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**THE CULTURE OF PEACE PROGRAMME:
FROM NATIONAL PROGRAMMES TO A PROJECT OF GLOBAL SCOPE**

SUMMARY

This document is presented in conformity with 144 EX/Decision 4.1, Part I, by which the Executive Board invited the Director-General to submit to it at its 145th session a report outlining the arrangements envisaged by UNESCO for the preparation, funding and implementation of national programmes for the culture of peace, accompanied by a project of global scope on the same topic.

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I. THE NEED FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE

1. With the end of the Cold War, the world now faces other urgent threats to security; uncontrolled population growth, pollution and environmental degradation, poverty and violence lead to massive emigration, to social exclusion, and to radicalization, extremism and war. The present upsurge of intercultural conflicts is not the consequence of freedom in former autocracies but rather the result of many years of oppression, silence, and the fermentation of hatred. Peace, which has been denied by a context of distrust and fear, can only be achieved through openness and interaction.

2. What is needed is no less than a global transition from a culture of war to a culture of peace. In a culture of war, everyone is tensed for the worst. Differences between individuals and communities become rallying points for mobilization and extremism and not simply the rich pluralism history has given us. By taking the road of a culture of peace, we can recover what is common between us through a dialogue that takes the place of hostility and aggression. The first steps in this transition from a culture of war to a culture of peace are justice and freedom, two fundamental characteristics of democracy.

3. To construct peace in the minds of men and women, economic growth is indispensable but not sufficient. Political development is crucial but again not sufficient. As the Preamble of UNESCO's Constitution states, peace depends on 'the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind'. This is the basis for UNESCO's contribution to the World Summit on Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) which includes: (i) endogenous capacity-building; (ii) enhanced quality of life in rural areas; (iii) people's participation, particularly at the municipal level; (iv) environmental security; and (v) communication for awareness and social integration.

4. In both the *Agenda for Peace* (1992) and in his report on the *Agenda for Development* (1994), the Secretary-General of the United Nations emphasizes the crucial role of preventive and long-term activities in peace-building. However, at present a vast majority of the resources and efforts are being invested in peace-keeping and humanitarian operations. Urgent matters overshadow those which are most important in the long-term and there is no time for the farsightedness and serenity to redress the present inefficient strategy for development. There is a failure to act consistently on endogenous capacity-building, to reach those who have not been reached, to provide every human being with equal opportunities and dignity.

5. Prevention is the solution. But, when successful, prevention is invisible. Society has become insensitive to all but the most visible, patent and even pathetic images on the television screen. Prevention requires looking to the horizon where the long-term can be seen. To shift from peace-keeping to peace-building demands a new perception, with help from the media, that focuses upon the intangible future. Prevention must be supported by decision-makers, parliaments and the civil society as a whole. This awareness can progressively consolidate a 'new vision' which addresses the threats to world security with imagination and perseverance. For example, during times of peace, armies can be put to work for sustainable human development, especially for improvement of rural quality of life.

6. As the culture of war has pervaded our ways of being in myriad ways, a culture of peace needs to be introduced into every aspect of our lives and into the process of learning. For example, the contents and design of national and regional history texts must be reviewed in order to forge attitudes of non-violence, of sharing, of favouring the 'knowledge of the other'

(which is fundamental to tolerance). Culture is how we behave every day. To behave peacefully, to be always ready for dialogue and comprehension, to maintain our beliefs and opinions without violence or dogmatism - this is 'building the defences of peace', this is UNESCO's role.

II. BACKGROUND OF THE PROGRAMME

7. Following its initial invitation to the Director-General to submit an action programme aimed at promoting a culture of peace (140 EX/Decision 5.4.2), the Executive Board received and discussed documents 141 EX/16 and 142 EX/13, Action Programme to Promote a Culture of Peace. The latter, containing a description of the peace-building activities in El Salvador, was transmitted to the twenty-seventh session of the General Conference along with a summary of the Board's debate in the Programme and External Relations Commission (27 C/126).

8. The twenty-seventh session of the General Conference debated extensively concerning a culture of peace, both in plenary and in Commission V. Member States gave strong support to the concept and to the proposed programme, and made a number of constructive suggestions for its implementation.

