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CHOOSING
THE TRUTH
INSTEAD OF SIDES





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FOR A FREE PRESS



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A free press is indispensable for transparency, responsibility and for just and legitimate authority



On this first World Press Freedom Day of the new century (...) we urge all actors in conflict situations around the world - governments, local authorities and armed forces - to protect the right of all citizens to reliable information and the right of journalists to provide it without fearing for their security, their freedom or their life (...)

freedom of the press is essential to transparency, accountability, good governance and the rule of law. It cannot be suppressed without dire consequences for social cohesion and stability. When it is sacrificed, whatever the reasons invoked, the chances are that conflict is not far down the road. All States should ratify the relevant international human rights instruments and should scrutinise their domestic legal systems with a view to bringing them into line with international standards governing the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

In times of conflict, the media's responsibilities for independent and pluralistic reporting are more important than ever. They can help to prevent the worst atrocities. But when belligerents see freedom of expression as an enemy to their cause and the media as a tool for propaganda, journalists who attempt to report in a non-partisan way face pressure, manipulation, intimidation, or even elimination. And when they are forced to leave, the cycle of violence does not end. In the aftermath of war, the esta-

blishment of a free and independent press offers a way out of mistrust and fear, into an environment where true dialogue is possible because people can think for themselves and base their opinions on facts.

Particular attention should be given to ensuring that women's voices are heard. Women are often the first ones affected by armed conflict. It is, therefore, right

and indeed necessary that women have full access to information and that they be there to cover the issues, with equal strength and in equal numbers.

Wherever their independence or security is threatened - whether in repressive societies, in times of conflict or in post-conflict situations - local journalists must be supported and protected in their efforts

to maintain a flow of fair and independent information. The international media, too, have an important role to play, in providing non-partisan coverage of conflicts and in calling the world's attention to humanitarian crises, human rights abuses and other situations where oblivion would be the worst of fates for suffering human beings.

The international community must keep on seeking to remedy severe violations of press freedom. On behalf of our organisations, and in the interest of knowledge, justice, and peace, we promise to explore every approach that offers hope of enabling the media to carry out their invaluable and often dangerous work.

In the aftermath of war, the establishment of a free and independent press offers a way out of mistrust and fear



A Joint Message on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, 3 May 2000, signed by:

- Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO
- Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations
- Mary Robinson, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights



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Belgrade (Yugoslavia): new titles struggle to encourage the democratic process

COMMUNICATION Building a free and independent media post-conflict is an enormous challenge, not least because of the critical distance that journalists must maintain. But however difficult, it must be done if the voice of reason is to rise above the sound and fury of prejudice and hatred

CHOOSING THE TRUTH, NOT SIDES

Observers of the harsh ethnic conflicts of the 1990s (...) often remarked on a new and dangerous tendency: the increased use of the media - and especially the electronic media - to encourage and sustain genocidal tendencies (...). But this broadcasting-based genesis also had a significant impact on the texture and challenges of the post-conflict environment," writes Monroe E. Price, an expert in media law from Oxford University (UK) in a new study published by UNESCO for this year's World Press Freedom Day (3 May).

This is why UNESCO's programme Freedom of Expression, Democracy and Peace (FED) now places emphasis on post-conflict assistance. "We are helping the United Nations reconstruction effort," stresses programme specialist Carlos Arnaldo. In the aftermath of conflict, reconstructing the media is now one of the UN's top priorities, along with rebuilding infrastructure. It was in Cambodia, after the 1991 peace agreement that this priority was put into place, and a radio station was created under

the aegis of the UN. "To counter war and hate propaganda in most post-conflict situations, the international government organisations (...) had to create alternative media outlets that were, initially, under IGO control," explains Monroe E. Price. "The logic is simple: to achieve content that is neutral and peace-oriented, a structure that is neutral and peace-oriented is required."

Today, the approach lauded by a number of NGOs, as well as UNESCO, consists of reinforcing local media, rather than creating a media linked to internationally supervised bodies. "An independent press is one of the main factors of democracy," says Alain Modoux, the Assistant Director General of UNESCO's Communication, Information and Informatics sector. A. Lin Neumann, of the Southeast Press Alliance in Bangkok agrees: "Without a free press, it would be impossible to hold a real election." The existence of a free press allows the public to act as umpires, in political, religious, economic and social debates.

