

INTRODUCTION

Our generation has inherited a wealth of cultural, material and immaterial resources, which are the embodiment of the collective memory of communities throughout the world and strengthen the perception they have of their identity in these uncertain times. As something precious which humanity must hold in trust, these resources are essentially non-renewable. Evidence of a responsible attitude to the conservation of these fragile riches is to be found more particularly in regard to the constructed environment, namely historical monuments and sites. At the same time, there has been growing interest for the construction and attendance of museums and for the consequent enlargement of their collections. In this way, material aspects - illustrious monuments and works of art - have been the main beneficiaries of the notion of preservation of the heritage. A worldwide movement has emerged, the pride and joy of international cultural co-operation, which has reinforced solidarity between the peoples of the world for this common cause. The disproportion that exists between the scope of objectives and the limited means for the conservation of the heritage throughout the world recommends that international efforts be made to mobilize the willingness of young people in universities so that they might work as volunteers for the benefit of the cultural heritage, under the leadership and guidance of professionals.² Their task would be to contribute, through their universities, to the preservation and enhancement of the heritage in order to promote, in a spirit of solidarity, greater mutual understanding and respect between cultures. The determination to make a decisive input for the development of specialized co-operation networks in the field of heritage, in conformity with its 1996-2001 Medium-Term Strategy, strengthened by the conviction that the universities have an important role to play in the Organization's programme, have encouraged UNESCO to strive to create a network of universities that have disciplines relative to heritage. The aim is to link up the human and technical resources of the universities which now have valuable instruments at their disposal in regard to the protection of the heritage. The creation of this network must be the outcome of reflection and concertation conducted by the students and teachers of the universities concerned in the theme of the heritage. Consequently, UNESCO and the Polytechnic University of Valencia have decided to hold an international seminar, the main purpose of which will be the joint construction of an international network on a sound basis of study and co-operation. The students and teachers will decide, during the seminar, on priority action to be conducted together, in conjunction with the action of ICCROM, ICOMOS, ICOM and IFLA in order to promote enforcement of international conventions and to contribute to the international campaigns and safeguarding action conducted by UNESCO. The aim of this international network will be to encourage the transfer of knowledge and exchange of know-how between universities in the heritage field and

thereby to contribute to promoting the objectives of the UNITWIN programme and the UNESCO Chairs implemented by the Education Sector of UNESCO.

(1 & 2) OUR CREATIVE DIVERSITY, Javier P~REZ DE CUELLAR
Report by the World Commission for Culture and Development, pp. 171 & 270

OBJECTIVES

- A. Mobilize at national and international levels the required human and technological resources in universities to achieve concerted action for the protection and presentation of the heritage in the interest of the populations.
- B. Give greater responsibility to young people by instituting co-operation amongst specialists, teachers and students at local and national levels in favour of the heritage.
- C. Create a movement of solidarity and mutual assistance by establishing links between universities at regional and international levels.
- D. Strengthen inter-university co-operation by transferring knowledge and exchanging know-how in the field of heritage.
- E. Upgrade theoretical training through practical experience.
- F. Promote mutual understanding between students and an intercultural dialogue for peace building.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- A. Creation of a local and national network. Basis of Forum - UNESCO.
Establish teams composed of students and teachers.
Establish close links with other universities. Introduce machinery for efficiency co-ordination.
Strengthen co-operation amongst heritage specialists, universities and research centres.
- B. Creation of a national data bank.
Inventory of monuments, sites and museums.
Inventory of surveys, theses and dissertations on heritage problems.
List of training courses and operational action conducted by universities.
- C. Organization of workshops and practical projects at national and D. Promotional action among young university students.
 - Awareness and mobilization campaign. Establishment of part
 - Awareness campaign for implementing conventions on the protection of the heritage.
 - Cultural events.
 - Exhibitions/lectures.
- E. Creation of UNESCO Heritage Chairs.

NETWORK OPERATION

The introduction of a new impetus between universities, at national level, constitutes the very basis of the network. Implementation of effective machinery for co-ordination at an

international level is the best guarantee of ensuring the success of its mission. Participants in the Forum-UNESCO network will be those universities which have disciplines in the fields of the heritage: architecture, archaeology, the history of art, urban development and the fine arts, and so forth. Each university will set up a hub composed of a group of students and teachers which will be the focal point in charge of the co-ordination and implementation of activities within the context of the national network and regional and international co-operation.

* At national level, a university will be selected by the National Commissions to UNESCO to represent the other universities according to its dynamism and efficiency in the conduct of action and / or projects relating to the heritage, as well as its potential in informatics. It would be preferable that such representation be conducted on a rota basis in order to enable other universities, particularly those of medium-sized cities, to play an active role in the Forum-UNESCO. As a focal point, a university should, in particular, play a role of co-ordination and leadership and contribute to an equitable distribution of responsibilities between the other universities according to the following fields of action:

- Research: theses and dissertations;
- Normative action: legislation and conventions;
- Operational action: practical courses and workshops;
- Information, public awareness and mobilization.

The first year will be devoted to setting up the network at national level.

* At an international level, those universities serving as national foci will develop, between them, an exchange of know-how and experience and joint projects. The main corpus of information will be provided under the afore mentioned headings in a data bank in order to ensure communication with all the partners concerned.

UNIVERSITY CHARTER

The action of Forum-UNESCO must convey an ethic, a generating dynamism which will strengthen solidarity between young people in the interests of the heritage. A charter would be adopted by the representatives of the universities at the end of the seminar.