REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON THE RESULTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS ON THE HUMAN RIGHT TO PEACE

SUMMARY

This document is submitted to the Executive Board in pursuance of paragraph 2(b) of resolution 43 adopted by the General Conference at its 29th session.

1. In this document and its annexes, the Director-General, acting in accordance with Resolution 43, submits to the Executive Board for examination the results of the International Consultation of Governmental Experts on the Human Right to Peace, held at UNESCO Headquarters from 5 to 9 March 1998.

2. The Director-General believes that this meeting enabled progress to be made and agreement to be reached on important aspects of the culture of peace and the commitment to peace, which are worth preserving.

3. In addition, he wished - in view of the fact that it was a consultation of experts - that their statements should be spontaneous and of a conceptual nature, rather than statements that sometimes express collective positions and fail to go to the heart of the subject under consideration.

4. The vast majority of countries firmly support the human right to peace as a moral principle that is binding only in so far as a country has had it adopted by its parliament and incorporated into its legal system. Likewise, the recognition of a right inherent in each individual is no obstacle whatsoever to the complete fulfilment by citizens of the duties that they owe towards their country, as stated in the Constitution or laws of their country.
5. Furthermore, the basic instruments of international law clearly establish that a declaration is not binding unless it has been formally adopted by national parliaments.

6. Some heads of state and an observer have, since the consultation, expressed their support for the concept of the human right to peace. Similarly, some countries belonging to the group that had expressed reservations have informed the Director-General of their support. Consequently, consultations need to be pursued with that group of countries in order to identify - and if possible clarify - the difficulties that the expression ‘right’ to peace raises for them.

7. The results of the examination of this subject by the Executive Board will enable the Director-General to guide more effectively the future course of the discussions.

8. UNESCO is the home of all cultures, of unrestricted freedom of expression, of dialogue and of mutual understanding.

9. The process must, therefore, continue in a spirit of equanimity and with a determination to carry out the task of clarification that will lead to the final drafting of a text that will receive general assent.
UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS ON THE HUMAN RIGHT TO PEACE

UNESCO Headquarters
Paris, 5-9 March 1998
(Rooms X and XI)

FINAL REPORT
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A. INTRODUCTION

1. Convened in pursuance of resolution 43, adopted by the General Conference at its 29th session (Annex I to this document), an International Consultation of Governmental Experts on the Human Right to Peace met from 5 to 9 March 1998 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. Its purpose was to examine this question in the light of the debates that had taken place at the 29th session of the General Conference and of the replies of Heads of State or Government to the letter DG/19/97/LAC/199 of 1 July 1997.

2. Experts representing the governments of the following 117 Member States of UNESCO took part in the work of this meeting with the right to vote: Albania, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

3. Palestine and the Holy See were represented by observers. The United Nations and the World Intellectual Property Organization sent representatives. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented by observers: Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation, Commonwealth Secretariat, Council of Europe, Inter-American Development Bank, Latin Union, League of Arab States, Organization of African Unity and Organization of American States. Some 20 international non-governmental organizations sent observers to the meeting. The list of participants is available, on request, from the Secretariat.

4. The meeting was opened by the Director-General of UNESCO who, welcoming the participants and observers, delivered an address in which he outlined the series of events that had led to the organization of this International Consultation. He then introduced the Draft Declaration on the Human Right to Peace as the Foundation of the Culture of Peace, which he had prepared and sent to Member States as an annex to circular letter CL/3479, which is contained in Annex II to this document. The Director-General pointed out that this draft text had been prepared so as to take account of the comments and suggestions made by Member States in response to his letter of 1 July 1997 regarding the draft declaration on the human right to peace drawn up in Oslo, and of the debates that had taken place on this subject during the 29th session of the General Conference. He also stated that the main aim of the Consultation was to seek, in a spirit of consensus, general agreement with a view to recognition of the human right to peace as the foundation of the culture of peace, so that UNESCO might make a major contribution to the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He pointed out that the text under consideration drew its inspiration from the UNESCO Constitution, which reflects the profound conviction that lasting peace provides the only framework in which freedom, justice, tolerance and the full
enjoyment of human rights can be guaranteed. In his comments on the draft text the Director-General emphasized its underlying principles: to strengthen the common values of the culture of peace and provide them with a foundation. The text of the Director-General’s opening address is contained in Annex III to this document.