9. Member States emphasized the inextricable linkage between a culture of peace and a culture of democracy, and respect for human rights, as well as with development and the eradication of poverty. It was emphasized that a culture of peace cannot be imposed; rather, it is a process that evolves constantly out of particular traditions, cultures and situations, and the will of the people involved.

10. Further, it was stressed in the debate that the proposed programme should be constructed on the basis of the vast experience of UNESCO in its fields of competence, including a study of where and to what extent it has been successful in achieving its goals. The programme should be transversal and intersectoral in nature, and long-term in perspective and be clearly reflected in the next Medium-Term Plan. Member States proposed that adequate resources should be devoted to the implementation of the tasks involved.

11. The pilot project for a culture of peace in El Salvador was praised by many Member States. In addition to pilot projects co-ordinated with United Nations peace-keeping operations such as those in El Salvador and Mozambique, it was proposed that the programme should continue the comprehensive, long-term development of a culture of peace involving preventive as well as post-conflict activities.

12. The concept was further refined at the first International Forum on the Culture of Peace held in San Salvador, February 1994. Representatives from a number of countries drew upon their national experience with peace-building. In addition to stressing the linkages to justice, human rights, democracy and development, they emphasized the importance of participation by people at all levels in the construction of a culture of peace.

13. The culture of peace was subsequently addressed by the third meeting of the World Commission on Culture and Development (San José, Costa Rica, February 1994) which proposed, as privileged means, education in multiculturalism, and the implementation of institutional and political mechanisms to prevent and manage intercultural conflicts.

III. ESTABLISHMENT OF UNESCO'S CULTURE OF PEACE PROGRAMME

14. Responding to the Executive Board and General Conference, the Director-General established a unit for the Culture of Peace Programme (CPP) under his direct authority, with effect from 1 February 1994. The unit was charged with a number of functions, including the development of national and subregional programmes, refinement of a methodology for the fostering of a culture of peace, provision of an integrated approach to the ongoing activities of UNESCO in this area, and co-ordination of these activities with those of the United Nations system and of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

15. In its first few months, the unit focused on the development of national programmes and the initiation of contacts with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. It also began a collection and analysis of ongoing activities within the Secretariat (both at Headquarters and the field offices) related to the culture of peace in order to establish a clear basis for co-ordinated action and thus strengthen the intersectoral character of the programme. At present the unit consists of a director, four professionals and two general service staff.

16. The Director-General has named two Special Advisers for the Culture of Peace Programme: Mr A. Ramirez Ocampo and Mr M. Sahnoun.

17. In order to ensure the intersectoral and interdisciplinary nature of the programme, involving all fields of competence of UNESCO, an Intersectoral Committee for the Culture of Peace was established. This Committee is made up of Assistant Directors-General and is chaired by the Director-General himself. Its first meeting, 20 April 1994, involved representatives from all sectors and major services of the Organization.

18. A number of joint projects are being established between the Culture of Peace Unit and sectors/programmes, for example in Burundi, Congo, Haiti and Mozambique. The creation of UNESCO chairs on human rights and democracy and peace in Jordan, Poland, South Africa, Spain and Venezuela and of schools of journalism goes in the same direction. The unit has undertaken to assist the UNESCO Consultative Committee on Women in the preparation of a consultative meeting on women and the culture of peace, a precursor to the fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995).

19. The Director-General has decided on the creation, by 31 December 1995, of an important number of Associated Schools, mostly during the International Year of Tolerance. In addition, a series of culture of peace children's festivals is being organized with the Associated Schools Project as a contribution to the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the United Nations and UNESCO, and the International Year of Tolerance. Ad hoc working groups have also begun to meet on selected issues and a number of other joint initiatives are being developed with the sectors and services of the Organization.

IV. NATIONAL CULTURE OF PEACE PROGRAMMES

20. National programmes jointly developed by all parties which were involved in conflict are an essential element in post conflict peace-building. Some national programmes for conflict prevention are being examined by UNESCO and Member States and information on them will be spread by a comprehensive network which is being developed within the Culture of Peace Programme Unit.

21. The national programme for the culture of peace in El Salvador was discussed and supported by the 142nd session of the Executive Board and the twenty-seventh session of the General Conference based on documents 142 EX/13 and 27 C/126, and the details will not be repeated here. Those documents outlined the methodology of the programme, based on a process of consensus and participation of all parties to the conflict ('cross-conflict participation') as well as the activities envisaged, which comprised a series of 23 projects in four categories. Those categories included: democratic citizenship and human development; recovery and development of the national identity in a culture of peace; learning and practice of a culture of peace; and several transverse themes and projects in information, social communication and the training of 'peace promoters'.

