing information on the violence-prevention activities of the different UN agencies. In this form, it would be a more extensive and dynamic version of the published guide.

Future collaboration with regard to violence prevention should include the development of a framework for advocacy to be tested during the African Year for Violence Prevention (2005) which will provide an excellent opportunity for UN agencies to work together on regionally-specific advocacy for violence prevention.

For more information, please consult :
http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/united_nations/un5/en/



NGOs and the Culture of Peace:

In this section, we present examples from non-governmental organizations registered on our website, thus seeking to illustrate different ways of working for a Culture of Peace. UNESCO is not responsible for the contents of these NGO projects and – unless explicitly stated – does not act as an official partner.

Indigenous NGO and a Culture of Peace

Ever since its foundation, *Yachay Wasi* (“House of Learning”), an NGO officially established in 1993, has dedicated its work to several key aspects of the Culture of Peace: the organization combines efforts for sustainable economic and social development with the promotion of understanding and tolerance and a special commitment to the human rights of indigenous people. *Yachay Wasi* is associated with the UN Department of Public Information and has consultative status at ECOSOC. Its president and co-founder was born in the Andean village of Acopia, speaks Quechua and resides in Cuzco, Peru. The two other co-founders were born in France and represent the NGO at the United Nations in New York.

Today the descendants of Tawantinsuyu (the Inka Empire) are no longer victims of open conflict, but have suffered prejudice and marginalization in the past hundred years. Prejudice mostly stems from misinformation and preconceived ideas. Through its campaign *Inka Challenge*, *Yachay Wasi* therefore provides information on the culture and religion of the Inka civilization, demanding respect for its remains and protection for its sacred sites.



At the same time, a long-term project in Acopia – the *Centro Cultural Yachay Wasi* – focuses on children, instilling pride and interest in their Inka legacy. This sustainable community-development initiative emphasizes cultural identity and works for the incorporation of traditional indigenous knowledge and environmentally balanced technology. It thus benefits the entire population of Acopia and its neighbouring villages. By these means, it nurtures cooperation and the goodwill indispensable for a lasting Culture of Peace.

In 2000, the General Assembly approved the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council, opening new incentives toward a culture of peace on a global scale. Consequently, *Yachay Wasi* organized two *Andean Encounters* (2001, 2003) to inform representatives of remote Quechua-speaking villages on the United Nations’ work and to consult on the issues.

The activities of *Yachay Wasi* stand in the context of two International Decades – not only the Decade “for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World” (2001-2010), but also “for the World’s Indigenous People” (1995-2004). In combining these objectives and building on indigenous knowledge, the organization acts in the spirit of Kofi Annan’s words when addressing the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in 2002: “you have knowledge, vision, values, skills and many other attributes that can and must help us at the United Nations, and indeed all of humankind, to achieve our long-sought goals of development and peace.”

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Heritage for a Culture of Peace: Project of UNESCO's NGO Liaison Committee

The multi-faceted nature of "heritage" was recently emphasized at the 32nd General Conference of UNESCO, as reflected in the adoption of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. The notion of "intangible heritage" underlines that "heritage" affect people's lives, being subject to their personal interaction and thus still in the process of evolving. In view of UNESCO's long-established role in the safeguarding and promotion of heritage (both tangible and intangible), the NGO-Liaison Committee has developed a campaign on "Heritage for a Culture of Peace". The Committee represents all NGOs maintaining official relations with UNESCO; in working on this particular project, it is supported by UNESCO's Culture of Peace Coordination office.

The campaign was first mentioned at the 2001 UNESCO-NGO Conference: assembling in December 2001, NGO representatives agreed upon an "Action Plan for the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World". Among other things, the document invited the Liaison Committee to draw up a list of monuments that can act as "messengers of the Culture of Peace". The idea behind the project is that heritage – be it in the form of monuments, works of arts or of traditions – can be used to promote dialogue and reconciliation.

The activities of UNESCO itself have frequently demonstrated this. A well-known example is the Organization's contribution to the reconstruction of Mostar bridge, whose planning implied dialogue and cooperation between the three communities in Bosnia. In this respect, the bridge's rebuilding also is a symbol of dialogue and reconciliation. From another angle, the Italian UNESCO Clubs have identified a number of historic sites which can be used in educating for peace and non-violence.