5. The Representative of the United Nations read out a message sent to the International Consultation by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. In his message, Mr Kofi Annan stated that the relationship between peace and human rights is critical to the mission of the United Nations, respect for human rights being the best guarantee of peace, and that the establishment of a durable peace is a condition of the respect for human rights. The text of this message is contained in Annex IV to this document.

6. Acting on the proposal of the chairpersons of the various electoral groups, the Consultation elected Mr Alexandre Kouznetsof as its Chairperson and the members of its Bureau as follows:

   Chairperson: Russian Federation
   Vice-Chairpersons: Canada
                  Democratic Republic of the Congo
                  Egypt
                  Malaysia
   Rapporteur: Venezuela

7. The Consultation took up the provisional Rules of Procedure and, after several amendments had been submitted, its Rules of Procedure (SHS-98/CONF.201/2) were adopted unanimously.

8. In accordance with its Rules of Procedure, the meeting established a Drafting Committee consisting of representatives of the following countries: Belarus, Bulgaria, Dominican Republic, France, Germany, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Malawi, Morocco, Senegal, Syrian Arab Republic and Uruguay.

9. On the proposal of the Chairperson, the Consultation decided that the Drafting Committee would focus its attention on the Draft Declaration drawn up by the Director-General of UNESCO, while taking account of the Draft Declaration adopted in Oslo and of the amendments to this text proposed by Member States and contained in the working document of the meeting (SHS-98/CONF.201/3).

10. In addition, the Consultation approved the timetable of work proposed by its Chairperson.

B. GENERAL DEBATE

11. The general debate took place during the plenary sessions of Friday, 6 March (morning and afternoon) and Saturday, 7 March (morning). The discussions in plenary focused on the main substantive question, i.e. the nature of the human right to peace, its definition, its content and its scope.

12. Sixty-seven Member States took the floor during the plenary sessions. The speakers expressed their support for the aims and ideas underlying the process initiated by the Director-
General with a view to gaining recognition of the human right to peace. Their opinions were unanimous regarding the existence of an indivisible link between all human rights and peace.

13. Most of the speakers were in favour of recognition of the human right to peace and the drafting by UNESCO of a declaration on this subject. For the most part they welcomed the Draft Declaration on the Human Right to Peace as the Foundation of the Culture of Peace proposed by the Director-General and formulated their comments on the basis of that text. For a large number of speakers a declaration on the human right to peace would form the very basis of a culture of peace, as just endorsed by resolutions 52/13 and 52/15 of the General Assembly of the United Nations. These speakers expressed their governments’ interest in the explicit formulation of the human right to peace, which is already mentioned in several international instruments, and saw there a process similar to that which had been initiated in the case of the right to development, which had been established by the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993.

14. A number of participants expressed, on behalf of their governments, doubts and reservations concerning the relevance of defining peace as a human right, the content and scope that such a human right to peace would have and UNESCO’s competence to draw up a standard-setting instrument on that subject.

15. At the request of several participants the Legal Adviser took the floor in order to clarify the legal status and scope of a declaration adopted by UNESCO. He stated that the aim of a declaration is to define certain principles and that any further measures that might be taken to transform it into another kind of legal instrument normally depended on the resolutions accompanying such declarations.

16. All the participants recognized that the Draft Declaration that was to be prepared by the Consultation would primarily be an ethical document designed to proclaim principles, in accordance with the moral and intellectual role assigned to UNESCO by its Constitution.

C. WORK OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE

17. The Drafting Committee held meetings on Saturday, 7 March (end of the morning and the afternoon), Sunday, 8 March (morning, afternoon and an extended meeting) and Monday, 9 March (morning). In accordance with the Rules of Procedure the meetings of the Drafting Committee were chaired by the Rapporteur, Mr Asdrúbal Aguiar, Minister-Secretary of the President’s Office of Venezuela, and were open to all participants. The Drafting Committee worked on the basis of the text submitted by the Director-General, taking into account the comments made by Member States during the general debate.

