

WORLD CONFERENCE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century
Vision and Action**

UNESCO, Paris, 5-9 October 1998

VOLUME IV

Thematic Debate:

Autonomy, Social Responsibility and Academic Freedom

Note of the UNESCO Secretariat

The present volume is part of the Proceedings of the World Conference on Higher Education (Paris 5-9 October 1998).

Volume I :	Final Report
Volume II :	Speeches and Lectures
Volume III :	Reports of the Commissions
Volume IV :	Thematic Debates
Volume V :	Plenary Speeches
Volume VI :	Listing of Titles of Individual Documents.

Documents are archived in the original language of delivery or in one of the language versions provided by the author. Copies can be obtained on request from the Division of Higher Education, UNESCO. Some documents are available in printed form only.

Note du Secrétariat de l'UNESCO

Le présent volume fait partie des Actes de la Conférence mondiale sur l'enseignement supérieur (Paris, 5-9 octobre 1998).

Volume I :	Rapport final
Volume II :	Discours et exposés spéciaux
Volume III :	Rapports des commissions
Volume IV :	Débats thématiques
Volume V :	Discours en séances plénières
Volume VI :	Liste des titres des documents individuels.

Les documents sont archivés dans la langue originale du discours ou de l'une des versions transmises par l'auteur. Les copies peuvent être obtenues sur demande adressée à la Division de l'enseignement supérieur, UNESCO. Certains documents ne sont disponibles que sur papier.

Nota de la Secretaría de la UNESCO

El presente volumen forma parte de las Actas de la Conferencia Mundial sobre la Educación Superior (París 5-9 de octubre de 1998).

Volumen I :	Informe Final
Volumen II :	Discursos y Ponencias Especiales
Volumen III :	Informes de las Comisiones
Volumen IV :	Debates Temáticos
Volumen V :	Discursos de la Plenaria
Volumen VI :	Lista de Títulos de los Documentos Individuales

Los documentos han sido archivados en el idioma original de la intervención o de una de las versiones entregadas por el autor. Para obtener copias de los mismos mande su solicitud a la División de la Enseñanza Superior, UNESCO. Algunos documentos sólo están disponibles en papel impreso.

Introduction

In organizing the World Conference on Higher Education, UNESCO's goal was to create favourable conditions for a sweeping debate and to increase awareness of the principal issues in this important field.

The Thematic Debates were organized in parallel with the Commissions and the Plenary sessions and so constituted one of the selected frameworks for reflection and for deepening discussions.

Planning the Thematic Debates included the participation of some fifty representatives of NGOs and IGOs, as well as a number of resource persons and UNESCO staff members.

Each working document was prepared under the coordination of a leader with the contribution of partners chosen by the Secretariat from organizations already cooperating with UNESCO.

Working documents of the Thematic Debates were taken into account in preparing the Conference's principal working documents and in elaborating drafts of the Declaration Framework for Priority Action. This synergy marked the entire preparation phase.

The 12 Thematic Debates were regrouped into three large themes:

Higher Education and Development

- *The Requirements of the World of Work*
- *Higher Education and Sustainable Human Development*
- *Contributing to National and Regional Development*
- *Higher Education Staff Development: A Continuing Mission*

New Trends and Innovations in Higher Education

- *Higher Education for a New Society: A Student Vision*
- *From Traditional to Virtual: The New Information Technologies*
- *Higher Education and Research: Challenges and Opportunities*
- *The Contribution of Higher Education to the Education System as a Whole*

Higher Education, Culture and Society

- *Women and Higher Education: Issues and Perspectives*
- *Promoting a Culture of Peace*
- *Mobilizing the Power of Culture*
- *Autonomy, Social Responsibility and Academic Freedom*

The introduction to each Debate was given by the author of the working document. This was then completed by input from the panel members.

Each Debate produced a synthesis report representing the results of the discussions and the recommendations made.

The general coordination of the preparation and organization of the Debates was undertaken by the Division of Higher Education, UNESCO.

Volume IV of the Proceedings of the World Conference on Higher Education regroups for each of the 12 Debates:

- The Working Document;
- The Synthetic Report for each Debate;
- The interventions of the panel members.

With regard to the thematic debates on students and women, contributions which were addressed to the Organizing committee and judged relevant were also taken into account.

Thematic Debate

Autonomy, Social Responsibility and Academic Freedom

Leader: The International Association of Universities (IAU)

Working Document drafted by: Mr Guy Neave
Director of Research, IAU

in collaboration with:

- . Education International (EI)
- . Fédération Internationale Syndicale des Enseignants (FISE)
- . International Association of University Professors and Lecturers (IAUPL)
- . International Union of Students (IUS)
- . World University Service (WUS)

and

the UNESCO SECRETARIAT

Contents

Summary	7
Panel	8
Synthetic Report	9
Working Document	11
Speeches:*	
Prof. B.M. Gourley, (South Africa)	20
Mr Dennis Longid, (The Philippines)	22
Doña Ximena Erazo, (Chile)	24
Mme Lise Bissonnette, (Canada)	26
Prof. Wichit Srisa-an, (Thailand)	29
Mr Olle Pekka Heinonen, (Finland)	32

*Authors are responsible for the choice and the presentation of the facts contained in signed article and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization. The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of this authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Summary

The Thematic Debate on Social Responsibility and Academic Freedom and Autonomy is set against two major driving forces for change; on the one hand the spiraling demand for higher education and on the other the globalization of Economic, Financial and Technological exchange. Against this background, the challenge of the university, it is argued, is to uphold a judicious balance between the imperative of technical development and its impact of its consequences upon the social fabric.

Academic Freedom and University Autonomy are seen as prior conditions for the optimal fulfillment of these and other responsibilities which society confers upon the university. Such prior conditions may apply to the academic community alone. They may also be seen as part of a broader perspective grounded in Human Rights.

A third perspective, which is more functional and utilitarian argues the case for university autonomy on the grounds that here too it is a condition necessary if higher education is to be part of a 'risk taking society'. Universities need the freedom to take risk just as they incur the consequences.

The discussion focuses on the challenges posed for academic freedom and university autonomy within four key issues:

University Autonomy and Accountability.

University Autonomy and Stakeholders.

Academic Freedom; Ethical Implications and Civic Responsibilities.

Academic Freedom and Entrepreneurial Activities.

PANEL

Chair: Prof. Justin Thorens, Université de Genève, Suisse

Panelists:

Prof. B. M. Gourley
Vice-Chancellor
University of Natal
South Africa

Mr Dennis Longid
Asian Students Association
University of the Philippines
Philippines

Doña Ximena Erazo
World University
Service
Chile

Prof. Dr J. Marcovich
Rector
University of Sao Paulo
Brazil

Mme Lise Bissonnette
Directrice
Grande Bibliothèque
"Le Devoir"
Canada

Mr Peter Preuss
President
Preuss Foundation
USA

Prof. Wichit Srisa-an
Rector
Suranaree University
of Technology
Thailand

Mr Olle Pekka Heinonnen
Minister of Education
Finland

Advisory/Steering Committee:

Prof. Justin Thorens
Université de Genève
Suisse

Synthetic Report

In their presentations, the seven Panelists shared a broad and basic view that Autonomy, Social Responsibility and Academic Freedom were the essential and guiding values which characterized the relationship between higher education and society. In his introductory speech, the Chairman stressed that academic freedom was not simply a fundamental value. It was also a means by which higher education fulfilled its mission to the various constituencies and stakeholders. Freedom was both a right and also a duty.

Whether higher education was meeting this role adequately, whether it had advanced 'liberty, equality and fraternity', had significantly contributed to narrowing the gap between rich and poor or had advanced social justice was, however, subject to question. Some constituencies, students for example, were still not fully recognized as stake holders 'à part entière'. Nor was the withdrawal of the State necessarily a pointer to greater institutional autonomy. Higher education remains a public service and education a social good. And from the standpoint of access, of upholding the principles of the democratization of higher education, and of preventing the broader social phenomenon of 'social exclusion', there were limits upon the extent to which the State should reduce its responsibilities to society by reducing its presence in higher education.

However, though the State reduced its responsibility, so higher education is increasingly under pressure to train, certify and impart technical knowledge, and its performance subject to increasing scrutiny in the name of the public. The danger is very real that the specificity of the university's moral and civic missions become weakened before the growing weight of the technological imperative and the thrust of short-term demands. Yet, higher education has long term obligations and these are no less important for the general good and for social stability. A commitment to the preservation of enduring values and tasks - to excellence, to examining and commenting the long term ethical implications which come from social change and to the abiding task of enabling students to become active citizens in an era of often unpredictable change these too constitute the long term undertakings of higher education. And because abiding, they too need preserving.

