

Hundred and fifty-fifth Session

155 EX/46
PARIS, 2 August 1998
Original: English

Item 9.1 of the provisional agenda

**APPLICATION OF 152 EX/DECISION 10.2 CONCERNING
EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN
THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES**

SUMMARY

In this document the Director-General reports to the Executive Board on the measures he has taken to give effect to 152 EX/Decision 10.2 and 29 C/Resolution 55.

1. The Executive Board, at its 152nd session, adopted 152 EX/Decision 10.2 in which it decided to include this item on the agenda of its 155th session and invited the Director-General *inter alia* to continue his efforts in favour of the educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories and in the Palestinian Autonomous Territories. Except for paragraph 9(a), (b) and (e), which were not carried out due to circumstances beyond our control, the other paragraphs of 152 EX/Decision 10.2 were implemented as follows.
2. The Bethlehem 2000 roving exhibition was hosted by the British Museum in London (United Kingdom) from 17 November 1997 to 28 February 1998 before proceeding to Athens (Greece), 21 March-24 April, Nicosia (Cyprus), 3-12 June, followed by Cologne (Germany) in July and Nuremberg in August. Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium), and Chartres (France) will be the next towns to host the exhibition before the end of 1998. The Bethlehem 2000 roving exhibition is a UNESCO activity to explain and promote the different priorities of the Bethlehem 2000 Emergency Action Plan and to develop co-operation between UNESCO and the host countries in favour of the Palestinian people.
3. In London, the exhibition was inaugurated by Dr Hanan Ashrawi, representing the Palestinian Authority, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the British Museum, in the presence of high level officials from the British Foreign Office, the United Kingdom Delegation to UNESCO, and the Chairman of the

Palestine Exploration Fund. The Director of the Cabinet of the Director-General represented the Organization.

4. In Athens, the exhibition was held in four prestigious rooms in the University of Athens. The Greek authorities added about 30 extra panels to enrich the exhibition and translated the catalogue into Greek. Mr George Papandreou, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, inaugurated the exhibition with the Very Reverend Metropolitane Ierapoleos Erineos, and the Palestinian 'ministry' of culture, Mr Abed Rabbo and the Governor of Bethlehem, Mr Jaabari. UNESCO was represented by the Director of the Co-ordination Unit for action in favour of the Palestinian people. UNESCO has asked the Patriarch of Jerusalem, His Beatitude Diodoros I, whether it would be possible to make a feasibility study for the conservation of the Church of the Nativity, which is in a bad state of disrepair. At the same time, contacts were made with the Greek orthodox authorities and the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to inform them of the great importance accorded by the Director-General to this study.

5. In Nicosia, the exhibition was inaugurated by Mr Kappas, Minister of Education and Professor Chachollades, Rector of the University of Nicosia. Mr Nabil Kassis represented the Palestinian Authority and the Patriarch of Nazareth represented the Patriarch of Jerusalem. The Director-General was represented by the Director, Cultural Chargé de mission, in the Sector of Culture.

6. On 14 and 15 December 1997, UNESCO participated in the meeting of the Consultative Group for the West Bank and Gaza, which took place at the World Bank offices in Paris. The Palestinian Development Plan (1998-2000), which includes UNESCO's PAPP projects as Palestinian top priorities, was presented at the meeting and the international donor community pledged US \$750 million in grants, loans and equity towards development activities in the West Bank and Gaza and a further US \$150 million in political risk guarantees for private investments. Some donors announced that they would provide funding in favour of Bethlehem 2000 in addition to their contribution to the Palestinian Development Plan.