22. In the interest of national reconciliation it is essential that all the former parties in conflict have access to new educational opportunities. Therefore, the Director-General has proposed three projects in El Salvador to ensure that the 'train of education passes again'. These projects are: (a) vocational training for the illiterate population; (b) vocational training for the literate population; and (c) a programme of access to higher education. These approaches are being considered with interest by the Palestinian education authorities and by different institutions in South Africa. The Director-General has also proposed a special similar programme to the Bosnian Government when he visited Sarajevo in May.

23. The training of peace promoters is intended to operationalize a linkage between the culture of peace and sustainable human development. In-service training in conflict-management skills and traditional methods of peace-making is given to field staff in human development projects of UNESCO and other international agencies. These staff are then expected to use their training in order to facilitate the involvement of participants from all sides of the conflict in a country in development activities. The goal is to develop national networks of peace promoters who ensure that development proceeds on the basis of broad participation and co-operation involving all sectors of the community.

24. Steps have been taken to provide effective management of the programme in El Salvador. This management is most important since the process of consensus and participation requires extensive mediation on the part of UNESCO. The Culture of Peace Programme has therefore established an office in San Salvador under the direction of a senior and experienced professional. This office is ensuring that the nature of the programme activities is consistent with the overall philosophy and concept of a culture of peace.

25. A major priority for the office is to ensure extra-budgetary funding for the 23 projects involved. To this end, UNESCO organized on 26 May a 'Culture of Peace' donor support meeting at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) offices in San Salvador. The meeting was attended by Ministers of the Salvadorian Government, the General Co-ordinator of the Frente Farabundo Marti de Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) and representatives of non-governmental organizations. Representatives of eight donor countries, the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank and the Commission of the European Communities expressed their interest in supporting the programme. Initial pledges amount to approximately \$6 million which will allow certain projects to begin.

26. As a follow-up to the donor support meeting, some of the original programmes have been transformed into specific projects designed for the funding that has been pledged. The

development process of these projects respects the wide consultation and consensus which is a basic characteristic in peace-building.

27. One mechanism which is thought to be useful in promoting a culture of peace is the use of national/international centres, and the Government of El Salvador is taking the initiative in promoting an international centre for the culture of peace. This centre will certainly conduct training, share experiences and be a type of clearing house. The functions and administration of the centre are being elaborated by a UNESCO consultant working in El Salvador.

28. The Culture of Peace Programme in Mozambique referred to earlier has been initiated in co-operation with the Mozambican National Commission for UNESCO. The programme supports the grass-roots initiatives for peace of the Mozambican people which have developed spontaneously since the Rome Accords of 1992 ended more than 25 years of war.

29. The programme in Mozambique is in its first phase and supports Mozambican non-governmental organizations, including women's organizations involved in conflict resolution and civic education at a community level. Through organizations of writers and social scientists it promotes the collection and preparation of traditional experiences of the Mozambican people in peace-making and reconciliation for diffusion by radio, and the print media, teaching materials and training manuals, in local languages as well as in Portuguese.

30. With the establishment of a UNESCO office in the capital, Maputo, it is expected that the Culture of Peace Programme in Mozambique will be expanded into a second phase by the end of 1994 on the basis of extra-budgetary support. In addition to the continued support of women's organizations and the collection and diffusion of local culture of peace materials, it is anticipated that the programme will develop a strategy for culture of peace education, both formal and non-formal, and a training programme for 'peace-promoters' in the context of human development programmes.

31. The national culture of peace programmes are initiated by seed money from UNESCO, but their further development depends upon extra-budgetary fund-raising. The process of such fund-raising in the first such programme, that in El Salvador, has been mentioned above. It is expected, however, that a wide variety of flexible models for financing such projects will be developed over time.

32. Before undertaking many more national culture of peace programmes, it is important to evaluate and to derive future directions from the concrete experiences of those programmes already under way. For example, the principle of consensus and active participation, learned in El Salvador, is being applied in Mozambique and should be recognized as a basic principle. Another example, the principle of basing the programme on traditional means of peace-making is being learned in the Mozambique programme and will be applied in other future programmes.

