

Forum UNESCO - University and Heritage
(Valence, Spain, 2-6 October 1996)

Declaration of Valencia

The representatives of universities participating in the international Seminar Forum UNESCO - University and Heritage, aware of the role to be played by universities in the protection of cultural heritage as a whole and in furthering action taken by ICCROM, ICOM, ICOMOS, IFLA and UIA,

bearing in mind the immense needs in that field and their responsibility in participating in the protection, safeguard and enhancement of this common heritage,

have decided unanimously to adopt the creation of an international network entitled Forum UNESCO - University and Heritage, whose coordination will be assumed by UNESCO and follow-up will be undertaken by the Polytechnic University of Valencia (UPV).

This international network, whose activities lie perfectly within the scope of UNESCO's mission, will be the messenger of a code of ethics and will have as its vocation to:

- work purposefully for the development of a sense of responsibility in students as well as in the public at large, for active participation in the protection, safeguard and enhancement of cultural heritage, a privileged field for the exercise of a citizen's duties;
- establish and strengthen national and international cooperation between universities on the basis of exchanges and solidarity in the field of cultural heritage.

Objectives

- to mobilize the universities' human and technological resources, at national and international level, for concerted action with local populations in order to protect and enhance cultural heritage;
- to develop a sense of responsibility among youth by creating cooperation between specialists, professors and students at local and national levels for the benefit of cultural heritage in universities and society at large;
- to create a movement of solidarity and cooperation, by establishing links between universities at regional and international level;
- to reinforce cooperation between universities by transferring knowledge and exchanging know-how in the field of cultural heritage;
- to develop training programmes related to cultural heritage;
- to complete theoretical training with practical experience;
- to promote mutual understanding between students and multicultural exchanges of views for the construction of peace.

Strategy for action

- to create regional and national networks;
- to develop a nucleus of students and professors in each university;
- to establish links with other universities;
- to implement jointly appropriate mechanisms for efficient coordination;
- to reinforce co-operation between cultural heritage professionals and universities;
- to create a database for Forum UNESCO - University and Heritage network;
- to encourage training in cultural heritage conservation and the creation of UNESCO

- UNITWIN Chairs for cultural heritage;
- to identify concrete operational projects.

Priorities

- to organize cooperation in order to meet the needs expressed by the representatives of Rwanda and Cameroon in the framework of UNESCO programme entitled "Priority Africa";
- to prepare the next Seminar, planned for September 1997.

Agenda

15 December 1996

Mailing by UNESCO of a draft Charter specifying the role devoted to Forum UNESCO - University and Heritage network;

15 April 1997

Mailing to the Polytechnic University of Valencia (UPV) by the universities participating in the Seminar of a fifteen-page report on:

- the creation of teachers and students associations and or UNESCO UNITWIN Chairs in heritage;
- the commitment of countries and universities in cultural heritage projects, related to Forum UNESCO - University and Heritage;
- new connections developed with universities of other countries;
- future projects.

15 May 1997

Preparation by UNESCO of a project document to be submitted to the General Conference of UNESCO in October/November 1997.

September 1997

Organization of Forum UNESCO - University and Heritage international Seminar, in September 1997, which will be prepared by the Polytechnic University of Valencia (UPV). Information concerning the next Seminar will be circulated by UNESCO and the network members.

Proposals for the operating structure

The universities suggest the establishment of scientific committees (or working groups) in the following fields:

- Computerization and the setting-up of a database
- Tangible heritage
- Intangible heritage
- Training in cultural heritage