



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

# Executive Board

Hundred and eighty-fourth session

# 184 EX/40

PARIS, 13 April 2010  
Original: English/French

## Item 40 of the agenda

### REPORT AND DRAFT DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. The Executive Board's Committee on International Non-Governmental Organizations met four times, on 31 March and 1 April 2010, with **Mr Hany Helal (Egypt)** acting as Chair, to examine item 29, "Relations with international non-governmental organizations, foundations and similar institutions" (184 EX/29). The meetings were attended by 23 States members of the Committee and 77 non-governmental organizations (NGO). Pursuant to Rule 16.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board, the Committee elected the representative of France, **Mr Jean Audouze**, as temporary Chairperson, and adopted its agenda.

2. In his opening remarks, the Chairperson first paid tribute to former NGO Committee Chairperson, **Mr András Lakatos (Hungary)** for his efforts over the previous four years to improve the Committee's working methods and strengthen UNESCO's relations with NGOs. He then pointed out that the current Committee session would be a "first" in several ways: the first of the biennium and the first following the election of a woman as Director-General of UNESCO. He thanked the representative of the Director-General for his support, and also the Chairperson of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee. He informed the members of the Committee that, as he had requested, the Permanent Delegations would soon have access, via the Intranet, to all the information contained in the database of the Section for NGOs. Lastly, he drew attention to Egypt's active involvement in that Committee over the previous two bienniums and how important he considered it to be to improve relations with NGOs, especially those of developing countries. In that connection, he recalled that he hoped that consideration would be given to setting up a fund to promote the participation of NGOs from countries of the South in Committee discussions.

3. **Mr Ahmed Sayyad**, Assistant Director-General for External Relations and Cooperation, then made his traditional introductory remarks, setting out the programme for the two days of work. He also welcomed the new Committee Chairperson and reaffirmed his own commitment to non-governmental organizations, to whose future activities he pledged continued support.

#### **Item 29: Relations with international non-governmental organizations, foundations and similar institutions**

**Wednesday 31 March**

**Round table on "Violence in the contemporary world" (morning session)**

#### **I. VIOLENCE AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE**

4. Part I of the round table, on the subject of violence among young people, was introduced by the morning session moderator, **Mr Olivier Catayee**, Principal at the Collège Gustave Courbet in

Romainville, France, who observed that the subject of violence, pervasive as it unfortunately was in today's society, could take up weeks of meetings.

#### **A. Social and human origins of violence in young people**

5. The first sub-theme was introduced by **Mr Daniel Sibony**, writer, psychoanalyst and philosopher, who pointed out that destructive violence originated in the same sources as the violence that brought life: creation and change. He reminded those present that the Bible began with a murder, involving two fellow-beings, that was committed because the murderer felt he lacked recognition. The ultimate ordeal, and the most difficult to endure, was that of being different, followed by the test of trusting life in order to transform it and eventually allowing it to express itself through the work of a third party or the law. A study of incidents of violence showed that they were rooted in a sense of injustice. And so people expected a great deal from the justice system, from that third party who was expected to enact intelligent and fair laws or rules to mediate when a violent clash arose. The role of third parties was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain, particularly for parents who had trouble distinguishing their role as individuals from that of third parties required to lay down the law and set limits. Matters were complicated even further when both entities involved in the conflict adopted a narcissistic and completely closed-off stance which precluded any encroachment by others. The result was an explosive, narcissistic clash between the two in which others, whose mere presence was a problem, were pushed away. With respect to violence against women, it was caused by a fear of what was feminine, by a childishness in men in which the violent individual had not apprehended the transition from mothering woman to the woman as a partner in dialogue, in pleasure, in life. It could be seen that violence often broke out when interaction had not been possible. Limits had to be established within which both partners were given full recognition. Those partners had to be ready to interact as they were; neither should be sacrificed to an abstract law on appropriate behaviour which could not satisfy personal desires or life goals.