Nevertheless, higher education remains a powerful engine for ideas and contributes substantially to the fortunes of its region. And the more this capacity is developed the more evident the benefits ought to be of effective academic freedom. If society is aware of the benefits it derives from higher education, it will be prepared to extend further the principle of academic freedom.

This 'service function', most particularly when involving goal oriented research, raises the fundamental question of intellectual property as a sub set of academic freedom. Who should define confidentiality? One view, powerfully argued, was that this should be vested in the individual researcher and should be decided on a case by case basis without penalty.

Similar pressures are exerted not just on individuals but also on institutions. And the possibility cannot be discounted that reducing the place of the State in higher education also means that institutions are less able to maintain their independence, intellectual or ethical, when facing resource pressure. As one panelist pointed out, if the state is to withdraw, it ought to make sure that higher education is sufficiently well off that it can turn down contracts and offers of support if it wishes to.

The role of higher education is changing very substantially and with it the range of expectations society places upon it. There is every need to be alert to particular examples of the way in which higher education has successfully been able to meet the hopes of external society, if only so that others may profit from their experience.

The discussion from the floor was lively and began by challenging the notion of social responsibility. It is not necessarily a neutral term. It may be used by authoritarian regimes precisely to muzzle academic freedom and university autonomy. Who is to determine it? Who is to define it? And what are the consequences that flow from whatever definition is made? These points were particularly important if UNESCO were to proceed to developing an international instrument. Other speakers pointed out that academic freedom is often seen by those in higher education as an individual right rather than as an element in a broader collective concept of freedom and autonomy. Furthermore, the concept of academic freedom and autonomy were capable of being extended and varied in the way they were interpreted by different Faculties and applied to such areas as financial autonomy, autonomy of resource allocation.

The floor refined and added to the presentations made by the Panel. It also raised the issue of the place of academic freedom and university autonomy in the Draft Action Plan which in effect made no reference to it. Yet, there was a clear intention of UNESCO to continue the work already undertaken into the Feasibility and Desirability of an International Instrument on Academic Freedom and University Autonomy.

A number of observations were made, some bearing on the wording in the IAU Statement on Academic Freedom Social Responsibility and University Autonomy, others on the institutional range of application contained in that document.

In Summing up, the Chairman noted that Academic Freedom and University Autonomy possessed both a certain tension, between their specific applications to the world of learning and their essential role as an application of Human Rights. Neither were a privilege, they were both a duty and an obligation. He noted that the Session expressed support for the notion of an International Instrument and that it should grow out of the 1997 UNESCO Resolution on Higher Education Teaching Personnel. He noted with satisfaction that the meeting was in favor of the general principle and that taking account of the general thrust of the discussion, the proposal of working towards an International Instrument had received warm and general assent.

Working Document

I. Introduction

The Social Responsibilities of the University

The contemporary university, like the communities in which it is embedded, is in the midst of massive change. Such change is propelled forward by two central trends. These are acceleration in the pace of change itself and the globalization of the economy and of technology.

The general acceleration of change is not merely a determinant of both individual and social progress. It also confers upon the production and dissemination of knowledge a key function in shaping the place of Nations in the international order, just as it largely determines the place and status of the individual in society. These developments, viewed from the perspective of the university community, place upon it an increasingly heavy responsibility both to provide training and research, investigation and advice as well as such services as consultancies, technology transfer and continuing education.

Over the past quarter century, the forces of modernization have drawn heavily upon higher education. They have also contributed in no small way to profound and often radical transformations in that community itself. The drive to mass higher education in the advanced economies and the very substantial growth in the numbers of institutions and of students in the less advanced economies of the world, both testify to this process. Nor is this dynamic likely to be any the less vigorous over the coming decade and beyond. The emergence of what has often been called "the Learning Society" amongst advanced technology economies, effectively the establishment of life long learning with its concomitant of knowledge updating and renewal for individuals, promises to be no less challenging in creating new expectations and demands amongst those who are likely to need - and make use of - such services and provision.

Growth of demand for higher education over the past quarter century and the distinct likelihood of its continuation well beyond the foreseeable future have, however, to be placed against a number of limitations, not least in the public sector, that of finance. Resource constraint limits the ability of higher education to meet current expectations with the quality often held to be necessary. Thus, in many countries, the credibility and standing of universities are increasingly subject to question.

One of the most pressing challenges facing universities today is that of resources - how to increase them; to diversify their provenance, to improve both their internal allocation and management and finally, how to meet the responsibilities society places upon universities whilst maintaining the recognized tradition of autonomy and disinterested service.

Nevertheless, the accelerating pace of change contains enormous potential for development just as it presents formidable challenges. It requires universities to embark upon considerable investment in adaptation, innovation, in developing sensitive and sophisticated systems and methods of management, in the definition and execution of the various alternatives which lie before them. It remains a fact however, that individual universities are far from being equal in the resources they command, in the ability of the student body they can attract or the esteem they enjoy in their communities. And whilst the speeding up of change and the demand by society that it be speedily accommodated are the watchwords of the hour, it does not follow that individual universities uniformly possess the same capacity to meet these exhortations. The possibility cannot be ruled out then that though the strong and those at the 'cutting edge' remain so, the weak may well be undermined yet further.

The Globalization of the Economic, Financial and Technological Exchange

The second factor which is in process of reshaping the landscape of higher education across the world, is the globalization of economic and financial exchange and the international nature of technology. One may confidently predict that this factor will continue to operate and with increasing weight in the affairs and priorities of higher learning. For all systems of higher education, globalization opens up the prospect of a higher level of interdependence across national frontiers than has been usual in the recent past.

There are many reasons why this should be so and equally there are many which call for universities to make the effort to be part of this new dimension. Increasingly, the conduct of research in domains directly linked to technology, biotechnology and medicine is characterized by sustained international cooperation. And judging the quality of research projects has long been subject to international peer review. The growth of the international dimension has been especially noteworthy at higher levels of training, particularly at graduate level. One thinks here of the tentacular expansion of MBA programmes as a specific instance within this broader phenomenon. Universities that lack entrepreneurial impulse and most especially in the area of economics and technology development, are not destined to flourish.

The globalization of the economy and the international flow of technology are not the only driving forces which bear down on the development of higher education. Equally potent are cultural, social and political differences which identify nations, peoples and communities and thus universities themselves. The coexistence of finance, economy and technology which drive towards integration alongside the enduring presence of cultural differences, political and historic specificities and variety in systems of belief which seek to uphold their particular nature, makes for powerful tensions, and most certainly so when upholding such particular features often tends to involve denying the freedom of others to exercise similar rights or by threatening them with subjugation.

Universities lie athwart these two worlds. They are subject to the tensions which each separately generates. They are also subject to the tensions that arise when the international appears to be in conflict with other, more rooted, notions of identity and belief. If the path to innovation and a healthy dynamism lies in an arena, increasingly international, in which disciplines and institutions compete for repute, recognition and excellence, it has also to be recognized that the university is founded within particular cultures and embedded in a specific society.

The university serves as handmaiden to the burgeoning internationalization of scholarly communication, of knowledge in general and of knowledge that applies to commerce between the Nations. But it is also the child of the cultures in which it is set. Its responsibilities also lie in protecting and advancing local cultural, intellectual and scholarly traditions.

Viewed from a world perspective, the major and constant challenge which the university faces from now on, is to uphold a judicious balance between the pressure for change which comes from the process of technical development qua globalization and the tensions created within civic society as a result of the impact of economic and technological change upon the social fabric. It is a delicate task and one ever renewed. It stands as an additional responsibility incumbent upon the university precisely because the university is both the agent and the recipient of economic and technological change. But, such a task is no less delicate for the fact that it comes over and above such well-recognized obligations as acting as a vehicle of understanding between different cultures and communities and for rectifying, where possible, the social imbalances which result from poverty, exclusion and conflict.

Academic Freedom and University Autonomy

So that the University may fully assume - and carry out - the responsibilities which Society lays upon it, the University as an institution of scholarship and its academic staff individually need to be granted certain

conditions of work held to be necessary for such responsibilities to be optimally fulfilled. These terms are contained in the two concepts of University Autonomy and Academic Freedom. The former relates to institutional self government. The latter relates to the individual members of academic staff. And, in respect of the freedom to choose what they will study, extends also to students. These conditions vary in their operational detail, in the degree to which they are applied in different countries and within countries, to different types of institution within the national system of higher education.

Nevertheless, the generic feature which distinguishes the University from training, from compulsory schooling and post compulsory institutes of education is the freedom to learn for students (Lernfreiheit) and the freedom to teach for academic staff (Lehrfreiheit). By extension, the freedom to teach is held to encompass the obligation upon academic staff to contribute through enquiry and research to the advance of fundamental knowledge which shapes the particular area of study to which they are individually committed. (Wissenschaftsfreiheit) Since the time of the Humboldtian reforms of the university and its derivatives, this basic mission has been part of the university's corporate responsibility, often described as the "search after Truth".

