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**The Assistant-Director General for Culture**

Ref: CLT/CPD/DIR/2005/192

**COPY**

17 May 2005

Dear Mr Ocampo,

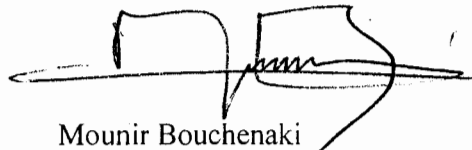
On behalf of the Director-General, I thank you for your letter of 7 February 2005 inviting UNESCO to submit comments and suggestions for a comprehensive programme of action for the Second Decade on World's Indigenous People (2004-2014).

As a result of a consultative process launched among all UNESCO programme sectors, I have pleasure in sending you herewith a document entitled "UNESCO's suggested actions for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People," which Ms Sarah Titchen, Programme Specialist, UNESCO Liaison Office in New York, will present at the occasion of the Fourth Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (New York, 16-27 May 2005).

You can be assured that our Organization will spare no effort to cooperate with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs as well as all other relevant agencies in addressing the needs of indigenous people in our programmes and activities in the framework of the Second Decade.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact my colleague Mrs Katérina Stenou, Director of the Division of Cultural Policies and Intercultural Dialogue and UNESCO Focal Point for Indigenous Issues (tel.: +33.1.45.68.40.86; fax: +33.1.45.68.55.97; email: [s.terada@unesco.org](mailto:s.terada@unesco.org)).

Yours sincerely,



Mounir Bouchenaki

Mr José Antonio Ocampo  
Under-Secretary-General  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
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USA



## **UNESCO's suggested actions for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People**

### **Summary**

The General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People to commence on 1 January 2005 (UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/59/174). The UN invited UNESCO to "submit comments and suggestions for a comprehensive programme of action for the Second Decade". It was suggested that the First Decade and its achievements could serve as inspiration for the establishment of the main themes to be taken into consideration for the Second Decade.

This document presents UNESCO's suggested actions for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (2005-2015). It is based on consultations with all UNESCO programme Sectors, as well as various documents included in annex 4.

Part I presents UNESCO's work in the framework of the First International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995-2004), including an analysis of UNESCO's actions in favour of indigenous peoples with respect to the main objectives of the First Decade.

Part II outlines the priorities and objectives that will guide UNESCO's contributions to the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (2005-2015). UNESCO envisages adopting priorities along the following lines: (i) Promote indigenous visions of development and sustainability (ii) Develop relevant international normative instruments; (iii) Apply the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent; (iv) Link its action with the UN Millennium Development Goals; (v) Link its action with other UN Decades.

Part III introduces concrete UNESCO's lines of action for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. All UNESCO Programme Sectors are presented: (i) Education; (ii) Natural Sciences ; (iii) Social and Human Sciences; (iv) Culture; (v) Communication and Information; and (vi) cross-cutting and intersectoral actions.

**The main objectives of the First Decade were:**

1. Strengthen international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous peoples in such areas as culture, education, health, human rights, the environment and social and economic development, by means of action-oriented programmes and specific projects. The slogan adopted was "Partnership in action".
2. Devote special attention to development activities of benefit to indigenous communities.
3. Educate indigenous and non-indigenous societies concerning the situation, cultures, languages, rights and aspirations of indigenous peoples.
4. Promote and protect the rights of indigenous women and men, and facilitate their empowerment to make choices which enable them to retain their cultural identity while participating in political, economic and social life, with full respect of their cultural values, languages, traditions and forms of social organization.
5. Further the implementation of the recommendations pertaining to indigenous peoples of all high-level international conferences.
6. Adopt the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and to develop international standards.

UNESCO developed various activities aimed at achieving the goals of the Decade, such as (i) standard-setting instruments, (ii) operational activities, and (iii) partnership-building. *Annexe 1* presents a statement on the work undertaken by UNESCO during the First Decade.

There has not yet been a formal **evaluation by UNESCO of its contributions to the Decade**. However, general lessons can be extracted from the UN General Assembly note entitled "Implementation of the programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People".

**Progress in the overall UN context include:**

- The consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples on planning and implementing the programme of activities for the Decade
- The Inter-agency cooperation in regard to indigenous issues
- The establishment of the UNPFII and of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, which improved the information about indigenous rights
- The implementation of activities concerning the development of indigenous peoples and a better access of indigenous peoples to development projects
- The strengthening of local indigenous organizations
- The recognition of indigenous identities and cultural specificities within pluricultural contexts

Nevertheless, indigenous peoples continue to be among the poorest and the most marginalized in many countries. The First Decade appeared to have suffered from a lack of visibility among indigenous people as well as among governments. Furthermore, progresses will be limited as long as the stereotyped view of indigenous peoples will persist due to the lack of quantitative and qualitative information on their needs and realities. Finally, indigenous organizations did not yet develop commonly visions, objectives and strategies to fight for their rights. The international community, and UNESCO in particular, are asked to make further efforts to change this situation.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning the work of UN agencies, **the High Commissioner of Human Rights distributed a questionnaire at several UN meetings inviting indigenous organizations to provide their views on the impact of the Decade**. The following suggestions and requests were provided by indigenous organisations:

- Receive more information on UN activities, especially at the local and national levels, and on training courses on indigenous rights for communities

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<sup>1</sup> "Resultados del Decenio internacional de las "poblaciones" indígenas del mundo (1994-2004). El caso de Guatemala", Cholwuj Cholna'oj, Centro de documentación e investigación maya, 2005

- Obtain greater support and participation within the UN system.
- Better access to development programmes and funds related to indigenous women's rights, education, health and protection of the environment

Regarding UNESCO's work on indigenous issues, a workshop took place in 1999 at headquarters in Paris on "The Cultural Challenges of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People".<sup>2</sup> Some obstacles to the achievement of the goals of the Decade and recommendations for overcoming those obstacles were identified by indigenous organizations:

- UN agencies efforts to promote and call attention to the Decade were insufficient.
- Action suffered from a lack of dialogue and coordination, which hindered the building of global and coherent policies.
- The various UNESCO programs (human, sustainable and cultural development) were a source of confusion for indigenous peoples.
- It was essential to improve the coordination between different UNESCO programs and activities, especially those concerning sustainable cultural development of indigenous peoples.