6. **Mr Jerald L. Newberry**, Executive Director of the National Education Association – Health Information Network, an American organization, and member of Education International, began by presenting the activities of his organization, which dealt with the three phases of an act of violence: before (prevention), during (the period which immediately followed the act) and after (accompanying victims). He then focused his contribution on three very different kinds of violence which had occurred in the United States. The first was a natural phenomenon – a hurricane which had caused several deaths in a school in Alabama, which he characterized as a violent phenomenon beyond anyone's control, the effects of which, however, could be minimized if preventive action were taken. The second was the shooting which killed 14 students and a teacher ten years previously in Columbine, Colorado, by two young people who had been ostracized from their community. Mr Newberry, who had had to handle the "during" phase of that disaster, pointed out that violent young people were often cut off from their peers but did show signs before actually resorting to violence, though unfortunately those signs were often ignored. He dwelt on the importance of returning to routine immediately after such an event, of not changing habits, and of not isolating victims in an attempt to protect them. He also pointed out that in such situations, young people expected adults, whom they saw as authority figures, to reassure them and talk to them. The third incident was the September 11 attacks, a global form of violence on American soil. He deplored the fact that people too often forgot that violence can happen anywhere and stressed that it was necessary to be constantly vigilant.

#### **B. Violence in schools and universities**

7. **Mr David Farthing**, Executive Director of the association Youcan, who had worked since 2000 with the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, shared his experience at the helm of his non-governmental organization, set up in 1997 to provide conflict resolution in schools and train young people in mediation. In 2000, Youcan had adopted a charter on ways to work with schools to develop a culture of peace and educate students on the basics of treating others as they would like to be treated themselves. One of the first elements was to respond rather than react. Building

peace took time, particularly because in contemporary society people did not take the time to discuss things. You can organized training workshops (including in prisons) on negotiation, mediation, reconciliation, dialogue, conflict resolution and listening, and other topics. Those workshops, which also showed participants how to “unlearn” certain types of behaviour, were interactive. What was learned was immediately put into practice. To illustrate his point, Mr Farthing gave the example of a school in Toronto where student suspensions had been reduced by 99% in one year thanks to their methods. Literacy rates had also improved, and a culture of respect had been established in the school. Lastly, Mr Farthing showed a video of a positive relationship that had grown up between a dog and an elephant to show that all beings could live in harmony, as long as everyone worked towards that end.

8. **Mr Mehulbhai Kantabhai Dabhi**, International President of the International Movement of Catholic Students, began by broadening the traditional definition of violence as a direct physical attack on a living being or property which inflicted pain and physical damage to include national education policies which led to unemployment and the commercialization of competition-driven education (which made the latter inaccessible), calling them “hidden structural violence”. Mr Dabhi referred to violence at school and university, noting that this was increasing rapidly. He spoke of increasing criminality on campuses and growing tension between teachers and students, the breakdown of family ties, particularly as a result of urbanization and in war and conflict zones, and the rise in unemployment, and unemployability. He then spoke about hidden structural violence at school and university and particularly the fact that not everyone had access to education, about academic pressure, the denial of students’ creativity, the shrinking of the democratic political arena in numerous regions, and the politicization of university campuses. Lastly, Mr Dabhi pressed the point that violent acts often stemmed from anger or frustration with a certain social, economic or political situation. In that connection, he cited the roles of various stakeholders such as students, the State, families, schools and universities and society in general. In his view, hope lay in the hands of the student community.

9. **Mr Olivier Catayee** also spoke as a panellist at the session. He began by saying he wanted to draw certain distinctions, between violence around schools and inside schools; between violence perpetrated among students and violence that came from outside; and also between different types of violence – the violence of parents who became educators dealing with “school” conflicts, and violence in connection with dangerous games students played. Violence was omnipresent in films, video games, music videos and television series in which stereotyped characters abounded. Every act of violence could be traced back to a failure in the system due, for instance, to shortages of staff and shortcomings in pre-service training. Young people no longer accepted punishment where it was deserved; any school was the potential scene of a serious incident. He had also observed a decline in social ties, in young people’s respect for others, and their hankering after social status and easy money. The solution was, as always, to invest in education – education for peace and for the non-violent resolution of conflicts. A security-driven response was not the answer. Children and teenagers, immersed in the learning process, were not violent by nature; they simply reflected what adults had made of them. He then asked why young people were out alone at night, why they were “babysat” by television and computers when it was common knowledge that such media gave them access to very violent information against which they could not protect themselves. Why were blows the only way to communicate? He denounced a rampant politicization of which children were both clients and victims. He concluded with a metaphor: children had two legs – school and family – and if both neglected each other or came into conflict, the child would stumble and fall. People should stop stigmatizing young people, and get down to work.