Different Interpretations of Academic Freedom

There are many ways of viewing academic freedom: as a functional condition which allows the University to fulfil its responsibilities to society; as a philosophic proposition and as a moral imperative. Is a professional ethic different from academic freedom? Not all those engaged in the academic community enjoy the same degree of academic freedom. Nor does it follow necessarily that academic freedom can - or should - be extended beyond academia. There is a view which argues ,it should be confined to those places and circumstances where it may be practised. This distinction is an exclusive one. It denies the notion that academic freedom leads on to the general right of Freedom of expression and to the general 'right to know'.

Thus, the usual view of academic freedom is that, by definition, it applies to the academic community. Such a view does not go unchallenged by those who view academic freedom as a sub-set of a broader and universal Human Right - that of the freedom of information and expression. This interpretation starts from the premise that academic freedom is a necessary condition for Human Progress. It links academic freedom to the broader issues of social advance in general thereby tying in academic freedom as an element in ensuring one dimension in Human Rights. Knowledge, so this line of argument runs, is NOT finite. On the contrary, progress is shaped by the ability to question, criticize and to enquire. Ensuring progress is one of the responsibilities of academia. It is not, however, exclusive. Since the accumulation of knowledge through enquiry is a condition of Human progress and advance, academic freedom is a condition of that progress. To the extent that progress itself is a Human Right, to that extent academic freedom IS indeed linked with a more general right.

Exceptions

It has, however, to be recognized that in practice, there are areas of research and enquiry to which this general principle is not extended. Research connected to national defence and sometimes to industrial R&D are cases in point. Thus, the issue of academic freedom should be debated within terms broader than the usual perspective of higher education. In effect, the core freedom which lies beneath academic freedom is the freedom of enquiry and this, also by definition is universal. The latter definition will be discussed as a forward looking perspective to an issue which, in general, has tended to be debated in terms of historical antecedent.

Other arguments justify the exercise of university autonomy less on the grounds of its being an historic 'droit acquis' than on grounds of efficacy and utilitarianism. They draw upon contemporary developments beyond academia and in particular those found in other organizations, one of which is the

modern enterprise. One line of argument in particular justifies university autonomy on the grounds that it is a necessary condition if institutions of higher learning are to adapt to "Risk taking".

University Autonomy in a "Risk-taking Society"

A society based on risk-taking requires greater latitude to be accorded to institutions so that the individuals bearing responsibility for their good husbandry, may exercise initiative in meeting the often changing demands society places on higher education. From this point of view, university autonomy, has to contend and find a balance, with other principles which determine its relationship with society, namely, accountability, social responsibility and transparency. Equally important in this regard are the two principles which accompany the notion of the university as a 'market-driven' institution: namely, competition and competitiveness. It may be argued that university autonomy - that is the capacity of self-government - is no less a prior condition for universities to determine in what way they may and will respond to competition, whether for students, for resources or for repute. To be in a position to do so, however, it is incumbent on the university to develop techniques of management, administration and self -verification which balance university autonomy with the obligation to be accountable to society, to demonstrate efficiency in fulfilling its mission and transparency in its manner of achieving it. We have therefore to be aware of the elements of change which a closer association with the productive process implies for a less narrowly defined concept of university autonomy than the historic and perhaps traditional interpretation of the university's governing principle.

Obligations

Rights confer obligations. Academic freedom and university autonomy naturally imply the obligations to excellence, to innovation and to the advancement of knowledge, the former by individual academics and the latter by the institution. Academic Freedom and University Autonomy have tended to be regarded as a protection vis a vis arbitrary interference and are underwritten by formal legislative enactment or by the State's recognizing the customary practices of the academic community. Though the responsibility of the State is not less central today, current developments whether expressed in terms of economic or administrative rationality - de-regulation', 'privatization', 'decentralization of decision-making" to the individual university or the greater importance attached to regional authorities - imply a more complex relationship with civil society. Today, Academic Freedom and University Autonomy are increasingly tempered by notions of Accountability and 'responsiveness to external interests'. As this new social contract between university and society takes shape, so the notion of University Autonomy - but not necessarily Academic Freedom - is subject to an increasing conditionality.

II. Thematic Areas for Discussion

The Thematic Debate organized within the World Conference on Higher Education on "Autonomy, social Responsibility and Academic Freedom" starts from the following proposition: that Academic Freedom and University Autonomy are prior conditions for the unfettered pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. They are bestowed upon the academic community not for its own sake but to enable the university to meet its responsibilities to society.

The perspective on which the Round Table will focus are the operational domains, - the real life activities - to which universities must attend and in which society expects demonstrable change and adjustment. There is every need to be vigilant to the short term. It is no less appropriate to examine some of the implications that may arise in the longer term as well.

The assumption underpinning the first of these topics **Academic Freedom and University Autonomy** - has two elements: first, that for the foreseeable future it is highly unlikely that universities will return to a period of stability. Rather they will continually be faced with an evolving series of demands from

different sectors of society and from the economy the more higher education becomes a central element in the latter. The second and in consequence, that for universities simply to “meet” whatever demands society places upon them is neither acceptable nor likely to be judged appropriate. The assumption is then that universities ought to be “pro active” or, put in other terms, that they are prepared to take the risk of seeing ways of anticipating and taking the initiative in meeting society’s demands.

The second topic, **the Globalization of Economic Financial and Technological Exchange** - may equally be seen as an “anticipated constant” in the life of higher learning in the 21st century.

Today Universities stand on the threshold of society’s realizing that idea to which higher education has long subscribed - that is, the global transmission of knowledge. Globalization poses many issues, not least of which is the ending of that historic monopoly over the transmission and production of higher education universities enjoyed almost since their foundation.

But the type of knowledge transmitted, the way it is transmitted and to whom, are not neutral processes. They carry with them values and priorities and thus assumptions about who is to receive what type of knowledge and for what purpose. Even assuming that globalization does not lessen cultural diversity or undermine both specific knowledge traditions and the communities which have developed them, questions that have been basic within the confines of the Nation-State are becoming yet more pressing when placed in a global setting. We assume that greater access to knowledge beyond the nation’s frontiers will both accelerate social change and eradicate those inequalities the Nation has not proven able to do. There is, however, the pessimistic thesis which suggests that globalization merely deepens the gulf between “haves” and “have nots” and that the competitive ethic lends a convenient justification for leaving them aside.

The third area of discussion focuses on four key and specific dimensions in the relationship between higher education and society. Rather than examining the fundamental condition of higher learning from within the university setting as a species of *droit acquis*, the debate should seek to identify those essential conditions for universities to be able to meet the expectations placed upon them. The theme will assess the consequences for academic freedom and university autonomy of the challenges posed by the tensions and expectations society is now beginning to voice. Many of the specific issues raised are not conjunctural. They are structural and strategic. They will remain a constant preoccupation until well on into the 21st century.

1. University Autonomy and Accountability

As public bodies or as private corporations, universities have long been involved in rendering accounts either to government or to Boards of Trustees representing either the public or the 'owners'. Thus, the right to institutional self-government engages the responsibility of university to demonstrate full and formal compliance with the appropriate conditions, laws and procedures. The demand for greater transparency and the press for universities to show their achievements with greater precision have brought the issue of accountability and quality assessment to the centre of higher education policy. Though the tying of institutional budgets to quality targets is far from being universal, it is clear that the extent a university may effectively exercise self government is increasingly dependent on demonstrated efficiency and effectiveness. Autonomy, appears to be explicitly tied to meeting externally set standards.

- ❖ *What are the consequences of an increasingly conditional autonomy for university management and for the role of institutional leadership?*
- ❖
- ❖ *To what extent is university autonomy compatible with the demand for greater accountability to the public, to students and other stakeholders?*

2. University Autonomy and Stakeholders

University autonomy shapes the relationship between government, society and the university. It upholds freedom from arbitrary intervention. Yet the more higher education is driven by a market economy, the greater the number and variety of external interests with which the university will have to deal, seek support and, ultimately, rely upon. The intensification of exchange between university and society is a direct consequence of policies of “de-regulation”. But it also implies a new commitment, some would say a new moral responsibility towards civil society which extends well beyond the issue of financial support. And the greater the weight placed upon the university’s commitment to “community service”. New partnerships at local and sub-national regional level certainly follow from the need to diversity support and funding. But the ‘return’ of the university to civil society poses a number of questions about an enhanced and more active role it may play not only in the usual area of ‘services to the community’ and in greater attentiveness to “stakeholders”. Such activities are also an act of social solidarity and responsibility by assisting that community to draw up the main priorities for its own development.