18. A number of participants had formulated written amendments to the Oslo Draft Declaration. In accordance with the decision taken by the Consultation in plenary, the Rapporteur decided to take account solely of formal amendments submitted to the Draft Declaration proposed by the Director-General.

19. The method of work chosen by the Drafting Committee was to examine, paragraph by paragraph, the Draft Declaration on the Human Right to Peace as the Foundation of the Culture of Peace. After each paragraph had been read out, the debate was opened for discussion of the formal amendments made in writing, as well as any other comments or oral amendments submitted by the members of the Committee or the other participants.
20. In revising the Draft Declaration, the Drafting Committee sought consensus by harmonizing the different proposed amendments that reflected the various positions expressed during the general debate. Thus, the Drafting Committee examined all the preambular paragraphs and part I of the operative provisions of the Draft Declaration (Articles 1 to 4) and drew up a revised text by consensus. However, owing to shortage of time, the Committee was unable to examine part II of the operative provisions of the Draft Declaration (Articles 1 and 2). It therefore decided to leave this part in square brackets until a decision could be taken at a later date. Since revision of the Draft Declaration had not been finalized, it was decided that this text, which is contained in Annex V to this document, would not be given a title.

D. CLOSURE

21. In his final address the Rapporteur gave a brief account of the proceedings of the meetings of the Drafting Committee, of the various points of view expressed during its work and of the results. He drew attention to the complexity of the subject examined and outlined the three main positions of the participants regarding the question of the right to peace: those who thought that it should be fully established as a human right; those who believed that it should be recognized as a moral right; and those for whom peace was not a human right, but an aspiration of human beings. The Rapporteur expressed his conviction that the different positions reflected slight differences in the intellectual and legal approaches, which could nevertheless be brought together. He pointed out that all the participants had agreed on the fact that a lasting peace could only exist in a situation where human rights were respected and on the existence of an indivisible link between human rights and peace. Finally, he emphasized the importance of the work carried out by the Consultation and expressed his satisfaction at what had been accomplished, as an important stage in the process designed to achieve consensus on this matter.

22. The Director-General of UNESCO thanked all the participants for their work and for the great mental and physical effort that the long meetings had demanded. He declared himself to be very satisfied at the progress achieved by the Consultation and at the efforts that had been made to encourage a dialogue and bring together the various positions with a view to achieving consensus. He underlined the importance of the debate that had taken place during the meeting and of the different points of view expressed, since such an exchange of ideas was fully in keeping with the mission entrusted to UNESCO as the highest forum for the intellectual discussion of the major issues confronting the international community. The Director-General stated that the meeting represented an important stage in the task of constructing peace and that a thorough study of its fruitful debates and conclusions would provide him with the essential ideas required for planning the next stages in the process.

23. In his final remarks the Chairperson of the International Consultation emphasized the difficulty of the task that had been entrusted to the International Consultation and welcomed the results achieved and the spirit of co-operation and consensus that had prevailed throughout the meeting.
E. ANNEXES
ANNEX I