## II. PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES GUIDING UNESCO FOR THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE (2005-2015)

The goal of the Second Decade is "to further strengthen international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous peoples in such areas as culture, education, health, human rights, the environment and economic and social development, by means of action-oriented programmes and specific projects, increased technical assistance and relevant standard-setting activities." (UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/59/174)

UNESCO reaffirm its solidarity with the analysis made in the **Report of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues** as well as the recommendations proposed<sup>3</sup>:

- Partnerships with indigenous peoples should be reinforced to empower indigenous institutions, build indigenous knowledge, practices and systems and strengthen indigenous economies.
- At the local and national levels, the institutionalised mechanisms for consultation and participation of indigenous peoples in the development process should be strengthened.
- At the international and national levels, partnerships should promote indigenous path for development and make every effort to achieve the MDGs, as articulated by indigenous peoples.

In terms of methodology, increased consideration of the principle of "Free, Prior and Informed Consent" (FPIC)<sup>4</sup> will be sought in order to construct mutual consent with indigenous peoples on policies and actions concerning their development.<sup>5</sup> For instance, UNESCO has already proposed to "**construct mutual consent with indigenous peoples on policies and actions concerning their development**" in its Program and Budget for 2006-2007 (33C/5).

The following priorities and objectives guiding UNESCO for the Second Decade were established based on (i) the lessons of the First Decade, (ii) UNESCO actions that produced positive outcomes for

<sup>2</sup> *Annexe 2* contains detailed recommendations of indigenous peoples addressed to UNESCO during that workshop. It could be a base for the formulation of a UNESCO Plan of Action for the Second Decade.

<sup>3</sup> "Millennium Development Goals and Indigenous issues", Report of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues, 2005

<sup>4</sup> "Free" should imply no coercion, intimidation or manipulation. "Prior" should imply that consent has been sought in advance of any authorization or commencement of activities and respect time requirements of indigenous consultation/consensus processes. "Informed" should imply that information is provided that covers the implications of the project involving or concerning indigenous peoples. From the "Report of the International Workshop on Methodologies regarding Free, Prior and Informed Consent and Indigenous Peoples", New York, 2005

<sup>5</sup> "Indigenous Peoples and the Millennium Development Goals", preparation paper to the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the UNPFII, Victoria Tauli Corpuz, March 2005

### **1. Promote indigenous visions of development and of sustainability**<sup>6</sup>

The Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples represents an opportunity for UNESCO to defend and promote the **cultural approach to development**, that is to integrate culture as a prerequisite and a basis for development project design, in order to endeavour "change in continuity", to respect peoples' way of life and thought, and to build a consented and sustainable development.

Concerning indigenous peoples, cultural approach to development means to respect their cultural specificity. Indigenous peoples detain a **holistic vision of the world (a cosmovision)**. They incorporate value systems based on a close subsistence and spiritual relationship with natural resources and biodiversity. They are the repositories of extremely rich, varied and locally rooted knowledge systems (indigenous technology, land and resource management, medicine, crops).

**Cosmovisions** can be briefly defined as the way people perceive the world in which they live. It includes relationships between the spiritual world, the natural world and the human world. It embodies the premises on which people organize themselves and determines the philosophical basis for interaction with nature. In this regard, indigenous cosmovisions begin with the respect for the earth and the land. Indigenous peoples consider their land not only as a physical and geographical piece, but as a territory where lives develop in abundance and freedom, and in which their language, culture, artistic expression, and dress be representative of their cosmovision.

Accordingly, **indigenous peoples' concepts of development, of poverty, and education**, greatly differ from Western constructions, which may have negative effects on indigenous and tribal peoples, such as the loss of lands, natural resources and traditional livelihoods. For example, indigenous peoples have specific perceptions and indicators of poverty and well-being as well as their own strategies for poverty reduction. For them, poverty may be expressed as a lack of political participation, or as a loss of territorial integrity and spiritual values. These diversified concepts of poverty rarely included in national poverty reduction efforts, and traditional poverty indicators do not necessarily capture their specificities and their visions.

However, the respect of indigenous cosmovision is increasingly taken into account in international debates. As affirmed in article 25 of the World Summit on Sustainable Development's Declaration indigenous wealth of knowledge, practices and rich cultural diversity underscores the "vital role of the indigenous peoples in sustainable development". In its General Recommendation on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/52/18, 1997), the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination states that governments must provide indigenous peoples with conditions allowing for a sustainable economic and social development compatible with their cultural characteristics.

In this context, UNESCO could **emphasize the role of culture as a mainspring of development**. That implies "to deepen the understanding of poverty in indigenous communities, developing culturally sensitive poverty indicators that can define poverty in term of unsatisfied basic needs, taking into account the nature of traditional subsistence economies."<sup>7</sup> Conversely, the cultural approach to development can benefit to indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. As such, the principle of reciprocity would be highlighted: cultural approach to development benefit indigenous cultures while indigenous people's vision of the world can enrich world cultures.