- ❖ *What is and ought to be the university’s role in community development?*
- ❖ *What strategies may be used to involve representatives of civil society in helping the university achieve its mission of service to the community?*

3. Academic Freedom: Ethical Implications and Civic Responsibilities

The search after truth is a fundamental responsibility of science, scholarship and inquiry. There is then a moral obligation of the university to speak truth to power. The truth that power would have the university sustain poses delicate issues, however. If the former engages the collective responsibility of academia as a whole, the latter often raises issues contrary to the personal ethic of individual academics. Technological; biological and medical advance, the development of cross disciplinary fields within them are, potentially fertile ground for tensions between the collective and individual aspects of ethical responsibility. They can pose similar dilemmas for individuals in their capacity as members of the scientific community and their personal ethical convictions as citizens. Such ethical conflicts do not remain within the university. Very often they are the stuff of social and political debate

- ❖ *What are the ethical responsibilities subsumed under academic freedom?*
- ❖ *How may the community of higher learning - staff and students alike - develop greater sensitivity to these responsibilities?*

4. Academic Freedom and Entrepreneurial Activities

Freedom to carry out research and the obligation to publish lie at the heart of academic freedom. They constitute at all levels - individual, departmental and institutional - the bedrock on which public recognition of excellence and scholarly achievement, rests. As universities seek to increase external revenue sources, to develop closer links between industry and the university research base and to demonstrate entrepreneurship through setting up science parks, spin-off firms and business ventures, contractual agreements can limit this commitment.

- ❖ *How may the freedom to research and publish be upheld at the same time meet the conditions of confidentiality which an entrepreneurial relationship often demands?*
- ❖ *What safeguards should the university seek from its contractual partners to uphold the terms of its overall mission, its commitment to academic freedom and the concerns of the individual scholar?*

III. Conclusion

UNESCO in planning the World Conference on Higher Education under the general theme Higher Education in the 21st century: Vision and Action, identified four generic themes for the debate. These are:

- Pertinence.
- Quality.
- Management and Financing.
- International Cooperation.

Within the scope of this Round Table discussion, these themes are no less present. The responsibilities society expects the university to assume reflect the changes society itself faces and, in turn, the capacity of the universe to identify, distinguish and prioritise between them in a manner acceptable and beneficial to society. Seen from this angle, "Pertinence" may be defined as the degree of convergence between what society expects and what the university is able to do. This does not mean however, that the university should be reduced to a "service agency", accepting without question and without independent judgement, short term "service-oriented" pressures exerted by 'the market'. By the same token, "quality" demonstrates to society the extent to which individual institutions are meeting the high standards expected of them. "Management and Financing" constitute the means and procedures by which the individual institution prioritizes the expectations society has expressed in the light of the means society provides for their execution. "International Cooperation" stands as the practical arena for competitive excellence to show solidarity with institutions less privileged but equally important in the development of a common global civilization.

World Conference on Higher Education

Follow-up to the Thematic Debate on Autonomy, Social Responsibility and Academic Freedom

In devising the follow up strategy to the Thematic Debate on Autonomy, Social Responsibility and Academic Freedom, the International Association of Universities sees a main target in engaging in sustained exchange the following groups:

- * ***Amongst the constituencies in higher education institutions***
 - ❖ Institutional Leadership.
 - ❖ Academic Staff.
 - ❖ Senior Administration.
 - ❖ Students.

- * ***Amongst policy-makers***
 - ❖ National government representatives.
 - ❖ Regional and municipal authorities.

- * ***Amongst Stakeholders***
 - ❖ Local Community representatives.
 - ❖ Industry

- * ***UNESCO and its Partner Organizations in Higher Education***

The need to engage such constituencies and interests in sustained dialogue and interaction beyond the occasion of the World Conference on Higher Education appears as a general requirement for the success of the Conference. It is especially highlighted by the purpose behind the Thematic Debate on “Autonomy, Social Responsibility and Academic Freedom”. In our mind, the strategic purpose is to set out a framework of a new Social Contract which reaffirms and re-defines the mutual responsibilities, rights and obligations between the constituent parts of University and Society so that both may meet the challenges of the new Millennium.

Such a strategy will involve operating a major change to the traditional concepts of academic freedom and university autonomy. Rather than as historic privileges, they need to be understood and implemented as basic conditions that enable academia as individuals and universities as institutions to carry out the responsibilities society delegates to both. Thus, follow-up actions should be designed in a manner so as to work towards, and deepen, a common understanding of the mutual obligations involved. An understanding that the University is held to be accountable to Society and to the collective obligation to quality, fairness, tolerance and for the upkeep of standards, academic, administrative and ethical, and that academic freedom and university autonomy are the prior conditions enabling higher education to discharge certain of its responsibilities to Society.

This understanding includes, on the other side, that Society and the various stakeholders, public or private, are under the obligation to refrain from, and prevent arbitrary interference in the way universities discharge their various missions. And that, what Society may reasonably expect higher education to fulfil is

closely tied to committing sufficient resources for such expectations to be met. It further involves also a clearer understanding of the different functions that higher education is expected to perform and the necessary division of labor which needs to be operated within the higher education system to enable it to respond in adequate manners to these diverse expectations.

An overall challenge for the follow-up to the World Conference will thus be to set in place the means and conditions that will allow to accommodate, across the different constituencies, a historical, and culturally diverse understanding of the role and missions of higher education in society to the rapidly changing circumstances with which society and higher education are faced. In this, specific sensitivity needs to be developed to the marked changes in the 'outreach' of higher education beyond physical frontiers. As, more particularly, Universities are concerned, the overall conditions for them to serve a world Society need to be clarified and agreed upon so as to form a New Social Contract, a common basis for upholding values common to Humanity and meeting the needs and expectations of a world where frontiers are becoming increasingly permeable.

This strategy, self evidently as regards both substantive scope and time scale goes well beyond the World Conference. However, the latter provides a vital occasion for opening a dialogue and developing closer contact amongst those actors, interests and their representatives mentioned above, with a view to moving towards a common understanding on the essential role of higher education within a shared vision of the Society of the future. Necessary efforts will then have to be deployed to sustain this dialogue and to set into movement a process that can eventually lead to an agreed upon formulation of that new Social Contract about role and mission of the University in Society. One instrument to guarantee such a contract could then be the elaboration of an International Charter on Academic Freedom, Autonomy and Social Responsibility, under the auspices of UNESCO, as a means of strengthening the principles of excellence, tolerance, pluralism, and academic solidarity between institutions of higher learning, as too between individual scholars and students.

Already in an earlier document presented to UNESCO, and entitled "The Feasibility and Desirability of an International Instrument on Academic Freedom and University Autonomy", the IAU, after extensive consultations amongst its members and other professional and regional associations representing higher education, expressed the argued opinion that such an international agreement appeared both feasible and desirable. More especially, it was held to be particularly appropriate, an area of initiative to which UNESCO might provide accrued legitimacy by playing a decisive federating role, both in the process of negotiations to be opened on this subject among the different partners, as too in setting in place an appropriate monitoring mechanism to follow the progress and observation of such an International Charter.

Address by: Prof. Brenda Gourley
Vice-Chancellor
University of Natal
South Africa

As we sit here today in the city of Paris - birthplace of the concept of «liberty, equality and fraternity» - in the UNESCO building - itself a product of a concept of a united and interdependent world - what indeed have we, as a global society achieved in the implementation of such ideas since their birth.

UNESCO itself gives us the answer: its research demonstrates that the gap between the rich and the poor has dramatically increased in this age of technology. Indeed access to the technology may well become the defining divide. So whatever technology has done for some of us, it has done nothing at all for most of us. No equality, freedom for relatively few, and desperately little fraternity.

The world teeters on the brink of a global recession, civil wars are unsurprisingly frequent (since they occur where poverty is most acute), massive illiteracy and ignorance (especially amongst the girl children of the world), not muskets and guillotines (as during the French Revolution) but nuclear arsenals threatening all peoples; a tragic failure in leadership in almost all quarters. Indeed a pattern of events that more than ever resembles the first half of the twentieth century: booms, busts and wars; and a new kind of apartheid : one that perpetuates an almost irrevocable divide between the rich and poor. Add to all this a threatened environment and well you may wonder what it is that universities have occupied themselves with thus far. If indeed they once had a competitive advantage as the storehouses and disseminators of knowledge, in our new knowledge society, it is an advantage they no longer enjoy. As Michael Gibbons' paper presented earlier this week so lucidly and admirably makes clear, they can be at best partners or brokers in knowledge production and there are certainly cheaper ways of knowledge dissemination.