10. **Ms Fiona Leach**, Professor at the University of Sussex, wished to offer a global overview of the issue of violence against girls in schools and explain why they are more vulnerable. Most violence has its roots in unequal gender relations and is perpetrated by males against females, but males can also be victims of violence and females can practice violence against both males and other females. Children can be both perpetrators and victims. Violence in schools may be physical, verbal, sexual, emotional and psychological. Much of it is of a sexual nature and may involve

harassment, assault, abuse or rape. Female teachers may also be targeted. Other forms of violence in school are ostracism, victimization, intimidation, cyber-bullying and verbal abuse. It is very difficult to assess the scale of violence in schools globally. Only in sub-Saharan Africa has the research had a strong gender component. Violence is largely a product of social inequities, including unequal gender relations, and girls are more vulnerable to violence in schools because of the social, political and economic environment that young people grow up in. The school reflects and reinforces these conditions. Schools are a reflection of society and thus often emphasize gender differences. Responses are weak and most interventions are carried out by NGOs. Policies are weak and the welfare of institutions is put above the welfare of children.

### **C. Prevention of violence through communication and information**

11. **Mr Daniel Da Hien**, Coordinator of the African Youth Network, stressed that information for young people was an important asset for the national policies of industrialized and developing countries alike. It was part of a national development strategy and a key issue in international relations. However, it was difficult to access information because it was scattered in many different places. An international approach was conducive to a broader, more global and more relative perspective on information. Faced with that reality, approximately 50 youth NGOs had set up an information and training network concerning youth called the African Youth Network. Factors accounting for the increased violence among young people were poor parental guidance, massive exposure to heavy media consumption and violent entertainment (television and videos, computer games, and the Internet), and critical levels of unemployment of qualified young people which went unnoticed by political leaders. One of the many solutions to be envisaged was the prevention of violence communication and information. UNESCO, which actively encouraged young people to produce information themselves by supporting youth-oriented media and by facilitating young people's access to information and communication networks, had an important role to play. It was also important to promote a culture of non-violence in the "young people's environment" through information and communication, particularly to educate young people and stimulate their creativity.

12. **Mr Adli Daana**, Secretary General of the International Palestinian Youth League (IPYL), member of the CCIVS, mentioned several reasons for violence: the economic situation (poverty and unemployment), social oppression, non-democratic regimes, media images and shows, conflicts and absence of a legitimate state. Violence is not exclusive to a specific region, religion, culture. He mentioned one example of violence and how the IPYL dealt with it. In 2002-2003, a questionnaire was sent to students in Palestine to measure the needs of young people. The survey asked what their future dream was. 76% of both boys and girls expressed that death was their future dream, either as a martyr or a freedom fighter. When asked a second time, there were still violent answers linked to the conflict. These answers were analysed in the light of the daily life of a young Palestinian. One important aspect is the complete absence of freedom of mobility because of Israeli checkpoints and the daily humiliations they entail. Another important aspect is the continued conflict, the standstill in the political talks, the weak legal status and performance of the Palestinian Authority. These factors have had a direct impact on the media; that is, an intense coverage of the conflict. The IPYL, established in 1997 to empower youth, uses and mobilizes all tools available for a more non-violent approach and activities, which is especially challenging in Palestine. It develops voluntary service, youth exchanges, seminars, music and informal and non-formal education. These are in addition to information technology and media. The most important and efficient tool in reducing violence was IT, media and communications, as a response more than as a preventive measure. Many projects were implemented with UNESCO's support and helped young Palestinians gain skills, find jobs and communicate with other young people from around the world. Media-related activities have become a true alternative to paths that have traditionally led to violence.