29 C/Resolution 43 of the General Conference of UNESCO

43 Draft Declaration on the Human Right to Peace

The General Conference,
Bearing in mind that, in accordance with the UNESCO Constitution, ‘the purpose of the Organization is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms ...,’
Recalling resolution 5.12 adopted at its 28th session by which it recognized the promotion of a culture of peace as the expression of the fundamental mandate of UNESCO and as an essential and guiding objective of UNESCO’s Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001,
Acknowledging the intimate link between peace and human rights,
Taking note of Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which proclaims that ‘everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person’,
Considering that UNESCO’s role of contributing to international peace through co-operation between nations in the fields of education, science, culture and communication lies at the very heart of the culture of peace,
Noting the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 15 December 1978 (resolution 33/73), which proclaimed that ‘every nation and every human being, regardless of race, conscience, language or sex, has the inherent right to life in peace’, the Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace adopted by the General Assembly on 12 November 1984 (resolution 39/11) as well as other General Assembly resolutions concerning the implementation of the above declarations,
Taking into consideration the United Nations General Assembly resolution 50/173 of 22 December 1995 entitled ‘United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education: towards a culture of peace’ by which the General Assembly welcomed with appreciation UNESCO’s transdisciplinary project ‘Towards a culture of peace’ and decided to encourage education for peace, human rights, democracy, international understanding and tolerance,
Recognizing that the absence of peace seriously impairs respect for human life and dignity and the full implementation of all human rights and fundamental freedoms,
Bearing in mind the Draft Declaration on the Human Right to Peace elaborated by an international experts’ meeting, organized by the Norwegian Institute for Human Rights (Oslo, Norway, 6-8 June 1997),
Bearing in mind also the ‘Report by the Director-General on the human right to peace’ (29 C/59).
1. Shares the motivations and ideas underlying the Draft Declaration;
2. Invites the Director-General:
   (a) to convene an international consultation of governmental experts to examine the matter in the light of the discussions that took place during the 29th session of the General Conference and of the replies of the Heads of State or Government;
   (b) to submit the results of this consultation to the Executive Board for examination at its 154th session within the framework of UNESCO’s participation in the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in December 1998.

ANNEX II

DRAFT DECLARATION ON THE HUMAN RIGHT TO PEACE
AS THE FOUNDATION OF THE CULTURE OF PEACE

1. ………

2. Considering that according to the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations the peoples of the United Nations are determined ‘to practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours’,

3. Considering that Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations, an expression of the will of the peoples of the United Nations, proclaims as its first purpose the maintenance of international peace and security,

4. Considering that peace is itself the ultimate aim of the United Nations system as a whole, and of other international organizations, in that the specific objectives assigned to them are the means of establishing and preserving peace among states and within them,

5. Recognizing that this is particularly true of UNESCO since, according to Article I of its Constitution, the purpose of the Organization is to contribute to peace and security among nations through education, science, culture and communication,

6. Recognizing the essential link between peace and human rights,

7. Noting that peace, a common good of humanity, is a universal and fundamental value to which all individuals and all peoples, and in particular the youth of the world, aspire,

8. Considering that according to the Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ‘the recognition of the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world’,

9. Taking note of the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 15 December 1978, which proclaimed that ‘Every nation and every human being, regardless of race, conscience, language or sex, has the inherent right to life in peace’ and the Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace, adopted by the General Assembly on 12 November 1984,

10. Noting that the General Conference of UNESCO, at its 28th session, in the resolution adopted on 13 November 1995 defining the Organization’s medium-term strategy for 1996-2001, expressed its conviction that ‘the major challenge at the close of the twentieth century is to begin the transition from a culture of war towards [the] culture of peace’,

encourage education for peace, human rights, democracy, international understanding and tolerance,

12. *Aware* that UNESCO’s ethical mission imposes on it the duty of promoting culture and education, with a view to justice, liberty and peace, and that peace must be based upon ‘the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind’,

13. *Considering* that every human being, all states and the other members of the international community have the duty to contribute to the maintenance and building of peace, and to the prevention of armed conflicts and of violence in all its forms,

14. *Recalling* the Declaration adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 29th session on ‘The Responsibilities of the Present Generations Towards Future Generations’ which expresses the renewed determination of the international community to solve current problems and to pass on to future generations a better world, in which all may, together, live in peace, security, and respect for international law, human rights and fundamental freedoms,

15. *Recognizing* the primordial importance of the values of a culture of peace, one of the essential objectives of UNESCO’s action, which were recognized in the resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1997, according to which the building of a culture of peace is a mission for the entire United Nations system,


17. *Taking into consideration* 29 C/Resolution 43 in which the General Conference of UNESCO, at its 29th session, stated that it ‘Shares the motivations and ideas underlying the Draft Declaration’ on the Human Right to Peace referred to it by the Director-General,

18. *Convinced* that the best way of responding to the challenges of today and tomorrow is the building of a culture of peace and, as a consequence, the recognition and fulfilment of the human right to peace,

19. *Solemnly proclaims* the present ‘Declaration on the Human Right to Peace as the Foundation of the Culture of Peace’, as the contribution of UNESCO to the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

I

1. Designed to build the defences of peace in the minds of human beings in everyday life, through education, science, culture and communication, the culture of peace involves respect for and the recognition and daily practice of a set of ethical values and democratic ideals which foster the intellectual and moral solidarity of humanity.