So how do universities argue their case in such a world? I suggest to you - with great difficulty! It seems to me that universities have done their least impressive work on the very subjects where society's needs for greater knowledge and better education are most acute - poverty, violence, war, unemployment etc. And if universities, wherever they may be, with whatever their resources (human and physical) do not seek solutions to the pressing human conditions of the society in which we are embedded then this could only be regarded as an ethical failure or an intellectual failure, or both. Such solutions will not however be found, I suggest, by universities working independently. The world has changed too much for that. Globalization (which looks more and more to poor countries like a new form of colonisation) has largely accounted for that change. Businesses have become so big that in many cases their wealth is larger than the combined wealth of entire countries. They are however beginning to realize that the health of the planet, the quality of life of its people and the infrastructure on which they rely to do business, is so complex and so intertwined that its vulnerability has increased exponentially and with it, their risks. They have to be partners in seeking a solution.

So do the nation states. They too see their autonomy being relentlessly eroded by the globalization of economic decision-making, the tides of refugees that make borders irrelevant and the environmental catastrophes that also pay no respect to nationality. They too realise (as Daniel Bell so succinctly puts it) that the national level is too small for the big problems and too big for the small problems. They too need partners. NGO's, community organisations and such also need to be brought together in this endeavour for a better world. They too have found that working on their own is ineffective.

What role is there for universities?

Universities I believe could and should be an important lead partner (broker, facilitator) in these new alliances where the search for social justice concerns us all. The capacity for leading, nurturing and sustaining

such alliances could well be the universities' conduit to the future. They are (whatever their faults) a more independent «estate» than can be found elsewhere. Intellectual homelessness and a measure of academic freedom is a feature only of universities, and scholars throughout the ages have demonstrated this. And independent thinking often accompanied inevitably by political dissension is certainly needed. As we come to learn that we are irrevocably interdependent, the big question of our time is whether (as George Mulgan says) we can combine freedom with the necessity for interdependence. Or are we doomed to a classical tragedy in which our love of freedom destroys our capacity to be interdependent?

It seems to me that it is the role of institutional leadership to understand and strategise around the realities of our changed environment and lead their institutions accordingly. They also need to lead with integrity and due consideration for the ethical imperatives for social justice. Universities in the conduct of their own internal affairs have not been good examples of social justice in practice. Their staffing and governing structures alone demonstrate that. Let us hope the future will be different.

I will conclude by quoting Robert Hutchins : He says «civilisation can be saved only by a moral, intellectual and spiritual revolution to match the scientific, technological and economic revolution in which we are living. If (universities) can contribute to that revolution then they offer a real hope to suffering humanity. If they cannot, or they will not, (face up to such social responsibility) then they are irrelevant and their fate is immaterial». I agree with him.

Bibliography

- Bok, D.(1990) *Universities and the Future of America*, Durham and London:Duke University Press.
 Gourley, B M (1994) Universities and Ethics.Inaugural Address, University of Natal, Durban
 Gourley, B M (1996) Education in a Borderless World. Unpublished Paper given at *Universities in the 21st Century*conference.Singapore.
 Handy, C. (1997) *The Hungry Spirit*.London:Hutchinson
 Ikeda, D (1995) *A New Kind of Humanism*. New York:Weatherill.
 King, A & B Schneider (eds).(1991) *The First Global Revolution. Report by the Council of Rome*. London: Simon and Schuster.
 Naisbitt, J.(1996) *Megatrends Asia. The Eight Asian Megatrends That Are Changing The World*. London Nicholas Brealey.
 Senge, P.M. (1990) *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation* .London:Doubleday.

Address by: Mr Dennis Longid
Office of the Student Regent
University of the Philippines
Philippines

Mr Chairman,
Fellow Members of the Panel,
Members of the audience,

Good afternoon,

Allow me first to introduce myself. I am Dennis Longid, from the League of Filipino Students and the Asian Students Association. I am also the Deputy Secretary-General of the National Union of Students in the Philippines and at present, a sitting Member of the University of the Philippines System as the duly elected Student Regent.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the International Association of Universities for inviting me as one of the panelists in the Thematic Debate/Roundtable discussion this afternoon. It is an honor indeed to be the only student in this panel. Had it not been for the IAU invitation, I would not be at this Conference right now.

Before I give my comments about the topic at hand, allow me please to give my thoughts about this Conference. Given the limited opportunities for students to be heard and represented in this Conference, allow me to take advantage of this occasion to raise a few points.

I was initially invited by my Government to be one among possible members of the official Philippine delegation. I never knew what happened next, but I am sure of one thing, there is no official student delegate from the Philippines. Last I heard, they said that a student had no business in this Conference.

When someone from the audience in the student debate yesterday asked the students who were actually part of their official national delegation, I was quite disappointed to see very few hands. It speaks highly of how, up to the present, and in general, students are not yet recognized as major stakeholders in education by their respective governments. In the Asian region, where literacy rate is below 65%, there is no official student delegate from any of the national delegations. Most of us here from the Asian region are here mainly as members of the Asian Students Association, not as part of any national delegation.

In the Philippines, where we continue to struggle for the advancement of students' democratic rights and welfare, school administrators respond by saying we, the students are transients. And that we have no business in decision and policy making bodies of universities. We, in the League of Filipino Students (LFS) and the Asian Students Association (ASA) firmly say: "Students may be transients, but students' rights are not".

Last Sunday during the first student forum meeting, many of us were given the impression that we should be actually grateful that we are here at this World Conference. While we are happy that we are here, I believe we don't owe it to anyone. It is the inherent and legitimate right of students not only to be represented, but also to be heard in this Conference. And while I am talking about rights, let me now go into the topic at hand: "Autonomy, Social Responsibility and Academic Freedom".

I come from a University that has a rich tradition said to be the bastion of academic freedom and critical thought - the University of the Philippines - the University of and for the people. I do agree with the

notion that academic freedom should not simply be defined or confined to the academic community. I believe that academic freedom should be seen as part of a wider or should I say broader human right – that of freedom of information and expression.

For us students, the freedom to know, to pursue what we want to study, and the necessary freedom to express this knowledge, these ideas should at all times be respected. In my University, while we enjoy a certain degree of academic freedom, this is now batlantly being threatened, especially with the very big control of the private sector in higher education. 85% of tertiary schools in the Philippines are privately owned.

This now brings me to my next point - that of Autonomy.-. While it is a common notion that academic freedom and autonomy go together, let me raise a few points we may be missing. I do believe that educational institutions should be independent from the government, and especially the private sector in running the affairs of the university. In terms of policy and decision-making, educational institutions should at all times be autonomous. But what does this autonomy mean? Self-government would inevitably mean educational institutions, and that should also be responsible for looking for resources, financial or otherwise, for the university. At least that is how we understand it in the Philippines. Autonomy disguised as independence and institutional self-government has meant the further entry of the private sector and the eventual withdrawal of government in providing subsidy to higher education. And here lies the contradiction. It is here that I say academic freedom is threatened:

One, in terms of access to education. Autonomy has meant for us the raising of fees of students shouldering the costs of education, of students being deprived of education:

Two, in terms of the content of education itself. With the entry of multinational corporation in universities, students are at the best limited in what they want to pursue and at worst, forced to study matters that are of vital interest to these companies. There is also the issue of intellectual property and I don't think I have to elaborate on that.

Three, in our campaigns against this type of autonomy, students are being threatened with all forms of harassment and repression. Student leaders organizing demonstrations against rising fees, etc., are being denied seats in student unions, policy-making bodies, etc. Some are even barred from enrolling again in their schools. Others go to jail. Legitimate student organizations are being banned; campus publications are closed down. This is another violation of academic freedom.

It is in basis that I raise my reservations on "autonomy". The LFS and the ASA again reiterate their call that education should be free of charge at all levels, and call on all governments to prioritize social services like education, health and housing over debt-servicing and military spending. Needless to say, we strongly condemn the IMF/WB and the GATT/WTO for their policies, which have intensified the commercialization and privatization of education.

And, going to the Third issue, I believe that only through the full financial support of government, coupled of course with academic freedom, can universities fulfill their social responsibilities. How can we expect students paying for their education or even institutions running on private money to have a sense of social responsibility? Society can only get something from these institutions of higher learning if, in the first place it gives them the support they badly need.

Thank you very much, and again good afternoon.

Libertad Académica y derecho a la educación superior

Discurso de: Doña Ximena Erazo
(Chile)

A la luz de las experiencias que los distintos países han realizado en lo que se refiere al ejercicio de la libertad académica y el derecho a la educación superior, parece necesario relevar la estrecha vinculación entre ambos conceptos y derechos, así como también la constatación del necesario ejercicio y realización del uno como condición para el desarrollo y realización del otro. Libertad académica y derecho a la educación superior existen y se desarrollan en una relación de verdadera simbiosis.