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<sup>6</sup> Information mainly extracted from the report of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues, "Millennium Development Goals and Indigenous issues", 2005

<sup>7</sup> "Millennium Development Goals and Indigenous Issues", Report of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues, 2005

## **2. Promote international normative instruments related to indigenous issues and integrate them on the political agenda of member states**

UNESCO seeks to raise awareness on indigenous issues amongst member states. In this sense, a major objective for the Second Decade could be the promotion of international standard-setting instruments.

**UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity** (2001) is an important instrument guiding the cultural approach of indigenous peoples' development on issues such as identity and pluralism, human rights, creativity and international solidarity. One of UNESCO's priorities is to facilitate the implementation of its Action Plan. Each point of the declaration represents a major advancement for the promotion and the safeguarding of indigenous peoples. For instance, article 4 ("Human rights as guarantees of cultural diversity") highlights that "the defence of cultural diversity is an ethical imperative, inseparable from respect for human dignity. It implies a commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the rights of persons belonging to minorities and those of indigenous peoples." Article 7 ("Cultural heritage as the wellspring of creativity") affirms that "creation draws on the roots of cultural tradition, but flourishes in contact with other cultures. For this reason, heritage in all its forms must be preserved, enhanced and handed on to future generations as a record of human experience and aspirations, so as to foster creativity in all its diversity and to inspire genuine dialogue among cultures."

The adoption and ratification of **the Convention on the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Contents and Artistic Expressions** could provide an important instrument for ensuring the right of indigenous peoples to create and disseminate in a fair environment their cultural goods and services as well as their traditional expressions, so that they will benefit from them in the future.

**The Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage** (2003) aims at protecting practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills that communities and groups recognize as part of their cultural heritage. The preamble makes explicit reference to indigenous communities, recognizing that they play an important role in the production, safeguarding, maintenance and recreation of the intangible cultural heritage.

The ratification of **the Convention against Discrimination in Education** also represent a major step for improving UNESCO's Integrated Strategy to Combat Racism, Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, which refers to indigenous peoples in the specific objectives: "deepen knowledge about the development of forms of discrimination inherited from the past, notably those linked to the period of slavery and colonization and those affecting indigenous peoples and cultural and religious minorities."

## **3. Link UNESCO's activities for the Second Decade of the World's Indigenous People with the UN Millennium Development Goals**

In 2000, the United Nations Millennium Declaration identified eight global goals to be pursuit in order to endeavour a fair and sustainable global development: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger (goal 1); achieve universal primary education (goal 2); promote gender equality and empower women (goal 3); reduce child mortality (goal 4); improve maternal health (goal 5); combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (goal 6); ensure environmental sustainability (goal 7); develop a global partnership for development (goal 8).

However, according to the **Report of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues**<sup>8</sup>, "indigenous people were not formally involved in the formulation of the goals and until now they have been largely absent from developing MDGs strategies and indicators as well as from the monitoring and reporting process." This may lead to the exclusion of indigenous peoples from sharing the benefits of the MDGs, hence deepening the discrimination. The analysis points to the potentially serious contradiction between indigenous peoples' holistic vision of development and the thematic, compartmentalized and

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<sup>8</sup> "Millennium Development Goals and Indigenous issues", Report of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues, 2005

quantified approach of the MDGs. Point 23 makes reference to a pertinent comment by an indigenous leader who believes: “The key weakness of the MDGs is that it does not question the mainstream development paradigm, nor does it address the economic, political, social and cultural structural causes of poverty...”<sup>9</sup>

**UNESCO endorses the analysis made in this report as well as the recommendations proposed<sup>10</sup>:**

- A double challenge is posed to the MDGs by indigenous peoples: “On one hand they have the right to be fully included and to benefit from the global efforts to achieve the MDGs, while on the other, their rights to define their own development path and priorities, must be respected, in order to ensure that the MDGs contribute to the full realisation and strengthening of the potential of these peoples.”
- A major challenge would be to “interpret and qualify the MDGs as related to the rights and priorities of indigenous peoples in a way which attributes to indigenous peoples a sense of ownership in the process, and to articulate the MDGs within international human rights standards. It will be crucial for the MDGs to be localized so that communities are also beneficiaries in any aggregate improvements.”

Despite these difficulties, **MDGs incorporate existing goals, commitments and plans of action set by or developed within UNESCO and concerning indigenous peoples<sup>11</sup>:**

- UNESCO is the leading agency for MDG 2 (achieve universal primary education)
- UNESCO is fully committed to MDG 1 (poverty eradication) and MDG 3 (promote gender equality and empower women).
- The protection of indigenous sacred sites and the promotion of biodiversity and cultural diversity, are related to MDG 7 (ensure environmental sustainability and protect our common environment).
- UNESCO’s cultural approach contributes to the achievement of MDG 6 (combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases), etc.

#### **4. Link UNESCO’s activities for the Second Decade of the World’s Indigenous People with the work of other current and on-going UN Decades and World Programmes**

International Decades are designed to draw attention on issues of global significance and encourage international cooperation. UNESCO could put indigenous issues forward on the UN and governmental agendas, by identifying how indigenous issues can be advanced in the framework of UN Decades’ plans of actions.