7. In January 1998, contracts were drawn up with the Municipalities of Nablus and Gaza for the creation of Multi-Purpose Community Resource Centres to help alleviate the problem of out-of-work youth, to find jobs, and to provide social and cultural activities and training courses. The Centre in Gaza is very active and two workshops have been organized, one on social problems (in particular family problems relating to marriage and divorce in Palestinian society), and the second in the form of a training course in pottery. The Director of the Centre has prepared a detailed work plan for the rest of the year. In Nablus, the MCRC is working under difficult conditions for the moment but has already succeeded in organizing, thanks to a financial contribution of £40,000 from the British Council, a specialized English course for tourism for about 20 persons working in the tourism sector in Nablus at the University of An-Najah. The British Council will also finance an advanced course in the same subject for persons who finish the first one. The Director of the Centre is very active too and, thanks to the French Consulate in Jerusalem who provided him with an air ticket, he was recently in Paris for briefing and training. He visited, among others, the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie at La Villette, the Centre d'Information et d'Orientation, the Centre d'Information et de Documentation pour la Jeunesse, the Institut du Monde Arabe and the Municipality of Kremlin-Bicêtre. It is hoped that MCRCs will play an important role in the development of spiritual and cultural tourism and in the awareness campaign of the year 2000.

8. A tripartite Working Agreement on the Granada II Process was signed by the Israeli and Palestinian authorities and UNESCO on 26 February 1998. The Agreement embodies the principles and goals set forth in UNESCO's Constitution and responds to the intentions expressed by the General Conference at its 29th session which urged the Director-General to implement a programme to promote the culture of peace in the region. The overall aim of the Israeli-Palestinian Programme of Co-operation (IPPC) is defined as enhancing education 'in peace, human rights, democracy, tolerance and mutual understanding'. The Working Agreement defines the areas in which co-operation to these ends will be pursued and establishes mechanisms for the joint implementation of IPPC activities. Fifteen co-operation projects in the fields of education, science and culture were identified and will be launched officially as soon as the political situation allows. President Arafat and Prime Minister Netanyahu have written to the Director-General expressing their appreciation and support for UNESCO's Granada II initiative and underlining its importance in building a lasting peace between their peoples.

9. On 22 May 1998, under the auspices of UNESCO and in the presence of the Director-General, two Agreements were signed in Verona (Italy): one between the cities of Ra'hanana (Israel) and Verona, and the other between the cities of Bethlehem (Palestinian Autonomous Territories) and Verona in order to establish sister city relationships. The aim of these Agreements is to develop friendly relations and cultural exchanges, especially in the social and cultural life of their citizens. The three cities see their sister city relationships as an important contribution to strengthening peace, tolerance, co-operation and confidence between the peoples of the cities.

10. By signing such Agreements, the Mayors of Bethlehem, Ra'hanana and Verona expressed the support of their cities to the role played by UNESCO to promote peace and tolerance all through the world and to safeguard and promote the cultural heritage of humankind. They also expressed their willingness to co-operate with UNESCO within the framework of UNESCO's culture of peace programme.

11. Three Palestinian students participated in the meeting 'Mediterranean Youth for Tolerance' held in Tarragona, Spain from 18 to 21 September 1997. The meeting was attended by representatives of 50 NGOs and youth associations, as well as specialists from universities and members of the Tarragona Parliament. This meeting was organized by UNESCO.

12. In April 1998, UNESCO agreed to sponsor the first Israeli-Palestinian boat to participate in the race-cruise organized by the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales, Lille, one of the biggest European university events. This race assembled some 230 boats and 6,000 students from different European countries. The crew of the Peace Boat was composed of French students and an equal number of Israeli and Palestinian students. It was a message of hope that young people can work together for peace and against intolerance and extremism. This message from Israeli and Palestinian youth was addressed to the European students and to their people to give hope for coexistence in peace as a real possibility.

13. On 19 February 1998, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between UNESCO and the Organization of the Islamic Conference concerning co-operation, within their sphere of competence, in all matters relating to the Palestinian Autonomous Territories and the Palestinian people. The main activities to be carried out will be in the fields of education, science, communication and information, and cultural heritage and cultural identity.