### **D. Debate**

13. During the debate which followed the presentations, representatives of nine Member States (Congo, Kuwait, Mongolia, France, Venezuela, El Salvador, Egypt, Cuba and Pakistan) took the

floor, thanking the Chair and emphasizing the relevance of the session's topic. They also underlined the crucial need for UNESCO to play a more prominent role in combating violence, notably through education, particularly in education for non-violence and the culture of peace, and through the promotion of socially responsible media. It was also suggested that access to cultural institutions should be made easier for young people. Member States also pointed to the crucial role of NGOs in this area and to NGO action that should be a source of inspiration to governments. The issue of a follow-up to the current meeting was raised and it was suggested that informal meetings should be organized between Committee sessions to ensure such follow-up. Four NGO representatives then took the floor to report on their organizations' actions, stressing, *inter alia*, the importance of not reducing national education budgets.

### **Wednesday 31 March**

#### **Round table on "Violence in today's world" (afternoon)**

##### **E. Violence in the minds of young people: cultural responses**

14. **Mr Hans d'Orville**, Assistant Director-General for Strategic Planning and Acting Deputy Director-General, and moderator of the afternoon's session, introduced the following panellists, **Ms Chantal Grevin** and **Ms Akouavi Gbone**, representatives of the non-governmental organization "New Humanity". They reiterated their organization's golden rule for successful living together: not to do to others what you would not have done to you. They then presented their teaching approach to peace education which was based on six very simple maxims: everyone should strive towards fraternity; have a positive attitude towards others; make the first step; approach even one's enemies; understand others; reciprocate, and consider others as friends. They then gave some examples of where that method had worked and presented the project "Semaine Monde Uni", which for one week involved encouraging young people from all over the world to step up their efforts to achieve peaceful living together. Within that framework, activities were carried out aimed at developing an attitude of respect towards all cultures.

15. After that contribution concerning violence among young people, and before moving on to violence against women, three NGOs which had not been able to take the floor during the morning's **debate** were invited to do so. They in turn stressed the importance of the educational work, particularly in the field of non-formal education, carried out by NGOs, especially the Scouts and youth and student NGOs. The representative of one Member State also took the floor to draw attention to the importance of actions like those carried out by "New Humanity" and of civics education as a means to train young people.

## **II. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

16. **Ms Eulalie Nibizi**, President of the Syndicat libre des travailleurs de l'enseignement du Burundi (STEB), a member organization of Education International, was the first speaker of the second part of the round table. She began by defining violence against women and the different forms that such violence could take outside school. From babyhood right up until adulthood, throughout early childhood, adolescence and youth, women were subjected to various types of violence which had their origin in ingrained customs and practices institutionalized at all levels of society. That violence undermined the dignity of women and should be combated. Violence, the physical and mental force used against women, was a means of obtaining what one wanted by force or coercion, playing on another's vulnerability. Forms of violence outside school – physical, psychological, verbal and sexual – could be perpetrated in public or private within social and economic relationships or within the bond of marriage, and were known as domestic violence. Even in their mothers' wombs, when parents knew they were expecting a girl, girls were subjected to violence and it could be the start of a real journey of suffering. Violence at school was the extension of the violence which took place outside school and was a major obstacle to girls' enrolment or attendance. Sexual violence, which, because of the age of the victims, could be

called sexual exploitation, was widespread, particularly in Burundi where 47% of victims of sexual violence were between 10 and 14 years old, and 27% between 15 and 19. Often perpetrated by the very people who were meant to protect the children, its consequences were disastrous, with the increase in HIV/AIDS in particular. So widespread was the problem that action needed to be taken by changing laws, beliefs and practices in order to empower women.