While it is important to reinforce the diversity of the media, vigilance is required.

Sarajevo (Bosnia): the destroyed offices of the Oslobođenje newspaper



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"In Bosnia, existing Muslim, Croat and Serb television stations undermined the peace process by broadcasting nationalistic and incendiary reports," says Stacy Sullivan, who was *Newsweek's* reporter in Bosnia and Kosovo. A striking example of the perverse effect of press freedom comes from Rwanda. Independent media emerged in 1990, after 30 years of state control. One of the "newborns", Radio-Television Libre des Mille Collines later incited the Hutus to massacre the Tutsis.

An important initial step in reconstructing media is to establish a legislative framework. "Not every country has media laws," says FED programme specialist Sylvie Coudray, "and sometimes the laws that do exist stifle press freedom." A. Lin Neumann notes that the press can sometimes be "too free. There are no codes of ethics, no professional standards." However, Sylvie Coudray hastens to add that: "UNESCO's position is not about banning anything, because who defines what should be forbidden? And you can get around bans. Our principle is freedom of expression, to counterbalance the forces of propaganda. And we try to create a culture of public service in the media." UNESCO has already helped the Indonesian government (see SOURCES 118, December 1999) and those from ex-Yugoslavia (Bosnia and Kosovo) set up legislative frameworks.

Training and assistance

Journalist training is also a key issue. It varies hugely from country to country, depending on local conflicts and training traditions. By 1991 Cambodia, had lost most of its journalists; the majority were murdered by Pol Pot. UNESCO helped to set up a journalists training centre, which is still operating. UNESCO has trained 110 journalists from both the private and public sectors in Rwanda, and another 30 radio journalists from Angola. The organisation also provides material assistance in war-torn countries: computers, help in rehabilitating and building printworks, equipment and cars. Countries that have benefited from this kind of support include Serbia, Kosovo, Rwanda and East Timor (see pages 6-7).

But international support alone is not enough to re-establish media freedom. In Cambodia, A. Lin Neumann observes that "despite millions of dollars spent by the international community to train journalists and encourage free expression, professionalism is still rare in the Khmer language press. Radio and television remain essentially under the control of the state." Despite all the efforts made, the "impact is really very little because of the political situation." And then "while western notions of fairness and objectivity may be expressed at seminars, the participants are in no position to impose such values on their editors and publishers once the training is finished." Co-author of the book "Hope

The media - war's first victim ?

"My cousin woke me up at 1.45am on Wednesday January 6, 1999. She told me that the rebels had arrived in Freetown from the east. I jumped out of bed with my wife, who was three months pregnant. She pulled our two-year-old son from his bed, and strapped him to her back."

Journalist Aroun Rashid Deen recalls the first shots fired into the night; the dash into hiding from the Revolutionary United Front who cast their net over Sierra Leone. Now a refugee living in the United States, the television journalist still remembers how the young, often drugged rebels massacred the population with their AK47s. The three-

do not have a monopoly on striking a blow against media freedom (87 journalists were in prison at the end of 1999), they are certainly its most visible enemy.

The role of journalists in wartime has also become more dangerous, because they are often transformed into actors in the conflict, and thus are potential targets. Vietnam showed that public opinion could win (or lose) a war; a message that was well understood by the Allied Forces during the Gulf war. And journalists are often encouraged to take a certain side when reporting an issue or conflict. If they choose not to do so, they risk serious reprisals. The Russian journalist

but often difficult due to "habits" formed during war. The winning side in a conflict does not always see democracy and its consequences of freedom as a necessity.

For example in Kosovo, Baton Haxhiu, editor in chief of the daily newspaper *Koha Ditore*, became the target of Kosovan threats – after also having been threatened by Serb authorities – for denouncing the exactions committed against the Serbs and gypsies living in the province. The official press agency of Kosovo, *Kosova-press* accused Haxhiu and newspaper manager Veton Suroi of being "degenerates" who "smelled of fetid Slav", "bastards" who had "no place in a free Kosovo," and could eventually be the "target of justifiable reprisals."