14. A representative of the Director-General attended the Conference convened in Brussels on 24 and 25 February 1998 by the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, together with the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States, the theme of the Conference being to promote the intensification of international action in support of the attainment of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and for the success of the peace efforts. The above-mentioned United Nations Committee organized two further meetings: (a) a seminar entitled 'Facing the challenges of the year 2000: promoting Palestinian national development', which was held in Cairo (Egypt) from 27 to 29 April and at which UNESCO was represented by the Cairo Office; and (b) a seminar and NGO symposium on the 'Question of Palestine for the Latin America and Caribbean region' from 26 to 29 May in Santiago (Chile), which the UNESCO Regional Office was requested to attend. These meetings were the occasion to expose the philosophy and objectives of the PAPP projects, to finance extrabudgetary projects and to establish relationships of co-operation between UNESCO and some of the participants.

15. Thanks to the mobilizing and promotional role of UNESCO, the Bethlehem 2000 project, conceived, planned and developed by the Organization since 1995 in its Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP), succeeded in establishing a partnership around the Palestinian Authority, with the World Bank, the European Commission and UNDP. The Director-General of UNESCO proposed that Brussels should host a Special Participants Conference for the Bethlehem 2000 Emergency Action Plan, financed by the Italian Government, and his proposal was accepted by the Belgian authorities, the European Union, UNESCO's partners, and by the Palestinian Authority. The Conference took place on 11 and 12 May in the presence of President Arafat, the Director-General of UNESCO, the President of the European Commission, a Vice-President of the World Bank and the Deputy Administrator of UNDP. In his opening speech, the Director-General announced UNESCO's intention to help the Palestinian Authority in the realization in Bethlehem of a cultural and historical Museum for Cribs and an International Modern Art and Research Centre. He also announced that he will make an appeal to the mothers of the world with a view to building in Bethlehem and its district, and in particular in the refugee camps surrounding Bethlehem, crèches and kindergartens for socially underprivileged children. This appeal is programmed to be launched in September or October of this year. The National Commissions, UNESCO Clubs and Women's Unions throughout the world will be implicated in the realization of this project of hope. At the end of the meeting, verbal commitments were made by the participants for an amount of approximately US \$95 million.

16. Following the Conference in Brussels, a meeting between UNESCO and the World Bank with the participation of Palestinian officials from the 'ministry' of culture and the 'ministry' of antiquities and tourism took place at UNESCO Headquarters from 13 to 15 May for the inclusion of cultural development activities in the cultural heritage component of the Bethlehem 2000 project. Matters discussed included legislation for the safeguard of cultural heritage and a Palestinian cultural policy. Out of the US \$25 million committed by the World Bank in Brussels, and officially adopted in July in the World Bank Appraisal Document for the Bethlehem 2000 project, it was decided that US \$1.2 million would be used to finance three UNESCO projects for culture and cultural heritage: (1) a feasibility study on the different options for a Palestinian cultural policy; (2) a culture and cultural heritage legislation project; and (3) the preparation of an Action Plan for Hebron and Jericho. The latter was recommended in the Bethlehem Emergency Action Plan in order to complete the idea of a service economy and to develop spiritual and cultural tourism. In addition, the World Bank has agreed to finance a cultural film on Bethlehem to be produced under the auspices of UNESCO.

17. The German Commission for UNESCO has allocated a grant of DM 15,000 for 1998 to cover operating costs and the provision of basic material for one year for the kindergarten created in Summer 1997 in the Jabalia Refugee Camp in Gaza through the volunteer co-operation of a Palestinian NGO and the Hamburg members of the Union of German and Palestinian Women. This kindergarten offers early childhood education to 60 children in one of the most deprived areas in the Palestinian Autonomous Territories.

18. The German Commission also granted through UNESCO US \$50,000 to cover the collection and shipment of scientific material and books to the West Bank and Gaza, to be carried out in co-operation with the Belgian NGO POLLEN. One hundred and twenty-thousand books have been collected from the Cité des Sciences at Sablé sur Sartre, the Lycée de Versailles and the Institut du Monde Arabe, whilst equipment for a physics laboratory was donated by IUT in Chartres. The books are destined for the libraries of the eight Palestinian universities and the municipal libraries in Gaza, Khan Yunis, Bethlehem, Hebron, Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarem and Salfeet. Some French-speaking Palestinian schools will also receive textbooks and manuals from POLLEN and the physics equipment will go to a school in Bethlehem.