Below are the current UN Decades that relevant to indigenous issues:

- **The World Programme for Human Rights Education** was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 2004, ideally extending the work of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004). It defines human rights education as “training, dissemination and information efforts aimed at the building of a universal culture of human rights through the imparting of knowledge and skills and the moulding of attitudes” Special importance is placed on oppressed and disadvantaged peoples when promoting human rights education. The first phase of the Programme (2005-2007) will focus on primary and secondary education, proposing a minimum action on the part of governments to promote values, skills and behaviours, which are linked with the respect of all human rights for all.
- **The First United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty** (1997-2006) aims at the social and economic integration of peoples living in poverty and the promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development. People living in poverty and their organizations should be empowered by being fully involved in programmes for poverty

<sup>9</sup> See the document from CLT/CPD, “Input from the UNESCO to the follow-up of the third session (May 2004) and the preparation of the fourth session (16 to 27 May 2005) of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues”, 2005

<sup>10</sup> “Input from the UNESCO to the follow-up of the third session (May 2004) and the preparation of the fourth session (16 to 27 May 2005) of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues”, 2005

<sup>11</sup> See *annexe 3* for further information

eradication and the development of community bases, ensuring the respect for (A/RES/51/178)

- **The International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World** (2001-2010) promotes the respect for all life; attitudes of living together, ending exclusion and oppression; the preservation of the planet (making sure that progress and development are good for everyone and for the environment); tolerance and solidarity; gender equality; and democracy.
- **The Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism** (2001-2010)
- **The United Nations Literacy Decade** (2003 -2012), as an integral component of Education for All, will provide both a platform and an impetus for achieving all the six goals of the Dakar Framework for Action. The vision for the Literacy Decade situates Literacy for All at the heart of Education for All. Literacy is central to all levels of education, especially basic education, through all delivery modes - formal, non-formal and informal. Literacy for All encompasses the educational needs of all human beings in all settings and contexts. The UNLD reconfirms that literacy and education are human rights, and addresses the needs of non-literate youth and adults, especially women, out-of-school children and youth, especially girls, adolescent girls and young women; and children in school without access to quality learning so that they do not add to the pool of adult non-literates. Literacy for All will be effectively achieved only when it is planned and implemented in local contexts of language and culture, ensuring gender equity and equality, fulfilling learning aspirations of local communities and groups of people. Literacy must be related to various dimensions of personal and social life, as well as to development.
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- **The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development** (2005-2015) aims at giving everyone the opportunity to benefit from quality education and learn the values, behaviour and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive societal transformation – through all forms of learning and public awareness. This Decade is of direct relevance to EFA. It also encourages lifelong learning through the acquisition of a basic set of values, processes and behaviours for sustainable lifestyles and livelihoods.
- **The International Decade for Action “Water of Life”** (2005-2015) can highlight the role of indigenous peoples to ensure a sustainable development at the local level, as they detain a precious knowledge, and have been developing ways of living in harmony with their environment.

### **III. CONCRETE UNESCO LINES OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE (2005-2015)**

In order to achieve UNESCO's general priorities and objectives for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, concrete lines of actions can be defined. The work undertaken by UNESCO during the First Decade and that produced results would be furthered, and innovative actions could be envisaged.

The overarching goal of UNESCO's contribution to the Second Decade is to ensure that the specific needs, interests and aspirations of indigenous women and men are addressed and integrated in the Organization's programmes, and equally promoted throughout UNESCO's work.

#### **1. In the field of Education**

- Improve access, lower repetition rates, advance completion and achievement rates through the development of a more flexible holistic education system, an appropriate preparation and support for teachers and other educational personnel, an enabling learning environments and concerted actions among stakeholders, particularly the involvement of communities and local governments in the provision, supervision and management of education.



- Further the promotion of Education For All, considering the quantitative and qualitative aspects of education. Promote bilingual intercultural education and fight against education materials that contain discriminatory contents and erroneous historical accounts.<sup>12</sup>
- Promote mother tongue instruction and literacy through special initiatives such as LIFE (Literacy for Empowerment) and the UN Literacy Decade. Promote education content and life skills education that take into account indigenous knowledge, practices, beliefs, culture and community needs and yet allow interaction with the wider community.
- Promote social inclusion and equal opportunities in higher education through (i) the expansion of scientific and technical programmes for indigenous people in remote areas (e.g. e-campus distance education programme) and (ii) the activation of indigenous research activities, publication/dissemination of results, training and networking through UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Programme.
- Promote the use of non-formal education methodologies. No longer the peripheral domain of education for marginalised groups, non-formal education constitutes learning opportunities for the vast majority of children, youth and adults in developing countries who are not reached by the formal education system. NFE is characterized by its context specificity and greater flexibility. It responds more easily to the needs of the learners, both in contents, pedagogical approach and timing.

## **2. In the field of Natural Sciences**

- In support of MDGs 1 and 7, strengthen synergies between indigenous knowledge and science in order to empower indigenous peoples in processes of biodiversity governance and the assessment of impacts on indigenous territories, as part of the intersectoral programme on Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS).
- In support of MDG 2, enhance the transmission of knowledge from elders to youth in order to maintain the dynamism of indigenous knowledge, as part of the LINKS programme.
- Safeguard indigenous peoples' culture and ways of life, in particular by establishing further link between cultural diversity and biodiversity.
- Give a special attention MDG 7 (ensure environmental sustainability) and to the International Decade for Action "Water of Life" (2005-2015), that could increase the participation of indigenous peoples in ensuring a sustainable local development and allow them to live better in their environment.