Journalists can thus also play a part in burying the press freedom that they should be encouraging. Happily, other, independent publications exist and are constantly coming into being that contribute to the reconstruction of a democratic space, where freedom of expression takes the place of honour. Everything possible must be done to support and encourage them.

Gil Gonzalez-Foerster
Journalist specialised in press freedom



Grozny, Chechnya, February 2000

week reign of terror during January 1999, claimed ten of Deen's colleagues among its victims.

The ten journalists were among 34 killed worldwide in 1999, according to the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). The committee notes that "armed groups often consider journalists as witnesses to be eliminated." In Algeria alone, 52 journalists were killed between 1993 and 1995. Although wars

Andrei Babitsky's only mistake was wanting to cover the Chechen conflict from the Chechen side. He was arrested and beaten by Russian authorities in January this year, and was only freed after a month's detention and a barrage of international protest. In the aftermath of war, when arms are laid down and replaced by economic, social and political reconstruction, the role of the media becomes even more essential. Essential,



for Rwanda”, Herve Deguine found that thorough journalistic enquiries were not carried out because of a lack of money. Objectivity was sacrificed for the cheaper alternative of opinion. Deguine also points out that the price of a daily newspaper costs a day’s pay for a farm labourer. A. Lin Neumann remains surprised that after a conflict, “the international community comes forward with the idea of transforming the media from one day to the next.”

Freedom of expression is a condition for establishing democracy, but it is not enough. It is clear that re-establishing peace and laying the foundations for professional and non-partisan journalism are tasks that take time. At least as much time as it took to silence the voices of liberty and the desire for truth in the first place.

Nadia Khouri-Dagher

No surrender in East Timor

The rapid establishment of a national press in East Timor is crucial to building a new and free country in the wake of the tragedy that traumatised its people and saw the destruction of its social, political and economic infrastructure after the referendum of last August 30. The premises of the *Suara Timor Timur* newspaper, the only one in existence during the period of Indonesian rule, was gutted, as was the radio station Radio Republik Indonesia (RII). Today, almost 80% of East Timorese are without any access to information. Most rely on rumours which often don’t make sense.

During the post-referendum violence, the pro-integration militia and the Indonesian army moved some 250,000 people including journalists, professionals and activists to refugee camps on the Indonesian side of the border. The initiative to build an East Timorese press began when a group of journalists returned from the camps. At the same time, some East Timorese ngos also came back to Dili to renew their activities. The groups met frequently for discussions on how to overcome the actual national problems.

Although the ideas brought up during these meetings were good, no one had the facilities to make the ideas come true. The journalists participating did not have pen

and paper let alone computers or printing machines. However, 24 years of resistance experience had fostered a “no surrender” spirit among East Timorese young people. In January 2000, *Lalenok*, a weekly newspaper was born. It was put together by a group of student activists which had already published, during the referendum campaign, a journal *Kokan Dwi Harian Vox Populi* owned by the National Council of Timorese Resistance.

Frustrations

Another news magazine, *Talit@kum*, has also published several issues. *Talit@kum* first appeared as an underground publication in Jakarta in 1998. There is also *The Timor Post*, an initiative of a former *Suara Timor-Timur* journalist, and *Lian Maubere*, published by Forum Demokrasi Maubere (Fordem).

From the beginning, the journalists showed a lot of determination (There are as yet no functioning printing presses in Dili. Publications are usually photocopied. Distribution remains limited. Ed) They may not have achieved the hoped-for results, but the establishment of a journalist association, without intervention from any political institutions, can be considered a major victory. The association is called “Timorese Lorosee Journalist Association” (TLJA). It will hold its inaugural congress in July. The frustrating part is that East Timor cannot talk about a “free press” while there is still “no press”. Despite UNESCO’s technical assessment mission and continued assistance in photocopying from the United Nations Transitional Administration, media development is only a study; we are still waiting for funds and facilities.

Vergilio Da Silva Gutterez,
chief editor of “*Lalenok*” weekly news,
and interim spoke-person of the Timor
Lorosee Journalist Association (TLJA).