La realización de ambos derechos nos remite, por otra parte, a la trilogía que constituyen los tres pilares en que se sustenta el desarrollo: Estado-Mercado-Sociedad Civil. La predominancia de uno sobre otro de estos pilares, o bien la relación equilibrada entre las partes que conforman la trilogía, dan cuenta del tipo o modelo de desarrollo y sociedad que tenemos.

En los países del mundo en desarrollo, o al menos en la mayoría de los países de América Latina y el Caribe, nos enfrentamos a una situación en la que el mercado destaca como actor privilegiado, predominante y poderosos de la trilogía. Más aún nos hayamos inmersos en un modelo que prescinde de la sociedad civil y donde se desdibujan crecientemente las obligaciones normales del Estado, particularmente su rol de garante de la igualdad de oportunidades, señalado como el rol esencial del Estado por Monsieur Leonel Jospin en la sesión inaugural de esta conferencia.

En el ejercicio de ambos derechos, el de la libertad académica y el del derecho a la educación, la función proactiva, orientadora y reguladora del Estado constituye una cuestión fundamental. La presencia de Estados fuertes, de un tamaño y funciones acordes a las demandas de la sociedad a que pertenece, es decir de un estado vigilante, garante y promotor de la igualdad de oportunidades no es, en modo alguno, sinónimo de Estado autoritario, ni de estatismo ni dirigismo, como se nos pretende confundir desde una perspectiva ideológica neoliberal. Se trata, simplemente, y como lo señalara el Dr. Tünnermann en su intervención de estos días, de reconocer que la educación superior es un servicio público y un bien social, y por ello mismo el Estado no puede declinar la responsabilidad de apoyarla y de proteger sus principios y normas esenciales para el buen servicio que se le ha encomendado. La ausencia de apoyos ha significado, la mayoría de las veces, el decaimiento o simplemente la desaparición de disciplinas y temáticas “poco rentables”, que dan lugar a una suerte de restricción encubierta de la libertad académica. De allí que haya que prestar atención a aquellas formas más sutiles o no violentas de restricción de la libertad académica y que derivan de la inhibición o autorenuncia del Estado a su rol proactivo en la realización de la igualdad de oportunidades.

El conocimiento ha pasado a ser la variable más importante del desarrollo y la organización social, al tiempo que adquiere una importancia inédita como factor clave en la búsqueda y el logro de la democracia y la equidad. En este contexto, emergen nuevas formas de relacionamiento entre el Estado y el sistema educacional público, entre el Estado y universidad, entre el Estado y la Sociedad en lo que se refiere a la exigibilidad y realización de dos derechos humanos esenciales: el derecho a la educación superior y la libertad académica. De allí que tanto desde las universidades estatales como desde la sociedad civil se haya extendido la demanda por una postura más proactiva del Estado para con sus universidades y la sociedad civil, promoviendo mecanismos de apoyo, participación y promoción.

La segmentación de la oferta educativa, expresada en diferencias de calidad, está contribuyendo a aceleradamente a la instalación de fenómenos que ponen en riesgo las dinámicas democratizadoras en curso. Mayores estratificaciones y brechas que resultan de las diferencias en la calidad de la educación a que se accede - la brecha entre los que dominan y los que no dominan los códigos de la modernidad - mayores niveles de

intolerancia e incomprensión, menores grados de libertad, así como exclusiones en lo que se refiere a la participación ciudadana, son situaciones que amenazan la gobernabilidad de las democracias.

El efecto que tiene para el desarrollo la inversión en educación; la forma en que la educación incide en las posibilidades de los individuos para realizar otros derechos; así como la estrecha relación que existe entre el derecho a la educación y el derecho al desarrollo y entre poseer un derecho civil de tanta importancia como el derecho a participar, adquieren especial relevancia cuando se aborda la problemática de la educación superior y de la universidad en particular.

La gran mayoría de las reformas dirigidas a modernizar las universidades estatales adolece de una contradicción no resuelta que desdibuja sensiblemente la misión de las universidades estatales: su compromiso y contribución al desarrollo del país y con los intereses y necesidades de la Nación. La contradicción resulta del hecho de que las mencionadas reformas están encuadradas en enfoque “estatizante” que desarrolla fórmulas de intervención del poder ejecutivo en los órganos internos de las universidades, por una parte, y en uno “desestatizante” que demanda crecientemente el autofinanciamiento de las universidades estatales, por otra.

Lo que dichas reformas no logran resolver es la evidente contradicción entre las demandas de la modernidad, por un lado, y las limitaciones impuestas a la universidad, por otro. La universidad está llamada, como ninguna otra institución, a responder a las necesidades de mayor conocimiento y desarrollo científico que emanan de los procesos modernizadores. Tales reformas tampoco logran resolver la abierta contradicción entre esas demandas y la exclusión de amplios y crecientes sectores de la población que no podrán acceder ni contribuir a la modernidad por falta de conocimientos y destrezas.

“La responsabilité sociale des universités”

Intervention de: Mme Lise Bissonnette
Présidente-Directrice générale
LA GRANDE BIBLIOTHÈQUE DU QUÉBEC
Montréal (Québec) Canada

Toute ma vie, j'ai fréquenté l'université en «externe». De mon poste d'observation, a la direction d'un journal quotidien que je viens tout juste de quitter, j'ai professé à son égard une amitié constante mais critique. Au moment où je prends la tête d'une institution publique encore virtuelle' mais immense, qui se situera dans le champ de la culture et de la formation, je me trouve absorbée, en quelque sorte, dans l'univers que j'analysais de plus loin. Les questions que je posais régulièrement, à propos de la responsabilité sociale des universités, m'interpellent désormais plus directement.

À cause de la brièveté de nos interventions autour de cette table, je ne m'intéresserai qu'à la responsabilité de l'université elle-même, comme personne morale, plutôt qu'à celle des enseignants et des chercheurs car le rôle de l'institution dans la cité me semble plus problématique aujourd'hui, que celui des individus qui la peuplent et qui useront toujours plus ou moins de leur liberté académique, selon l'importance qu'ils accordent à cette valeur aussi intangible aujourd'hui qu'hier. Il en va autrement, me semble-t-il, de l'institution. Plus que jamais intégrée aux rouages de l'économie, pilier du développement de la société dite «du savoir», l'université est-elle encore libre de promouvoir ses propres valeurs et a-t-elle encore soif de cette liberté ?

Il est impossible d'offrir une réponse générale à la question. Les modèles universitaires, bien qu'ils aient désormais tendance à migrer d'un continent à l'autre, demeurent assez différents. L'université nord-américaine, celle que je connais le mieux, a pris son essor avec la révolution industrielle et éprouve moins d'états d'âme à la perspective d'être définie par les besoins sociaux dominants plutôt que de contribuer à les définir et à les transcender, ce qui me semble demeurer sa responsabilité sociale principale, une exigence née de son autonomie. L'université européenne paraît plus consciente de devoir sa naissance à la philosophie et d'avoir encore mission de mettre en question le monde et sa succession d'idées reçues. Mais le modèle nord-américain de l'université fonctionnaliste gagne actuellement du terrain en Europe. L'uniformisation des mécanismes économiques, corollaire de la mondialisation, impose partout aux universités les mêmes pressions, et bientôt les mêmes comportements.

Quelques causes

L'université, hier encore conviée à former surtout les futurs cadres de la nation, doit maintenant estampiller «conformes» l'énorme ensemble des travailleurs qualifiés de la société du savoir. Dans la plupart des sociétés industrialisées, presque tous les nouveaux emplois qui apparaissent sur le marché réclament une formation de niveau universitaire, ce qui a tendance à transformer les universités en vastes écoles professionnelles où l'étudiant - et l'entreprise qui le recrutera - achètent d'abord et avant tout des habiletés monnayables. Le savoir source de richesse a largement déclassé le savoir pour le savoir.

- Mais le néolibéralisme, qu'on accuse si facilement de tous les maux, n'est pas seul à l'origine de cette mutation. Les soixante-huitards, grands révolutionnaires devant l'éternel, y sont aussi pour quelque chose. L'une de leurs principales revendications exigeait que le discours critique, apanage de l'université, se double d'un engagement sur le terrain, que les programmes d'enseignement intègrent l'étude de problèmes sociaux concrets, et de tous ordres, et que les établissements universitaires deviennent le lieu d'un brassage de classes et d'idées qui déborderait sans cesse dans la cité en y changeant la vie. Cette fièvre, quand elle s'est apaisée,

avait néanmoins accrédité un devoir de réponse universitaire immédiate aux demandes sociales. Le fait que l'état ou l'industrie réussisse mieux que les groupes moins puissants à obtenir cette réponse n'a rien d'étonnant mais procède aussi de la grande mutation survenue à la fin des années soixante, au nom de la destruction de la «tour d'ivoire».