19. UNESCO Special Adviser Mrs Ute Ohoven, who visited Gaza in April, has promised to continue contributing funding support in an amount of US \$200,000 for the 'Right to Live Society', a Centre for the education of Downs Syndrome children led by Mrs Adala Abu Middain.

20. The Saudi Arabian Government has granted a further \$2.5 million to finance PAPP projects through UNESCO, of which US \$2 million for the second phase of the rehabilitation of 17 more schools in the West Bank and Gaza. The Saudi Arabian authorities have also given their agreement in principle for the remaining US \$500,000 to be used for the creation of a Hotel Management School at the University of Al Azhar in Gaza and an Institute for Archaeological and Architectural Conservation at Al-Quds University, East Jerusalem.

21. Seven fellowships have been granted to Palestinians since September 1997, two awarded under the 1996-1997 regular programme, one under a fund-in-trust project financed by Italy and four under PEDDRO, a project funded by the European Commission with a view to promoting a network of information in the field of preventive education against drug abuse. In 1998, scholarships were granted in an amount of US \$50,000 under emergency assistance for 12 Palestinian students enrolled at the University of Cairo.

22. Within the framework of the Fellowship Bank Scheme (1998-1999 regular programme), 15 fellowships were awarded in early 1998 to Syrian nationals living in the Golan, for a total amount of US \$30,000 (US \$2,000 each), to enable them to pursue studies of a 12-month duration.

23. Under the Participation Programme, a financial contribution was granted for a computer centre for Palestinian children, the purchase of copy printers for six schools, a multi-purpose playground and electrical distribution board for schools in Gaza and the West Bank, the Gaza women's network, scholarships, the purchase of books for the Salfeet Municipal Library, educational and cultural animation for young people in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, and towards the creation of a Museum of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

24. The Local Aid Co-ordination Committee (LACC) held regular meetings at the French Consulate in East Jerusalem for the Sector Working Group on Education, which were attended by a representative from the UNESCO Liaison Office in Ramallah. The Director of

the Co-ordination Unit for action in favour of the Palestinian people participated in the LACC meeting held in June. UNESCO was also represented at the inter-agency meeting held by UNESCO in Gaza on 30 June.

25. On 18 and 19 May a UNESCO programme specialist in equipment procurement and public contracting held two workshops in Bethlehem and Ramallah for UNESCO local staff and Palestinians working in the 'ministries' and in the Palestinian Committee for UNESCO.

26. In implementation of the different PAPP projects, the following activities took place:

Education

(a) IIEP is actively participating in four projects funded by Italy for the benefit of the Palestinian Authority:

- (i) The project 'Strengthening the "ministry" of education of the Palestinian Authority through the use of teaching materials for basic education and the training of teachers', approved initially for US \$2 million, has been increased by US \$1 million and extended to 31 December 1999. This project will help finance a number of activities such as rehabilitation of schools and the development and production of pedagogical materials for over 100 schools. Training sessions for heads of schools and supervisors under this project were held in Ramallah, Gaza, Hebron and Nablus in March 1998.
- (ii) The completion date of the project 'Capacity-building in educational policy formulation and management for the Palestinian Authority' (US \$730,000) has been rescheduled for December 1998 in order to extend training activities and to allow for additional training sessions.
- (iii) With regard to the project 'Capacity-building in educational planning and budgeting for the Palestinian Educational Authority' (US \$321,000), a workshop was held in Ramallah from 16 to 23 February for 30 high-level administrators from all districts of the West Bank and professional staff of the Department of Financial Affairs and other departments in the 'ministry' of education.
- (iv) The Plan of Operations for the 'Policy analysis and formulation for the development of the "ministry" of education' project was signed between UNESCO and the Palestinian Authority in December 1997. This project, financed by the Italian Government in an amount of US \$300,000, is intended to assist the national Department of Education to analyse and formulate education policy, including implementation and will thus contribute to setting-up a medium-term (five-year) plan organized according to sectors.