The burnt out presses of the *Suara Timor Timur* newspaper, Dili



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From ground zero

A sense of triumph among East Timor journalists is well justified when measured against the historical backdrop of some 400 years of colonialism under the Portuguese and the last 26 years under annexation to Indonesia. It is truly the first time that people can think and speak freely, and journalists can report the truth without fear of reprisal. The transition period is also a time of learning a new journalism, a journalism born of one's deepest national aspirations, but one which must simultaneously deal with the realities of a country starting at ground zero. It is a journalism that must work with the Bahasa, Portuguese, Dawan and Fatoloka languages, not to mention some 30 versions of Tetun.

This landscape lends itself to the development of community radio in particular. Portugal, Japan and USAID have all pledged radio receivers - rare commodities in East Timor. Donors are also studying a UNESCO proposal to get radio "owned, managed and produced for the people and by the people" off the

ground in a number of districts away from the capital Dili.

UNESCO and the British-based ngo Article 19 (a reference to Article 19 in the Universal Declaration of Human



A microphone, tape recorder 20 watt FM transmitter and antenna were all it took to get people on the air in the village of Lospalos (East Timor)

Rights on the freedom of opinion and expression) have supported the development of the East Timor Broadcasting Law, which is expected to be finalized over coming weeks. It will incorporate a framework to ensure public service broadcasting has a primary place alongside community, educational and commercial networks. UNESCO and the Asia-

Pacific Broadcasting Union are to advise on the most practical and economic ways of achieving national coverage for radio and eventually for television in order that the East

Timorese can easily run operations when the transition period is over.

An immediate urgency, however, is the daily production of newspapers. East Timor needs a free and pluralistic press to reflect and strengthen its social fabric as the country gets on its feet. A consortium press facility based around three Heidelberg presses from the former Indonesian state printery is UNESCO's first recommendation to develop the print media.

Such presses, once they are repaired, could also print school text books and other educational material.

*Carlos Arnaldo
Chief, Communication Policies and
Research
UNESCO*

Rwandan women build peace and justice on radio

Media were used as major instruments in the preparation and execution of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Radio Mille Collines, a private station linked to the Hutu régime of the time, made explicit calls for massacres. After the genocide, the Rwandan Association of Women Media Workers (known as ARFEM) set out to contribute to national reconstruction by broadcasting messages of peace and reconciliation.

In December 1997, we launched a programme for women on Radio Rwanda, the sole radio channel in the country. These programmes are today broadcast twice a week: on Tuesdays from 7h30 to 7h45 and on Sundays from 18h30 to 18h45. We are proud to have conducted awareness campaigns on major subjects.

Prior to the launch of our programme, there was no special place for women's issues in the media and social problems were treated in a general way. We chose topics by following the recommendations of the 1995 United Nations Women's Conference in Beijing: health, the education of girls,

women's rights and decision-making. Reports and interviews constitute the guiding principle for the programmes.

The Profemmes Twese Hamwe collective grouping 32 women's ngos, to which ARFEM belongs, won the 1996 UNESCO/Mandanjeet Singh prize for tolerance and non-violence.

In 1998, massacres were taking place in the North of the county against impoverished refugees returning from the Congo. We campaigned in favour of these returnees being accepted back home and collected donations to help them. We also campaigned in favour of national reconciliation and demonstrated the important role played by women in reconstruction.

To take another example: we have made programmes about inheritance issues, interviewing jurists and Justice Ministry officials in order to highlight discrimination against women in our laws. Rwandan women had no right to inherit goods or property left by the victims of the genocide. Considerable public attention was drawn to the issue and

We demonstrated the important role played by women in reconstruction

**THE PROGRAMME
"WOMEN" COSTS
\$5,000 A MONTH,**

financed by the HCR, UNESCO, the Swiss and Canadian cooperation missions and other donors. This pays for the hire of Radio Rwanda air time, my salary and the salaries of the secretary-accountant and the driver for reporting assignments, telephone and mail bills, equipment, fuel, tapes etc. Our journalists are paid \$35 dollars a shift.

V.G.

a new inheritance law was voted in last December.