17. **Ms Nadya Kassam**, Head of Global Advocacy at Plan International, presented her organization which is present in 66 countries, 49 in the South, and operates in favour of the most vulnerable children and communities in the world. She then showed a video illustrating violence in schools in Kenya. The consequences of school violence are corporal punishment, sexual violence and bullying, all having short and long term impacts. Plan International thus created Global Vision with global goals to reach protection through laws, respect, and recognition of the scale and severity of school violence by all governments. Global research has shown that one million children are affected by school violence each day, that girls are at greater risk of sexual violence than boys, and that school violence is a global and gendered problem. Plan International questioned children of Ghana, Guinea Bissau and the Philippines, through a pilot study, and the early results of this ongoing survey are that 64% of the participants had been verbally bullied by a classmate in the previous month, that girls are always more scared than boys and are at greater risk of sexual violence than boys. Consequently, better school policies are needed especially since school is the institution that all children trust the most, taking into account national and local variations. Some of the reasons why such violence takes place is because children are not full adults and thus are not considered as having full rights, beating is considered a legitimate form of justice if an adult/teacher does it and discipline is considered a private matter. Measures that can have an effect on school violence are global initiatives such as UNESCO's EFA programme, national policies and the media. Ms Kassam then presented some of the progress made by Plan International's campaign and raised several questions for UNESCO's action, in particular, why there are still no laws against this type of violence in every single country.

18. **Ms Kirti Singh**, Lawyer at the Supreme Court of India and New Delhi High Court, recalled the right to life and to live with dignity. She underlined the fact that the Penal Code in India, as well as in many other countries, was written in the 19th century and thus mentions rape and sexual harassment without having an understanding of the women of today, marital rape still not being outlawed. It is high time fundamental changes were introduced in the law. She also mentioned female infanticide and the fact that discrimination against girls begins in the womb through a deliberate and targeted use of abortion to get rid of female foetuses, to the point that girls are being "imported" from other states to marry. It is a very serious human rights issue. In 1994, India introduced a law to stop this practice; however there is hardly any implementation of the law. Child marriage also continues to be a problem and even though boys are also affected by this issue, the impact on girls is far larger in number and intensity as they have to perform household tasks and thus stop schooling. Although there are several laws relating to child marriage, the problem remains and when children want to be able to choose their partner, crimes are committed, initiated by members of the boy's family. Some men are still too backward-looking, totally against inter-religious and inter-caste marriages. As concerns sexual abuse, there are very high rates of mortality and morbidity and violence or rapes committed by people of power.

19. **Ms Sophia Lakhdar**, Director of the French Committee against Modern Slavery (CCEM), recalled that human trafficking was a grave violation of human rights and remained a major issue with regard to women's exploitation. She presented CCEM's work, its mission being to offer legal and medical support to victims of such exploitation, and to help them regularize their situations. Many of the victims were in jobs in domestic service and in the building, catering and craft trades. In most cases, they were hired for domestic exploitation purposes with false promises of schooling given to parents since they were sometimes very young children when recruited. Victims came mainly from North, West and Central Africa; they were often members of the same family or network of friends, or from the same village, and knew each other. Women were usually the victims, but very often women hired them too. Conditions of exploitation involved working 15-20 hours a day, seven days a week, and victims were subjected to social isolation, discrimination and

strong psychological pressure, with restricted access to food, healthcare and hygiene. In 2010, OSCE would be addressing the subject and ILO examining domestic work: UNESCO was therefore also encouraged to do likewise.

20. **Ms Fiona Leach** intervened a second time during the session on violence against women and underlined that forms of violence are context specific. Violence in wider society spills over in schools, it is thus important to teach children new behaviours and attitudes. The media, especially movies and the Internet, can have very negative impacts and cyber-bullying is becoming very important. She also mentioned the negative circle of violence; children learn violence at home or in the street and then perpetuate it. A broad systemic approach is needed to address the issue.

21. During the **debate** that followed, representatives of five Member States (Mongolia, Kuwait, Greece, Egypt and France) and eight NGO representatives took the floor, stressing the relevance of the subject which must not be considered as belonging to the private sphere but a social problem with repercussions on the social, economic and cultural development of countries. Human trafficking, too, was a fundamental issue which had to be seen as a worldwide problem for which international cooperation should be developed. All speakers urged UNESCO to devote more attention to issues in conjunction with NGOs. France also suggested the possibility of a United Nations international year against violence.