Longtemps boudée par les élites économiques qui la percevaient comme une charge sociale, l'université leur offre aujourd'hui un service essentiel et a regagné du prestige à leurs yeux. Les grandes et moyennes entreprises partagent de plus en plus avec l'état les coûts de la formation et de la recherche et accordent à l'université une reconnaissance et un statut qui rendent d'autant plus difficile le maintien d'une autonomie et d'une distance critique.

Quelques réactions

La tradition universitaire ne saurait disparaître aussi facilement. Les universités tentent de la maintenir de diverses façons :

- * en recrutant encore et toujours des professeurs dont les interventions individuelles, protégées par la liberté **académique, éclairent** la cité et y lancent des débats, tout en contribuant ainsi à préserver un trait spécifique de l'institution universitaire ;
- * en se dotant, du moins comme on le voit chez nous, de bureaux spécialisés dans l'intervention sociale, qui mettent le savoir universitaire au service de groupes défavorisés ou exclus ;
- * en soutenant certains programmes de recherche non subventionnés par les pouvoirs publics et/ou les intérêts privés, orientés en priorité à la poursuite des changements sociaux.

Les dangers

Ces quelques lieux encore vifs où peut survivre la liberté académique et où l'institution peut intervenir plus librement dans son environnement ne font pas oublier les tendances lourdes.

- L'organisation de l'université, prise dans la trame des intérêts qui tentent de la coopter, tend à transcender ceux qui la dirigent. Les directions d'établissement sont coincées entre les règles d'un financement public de plus en plus centré sur la performance, et les commandites qui régissent non seulement la recherche mais aussi l'enseignement de tous ordres et de toutes disciplines sauf peut-être celui des lettres et de la philosophie, qui deviennent lentement mais sûrement les danseuses du système de formation.

- Les recteurs, dont la personne devrait symboliser la liberté académique ont moins de marge de manœuvre que les dirigeants d'entreprise qui ont d'ailleurs tendance à occuper à leur place l'espace public, à y prendre la parole, à y défendre leurs valeurs tandis que l'université, comme institution, n'est même plus invitée à participer à certains forums majeurs.

- La pente est si glissante que le recrutement d'esprits libres pour le corps professoral pourrait à terme être menacé, les facultés craignant de compromettre leur financement et leur course aux subventions publiques et surtout privées au soutien de la recherche.

- Mais le danger le plus sérieux est évidemment la disparition graduelle de la spécificité de l'institution universitaire. À partir du moment où elle s'insère aussi pleinement dans la chaîne de montage de l'économie, nationale ou mondiale, elle ne peut plus prétendre à une véritable différence de civilisation, à une place à part dans son environnement, où les règles ne seraient pas tout à fait les mêmes et où la liberté de penser le monde autrement serait entièrement protégée. Or c'est là, me semble-t-il, sa

responsabilité sociale première, celle d'assurer la formation de la main-d'œuvre qualifiée n'étant que subsidiaire (l'entreprise pourrait d'ailleurs se **substituer** à l'université pour donner ces formations et commence d'ailleurs à le faire, notamment aux États-Unis).

Quelques pistes

Certains fatalistes acceptent désormais que l'engagement civique de l'université soit limité à l'engagement civique individuel de quelques universitaires, professeurs et chercheurs qui interviennent dans le débat politique et social, mettent bénévolement leurs connaissances au service de quelque action communautaire méritoire, ou qui dirigent leurs recherches vers des objets socialement utiles. D'autres refusent de se laisser absorber, de détruire la singularité originelle du collectif qu'est l'université.

Les universités américaines, souvent les mieux nanties, s'offrent de plus en plus des sortes de secteurs-témoins de ce que fut la pleine liberté académique en créant des programmes dits « d'arts et sciences » qui ne sont rattachés à aucun cheminement professionnel, où de petits groupes d'étudiants ont accès aux meilleurs enseignements sur les fondements des grandes disciplines. Mais ils ont tendance, comme autrefois, à n'être accessibles qu'aux élites, que la fortune rend moins dépendantes de l'obsession de la formation professionnelle.

D'autres, encore animés par l'idéal de démocratisation qui fut à l'origine de l'université de masse, croient toujours possible d'y insuffler l'esprit qui fit l'originalité de l'université dans la cité, lieu de pensée et de parole libres. Les jeunes cherchent d'ailleurs toujours, plus ou moins consciemment, dans des lieux culturels ou contre-culturels, un espace qui échappe aux diktats du marché et c'est cet espace que les universités peuvent tenter de faire leur, en redevenant des lieux d'effervescence intellectuelle, sinon dans les classes mêmes ou les programmes de recherche, du moins dans leurs modes de vie.

Le défi renaît de créer ou recréer un espace différent dans la ville (alors même que disparaissent les quartiers latins), un espace ouvert à sa rumeur mais attaché tout autant à la décoder, où les débats, d'atriums en cafés, invitent tous et chacun, étudiants jeunes et adultes, à désacraliser les dogmes passagers, à rétablir une distance culturelle entre l'université et le marché du travail, de façon à ce qu'ils n'y pénètrent pas en automates. Il ne suffira pas, pour y arriver de réintroduire quelque dose de culture générale dans les programmes, tâche quasiment impossible et factice désormais. Il faudrait repenser au quotidien les façons de vivre à l'université et trouver les moyens contemporains d'en faire le forum de ses origines. Si elle redevient effervescente, peut-être lui demandera-t-on, à nouveau, dans le forum qu'est devenu la cité, de retrouver place et parole différentes.

Le premier devoir de l'université, sa responsabilité civique entre toutes, est d'inspirer la cité. Et pour y arriver, il lui revient de préserver ou de retrouver elle-même une inspiration que tout tend, désormais, à éloigner.

Address by: Prof. Dr Wichit Srisa-An
Rector
Suranee University of Technology
Thailand

Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel greatly honored and privileged to have been asked to speak before such a distinguished audience gathered here today. The topic assigned to me is "Academic Freedom and Social Responsibilities".

First, I would like to begin with the brief history of academic freedom.

Before the 17th century, intellectual activities at universities were restricted. Opinions or conclusions that conflicted with religious doctrines were likely to be condemned. In the late 17th century English philosophers John Locke and Thomas Hobbes helped pave the way for academic freedom in the modern sense, demonstrating the need for a general approach to learning unimpeded by preconceptions. The German universities of Halle and Göttingen, founded in 1694 and 1737, respectively, were the first European universities to offer broad academic freedom from their inception. In the 18th and 19th centuries, universities in Western Europe, Great Britain, and the United States enjoyed increasing academic freedom as acceptance of the experimental methods of the sciences became more widespread and as religious control of institutions declined.

More recently, at the 27th Session of UNESCO's General Conference in a resolution was adopted inviting non-governmental organizations to contribute to the development of a possible international instrument on Academic Freedom and University Autonomy and in particular to ascertain how far such an instrument was desirable and feasible. At the Tenth General Assembly of the IAU held at New Delhi in February 1995, UNESCO requested the Association to take soundings amongst IAU membership with a view to assessing the feasibility, desirability and possible content of an International Charter on Academic Freedom and University Autonomy. In the document presented to a special Round Table session during the General Assembly, UNESCO justified its initiative on the grounds that the academic community was increasingly concerned to 'develop principles, norms and practices designed to regulate higher education at the institutional, national and international levels.'

The IAU Mid-Term Conference, held in Bangkok (Thailand), on November 15, 1997, contributed to the preparation and run-up to the World Conference on Higher Education. In view of the nature of the vital issues involved in the theme "Autonomy, Social Responsibility and Academic Freedom", the International Association of Universities has already taken a number of initiatives to 'prime' the debate and to draw the attention of its member universities to the importance of the topic and of the occasion. It also followed upon the series of Regional Consultative Meetings, organized by UNESCO in preparation for the World Conference on Higher Education. The Mid-Term Conference provided the first occasion for the university constituency worldwide to explore and to discuss a complementary but closely related topic - namely, "Universities' Responsibilities to Society". Within this overall debate, one plenary session was given over to the issue of University Autonomy and Academic Freedom. The Mid-Term Conference provided the occasion, in addition to a further meeting of the members of the Taskforce on Academic Freedom and University Autonomy, to bring together a number of experts from major regional and professional organizations representing the university and academic staff specifically to discuss the issue of the feasibility and desirability of a possible International Instrument as well as elements which might be included in it.