Last summer, we also conducted a campaign on war rapes. We took women members of parliament to visit centres for rape victims of the war, some of whom were still bleeding. On their return, these parliamentarians worked to increase awareness amongst their male colleagues and the law on war rapes was reinforced: war rape is now in category 1 of war crimes (those most severely punished) instead of category 4.

We also carried out a campaign over the rape of young girls and women, which today constitutes a major scourge. Some say it is because of the war: men raped during the war and continue to do so today. Others believe this existed before the war, but that people didn't talk about it. We interviewed victims, some of whom gave the names of their aggressors on the air. Once a schools inspector was accused, on another occasion it was a 58-year-old man who had raped two five-year-old girls and been sentenced to ten years in prison. But he had infected them with AIDS, and we demanded more severe punishment. We are also campaigning so that the medical examinations necessary to prove rape should be free of charge.

When these programmes started, we were faced with considerable opposition. People at the radio said: "ARFEM has taken over the radio. These women are making too much noise." They considered we were merely agitators. But now people are beginning to understand better. When it comes to rape, everyone knows a little girl or a young sister who has been a victim. Now everybody knows the signature tune of our programme. A year ago, TVR, Rwanda's only television channel, started a weekly programme for women. The weekly magazine *Imvaho* also publishes a women's page and



ARFEM has helped put the plight of Rwanda's women on the political agenda

© SIPA PRESS/MORVAN

the army's paper, *Ingabo*, has just started doing the same. The National Reconciliation Commission also has a radio programme in which elderly people talk about how Rwandans lived harmoniously together until politicians poisoned their minds with the ethnic identity germ. Paradoxically, freedom of expression has increased since the war: nowadays we can talk about any subject. There are no taboos any more. Before the media only gave one side of the story.

*Valérie Gatabazi
President of ARFEM (Rwandan
Association of Women Media Workers)
and producer of Radio Rwanda's
programme: "Women"*

Nizar Nayyounf : torturing freedom



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It all started with a well-known trick: they first arrested his wife Nada and his two-year-old daughter Sara. Eighteen days later, on January 10th 1992, Nizar Nayyounf gave himself up.

The 45-year-old Syrian economist and journalist is still in prison, serving a ten year sentence. His legs are partially paralyzed from being tortured, and there are burn-marks on his face. He lives in isolation in a cell in the Mezze military prison in Damascus, and is reported to be suffering from cancer for which he has received no treatment.

On May 3rd, Nizar Nayyounf was awarded the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano press freedom prize founded in 1997 in memory of the Colombian journalist who was assassinated in 1986. This award was made in the context of an international campaign to free him and other Syrian political prisoners.

Nizar Nayyounf was arrested for writing a tract issued on December 10th 1991 by the "Committees for the defence of democratic liberties and human rights" (CDF) of which he is one of the founders. The tract denounced in particular "the confiscation of public

and democratic rights”, the “daily aggressions of the security services” and “those who have been forgotten behind the prison-bars of martial law.”

This four-page document recalled how, during the 1991 referendum, “a large number of our fellow-citizens were forced to take part in marches and ceremonies” and how “people, especially shopkeepers and school children, were obliged to contribute financially to the decorations”. At the time of his detention, Nizar Nayyof was editor-in-chief of the CDF publication *Sawt al Demokratiyya* (The Voice of Democracy).

As the World Association of Newspapers stated when awarding this year’s Golden Pen for Freedom prize to Nizar Nayyof: “What was his crime? To appeal for democracy.” Terry Anderson, the former journalist and hostage in Lebanon, now vice president of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), put it this way when calling for Nayyof’s release last September: “Nizar Nayyof has committed no recognisable offense under international law. He is in prison solely for practicing his right to free expression by speaking out about human rights in Syria.”

Widespread violations

“Violations of press freedom are widespread in the (Arab) region: imprisonments, excessive sentences for ‘libel’, censorship, suspensions, administrative harassment, illegitimate sackings, surveillance or expulsion of foreign journalists, banning of foreign publications, broadcasting under state control” are common asserts Reporters sans Frontières in its 1999 annual report in which it recalls that (at least) 25 journalists are still in prison in the Arab world.

