



**ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF
THESSALONIKI
UNESCO CHAIR**
on Education for Human Rights and Peace



UNESCO/UNITWIN Award 2002

UNESCO Chair on Education for Human Rights, Democracy and Peace

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

I. ACTIONS

During the first half of the "**Decade**" (2001-2005) the UNESCO Chair of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (A.U.Th.) has undertaken the following actions for the promotion of the Culture of Peace.

I. ACADEMIC PROGRAMME at A. U. Th.

We succeeded to introduce the topic of the Culture of Peace and Non-Violence in the academic teaching of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, as follows:

A. Undergraduate level

1. Interfaculty Interdisciplinary Programme on Education for Human Rights and Peace (title: "*Contemporary World Problems and the Scientists' Responsibility*" – Academic Responsible: Professor Dimitra Papadopoulou).

The Programme is dedicated in both semesters of each academic year to the "Decade".

The UNESCO Chair has been offering the above Programme to undergraduate students of all Schools of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki since the academic year **1993-1994**; in **1997** the Programme has developed into an UNESCO Chair at A.U.Th. on Education for Human Rights, Democracy and Peace.

During the period 2001-2005 (total number of academic semesters: **9**) more than **40** Professors of the A.U.Th. and other Greek Universities, as well as a Lieutenant General, an official of UNICEF and representatives of several NGOs, have taught in the Programme.

The academics came from **18** University Schools such as Psychology, Medicine, Law, Philosophy, Physics, Chemistry etc. They gave lectures on different subjects such as:

Culture of Peace - Basic Concepts and Programmes of Action
● *Forms of Non Violence and Peace Research* ● *UNESCO - Programmes of Education for Human Rights and Peace* ● *The Contribution of Youth to the Culture of Peace* ● *International Protection of Cultural Heritage* ● *Violence on Children: Protection of their Rights* ● *Women and Citizenship: Dimensions of Democracy and Equality in Education* ● *Military Science and Art in the 3rd Millenium* ● *International Institutions and the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes* ● *Migration and Cultural Identity* ● *New Biotechnologies and Genetically Modified Organisms - Bioethical Questions* ● *Peaceful uses of Nuclear Physics* ● *Terrorism and Asymmetrical Warfare* ● *Multicultural society and school: the need of intercultural education* ● *Religions and the message of Peace* ● *Bio-terrorism-Contemporary reality of the biological threat, etc.*
(Please, see Attachment N^o 1)
(<http://www.unesco.auth.gr>)

During 2001-2005 around **1100** students coming from various Schools of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki have been enrolled in the above Programme.

2. Social Psychology and Peace (School of Psychology, A.U.Th.)
Some of the topics-object of this course are the following:

Culture of Peace. Basic concepts, international activities ● *The contribution of Social Psychology to Peace* ● *Aggression and violence. Social psychological theories* ● *Conflicts (Interpersonal, Intergroup, International)* ● *Non-Violence (types of) – M. Gandhi, M.L.King* ● *UNESCO and the Culture of Peace* ● *The Seville Statement on Violence and the Manifesto 2000 of UNESCO: social-psychological analysis, etc.*

B. Post-graduate level **European's Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratization**

This Programme is organised with the cooperation of **37** Universities from all member-states of the European Union and coordinated by the *European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratization*, (EIUC, Italy). The UNESCO Chair/A.U.Th. has been participating in this Programme since 1998.

During 2001-2005, **20** Professors coming from **7** Schools of A.U.Th. have taught in this Interdisciplinary Programme. The courses refer to topics such as:

Education for Human Rights, Democracy and Peace: Towards a Culture of Peace • Human Rights in Education • Women's Rights and Democratic Education: Discussing about Gender • Democracy and Citizenship • Multiple discrimination in Gypsy minority women • Multiculturalism and Intercultural Education • Immigration and Human Rights : National Issues • Nationalism and National Identity in Everyday Life: A Discourse Analytic Perspective • Civic Participation, Health Inequalities and Change in Deprived Communities, etc.

(Please, see: <http://www.emahumanrights.org>)

II. The UNESCO Chair / A.U.Th. has organised a National Interdisciplinary Conference on "**The Role of Teachers in the Culture of Peace and Human Rights**" (Thessaloniki, 14-16 December 2001).

The Conference was dedicated to the "Decade" (2001-2010) and to the U.N. Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004).

Main objective of the Conference was to make the Culture of Peace values to teachers of Primary and Secondary Education widely known and to invite them to undertake, together with their pupils, activities for the implementation of these values in the classroom.

Fifty nine (59) speakers had participated in the Conference which was attended by more than 550 participants, teachers of all 3 levels of Education, coming from all specialties and all over Greece.

(Please, see Attachment N° 2)

III. The UNESCO Chair / A.U.Th. established (December 2001) the **National Network of Educators for a Culture of Peace and Non Violence**.

The purpose of the Network is to promote the principles of the Culture of Peace in primary and secondary Education Schools. The Network members, more than 550 teachers of primary and secondary education, from all specialties and in all regions of Greece, have been working actively in order to diffuse the values of respect, tolerance, democracy and the Culture of Peace in the minds of hundreds of children.