In the period May 1997-April 1998 six officials from the Palestinian Authority have received training at IIEP, participating in its Annual Training and Visiting Trainees programmes.

(b) On 29 October 1997, a Technical Assistance Agreement in an amount of US \$40,000 was signed between the UNESCO Office in Cairo and the Welfare

Association for a co-sponsored project entitled 'Capacity-building in human resources and informatics infrastructure in Palestinian universities'. The objective of the project is how to use the modern multimedia computing and networking technology in the areas of university teaching, research and administration. Oxford University is involved with UNESCO in the implementation of this project, which is aimed at assisting science and engineering faculties in three selected Palestinian Universities (Birzeit, An-Najah and Gaza Islamic). The project was initiated by a UNESCO mission to Palestinian universities undertaken during the period 22-27 November 1997. It will provide for two faculty training workshops and two faculty training visits. The first faculty workshop took place at Birzeit University in May for a duration of five days.

- (c) Implementation of the NORAD (Norway) financed project 'Elaboration of a strategy for rationalizing the development of higher education in the West Bank and Gaza' (US \$190,000) is continuing. Staff and consultants have been contracted to prepare a draft legislative and strategic plan and a workshop has been held on strategic planning. Two study tours were organized for two staff members from the Palestinian 'ministry' of higher education for training on evaluation and accreditation at the Jordanian Ministry of Education and Higher Education.
- (d) The PEACE Programme is continuing its work and is in the process of preparing its General Assembly to be held on 3 and 4 October at the Sorbonne University prior to UNESCO's International Conference for Higher Education which will commence on 5 October at UNESCO Headquarters.

Science

- (a) The Plan of Operations for a three-year project on 'Capacity-Building in Water Resources', financed by the Flemish Community of Belgium in an amount of US \$530,000, was signed on 12 March. The project was launched on 30 March at the Water Research Centre of Al Azhar University, Gaza, with a workshop on 'Capacity-building and training on environmental planning and management'. Training needs for the Palestinians in the water sector were identified. Implementation of the work plan is ongoing.
- (b) Two international experts were sent by UNESCO to Nablus from 1 to 5 May to advise on technology transfer on urban drainage.

Communication, information and informatics

- (a) At the end of 1997, the Italian authorities provided US \$1.5 million for the Palestinian News Agency (Wafa) project, which aims at establishing an independent professional news agency with qualified staff. The implementation of the project was initiated on 27 April 1998 at UNESCO Headquarters when all the parties concerned approved an updated project document. The work plan has been modified in accordance with the new dates for the implementation of the project. It was decided that the rehabilitation of Wafa's premises required urgent action and should be implemented first. The participants also agreed on the importance of training as an essential component of the project. In agreement with the parties concerned, a UNESCO mission was organized to the Palestinian News Agency in order to identify the training and equipment needs of the Agency.

- (b) Luxembourg has provided extrabudgetary funding of US \$94,000 for television production training for the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation (PBC). During a meeting held at UNESCO Headquarters on 30 June 1998, the Italian Government expressed interest in funding a feasibility study for the modernization of the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation. UNESCO and the Italian Government agreed to further discuss the matter during a meeting to be held in July or August 1998.
- (c) Furthermore, UNESCO, through IPDC, has earmarked US \$56,000 for the purchase of a professional film projector for the Palestinian 'ministry' of culture.

Social sciences

- (a) The Palestinian focal point of the UNITWIN Network on Forced Migration (An-Najah University, Nablus) has produced the first two numbers of Volume I of the 'Journal of Involuntary Migration'. Both journal issues are bilingual, in Arabic and English.

Under this same programme, a meeting was organized by the two focal points (An-Najah University and the University of Oxford, United Kingdom) at the University of Yarmouk at Irbid in Jordan from 23 to 25 May. A professor from An-Najah University attended.