“In 1989, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, things changed in Jordan, Egypt and Yemen with moves towards more openness; there was a wave of democratisation under way,” says Ghayath Nayssé, a surgeon who is one of the people in charge of the CDF in France. It was then that the CDF was set up in Syria.

However, “the CDF were never authorised and the newspaper *Sawt al Demokratiyya* remained underground,” says Haïtham Manna, spokesman for a Paris-based ngo, the Arab Commission on Human Rights. In December 1991 and January 1992, following the publication of the tract, there was a wave of arrests affecting some 200 people: “fathers, mothers, brothers and friends were arrested,” says Ghayath Nayssé.

Seventeen of these were sentenced under article 4 of a 1966 decree which forbids “opposition to any of the objectives

of the Revolution or obstructing the realisation of these objectives by holding demonstrations or meetings or carrying out actions which disturb public order, or inciting others to do so, the publication of false information aimed at creating disorders or shaking the confidence of the masses in the objectives of the Revolution.”

From abroad however, the CDF continued to mobilize human rights organizations. According to Ghayath Nayssé, “the number of political prisoners, estimated by the CDF at between 14,000 and 18,000 in 1989 fell to 1,700.” Out of the 17 CDF members arrested, 14 have been freed so far.

Haïtham Manna sees it like this: “these regimes are obliged to make concessions. The government has no alternative if it wants to avoid uncontrolled violence. If Syria continues like it has in the past, it will be outlawed by the international community.”

Signs of greater openness already exist. For example, in February 1999, Haïtham Manna took part in a two-way live debate on the Qatari TV channel Al Jazira with Ahmad Al Assad, vice-president of Syria’s ruling party. “Today, you can find criticisms expressed in newspapers which would have been impossible two years ago, for example concerning corruption, with people being named,” stresses Haïtham Manna. But terror or the memory of it are still alive in Syria. Nada Nayyof did not go to Geneva to collect the \$25,000 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano press freedom prize on behalf of her husband. She lives clandestinely with her daughter, far, far away from her Syrian home.

Nadia Khouri-Dagher

Nizar Nayyof has committed no recognisable offense under international law

Syria: portraits of President Assad are omnipresent



© GAMMA/C. VIOUJARD

► CULTURAL HERITAGE

War is one of the greatest threats to our cultural heritage. International legal instruments exist to protect it from marauding armies and those who loot and plunder in their wake, but to be effective, they must be supported

STOP THE DESTRUCTION

In the ruins of a Serb-Orthodox church in north-western Bosnia. The church was destroyed in 1995 during a Croatian army offensive

No one can deny that to abandon oneself to the pointless destruction of temples, statues and other sacred objects is the action of a madman," said the Greek historian Polybius back in the second century before the Christian Era. Few would argue the point today, a period of unprece-

dent interest in, and concern for, cultural heritage. UNESCO's World Heritage List now counts 630 sites around the world and is constantly being added to. The notion of heritage has also been expanded to include not only great monuments, but also important cultural and industrial landscapes. Why? Because in a globalising world, culture provides us more than ever with a sense of identity and continuity. As Professor Stanislaw Nahlík, an eminent specialist in the protection of cultural property, pointed out: "The human individual is mortal and generations follow one upon the other. It is nevertheless possible for every generation, however fleeting its existence, to leave here below an immortal trace of its genius, embodied in a work of art here, an historical monument there or cultural property in another case. We should never forget the relationship between what is fleeting and what, alone, can endow people and their works with perennial qualities. *Vita brevis Ars longa*," (life is short, art is long).

These feelings are universal. "We find striking examples (of protection of cultural property) in all cultures, all religions and all political systems," writes Jiri Toman the author of "The Protection of Cultural Property in Armed Conflict" (Dartmouth/UNESCO Publishing, 1996).

The destruction continues though, because the very attributes that make cultural heritage so important also make it a prime target during conflict, even for many years after the guns have been silenced. The pillaging and looting that result from the breakdown of security services, border controls and social order, can, in fact, prove far more damaging than the shellfire and rockets. The three following articles on the situation in Iraq (p. 11), Afghanistan (p. 13) and Cambodia (p. 14) provide terrible examples of this.