## **3. In the field of Human and Social Sciences**

- Contribute to the achievement of the MDG 1, focusing on indigenous peoples: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. In order to complete current UNESCO's actions that mainly focus on rural indigenous peoples, a particular attention could be put on gender and urban issues.
- Take into account the issue of indigenous people and discrimination in elaborating the regional Plans of Action of the International Coalition of Cities against Racism. Within this framework, promote policy relevant research projects on the municipal actions in favour of indigenous peoples.
- Develop data collection and the disaggregation of data on indigenous peoples in order to build indicators that better monitor and evaluate policies against discrimination. A collaboration could be envisaged with UNESCO Institute for Statistics in Montreal.

## **4. In the field of Culture**

In the framework of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (in particular the article 4 of the declaration and the main line of action 14 on indigenous people):

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<sup>12</sup> "Indigenous Peoples and the Millennium Development Goals", preparation paper to the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the UNPFII, Victoria Tauli Corpuz, March 2005

- Formulate policies that favour intercultural dialogue in line with the United Nations Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations. UNESCO's policies should be drawn to protect indigenous cultures and at the same time to create synergies and mutual enrichment between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples.
- Strengthen the institutional and local empowerment of indigenous peoples through actions such as the indigenous fellowship programme, cultural mapping and initiate a database on indigenous experts in the field of culture.
- Build various networks of scholars, other relevant stakeholders and decision makers in order to improve inter-institutional communication as well as exchange amongst indigenous communities
- Further develop the concept of "Free, Prior and Informed Consent" (FPIC) in UNESCO activities in the field of culture and development. Support initiatives of indigenous people themselves, helping them to develop their own advocacy platforms and building awareness among the general population.
- Strengthen the efforts concerning the safeguarding of indigenous peoples' tangible and intangible culture heritage with a particular emphasis on cultural landscapes and sacred sites. Furthermore, highlight the rich creative diversity of indigenous communities, in particular of indigenous youth.

#### 5. In the field of Communication and Information

- Promote the cultural expression of indigenous peoples through the media by providing capacity building opportunities to communities;
- Empower indigenous peoples and allow them to express their views (in a democratic environment), by reinforcing programmes such as UNESCO's Programme for Creative Content and the International Initiative for Community Multimedia Centres.

#### 6. Cross-cutting and intersectoral actions

- Continue with the implementation of UNESCO's CCT project "ICTs for Intercultural Dialogue: Developing communication capacities of indigenous peoples" and extend it to as many indigenous communities as possible in its second phase.
- Elaborate projects and research work concerning indigenous issues at local level (particularly in the field of cultural resources) in order to find ways and strategies of sustaining them, and to integrate them in the dialogue on visions, policies and instruments. UNESCO will further cultural mapping and research on the socio-economic conditions of indigenous peoples, which could represent the beginnings of an international database on indigenous issues.

**UNESCO Statement at the 61<sup>st</sup> session of the UN Commission on Human Rights  
(Geneva, 14 March- 22 April 2005)  
Item 15 – Indigenous people**

**Work undertaken by the UNESCO on indigenous issues during the  
First International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1994-2004)**

Over the First International Decade on the World's Indigenous People, and indeed since well before that, the United National Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) has actively sought to articulate, and implement, an integrated vision to the aspirations and needs of indigenous peoples.

Drawing on its multi-sectoral mandate and its interdisciplinary expertise - which includes education, culture, the natural and social sciences, and communication - UNESCO is committed to promote the full participation of minorities and marginalized and vulnerable groups in devising, implementing and monitoring policies and actions which directly affect them.

Guided by the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, which covers different dimensions as identity and pluralism, human rights, creativity and international solidarity, the Organization's actions are directed to *safeguarding cultural diversity and encourage dialogue among cultures and civilizations and enhance the linkages between culture and development.*

As we are about to start the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, it is important to identify the achievements of the First Decade by reviewing and evaluating actions undertaken by UNESCO different programme sectors.

UNESCO takes an active part in **indigenous education** through the preparation of publications, information materials, support to regional conferences and the organization of expert group meetings and seminars. The latest publication under the title: *"The Challenge of Indigenous Education: Practice and Perspectives"* (2004) provides a succinct overview of current thinking and practice in the area of indigenous education. UNESCO co-organized the *expert seminar "Indigenous Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"* jointly with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights from 18 to 20 October 2004 at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. The experts discussed issues related to indigenous peoples access to quality education, culturally appropriate quality education, participatory approaches and higher education for indigenous peoples. In addition, UNESCO has continued its *collaboration with Ministries at country level to promote education policy reform in favour of indigenous peoples.* UNESCO has further continued to play its role in providing an international framework for education policy and practices. In the context of the *Education for All (EFA) Framework for Action*, the Organization has emphasized the need for culturally and linguistically pertinent curricula in which indigenous peoples' history, values, languages, oral traditions and spirituality are recognized, respected and promoted.