2. The right of every human being to peace constitutes the foundation of the culture of peace.
3. Every human being has the right to peace, which is inherent in the nature of the human person; it must be recognized, respected and implemented without any discrimination in either internal or international contexts by all states and other members of the international community.

4. Violence in all its forms is intrinsically incompatible with the right of every human being to peace; since inequalities, exclusion and poverty are liable to lead to violations of international peace and internal peace, the right of every human being to peace requires the promotion of social justice through appropriate national and international policies aimed at sustainable human development.

II

1. *Calls upon* all individuals, all states, all international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, and, in a general way, all social actors to promote and to implement the right of all human beings to peace as the foundation of a genuine culture of peace,

2. *Urges* all states to take, with a view to the implementation of the right of every human being to peace, all appropriate measures, particularly in the fields of education, science, culture and communication.

Adopted in Paris on
ANNEX III

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Address by
Mr Federico Mayor

Director-General
of the United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization
(UNESCO)

at the opening of the international consultation of governmental experts
on the human right to peace

(UNESCO, 5 March 1998)
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to you all. It is a great pleasure to receive you here for this consultation. As you know, I convened it pursuant to resolution 43 adopted by the General Conference at its 29th session. I am happy to see here so many eminent experts, demonstrating the interest shown by Member States in UNESCO’s work to secure recognition of the human right to peace.

We all realize today that peace is not just the absence of war. As defined at the round table of Nobel Peace Prize winners held in Geneva in April 1978, peace is a dynamic network of coexistence and co-operation among nations, characterized not only by the absence of armed conflict, but also by respect for the human values set out in particular in the Universal Declaration of 1948. This definition, which was at the forefront of the minds of the men and women who survived the Second World War, is the cornerstone of the system of international organizations set up to promote the building and maintenance of peace.

UNESCO is one of the organizations responsible for this task. In the words of its Constitution, its purpose is ‘to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world’. The Constitution reflects the profound conviction that a lasting peace is the only context in which freedom, justice, tolerance and the full exercise of human rights can be guaranteed. There is no justice without peace. There is no peace without justice. It is an interactive ‘virtuous’ circle which must replace the vicious circle of force, coercion and domination. Education, science, culture and communication are means of building and consolidating peace in justice and freedom. This is why the struggle for the recognition of the human right to peace forms part of the Organization’s ethical mission.

As the twentieth century draws to a close, in spite of undeniable advances in certain areas, humanity is still confronted by fear, violence, intolerance and contempt for the law. The fact that matters of war and peace concern each one of us, and that the destiny of every human being is closely linked to that of all other human beings, makes international co-operation more necessary than ever. This co-operation is indispensable if we are to put an end to conflicts, or, even better, prevent them. The most important challenge facing us on the threshold of the twenty-first century is this: how to tackle conflicts at the root, in advance, and prevent them.

It is thus time to act. Many legal texts - international declarations and resolutions - already refer to the right to peace. However, the human right to peace as it appears in a number of legal instruments is dealt with only in part. No single text covers all aspects of the subject. UNESCO, as a catalyst of intellectual reflection by the international community, has pledged itself to fill this gap.