The 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two protocols, of which UNESCO is the "keeper", is the only existing universal legal instrument to protect cultural property in war. It sets out the admi-



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nistrative and technical measures required for such protection and establishes rules of conduct for warring parties. Its first protocol, in particular, covers the export of such property and obliges states-parties to return it. The second protocol was adopted in March 1999 after a major review found that the convention needed updating, and eight years of intense debate on how this should be achieved. It creates a new category of enhanced protection for cultural heritage of the greatest importance for humanity, which is protected by relevant national legislation and is not used for military purposes. Crucially, it also elaborates sanctions for serious violations against cultural property.

Support lacking

So far 98 states have joined the convention, of which 82 are also party to its first protocol. However, the second protocol has so far only been signed by 39 countries, and ratified by none. A minimum of 20 ratifications is needed before it can enter into force.

“Some states don’t consider the convention a priority because they believe their involvement in armed conflict unlikely, or are concerned that rapid accession to it may be perceived as preparation for armed conflict,” explains Jan Hladik, of UNESCO’s International Standards Section. “A number of developing countries lack the administrative and financial means to properly implement the convention; to create the civilian and military services for the protection of cultural property for example, or even to translate the convention into their own language (it was drafted only in English, French, Russian and Spanish). Some may need to change their constitution. Under the terms of the convention they can ask for UNESCO’s help in overcoming these hurdles.”

The 1954 convention can have a real impact. It makes the destruction of cultural property a war crime that courts take seriously. The Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia for example stipu-

ALERT!

During May 1997, as Laurent Kabila’s armed rebellion took Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo (then Zaire), the Institute of the National Museums of Zaire (INMZ) lost several of its finest pieces, including this Kuba Ndop royal statue.

The INMZ had some 50,000 objects on its premises at the time, forming one of the world’s most beautiful and important African collections. Fortunately, these objects had been precisely inventoried and documented, reports the International Council of Museums (ICOM), which has warned museums, galleries, collectors and amateurs of African art against the acquisition of all objects coming from central Africa.

The Democratic Republic of Congo has been a state-party to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict since 1961. However, it has not signed the convention’s second protocol.



© MUSEE DES ARTS DÉCORATIFS, PARIS, LAURENT-SULLY JAULMES

lates that the violations of the laws or customs of war shall include “seizure of, destruction or wilful damage done to institutions dedicated to religion, charity and education, the arts and sciences, historic monuments and works of art and science” (*Article 3(d) on Violations of the laws or customs of war*). The Tribunal’s indictments of Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and Serb army commander Ratko Mladic, specifically refer to the destruction of sacred sites belonging to Muslims and Catholics in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The mechanisms thus exist to protect humanity’s treasures. The elaboration of the convention’s second protocol has shown that such protection remains a publicly stated priority for the world’s decision makers. It is now up to them to demonstrate the will to make it work.

Sue Williams

Iraq: Robbers of the cradle

The “cradle of civilisation” has been plundered and robbed. The Gulf War in 1990 and the subsequent United Nations trade embargo against Iraq have been an “unmitigated disaster” for the country’s cultural heritage, according to eminent American archaeologist John Russell. Professor Russell, of the Massachusetts College of Art spoke of his concerns to UNESCO Sources.

What damage was done to Iraq’s cultural heritage during the Gulf War, and who was responsible for it?

The primary problem during the Gulf War was damage to archaeological sites and heritage buildings. In the absence of outside assessment, only a few examples are known to me. The archaeological site of Ur of the Chaldees, reputed birthplace of Abraham, was bombed and strafed by allied aircraft, with over 400 cannon holes reported in the temple tower and at least four bomb craters in the site. The unexcavated major ancient site of Tell el-Lahm was trenched and bulldozed by American forces.

Immediately after the cease fire, the Iraq



© JOHN RUSSELL

One of a number of Assyrian slabs that were stolen from a storage facility, smashed to manageable size, and are now being offered for sale

Antiquities Department requested UNESCO's assistance in assessing damage to heritage sites. The UN Security Council vetoed the request.

Has the destruction continued? If so, what form is it now taking?