33. Culture of peace activities must be carried out by our field offices in co-operation with the responsible sectors or by special units where no representation exists. When special national programmes are developed on the prevention of conflict, these will normally be organized and managed by specific sectors, in consultation with the Culture of Peace Programme. The same criteria are applicable when UNESCO undertakes special activities for peace-building or the Director-General himself leads initiatives of this kind.

V. TOWARDS A PROJECT OF GLOBAL SCOPE

34. In the development of such a project there are a number of underlying principles which are of critical relevance. These principles derive from the theoretical and practical clarification of the concept. Two activities in particular add significantly to this progressive refinement of the concept - the first International Forum on the Culture of Peace, 16-18 February 1994 and the first Consultative Meeting of the Culture of Peace Programme, 27-29 September 1994.

35. Further, as the Culture of Peace Programme is comprehensive and touches all aspects of UNESCO's work, a project of global scope will be an addition of actions reflected in many different programmes of the Organization.

36. As mentioned earlier, the first International Forum on the Culture of Peace held in San Salvador helped to improve the concept of a culture of peace. The conclusions of that forum offered a clear framework within which any programme of worldwide scope must be conceived. They are:

the objective of a culture of peace is to ensure that the conflicts inherent in human relationships be resolved non-violently;

peace and human rights are indivisible and concern everyone;

the construction of a culture of peace is a multidimensional task requiring the participation of people at all levels;

a culture of peace should contribute to the strengthening of democratic processes;

the implementation of a culture of peace project requires a thorough mobilization of all means of education, both formal and non-formal, and of communication;

a culture of peace requires the learning and use of new techniques for the peaceful management and resolution of conflicts;

a culture of peace should be elaborated within the process of sustainable, endogenous, equitable human development; it cannot be imposed from outside.

37. The first Consultative Meeting of the Culture of Peace Programme is expected both to contribute to the clarification of the concept and the activities conducive to a culture of peace. The preparation and conduct of the meeting will draw on the expertise of a wide range of persons. The working document for the meeting, for example, was prepared relying heavily on 12 working papers obtained from experts from different geographical regions on the various aspects of a culture of peace. The report of the meeting will be made available to the members of the Executive Board.

38. Future evolution of the Culture of Peace Programme may involve moving from national programmes to subregional programmes. Already, there have been discussions on the possibility of a programme in Guatemala, and specific actions in support of a culture of peace have been undertaken in Nicaragua. In this context, it is possible to envisage in the near future a subregional programme in Central America.

39. In a similar fashion there is scope for drawing general principles from ongoing and possible programmes in southern Africa - Mozambique, South Africa and Angola - and in the horn of Africa. The methodologies and personnel trained in one country which have proved successful can be used to help launch similar programmes in neighbouring countries. By expanding in this way, the programme can take a step towards a culture of peace project of universal scope.

40. The consultative meeting relied heavily upon the contribution of international non-governmental organizations which are engaged in activities related to a culture of peace on a universal scale. It is expected that the relationship between the UNESCO programme and such non-governmental organizations will increase over time, as UNESCO increasingly works not only with Member States and National Commissions, but also with organizations working at grass-roots community level. For example, the International Peace Research Association has scheduled a plenary session on the culture of peace at its world conference in Malta, November 1994 at which UNESCO will present its programme. For this purpose, a high priority of the Culture of Peace Programme is the establishment of an information and networking system with an emphasis on international non-governmental organizations.

41. Perhaps the fastest and also one of the most comprehensive ways of developing a project of global scope is through the development of an international network. Indeed the development has already started. The network will be plugged into existing networks and will develop contacts with the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies, both international and local non-governmental organizations, research institutes and national institutions. Within these networks the link with human development activities will be given special importance.

42. Increasingly, UNESCO finds itself joined by other agencies and organizations who have come to realize that the world is ready to begin the transformation from a culture of war to a culture of peace. Not a day goes by without inquiries from individuals and organizations who wish to play some role in this challenging task, and who wish to work with UNESCO as partners in its realization.

43. A project of global scope will require much time and effort. The foundations have been laid. As our knowledge expands concerning the prevention of conflict and post-conflict peace-building, the parameters of our project will shift to anticipate conflict and thereby prevent its turning to violence.