22. Finally, **Mr Hans d'Orville** concluded this round table by reminding that gender equality is one of UNESCO's global priorities and that addressing youth and the needs of youth is a priority for the Organization and each Programme Sector. UNESCO is, thus, a forum and a laboratory of ideas, a knowledge broker, an advocate for policies and for awareness and an adviser to governments for their own policies. Hence, there is an important potential to develop the actions of UNESCO in this field if the governments wish to do so. Moreover, UNESCO is an increasingly important partner in United Nations interagency affairs where the issues of gender equality and prevention of violence against women are being addressed. Mr d'Orville also reminded that 2010 was the International Year of Youth, which creates another opportunity to insert the dimension of violence into several of UNESCO's activities. He then mentioned a number of other concrete opportunities that the Organization could seize in its different fields of competence, especially in the field of education or in the context of the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) which was approved by the Executive Board in 2009, to address more directly the issue of violence. He also said that there should be a reflection on how the agencies of the United Nations system could bring this issue to the level of the United Nations country teams and to governments. Finally, he suggested that the theme of this round table be used as an inspiration for the next UNESCO Youth Forum that will be held in 2011, in the context of the 36th session of the General Conference.

23. Following the discussion, participants were invited to watch Jean-Paul Lilienfeld's film "**La journée de la jupe**", released in 2009 and winner of several awards, which illustrated how violence could arise in schools either among students or initiated by teachers, as well as the psychological violence from which women suffered.

#### **Thursday 1 April**

##### **"NGO activities and examples of cooperation with UNESCO" (morning)**

24. The discussion session was opened by **Mr Bernard Loing**, Chairperson of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee and moderator of the discussion. Mr Loing commended Egypt's initiative to devote the Committee's second day to statements by NGOs. He stressed the strong ties linking the NGO community maintaining official relations with the Organization to the Committee on International Non-Governmental Organizations of the Executive Board, and drew attention to the fact that the Committee had two working days available to it. He then underlined the importance of renewing UNESCO's working methods as part of its complementary partnership with NGOs, which were active in all UNESCO fields of competence, and ranged from small grassroots organizations to think tanks. The proof of this renewal was the creation of an online

discussion forum and the launch of a series of conferences on universal values and paths of diversity. He also mentioned the need to study the issue of war and its new forms to address more effectively the theme of peace and contribute fully to the culture of peace and intercultural dialogue. Lastly, he stressed the fact that the theme of the Committee's round table was relevant, highly topical and particularly appropriate to NGO activities.

25. **Mr Elie Absi**, first Vice-President of the International Union of Technical Associations and Organizations (UATI), spoke on the theme of "Science and technology in the service of African development". He described the Union's method of work, which involved three priority action modalities, a development illustrated by specific objectives and use of the progress chain principle to facilitate discussions. Lastly, he submitted the broad and varied action plan of the Union in its capacity as an NGO, a plan governed by the concept of the progress chain. The goal was to enable experts to meet and exchange experiences, while reaching conclusions and making specific proposals. The experts would be endeavouring to comply with the aims of UNESCO and the African Union, mobilize their networks in Africa and seek new partners.

26. **Ms Catherine Deremble**, representative of the Joint Programmatic Commission (JPC) on Dialogue among Cultures for Peace, described the history, composition, objectives and working methods of the Commission. Following the shock of the 2001 terrorist attacks, a movement promoting dialogue as a counterweight to Manichaeism had emerged. Since then, some 40 NGOs had joined the movement. The objective was to identify the shape of that dialogue and to allow prominent representatives of civil society to be heard. To date, the Commission had addressed three topics: identifying obstacles to dialogue (2007), conditions of dialogue (2008) and acts of dialogue (2009).

27. **Mr Patrick Petit**, representative of the Goï Peace Foundation, described his organization, its mission and activities. Founded in 1988 in New York, Goï International aimed to develop a culture of peace. It notably sponsored the International Essay Contest which encouraged young people throughout the world to promote peace and seek solutions. The awards ceremony for the competition was organized jointly by UNESCO and the Goï Foundation in Tokyo. A forum had also been sponsored by UNESCO and the Republic of Korea in 2008 at which young people's participation had been facilitated.