The Charter of the United Nations, which establishes three pillars, namely peace, justice and freedom, begins as follows: ‘We the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war …’. In 1989 the meeting which was held in the heart of Africa, at Yamoussoukro, on ‘peace in the minds of men’, brought together in the phrase ‘culture of peace’ both the fundamental mission of UNESCO and its accomplishment. From that moment on, all the Organization’s activities have been guided by it. In 1992, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in An Agenda for Peace,
made a number of recommendations with a view to consolidating the capacity of the United Nations system to contend with the emergence of violence bound up with ethnic and cultural conflicts and socio-economic inequalities in many parts of the world. In 1996, a few weeks after taking office, Mr Kofi Annan declared that the culture of peace was henceforward the common objective of the United Nations system. In a moment, Mr Fodha will read out the message which the Secretary-General of the United Nations has sent to us at the opening of this consultation.

The project ‘Towards a culture of peace’ was - as you will recall - proposed as a transdisciplinary project in the Medium-Term Strategy submitted to the General Conference at its 28th session, in 1995, and at that same session the General Conference adopted 28 C/Resolution 5.3, authorizing me to implement the activities under that project. Two years later, in December 1997, the General Assembly of the United Nations, by its resolution 52/13, acknowledged the importance of this interdisciplinary project of UNESCO. In addition, it enshrined the culture of peace by proclaiming the year 2000 as the International Year for the Culture of Peace.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is the background to my appeal of 1 January 1997. My Declaration on the Human Right to Peace was followed, in February 1997, by a UNESCO meeting of experts at Las Palmas, and then in June 1997 by a meeting at the Institute of Human Rights in Oslo. The results of these meetings were submitted to the General Conference of UNESCO in November 1997.

I have been most attentive to the reactions of Member States on this subject. That is why I transmitted the draft declaration drawn up in Oslo to all the heads of state or government of UNESCO’s Member States, for their opinion, comments and suggestions. I note with satisfaction that UNESCO has benefited from the contribution of many Member States, and I would like to thank in particular all the Member States which were good enough to reply to my letter of 1 July 1997. These comments are, as you know, at your disposal. The specific proposals are also contained in your working documents.

During the plenaries of the 29th session of the General Conference - statements made in plenary are always a major source of inspiration to me - several Member States referred to this initiative. Some of them even devoted their entire statements to it. I particularly appreciated the address delivered by the Minister of Education of Mexico, Mr Miguel Limon, and the support expressed by the Observer for the Holy See. At that session, I submitted to the General Conference a report on the consultation process, and a particularly rewarding debate took place on this item. I followed the debate with interest and noted that, as may be seen from 29 C/Resolution 43, the great majority of Member States shared the ideas and reasons that had led me to encourage the preparation of an instrument with the purpose of establishing the human right to peace. However, the draft declaration of Oslo, in the opinion of some people, needed to be further discussed and refined. I therefore decided - after listening and giving thought to the matter - to prepare a new draft declaration, which you now have before you. It seeks to elicit general agreement regarding our priority objective: recognition of the human right to peace, as the foundation of the culture of peace and as UNESCO’s contribution, within the framework of the United Nations system, to the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The draft before you today reflects the need of the international community to uphold the shared values of the culture of peace and to give them a basis in law. It makes every effort to promote peace as a universal and fundamental value while taking account of cultural, social and economic obstacles. In the last few days, I have been a witness once again to the horrors of war, to the wounds inflicted on the Earth by violence, to the scars left on human bodies and souls - especially souls. I proclaim, forcefully, that this vortex of destruction and death must be stopped at the outset; that we must henceforth be ready to pay the price of peace as we have paid with millions of human lives the price of war; that the diversity of cultures, the very basis of our identities and sense of belonging, should unite us around the ideals proclaimed by our Constitution and never again divide us; that religions, founded on love, should not lead us to confrontation and hatred; and that ideologies, through freedom of expression and participation, should serve democracy and not coercion.

We must look ahead to be prepared for the future. Each state must strive to combat inequality, exclusion and poverty by promoting social justice on its own territory and at international level, adopting policies to encourage human development. The draft declaration invites states to take constitutional, legislative, administrative, economic and social measures, in particular in the fields of education, science, culture and communication, using all the means at their disposal to ensure respect for the human right to peace, the basis for the culture of peace which has been approved by UNESCO and by the United Nations.