Since 2002, an NGO ad-hoc group is in charge of the project "Heritage for a Culture of Peace". With the support of UNESCO, a brochure was subsequently published, which the ad-hoc group sent to its member organizations. Additional copies are still available from the Committee, as well as from UNESCO itself. The brochure explains how to design and register a "heritage for a Culture of Peace" project by identifying a local element of their tangible or intangible heritage as an awareness-raising and action tool for a Culture of Peace. At the international NGO conference in

December 2003, a new resolution recommended that the Liaison Committee and its special task force "pursue their commitment to promoting a Culture of Peace and their action within the framework of the campaign".

In order to support this campaign, UNESCO's Culture of Peace Coordination has now started to collect examples of NGO projects working on the linkages between heritage and the Culture of Peace. By the end of 2004, it is planned to document some exemplary and inspiring cases of specific initiative.

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Editorial note:

The newsletter is published by the Culture of Peace Coordination, Bureau of Strategic Planning, UNESCO. The current issue was edited by Aurore Salinas, Daniel Laqua and Pierre Terver.

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Disclaimer: *The Coordination office is not responsible for the contents of NGO projects featured on its website (www.unesco.org/cp) or in this newsletter. The ideas and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect UNESCO's point of view. The designation and presentation of the contributions do not implicate UNESCO regarding the jurisdiction of the countries, territories, cities or zones, nor their frontiers or authorities.*



Recent and Upcoming Events:

UNESCO's Culture of Peace website includes an events calendar for the International Decade (http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk_sum_calendrier.htm). On these pages, Culture of Peace actors can disseminate information on relevant events. The events registered by Culture of Peace actors are, however, not sponsored or officially endorsed by UNESCO: responsibility for the events remains with the organizers. You can receive further information on these events – as well as on many others – when visiting the website.

16-19 May 2004 World Forum on Human Rights, Nantes/France

This three-day forum, organized by the city of Nantes aimed to facilitate an exchange between different actors in the field of human rights, thus helping them to establish closer links. WWW: <http://www.forum-humanrights.org>

19 May 2004 International Ethics Day, Vilnius/Lithuania

The Ethics Department of Vilnius Pedagogical University hosted a series of events (panel discussions and cultural activities) in order to stress the importance of an ethical basis for a free society. The event follows on from previous activities, for instance a conference organized by the Department from 12 to 14 March 2004.

World Wide Web: <http://www.vpu.lt/en/padal.fakultetas/6>

4-6 June 2004 Salon international des initiatives de paix, Paris/France

The French NGO coordination committee for the International Decade (*Coordination Française pour la Décennie internationale de la promotion d'une culture de non-violence et de paix*) organizes this international "Culture of Peace" fair; it hence provides an opportunity for member of civil society to present their projects and to establish common ground for future activities. World Wide Web: <http://www.decennie.org/>

15-17 July 2004 International Youth Festival for Peace – "Colours of Asia", Seoul/Republic of Korea

The Youth Festival for Peace is organised by the International Youth Hostel Federation, bringing together 800 young people, who will discuss issues such as conflict prevention, environmental protection and heritage conservation. Participants will build "Peace Villages" in the Olympic Peace Parks as well as celebrating through song, dance and poetry. WWW: <http://www.cuseoul.org/>

9-12 August 2004 "Language as Violence – Violence as Language", Barcelona/Spain

This forum, taking place in the framework of the World Youth Festival, will bring together up to 1,000 young people from all over the world. They will discuss the forms of violence which they encounter in their daily lives, as well as searching for alternative languages to violence. The Forum and Festival are one of countless events at the "Universal Forum of Cultures – Barcelona 2004" (www.barcelona2004.org), which the Spanish and Catalan governments and the municipality of Barcelona hold in partnership with UNESCO.

WWW: http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk_visu_action.asp?CodeAction=1490

We invite all registered actors to update their profiles and to enter information on events and projects which are related to the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence! If you have lost your account number, please do not hesitate to contact us via cp@unesco.org.