A broad range of notable activities has been organized by teachers and schools of the Network, approaching diverse issues related to the Culture of Peace. Through projects, lessons, artistic events, information activities, conferences, educational interventions, multimedia presentations, discussion panels, communication with schools of foreign countries and publications, a nation-wide mobilization has been developed with the aim of involving the Greek students in the core of the Culture of Peace. The issues addressed by the above activities, include the following:

- ▶ Peace, non violence
- ▶ The rights of the child, child abuse, violation of children's rights
- ▶ (Anti)racism-xenophobia, intercultural education, diversity-tolerance and cooperation
- ▶ The consequences of war, humanitarian aid
- ▶ Respect, solidarity

► Respect / protection of the environment

The National Network of School teachers for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence, created by the UNESCO Chair, is a major instrument of cooperation of the 'Chair' with primary and secondary education teachers all over Greece.

IV. Among the various activities of the UNESCO Chair of the A.U.Th., is also the 'Chair's' **Collaboration with the Greek Armed Forces:**

The UNESCO Chair has a constant collaboration with the **National Armed Forces**, since 1998. The collaboration consists in the delivery of lectures and documents concerning issues of Education for Human Rights and Peace, as well as the Culture of Peace to Armed Forces personnel, soldiers and the public.

A number of lectures has been delivered by the UNESCO Chair at the School of National Defence (Athens) and the Higher School of War (Thessaloniki). The issues discussed in the above lectures related to subjects such as: "*UNESCO and Education for a Culture of Human Rights and Peace*", "*The Contribution of UNESCO in Peace Building Processes*", etc. The lectures were dedicated to the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).

V. The "Chair" has recently published a collective interdisciplinary volume under the title "**Towards a Culture of Peace. Education for Peace in Schools**" (Ed. Dimitra Papadopoulou), Thessaloniki 2005, p.530.

The authors of the book (48) come from all 3 levels of education and from many scientific fields (Theology, Mathematics, Biology, Psychology, Medicine etc.) A Lieutenant General and a former Vice Secretary General of the U.N. are among the writers. The *Seville Statement on Violence* and the *Manifesto 2000* are also included in the volume.

(Please, see Attachment N^o 3)

VI. Participation in Meetings and Conferences

The director of the UNESCO Chair, A.U.Th. and many other academic members of the "Chair" have participated and have given lectures on the Culture of Peace and non- violence and on the "Decade" in a great number of Conferences and Meetings organized by Organizations other than the UNESCO Chair, all over Greece as well as in other European countries.

The aim of this activity was to spread the objectives and values of the "Decade" widely in as many settings as possible all over Greece and to sensitize members of various social groups and Associations.

Some of the topics presented in this context are the following:

*UNESCO's contribution to the Culture of Peace (12.11.2001) ●
Human Rights Education after September 11th (24.01.2002) ●
Education for a Culture of Peace (18.05.2002) ● Violence
Prevention and Free Time. The Presence of the UNESCO Chair at*

the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 23 – 25.5.2002 • Education for Human Rights and Peace. Towards a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence. Round Table, 19.12.2002 • The role of the UNESCO Chairs to the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and non-violence (20.09.2002) • Culture as an instrument for conflict prevention (27.11.2003) etc.

The purpose of all the activities of the UNESCO Chair/A.U.Th. is the greatest possible promotion of the Culture of Peace and Human Rights values. In order to reach and sensitize many and diverse target groups to global problems and issues of the Culture of Peace, the UNESCO Chair a) has developed a broad interdisciplinary framework of studies regarding multiple contemporary issues, b) has based all its activities on a wide range of cooperations with various Institutions, Networks, Universities, and individuals such as academics, teachers, students and citizens.

It is worth noting that the UNESCO Chair's activities are not limited inside the academic community but extend to the rest of the society as well. Through its various Conferences, cultural events, Round Tables, educational interventions etc, the UNESCO Chair manages to attract a variety of audiences and to raise public awareness as to the above mentioned issues.

II. PROGRESS

Following the **Actions** described above, we consider what follows as evidence of the progress made by the UNESCO Chair / A.U.Th. towards the promotion of the Culture of Peace:

1. Increase of the "Chair's" co-operations with Institutions, Networks, Universities and individuals such as academics, teachers, artists, students and citizens. A key principle of the UNESCO Chair is expanding its activities in order to reach and sensitize as many Target Groups as possible to Global and the Culture of Peace issues.

All the activities of the "Chair" are interdisciplinary / pluridisciplinary; as a consequence its partners are Professors of several Schools and Faculties of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and other Greek and European Universities, Higher Education Institutes such as the School of National Defense, National and International IGOs and NGOs (UNICEF, U.N. International Centre of Information, Amnesty International, Institute of Education for Peace, Médecins du Monde etc.), Scientific Societies, Schools and educators all over Greece, etc.

2. The participation of the UNESCO Chair in European Projects and Networks has opened the way to a closer co-operation among the UNESCO Chairs of Europe and of the Balkan Region.

3. The activities of the UNESCO Chair have also a strong impact on the students of A.U.Th. The fact that approximately **1100** students have attended the Chair's courses during the period **2001-2005**, participating in the course's demanding examinations as well, illustrates the Chair's ability to draw their interest to Culture of Peace and Human Rights issues.

4. The creation of the **National Network of Schoolteachers for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence** has added a significant perspective to the work of the UNESCO Chair. Due to the national scope of the Network, a great number of schools, teachers and pupils are involved and work towards a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence.