You are now going to examine these proposals in detail and make any improvements and additions you consider appropriate. When the resulting text has received the approval of all those who are assembled here I shall feel able to submit it to the Executive Board for examination at its 154th session, in time for the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Your work will be of crucial importance, for this text will consolidate the international community’s awareness of what is referred to in the United Nations Charter as the ‘scourge of war’, and its efforts to progress towards a culture of peace, day by day. May I wish you every success in your work, in which I and my colleagues will be glad to assist in any way we can. After ten years as Director-General, ten years completely devoted to UNESCO, I feel I know, as we stand on the threshold of a new century and a new millennium, why the founders of the United Nations and of UNESCO entrusted us with the supreme responsibility of ‘constructing the defences of peace in the minds of men’ through the ‘intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind’. I am sure that our intellectual and moral efforts will enable us to rise to the key challenges of our times.

Thank you.
ANNEX IV

The Secretary-General

Message to the UNESCO International Consultation of Governmental Experts on the Human Right to Peace

Paris, 5-9 March 1998

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The relationship between peace and human rights that you have chosen to focus on over the next four days is critical to the mission of the United Nations. Respect for human rights is the best guarantee of peace and the establishment of a durable peace is a condition of the respect for human rights.

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. Human rights are the foundation of human existence and coexistence. Human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent. Human rights are what make us human. They are the principles by which we create the sacred home for human dignity.

The absence of tolerance and human rights is not only a denial of human dignity. It is also the root of the suffering and hatred that breeds political violence and inhibits economic development. If this century’s bloody history has taught us one lesson, it is this. When we speak of the right to life, or development, or to dissent and diversity, we are speaking of tolerance. Tolerance promoted, protected and enshrined will ensure all freedoms. Without it, we can be certain of none.

Human rights are the expression of those traditions of tolerance in all religions and cultures that are the basis of peace and progress. Human rights are foreign to no culture and native to all nations. Tolerance and mercy have always and in all cultures been ideals of government rule and human behaviour. Today, we call these ideals human rights.

It is the universality of human rights that gives them their strength. It endows them with the power to cross any border, climb any wall, defy any force. The struggle for universal human rights has always and everywhere been the struggle against all forms of tyranny and injustice: against slavery, against colonialism, against apartheid. It is nothing less and nothing different today.

The struggle for peace is the struggle for human rights and the struggle for human rights is the struggle for peace. Indeed war is the greatest source of human rights abuses. A recent United Nations report by Graça Machel concluded that over 2 million children had been killed in conflicts in the last decade. How many millions of others have been displaced, brutalized, made orphans, and left to grow up in devastated countries without access to health care? We must do all we can to prevent these conflicts and to ensure that during conflicts the human rights of all civilians are respected.

I am particularly pleased to witness the emergence of the right to live in peace as a fundamental human right and that you will be focusing on this right during your discussions.
For the United Nations, there is no higher goal, no deeper commitment and no greater ambition than preventing armed conflict. Why? Because that prevention secures the human rights of the weakest, most vulnerable of our world - the people of the world for whom the United Nations exists.

I wish you all success in your deliberations and that this meeting may mark another step in our common journey to ensure all human rights for all.
ANNEX V

1. ..........  

2. *Considering* that according to the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations the peoples of the United Nations are determined ‘to practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours’,  

3. *Bearing in mind* all of Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular paragraph 1 thereof, which *inter alia* proclaims the maintenance of international peace and security,  

4. *Considering* that peace is itself one of the fundamental aims of the United Nations system as a whole, and of other international organizations, in that the specific objectives assigned to them are the means of establishing and preserving peace among states and within them,  

5. *Recognizing* that this is particularly true of UNESCO since, according to Article I of its Constitution, the purpose of the Organization is to contribute to peace and security among nations through education, science, culture and communication,  

6. *Recognizing* the existence of an indivisible link between all human rights and peace,  

7. *Noting* that peace, a common good of humanity, is a universal and fundamental value to which all individuals and all peoples aspire,  