**In the field of Culture**, the *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* aims at protecting practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills that communities and groups recognize as part of their cultural heritage. The preamble makes explicit reference to indigenous communities, recognizing that they play an important role in the production, safeguarding, maintenance and recreation of the intangible cultural heritage. *The Preliminary Draft Convention on the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Contents and Artistic Expressions* could provide an important instrument for ensuring the right of indigenous peoples to create and disseminate their cultural goods and services as well as their traditional expressions so that they will benefit from them in the future. UNESCO's programme on "Integrating Pluralism and Intercultural Dialogue in the Development of Indigenous Communities" has developed a number of *methodological approaches and tools on cultural resource mapping* for the empowerment of indigenous communities. *The UNESCO endangered languages programme* intends to safeguard and revitalize endangered languages with a special focus on languages of indigenous peoples. *UNESCO's publications* to promote and defend indigenous culture are diverse, as shown in the CD-Rom on "Cultural Diversity and Indigenous Peoples" and the brochure on "Cultural Diversity and Biodiversity for Sustainable Development". Toward strategies for the sustainable development of tourism, the project *"The Sahara of Cultures and People"* builds on the local knowledge and cultures of local communities in the region. An *International Symposium on "Conserving Cultural and Biological Diversity: The Role of Sacred Natural Sites and*

**Under the impulse of the Social and Human Sciences Sector**, UNESCO adopted at its 32nd session of the General Conference in 2003, an *Integrated Strategy to Combat Racism, Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance*, which refers to indigenous peoples in the specific objectives: “deepen knowledge about the development of forms of discrimination inherited from the past, notably those linked to the period of slavery and colonization and those affecting indigenous peoples and cultural and religious minorities.” It encourages scientific research and reflection on the phenomena of racism, discrimination and xenophobia. In collaboration with other UN agencies such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the International Labour Organization, UNESCO plans to encourage the *ratification of instruments*, such as the Convention against Discrimination in Education. Through the initiative of the International Coalition of Cities against Racism, UNESCO encourages local authorities to be committed in implementing innovative and concrete policies and actions against racism and discrimination.

**In the sphere of Natural Sciences**, UNESCO developed actions in favour of indigenous people throughout the world. Its program of *environment and development in coastal regions and small islands* encouraged the inclusion of indigenous practices in sustainable development. UNESCO’s *Man and the Biosphere Programme* was developed for the improvement of the relationship between people and the environment in accordance with the principle of sustainable use and conservation of biological diversity, which specifically addresses traditional knowledge. The *Culture-based Environmental Conservation Initiative on Natural Sacred Sites* promotes conservation’s mechanisms using biospheres reserves, natural world heritage sites as well as non-protected areas.

**The UNESCO Communication and Information Sector** supported the *development of standards to ensure the presence of endangered languages in the digitalized environment* as well as research on language scripts and their representation in information exchange standards. The *Programme for Creative Content* aims at boosting production and dissemination of local content in both traditional (radio, television) and new media within the developing world. The objectives include promoting cultural expression and linguistic diversity through communication and information, contributing to building an inclusive knowledge society where disadvantaged communities can fully participate, working to improve intercultural communication, and promoting a free and better-balanced flow of information and freedom of expression. *UNESCO’s International Initiative for Community Multimedia Centres* tries to reduce the digital gap and to promote indigenous community empowerment by the creation of their own database, store local and global information for educational and development purposes.

UNESCO initiated several **interdisciplinary activities cutting across Sector programmes and priority areas**. *Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS)* draws together expertise from all areas of UNESCO’s competence to address in a holistic manner the issue of indigenous knowledge. The LINKS project contributes to a number of recommendations from the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, particularly as concerns economic and social development, environment, and education. *ICTs for Intercultural Dialogue: Developing Communication Capacities of Indigenous Peoples* promotes indigenous peoples’ knowledge and cultural resources and revitalize indigenous peoples’ identity by fostering access to and use of new technologies and increasing capacities to engage in intercultural dialogue between indigenous peoples with public authorities and other groups. *The Indigenous Fellowship Programme*, established by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, invites fellows to stay in UNESCO for a period of two-weeks exchanging with colleagues and following their specific action research interests. Several were able to use the information and contacts to enrich the work of their respective associations. *Projects related to Youth* were led, as the Youth Forum in wish the participation of indigenous representatives were encouraged. The brochure “All Different, All Unique: Young People and the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity” (2004) presents comments, aspirations and difficulties formulated by indigenous representatives during different workshops.

Finally, in compliance with UNESCO’s gender mainstreaming policy, all of the Organization’s programmes are expected to take into account both women’s and men’s needs, aspirations and interests and contribute to the promotion of gender equality. With respect to indigenous people in particular, a pilot project has been launched in Kenya, with indigenous communities, on women’s human rights and issues of cultural diversity.

**Recommandations des populations autochtones/tribales adressées à l'UNESCO  
lors de la conférence et de l'atelier sur  
« Les enjeux culturels de la Décennie internationale des populations autochtones du monde » (1999)**

Paris, 20 octobre 1999

Nous, représentants des populations autochtones/tribales participant à l'atelier sur les enjeux culturels de la Décennie internationale des populations autochtones du monde, souhaitons formuler ce qui suit :

1. Considérant que la question des populations autochtones/tribales est une question internationale et nationale d'une grande importance et que cette importance ira croissant au cours du prochain millénaire, notamment en raison de la mondialisation,
2. Considérant que par ses articles 15 et 18 la Déclaration de Hambourg sur l'éducation des adultes a affirmé le droit à l'éducation des populations autochtones/tribales du monde entier,
3. Considérant qu'il incombe à la fois aux gouvernements et aux populations autochtones/tribales de faire plus largement comprendre et reconnaître les droits des populations autochtones/tribales,
4. Considérant que le nouveau programme de l'UNESCO, en conformité avec les politiques culturelles de l'Organisation applicables à compter de l'an 2000, sera fondé sur la mobilisation des réseaux de compétence et des nouvelles connaissances par le biais des activités de plaidoyer et du partenariat,
5. Considérant que les populations autochtones/tribales ont à maintes reprises rappelé leur besoin de projets culturels, d'éducation et de formation permanente prenant en considération leurs langues, leurs cultures, leurs modes d'apprentissage et leurs aspirations,
6. Considérant que l'UNESCO s'occupe du développement sous des formes très différentes - développement humain, développement durable et développement culturel - dans le cadre de ses multiples programmes, ce qui est une source de confusion pour les populations autochtones/tribales de tous les pays et qu'il est indispensable d'améliorer la coordination entre les divers programmes de l'UNESCO notamment en ce qui concerne le développement culturel durable des populations autochtones/tribales,
7. Considérant que nombre d'organismes des Nations Unies et d'institutions donatrices élaborent à l'intention des populations autochtones/tribales des politiques et des programmes qui ne sont pas coordonnés,