28. **Ms Eva Egron Polack**, Secretary-General of the International Association of Universities (IAU), regretted that the Vice-President of the organization had been unable to come to Paris to make the presentation, owing to a lack of funds. She then described the composition of her NGO, which maintained formal relations with UNESCO and brought together thousands of members across the world. Through two examples of its work, she described the Association's efforts to promote sustainable development and to redefine quality and excellence in modern education. Those projects had led to the creation of a teaching kit, an Internet portal and a newsletter highlighting the connection between education for all and higher education. She emphasized the need to make higher education more international in response to globalization. The Association provided a public service and had a data bank containing thousands of documents. Lastly, it had worked in collaboration with UNESCO on the World Conference on Higher Education (1998, 2003, 2009), the World Conference for Education on Sustainable Development (2009), and within the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee.

29. **Mr Hadi Martono**, Secretary of the Director-General for Multilateral Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, described the procedures and cooperation established in Indonesia to facilitate NGO activities. NGOs served as intermediaries for the population by proposing specific and practical solutions in the field. He highlighted the participation of non-State actors in the development process. Cooperation between the Government of Indonesia and NGOs had been instituted years ago to support innovation and facilitate communication, research, follow-up and assessment. It enabled advocacy for and by the poor which strengthened the population's capacity for action. It offered innovative solutions and encouraged a strong commitment to ideals in the definition and implementation of activities and the promotion of social protection. The creation

of a favourable cultural and social environment empowered citizens to act. Cooperation between the Government and NGOs was overseen by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which examined all requests, on the basis of the objectives and feasibility studies.

30. Those presentations were followed by a **debate**, in which six Member States (Egypt, France, Greece, Kuwait, Mongolia and Russia), members of the UNESCO Secretariat and 10 NGOs took part. The issue of marketing university degrees was raised. The importance of working with NGOs with a universal scope mirroring the Organization's priorities was stressed, as was the need for UNESCO to concentrate mainly on developing countries and countries in transition. The value of diversifying NGO participation in such meetings to give more NGOs from developing countries an opportunity to express their views was highlighted once more. The representative of the Education Sector spoke about the most recent meeting of the Collective Consultation of Non-Governmental Organizations on Education for All, which had been held in March 2010 in Bangladesh to promote cooperation with civil society locally, nationally and internationally and analyse the impact of the financial crisis on NGOs working to promote education for all. He said that the Collective Consultation currently comprised a network of over 260 NGOs. All the NGOs had described the collaboration with UNESCO as natural and very effective. Mr Loing ended the morning session by stating that NGOs reflected the image of the world's diversity and complexity, and it was necessary to preserve the Committee's vitality, competence and freedom of speech.

#### Thursday 1 April

#### NGO activities and examples of cooperation with UNESCO (afternoon)

31. The discussion continued with statements by another five panellists. **Ms Marie-Bernadette Diop** of the International Movement ATD Fourth World said that her organization strove to promote human rights in order to ensure that the poorest could exercise all of their rights, and to achieve progress in the eradication of poverty. It was present in ten African countries through its national branches and partners, which carried out many activities relating to access to knowledge and culture, knowledge of rights, commitment and participation in social life, training in public speaking and education for peace, for example.

32. **Mr Pierre Arlaud**, representative of the Joint Programme Commission on Youth, gave examples of cooperation and highlighted the difficulties experienced in collaborating with UNESCO. He said that youth NGOs were skilful in the search for political coherence at the local level, the development of holistic solutions and the building of expert capacity. The ongoing dialogue between UNESCO and NGOs was vital in order to promote youth involvement in decision-making at UNESCO, rise above individual situations and ensure joint efforts. He regretted that UNESCO representatives did not participate in the Joint Programme Commission. He therefore suggested that joint meetings be held more regularly and that overall multilateral partnership be strengthened in order to serve youth.