- (b) In March 1998, within the framework of the project 'Dialogue between young Palestinians and Israelis through the Internet', four computers were presented to the Palestinian Authority (three for high schools and one for the Palestinian Committee for UNESCO).
- (c) On 30 January 1998, the Algerian Ministry of Youth and Sport was requested to grant scholarships to four young Palestinians for training as cultural and sport animators. It is foreseen that the training will take place in Algiers in October.

Culture

- (a) Under contract with UNESCO, a team of Italian experts from Verona (Italy) visited Bethlehem for a few days in May and June and are now actively engaged in the preparation of the project document for the creation of a Museum of the Nativity in Bethlehem.
- (b) There are two projects in Jericho, with funds-in-trust from Italy, one for the safeguard of mosaics in the Ommayad Hisham palace, and another for the protection of the entrance to the spa (staircase and roof) which has been implemented. Norwegian funds-in-trust are being used for the training of Palestinian specialists in the conservation and restoration of cultural heritage.
- (c) An awareness campaign workshop in favour of the preservation of cultural heritage, organized jointly by the Palestinian Committee for UNESCO and the Palestinian Department of Antiquities, was held in June at An-Najah University in Nablus.

ANNEX

UNESCO EXTRABUDGETARY PROJECTS FUNDING/IMPLEMENTATION STATUS 1998

Project title	Sector	PA counterpart	Funding status (US \$)	Donor	Implementation status
Rehabilitation of schools	ED	'ministry' of education	2,500,000	Saudi Arabia	implemented
Rehabilitation of schools II	ED	'ministry' of education	2,000,000	Saudi Arabia	under preparation
Hotel Management School, Gaza	ED	Al-Azhar University, Gaza	250,000	Saudi Arabia	under preparation
Curriculum development	ED	'ministry' of education	300,000	Italy	implemented
Curriculum development II	ED	'ministry' of education	450,000	Italy	implemented
Rationalizing development, Higher education	ED	'ministry' of higher education	190,000	Norway	ongoing
Policy analysis MOE	IIEP	'ministry' of education	300,000	Italy	ongoing
Capacity-building & budget in education	IIEP	'ministry' of education	321,000	Italy	implemented
Capacity-building formul- ation & management in education	IIEP	'ministry' of education	730,400	Italy	ongoing
Use teaching materials for basic education & training	IIEP	'ministry' of education	3,000,000	Italy	ongoing

Project title	Sector	PA counterpart	Funding status (US \$)	Donor	Implementation status
Intercultural education	BIE	'ministry' of education	300,000	Italy	ongoing
Emergency Action Plan, Bethlehem	CLT	Bethlehem 2000 Steering Committee	223,000	Italy	implemented
Mosaics, Jericho	CLT	'ministry' of antiquities	100,000	Italy	ongoing
Conservation training, Jericho	CLT	'ministry' of antiquities	50,000	Norway	ongoing
Water Research Centre	SC/COI	Water Authority	550,000	Flanders - Belgium	ongoing
Sports articles, Gaza	SHS	'ministry' of youth	1,500,000	ADIDAS	implemented
Restructuring News Agency (WAFA)	CII	Palestinian News Agency (WAFA)	1,500,000	Italy	ongoing
Training in television production at the PBC	CII	Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation (PBC)	94,000	Luxembourg	under preparation

Hundred and fifty-fifth Session

155 EX/46 Corr.
PARIS, 3 September 1998
Original: English

Item 9.1 of the provisional agenda

**APPLICATION OF 152 EX/DECISION 10.2 CONCERNING
EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN
THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES**

Paragraph 22 should be replaced by the following:

‘22. Within the framework of the Fellowship Bank Scheme (1998-1999 regular programme), 15 fellowships were awarded in early 1998 to Syrian nationals living in the Occupied Syrian Golan, for a total amount of US \$30,000 (US \$2,000 each), to enable them to pursue studies of a 12-month duration’.