8. *Considering* that according to the Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ‘recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world’,  

9. *Taking note* of the principles set forth in the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 15 December 1978, stating that their full implementation includes *inter alia*, ‘educational processes in promoting the ideals of peace and understanding among nations’ and ‘calls for concerted action on the part of governments, the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies, in particular UNESCO’, and the Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace, adopted by the General Assembly on 12 November 1984, which, *inter alia*, recognized that the maintenance of a peaceful life for peoples is the sacred duty of each state,  

10. *Recalling* the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993, which states, *inter alia*, that ‘the efforts of the United Nations system towards the universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, contribute ... to improved conditions for peace and security as well as social and economic development’, and which affirms ‘that extreme poverty and social exclusion constitute a violation of human dignity and that urgent steps are necessary to achieve better knowledge of extreme poverty and its causes, including those related to the problem of development, in order to promote the human rights of the poorest, and to put an end to extreme poverty and social exclusion and to promote the enjoyment of the fruits of social progress’,
11. Recalling that in resolution 0.12 on the Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001 adopted at its 28th session by the General Conference of UNESCO on 13 November 1995, the General Conference declared that it was convinced ‘that the major challenge at the close of the twentieth century is to begin the transition from a culture of war to [the] culture of peace’,


13. Aware that UNESCO’s ethical mission imposes on it the duty of promoting culture and education, with a view to justice, liberty and peace, and that peace must be based upon ‘the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind’, the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms,

14. Recalling that international intellectual co-operation, one of the cardinal missions of UNESCO, is a factor that brings human beings, both individuals and peoples, together and promotes mutual understanding among them, helping them through education, science and culture to create in their midst greater fellowship, solidarity and peace,

15. Recalling the Declaration adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 29th session on ‘the Responsibilities of the Present Generations Towards Future Generations’, which expresses the renewed determination of the international community to contribute to the solution of current problems and to hand on a better world to future generations so that all may, together, live in peace, in security and justice, respect for international law, human rights and fundamental freedoms,

16. Recognizing the primordial importance of the values of a culture of peace, one of the essential objectives of UNESCO’s action, which were recognized in resolution 52/13, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1997, according to which the building of a culture of peace is a mission for the entire United Nations system,

17. Emphasizing that on 20 November 1997, in resolution 52/15, the United Nations General Assembly solemnly proclaimed the year 2000 as the ‘International Year for the Culture of Peace’,

18. Taking into consideration resolution 43 adopted by the General Conference at its 29th session,

19. Convinced that the best way of responding to the challenges of today and tomorrow is the building of a culture of peace based on respect for all human rights,

20. Solemnly proclaims the present Declaration as the contribution of UNESCO to the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

I

1. Design to build the defences of peace in the minds of human beings in everyday life, through education, science, culture and communication, the culture of peace involves respect for and the recognition and daily practice of ethical values and democratic ideals, based in particular on law, justice and equality among peoples, and conducive to the intellectual and moral solidarity of humanity.
2. The commitment to peace is a general principle, in the spirit of Article 38.1(c) of the Statute of the International Court of Justice, which is inherent in human beings and which constitutes, together with respect for all human rights, the foundation of the culture of peace. This principle must be recognized, respected and implemented without any discrimination, both within countries and at the international level.

3. Every human being has a moral obligation to contribute to the maintenance of peace, and also to the prevention of armed conflict and the elimination of violence, by addressing all their causes.

4. The use of force in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and of the general principles of international law, and in particular all acts of aggression, non-respect of international humanitarian law, illegitimate violence and non-recognition of all human rights are incompatible with peace. The promotion of a culture of peace and the achievement of social justice are indispensable to the attainment of the aims of this Declaration.

[II]

1. **Calls upon** all individuals, all states, all international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, and, in a general way, all social actors to promote and to implement the right of all human beings to peace as the foundation of a genuine culture of peace,

2. **Urge**s all states to take, with a view to the implementation of the right of every human being to peace, all appropriate measures, particularly in the fields of education, science, culture and communication.

[Adopted in Paris on …]