33. **Mr Gaston Melo**, representative of the Association of Latin American Students (EVAC), said that his organization sought to make the voices of university students heard and to ensure that students participated in national platforms, exchanges and meetings with representatives of international institutions, politicians and business leaders. EVAC had begun to cooperate with UNESCO and the OECD in order to establish a world platform of young academics and thus promote dialogue and encourage the major international institutions to share projects and draw closer to citizens.

34. **Ms Paola Costa-Orjuela and Ms Katy Ndiaye**, representatives of the International Council of French-Speaking Radio and Television (CIRTEF), described their NGO, which aimed to promote the role of radio and television as engines of development in the community interest and to encourage cultural and technical exchanges. For that purpose, CIRTEF maintained working relations with many organizations, including UNESCO. The two organizations had, in particular, conducted joint audiovisual campaigns on AIDS prevention, human rights and the emancipation of

women. Lastly, they described CIRTEF's various operational resources, programmes and broadcasts. Radio and television productions consisted of socially and culturally relevant broadcasts and could take the form of documentaries, fiction or magazines that were widely disseminated throughout the French-speaking world.

35. **Ms Yseult Kaplan**, representative of *Soroptimist*, described the organization and its working methods. It was a generalist and apolitical organization that worked to secure a fairer status of women in society. Its projects took a long-term view aimed locally or nationally at sustainable development. She gave some examples of activities or objectives, which included a marathon held yearly to promote sustainable access to drinking water and other economic or educational projects. The purposes of the current project *Sierra une famille = un futur* (2007-2011) were to avoid the breaking up of weak families, assist young mothers in difficulty and even rehabilitate street children. *Soroptimist* spoke up for those who did not have a voice and participated actively in UNESCO's strategy.

36. In the ensuing **debate**, five Member States (Denmark, Peru, Russian Federation, Greece and Latvia) took the floor. UNESCO was encouraged to strengthen the tripartite States-UNESCO-NGO dialogue and to exchange information. The issue of relations among National Commissions, NGOs and the Organization geared to improve work at the national level was raised. The aim was to strengthen the role of the National Commissions, in particular, their operational role in the UNESCO federations, associations and clubs. One NGO representative referred to UNESCO's catalytic role in strengthening the status of the Organization. The Member States suggested that the Committee be empowered at each session to choose the theme for the following session. The Chairperson said that a procedure for the electronic consultation of members of the Committee would be introduced before the next session so that the theme of the round table could be selected by that means.

#### **Draft decision**

37. In regard to the draft decision contained in paragraph 10 of document 184 EX/29, a slight amendment was made to paragraph 3 and two paragraphs (4 and 5) were submitted to the Committee for approval, and were adopted as amended below in order to reflect the Committee's debates. In addition to those two new paragraphs, another five paragraphs reflecting the debates held during the Committee's two-day meeting and reflecting the various requests made by Member States were proposed when the draft decision was being adopted. As several Member States had regretted that there was not enough time to take a decision on those proposals, which had not been submitted in the two working languages, it was decided that those proposals would be examined at the next session. The Committee therefore recommended that the Executive Board adopt the following draft decision:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 174 EX/Decision 31, 177 EX/Decision 57, 183 EX/Decision 13 and 34 C/Resolution 59,
2. Having examined documents 184 EX/29 and 184 EX/ONG/2,
3. Appreciates the continued efforts made by the Committee on International Non-Governmental Organizations to strengthen cooperation with NGOs in the various fields of UNESCO's competence and at international, regional and national levels, in particular the organization of one Committee day dedicated entirely to NGO activities;
4. Expresses its concern about the theme addressed "Violence in the Contemporary World", in particular among the young and against women;

5. Recalls, in view of the importance of this theme, the primordial role of NGOs in this regard, both on the ground and in cooperation with UNESCO in its primary responsibilities as a laboratory of ideas and knowledge facilitator;
6. Takes note of the Director-General's decisions concerning the admission to operational relations of the organizations listed in Part II.A of document 184 EX/29;
7. Decides to admit to formal consultative relations the non-governmental organizations listed in Part II.B of document 184 EX/29;
8. Takes note of the Director-General's decisions concerning the renewal of official relations with the foundations listed in Part II.C of document 184 EX/29.