Academic Freedom: The Soul of the University

Now I would like to emphasize that academic freedom is considered "the soul of the university". It is essential to the university and applies to both teaching and research. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Academic freedom in its teaching aspect is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning. It carries with it duties correlative with rights. Tenure is a means to certain ends, specifically:

- 1) freedom of teaching and research and of extramural activities, and
- 2) a sufficient degree of economic security to make the profession attractive to men and women of ability. Freedom and economic security, hence, tenure, are indispensable to the success of an institution in fulfilling its obligations to its students and to society.

Definitions of Academic Freedom

Let me then talk a little bit about the definitions of the term "Academic Freedom"

Since the foundation of the university, academic freedom has been and remains, the central value and condition which both justifies and makes possible, innovation and organized creativity. Academic freedom is the central, pervasive, and guiding principle of academic work. The principle of academic freedom can be defined as the freedom for the members of the academic community - that is, teaching personnel, students and scholars - to follow their own scholarly enquiries and are thereby not dependent on political, philosophical or epistemological opinions or beliefs though their own opinions may lead them in this direction.

Therefore, academic freedom can be regarded as an application of the right to the free holding of opinions and the freedom to express those opinions but specifically applied to the individual position of researcher, professor, lecturer or student. These rights to the free holding of opinions and the free expression of opinion are expressly included in all human rights treaties. Nor are these freedoms missing from democratic constitutions. Hence it may, at first sight, appear superfluous expressly to incorporate the right to academic freedom in a treaty, constitution or even in an ordinary law.

Many countries entrench 'academic freedom' in their constitutions, for example, Austria, Belarussia, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and quite recently Thailand (1997), amongst others.

Thus, academic freedom guarantees the liberty of those engaged in higher learning to teach, research, and to express opinions in the areas for which they are qualified and the advancement of which they are professionally committed and to do so without fear that such considered views will make them answerable for *délit d'opinion*. An alternative interpretation, more in keeping with the Germanic legal tradition, regards academic freedom as the exemption in the area of academic endeavor and scholarship from government instructions and intervention.

So, whatever the particular legal setting in which it is located, academic freedom remains the fundamental philosophical premise on which the transmission of established knowledge and the generation of new knowledge are grounded. It is, in short, held to be the optimal condition for the advancement of knowledge, for underpinning the pursuit of excellence and the application of human creativity to matters of concern to the various communities, scholarly and economic, industrial and social, which have a stake in higher learning.

Academic Freedom and Electronic Communications

Next, I would like to touch upon the impact of electronic communications on academic freedom.

The advent of electronic and digital communication has fundamentally and profoundly changed the ways that university faculty members conduct research, store data, and share information and insights. Such changes make timely the consideration of whether--and how--new media and information systems may alter traditional approaches to safeguarding academic freedom within the university community. While basic principles of academic freedom clearly transcend changes in media, new issues will inevitably arise in cyberspace, to which time-tested policies and precepts may need to be adapted in imaginative ways.

There is one overriding principle that should govern such inquiry: Freedom of expression and academic freedom should be limited to no greater degree in electronic format than in printed or oral communication, unless and to the degree that unique conditions of the new media warrant different treatment. While expression in cyberspace is obviously different in important ways from print or oral expression--for example, in the far greater speed of communication, and in the capacity to convey messages to far wider audiences--such factors do not appear to justify alteration or dilution of basic principles of academic freedom, and free inquiry within the academic community.

Several specific issues, however, concerning academic freedom and electronic communications deserve to be addressed, such as freedom of research and publication, freedom of teaching, access to the system, and the likes.

Academic Freedom and Social Responsibilities of the University

We have now come to the heart of the matter, that is, academic freedom and social responsibilities. Let me just briefly talk about the relations of academic freedom and social responsibilities of the university.

At the International Conference convened by UNESCO in 1950 in Nice, the Universities of the World stipulated three indissociable principles for which every university should stand, namely: the right to pursue knowledge for its own sake and to follow wherever the search for truth may lead; the tolerance of divergent opinion and freedom from political interference; the obligation as social institutions to promote through teaching and research, the principles of freedom and justice of human dignity and solidarity, and to develop mutually material and moral aid on an international level.

Also, Article 42 of the 1997 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand on the academic freedom of an individual stipulates that: "education, training, teaching and learning, research, and the publication of the research findings, are protected under the law, as long as they are not detrimental to good citizenship".(Ratthathammanoon haeng Ratcha Aanaachak Thai B.E. 2540). Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Articles 13 and 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, stipulate that: "higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit", underlining the importance of the full development of the human personality, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the maintenance of peace, and that States "undertake to respect the freedom indispensable for scientific research and creative activity".

On an international level, the International Association of Universities (IAU) has laid down some important principles of a new Social Contract which sets out mutual responsibilities, rights and obligations between university and society so that they may meet the challenges of the new millennium, such as the principle of institutional autonomy, the principle of academic freedom, rights confer obligations, academic freedom engages the obligation, university autonomy and accountability.

Address by: Mr Olli-Pekka Heinonen
Minister of Education and Science of Finland

Mr Chair,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to join the previous speakers of the panel and the speakers from the floor in emphasizing the importance of the issues under discussion in this debate.

I will not go into the analysis of the operating environment affecting autonomy, social responsibility and academic freedom of universities, because it is done in the excellent background document and by the previous speakers. In my capacity as a political decision-maker, I would like to bring into the debate a few supplementary points.

First of all, I feel I need to set the scene, so to speak, for my intervention: I come from an affluent society in which education at large, and university education in particular are highly appreciated both by the political leaders and the people. This appreciation is not only rhetorical, but it has taken concrete forms in the sense that we have invested heavily in university education and research during the recent years, and will continue to do so.

It is also important to note that we have moved from a rather centrally steered university system into a management by objectives and results - based steering system during the last ten years. It is my firm belief that the steering system happening at an arm's length, as it were, has increased the institutional autonomy of our universities. Our universities have always had an extensive autonomy in the matters relating to education and research, and the present steering system together with our new Universities Act further enhance their autonomy by delegating decision-making power as to organizing their own internal administrative and academic structures independently.

This I feel is very significant: now the universities can decide for themselves which faculties they should have or would they be better off without any traditional faculty structures. The relaxed steering system does not mean that the government has given away all policy instruments. I think it absolutely necessary that we can, together with the university and scientific community, set nationally and regionally relevant policy objectives and even target numbers for graduate output for each university. Setting objectives is not the whole story, however. In order to have a credible steering system we need to be able to monitor and evaluate the performance of the universities, and act on the results.

Justification for accountability is unquestionable in my mind. One cannot think of any other public service where this is even being discussed. Surely no one can believe in a system where taxpayers and other stakeholders would happily finance a service without asking what has been done with their money. Of course there is an on-going and evident need to discuss the length of the arm of the steering system; that is, how far does the requirement for accountability reach itself. We policy-makers must keep a keen eye on ourselves, because a temptation to go just a little too deep into university's internal activities is always lurking behind the corner.

This takes me to my next point, which are the possibilities of the modern university to maintain its autonomy in the market-driven world. In my mind, we as policy-makers must support universities in this. That we can do by guaranteeing the necessary resources the university needs to be able to commit itself to its own strategy and fields of expertise without a constant obligation to look for - or accept - any kind of external funding for any kinds of purposes. A reasonable level of public funding helps to keep the chosen institutional profile clear.

The problem with external funding is that it is normally earmarked research funding which often eats up publicly financed infrastructure without contributing any to education or pure basic research done at the universities. Perhaps the universities could think the whole management of external funding over. By this, I mean that universities could combine all the resources, whether public or private, to cover all university activities. This could perhaps lead to a more holistic strategy for the individual university.

Mr. Chair, if you allow me a moment I would like to finish by stressing the role a well-defined strategy could have in safeguarding autonomy and academic freedom of the universities without compromising their social responsibility. In my mind, such a strategy should include at least the following points:

- * making better use of the university's knowledge production and expertise beyond the world of academia;
- * increasing effectiveness and efficiency of all university activities;
- * enhancing innovativeness and institution-specific profiles;
- * reconciling internal and external interests and processes and lastly, ensuring effective financial management and profitability of all actions.

Basically, in order to have a successful strategy the university must be prepared to adapt itself to the changes in its environment. The question they need to address is whether they are capable of concentrating on what is good and still fruit bearing in their activities and accordingly cut off the barren branches. Such honest analysis would increase social relevance of the university and add to the students' employability after graduation.

A strong and well-conceived strategy helps the university maintain its autonomy even in the open, ever-changing world.

Mr. Chair,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The ancient university was an ivory tower where the sage had a possibility to engage himself in studies relevant perhaps only to him. People respected the sage because he was seen to have a knowledge of the unknown. Today, the modern university can only flourish if it lives in genuine interaction with the society at large. Today, people's respect does not come as easily as before universities must earn it by yielding to the service of their supporters.