**NOUS RECOMMANDONS A LA CONFERENCE GENERALE DE L'UNESCO**

1. Qu'il soit procédé à une évaluation à mi-parcours de la Décennie internationale des populations autochtones en vue de déterminer l'incidence réelle de la Décennie sur le développement culturel durable des populations autochtones/tribales et de réorienter les activités pertinentes pour la période 2000-2004 ;
2. Que l'UNESCO élabore une politique des populations autochtones/tribales ainsi que des plans d'action et des programmes appropriés et que ces plans d'action et ces programmes reprennent les initiatives du plan d'action recommandé ci-après ;
3. Que l'UNESCO crée et soutienne un groupe de travail formé de spécialistes issus des populations autochtones/tribales et d'autres spécialistes qui sera chargé d'établir la politique, le plan d'action et les programmes de l'UNESCO relatifs aux populations autochtones/tribales ;

**Recommandations des populations autochtones/tribales adressées à l'UNESCO lors de la conférence et de l'atelier sur « Les enjeux culturels de la Décennie internationale des populations autochtones du monde » (1999)**

Paris, 20 octobre 1999

Nous, représentants des populations autochtones/tribales participant à l'atelier sur les enjeux culturels de la Décennie internationale des populations autochtones du monde, souhaitons formuler ce qui suit :

1. Considérant que la question des populations autochtones/tribales est une question internationale et nationale d'une grande importance et que cette importance ira croissant au cours du prochain millénaire, notamment en raison de la mondialisation,
2. Considérant que par ses articles 15 et 18 la Déclaration de Hambourg sur l'éducation des adultes a affirmé le droit à l'éducation des populations autochtones/tribales du monde entier,
3. Considérant qu'il incombe à la fois aux gouvernements et aux populations autochtones/tribales de faire plus largement comprendre et reconnaître les droits des populations autochtones/tribales,
4. Considérant que le nouveau programme de l'UNESCO, en conformité avec les politiques culturelles de l'Organisation applicables à compter de l'an 2000, sera fondé sur la mobilisation des réseaux de compétence et des nouvelles connaissances par le biais des activités de plaidoyer et du partenariat,
5. Considérant que les populations autochtones/tribales ont à maintes reprises rappelé leur besoin de projets culturels, d'éducation et de formation permanente prenant en considération leurs langues, leurs cultures, leurs modes d'apprentissage et leurs aspirations,
6. Considérant que l'UNESCO s'occupe du développement sous des formes très différentes - développement humain, développement durable et développement culturel - dans le cadre de ses multiples programmes, ce qui est une source de confusion pour les populations autochtones/tribales de tous les pays et qu'il est indispensable d'améliorer la coordination entre les divers programmes de l'UNESCO notamment en ce qui concerne le développement culturel durable des populations autochtones/tribales,
7. Considérant que nombre d'organismes des Nations Unies et d'institutions donatrices élaborent à l'intention des populations autochtones/tribales des politiques et des programmes qui ne sont pas coordonnés,

**NOUS RECOMMANDONS A LA CONFERENCE GENERALE DE L'UNESCO**

1. Qu'il soit procédé à une évaluation à mi-parcours de la Décennie internationale des populations autochtones en vue de déterminer l'incidence réelle de la Décennie sur le développement culturel durable des populations autochtones/tribales et de réorienter les activités pertinentes pour la période 2000-2004 ;
2. Que l'UNESCO élabore une politique des populations autochtones/tribales ainsi que des plans d'action et des programmes appropriés et que ces plans d'action et ces programmes reprennent les initiatives du plan d'action recommandé ci-après ;
3. Que l'UNESCO crée et soutienne un groupe de travail formé de spécialistes issus des populations autochtones/tribales et d'autres spécialistes qui sera chargé d'établir la politique, le plan d'action et les programmes de l'UNESCO relatifs aux populations autochtones/tribales ;

4. Que l'UNESCO lance un programme d'activités de plaidoyer et de coordination en matière de développement des populations autochtones/tribales en collaboration avec les autres institutions des Nations Unies et les Etats membres.

#### PLAN D'ACTION RECOMMANDE

Le plan d'action recommandé invite l'UNESCO à reconsidérer sa politique relative aux populations autochtones dans une perspective holistique tenant compte de la conception du monde des populations autochtones elles-mêmes.

1. Création d'une banque de données mondiale sur les populations autochtones.
2. Recherche sur les domaines d'importance stratégique en association avec des spécialistes autochtones.
3. Élaboration de principes éthiques garantissant que les projets et les programmes destinés aux populations autochtones/tribales correspondent à leurs besoins et aspirations et prennent en considération leurs cultures, leurs langues et leurs modes d'apprentissage, compte tenu des principes directeurs et codes de conduite existant par ailleurs.
4. Renforcement du service de coordination de l'UNESCO pour la Décennie et diffusion d'informations sur les activités de ce service, son rôle et ses responsabilités envers les populations autochtones/tribales sur le site Web de l'UNESCO et par d'autres moyens.
5. Action en faveur de l'échange de données d'expérience et de compétences entre les organisations de populations autochtones et entre les universités et d'autres institutions dans les différents pays et régions du monde.
6. Réalisation d'études sur l'exploitation des oeuvres culturelles et des savoirs des populations autochtones/tribales qui porte atteinte au droit d'auteur et prive ces populations de l'avantage économique qu'elles peuvent en retirer.
7. Réalisation d'études sur le patrimoine matériel et immatériel des populations autochtones/tribales et mise au point de méthodes pour régler les différends liés à l'utilisation de ce patrimoine en collaboration avec ces populations.
8. Organisation et soutien d'ateliers à l'intention des différentes catégories de travailleurs culturels (écrivains, musiciens, gens de théâtre, etc.) pour leur permettre d'échanger des données, des leçons et des résultats tirés de l'expérience.
9. Soutien à la mise en place par les populations autochtones/tribales et à leur profit de banques d'oeuvres représentatives de l'art autochtone du monde sous réserve que leur protection soit suffisamment assurée.
10. Réalisation d'études sur l'apport des cultures autochtones à la culture et à la civilisation universelles.
11. Suivi périodique des progrès du développement culturel au sein des communautés autochtones/tribales dans un contexte multiculturel, et publication de renseignements à ce sujet dans le Rapport mondial sur la culture et d'autres publications pertinentes de l'UNESCO.
12. Étude et évaluation des expériences faites en matière d'éducation multiculturelle, bilingue et multilingue ("meilleures pratiques") et formulation de recommandations appropriées.
13. Réalisation d'études sur la manière dont la vie réelle, la culture et le patrimoine des populations autochtones/tribales sont pris en compte dans les programmes d'enseignement et les matériels didactiques nationaux.

14. Élaboration de programmes visant à sensibiliser les autorités, les universités et les entrepreneurs aux traditions, aux savoirs et au patrimoine culturel des populations autochtones/tribales.
15. Réalisation d'autres études et diffusion d'informations sur la nature, la portée et les problèmes de l'éducation dispensée actuellement aux niveaux primaire, secondaire et tertiaire dans les populations autochtones/tribales.
16. Élaboration de programmes d'enseignement et de formation visant à familiariser les populations autochtones avec leurs droits, les techniques de négociation et l'art de diriger.
17. Extension des activités menées en Afrique en matière linguistique parmi les populations autochtones/tribales, en particulier des expériences tendant à mettre au point des règles d'écriture, à l'intention des populations autochtones/tribales des autres régions - y compris l'instauration d'une coopération transfrontières (Inuits, Quechuas, Samis).
18. Aide au développement des médias autochtones/tribaux, écrits et autres. Cette action pourrait tendre aussi à la mise en place de centres de formation au cinéma et à la télévision pour les journalistes.
19. Réalisation d'études sur l'incidence du développement sur les populations autochtones/tribales centrées sur la région arctique (Sibérie), les forêts tropicales humides et les régions côtières.
20. Réalisation d'études sur les zones considérées comme des réserves de biosphère et des zones protégées, gérées par des populations autochtones/tribales.
21. Conception d'un cadre juridique pour les populations autochtones/tribales, et fourniture de services spécialisés en vue d'assurer un accès aux ressources naturelles qui permette de perpétuer et de préserver les traditions culturelles et les pratiques médicales de ces populations.
22. Réalisation d'études en vue de protéger et d'accroître les savoirs générés et perpétués par les communautés locales par des activités de sensibilisation, des programmes de formation, des arrangements internationaux relatifs au droit de propriété et des procédures d'homologation.
23. Réalisation d'études en vue de réunir de la documentation et d'analyser les questions éthiques posées par les pratiques des populations autochtones/tribales en matière de chasse et de pêche et l'utilisation par elles de produits vivriers en contravention avec les réglementations nationales et internationales.



**General/broad information concerning UNESCO's role in the implementation of the UN Millennium Development Goals taken from document 32 C/5 Approved and document 31 C/4 Approved<sup>15</sup>**

UNESCO's **Bureau of Strategic Planning** brought his contribution to the achievement of MDGs UNESCO through its Medium-Term Strategy 2002-2007. (31 C/4 Approved)

<b>Education</b>	<b>Natural Sciences</b>	<b>Social &amp; Human Sciences</b>	<b>Culture</b>	<b>Communication &amp; Information</b>
The purpose of UNESCO's education programme is to achieve Education for All (EFA) seen in its broadest sense: education for all, at all levels, throughout life. More precisely, UNESCO contributes to activities that: (a) promote education as a fundamental human right; (b) improve the quality of education; (c) promote experimentation, innovation and the sharing of information and best practices, in addition to policy dialogue in education.	Natural Sciences programme seeks to improve human security through a better management of the environment and to enhance human and institutional capacities in science and technology. Both programmes also pursue the MDGs in particular Goals 1, 3, 7 and 8	The role of social and human sciences, philosophy and future-oriented activities within the overall mandate of UNESCO is to advance knowledge, standards and intellectual cooperation in order to facilitate social transformations conducive to the universal values of justice, freedom and human dignity.	No information at present	Access to information and knowledge increasingly determines patterns of learning, cultural expressions and social participation, besides providing opportunities for development, more effective poverty reduction and preservation of peace.
MDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8	MDGs 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8	MDGs 1, 3 and 8		MDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8

<sup>15</sup> See the web page of BSP about Millennium development goals: [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)