In the uprisings immediately after the conflict, numerous regional museums were looted and their collections smuggled onto the antiquities market abroad. Emergency agricultural development necessitated by the UN economic sanctions has resulted in the destruction of a large but unknown number of sites. Then, rampant looting of archaeological sites by hungry Iraqis has damaged and destroyed a large but unknown number of sites around the country. Tens of thousands of looted antiquities have been illegally smuggled out of Iraq, and are up for sale on the international art market. Today Assyria is in fashion again and its sculptures are bringing unprecedented prices.

On top of this, active bombing of Iraq continues and Iraqi aircraft are prohibited from patrolling south of the 32nd and north of the 36th parallels. These areas have great concentrations of heritage sites. Without outside assessment though, it is impossible to gauge the extent of ongoing heritage destruction this is causing.

Iraq has always proudly defended its heritage and had an admirable record of protecting it. What's the situation now?

Heritage protection in Iraq has gone from being among the best in the world, to one of the very worst. The Iraq Antiquities Department is aggressively battling heritage

The Sanctions Committee and the international market

Over the past decade, UNESCO has taken a number of measures to try to control the damage and loss of Iraq's cultural heritage. Immediately after the end of hostilities in 1991, it requested permission to send a mission to examine damage to cultural heritage in Iraq. This was refused by the Security Council. In 1992, Iraqi authorities sent four volumes listing over 4,000 cultural objects missing from their provincial museums to UNESCO. Copies made by the organisation were distributed worldwide. In February 1995, UNESCO issued a press release alerting the international art market of the scope of the damage. In August that year, a Notice of Stolen Cultural Property with representative examples of the

missing objects was distributed by the organisation. In December 1995, at the request of experts in Mesopotamian archaeology, a letter was sent to the chairman of the Sanctions Committee asking for permission to import photographic materials and printing paper to Iraq to enable preparation of better documentation on the objects from the inventory of the museums. The chairman replied that the committee was unable to approve the request. This effectively blocks UNESCO from taking any further action on this particular matter. UNESCO attended an international conference on the ziggurats and temples of Babylon, held in Baghdad last September, which allowed contact to be renewed with Iraqi authorities and

institutions. It was decided that assistance from the organisation should be directed through UNESCO's office in Amman (Jordan). One activity at that office which will be extended to Iraq will be training in the Object-ID inventory system to assist international tracing of stolen cultural property. The situation in Iraq has also been raised at meetings of the World Heritage Committee, and the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation. This latter called on the Director-General "to do his utmost to help in the tracing and returning of the cultural and archaeological objects stolen and smuggled from Iraq."

S.W.

destruction, with the full cooperation of the government. Heritage, however, does not have higher priority than food and health care, and so the department is hampered by lack of equipment, supplies, and funds, and much of what it needs to import is forbidden by the trade sanctions. The Antiquities Department has requested photographic supplies to assist with documentation and dissemination of information on looting, but this has also been vetoed by the Security Council. (Reports coming out of Iraq now indicate that archaeologists are burying their carefully and painstakingly excavated ruins to prevent further damage or destruction. Ed.)

Could the Hague Convention and its second protocol help Iraq?

In an ideal world, I can see three articles

in the second protocol that could apply here. Article 9 protects cultural property in occupied territory, and prohibits its illicit export or illegal excavation. It could certainly be argued that the US is an “occupying power” in the northern and southern no-flight zones. As such it could be called upon to assist in preserving cultural property in these zones.

Article 32 allows a Party to request international assistance in implementing provi-

sions for the protection of cultural property.

And Article 33 allows a Party to call upon UNESCO for technical assistance in organising protection of its cultural property, including in emergency situations. However, it is the Security Council that has final say on this, and up until now they have vetoed such requests.

Interview by Sue Williams

Afghanistan: the wounds of war

Afghanistan's national museum in Kabul was considered one of the world's most opulent repositories of Asian art. It was home to a unique and priceless range of antiquities that included Alexandrian glassware, Roman bronzes, Buddhist reliefs in marble, ivories from India, Greek statuary, Islamic bronzes and miniatures, and one of the largest collections of ancient coins ever discovered.

In the spring of 1993 during a battle for control of the city by rival *mujaheddin* groups, a rocket blasted through the museum's roof, engulfing a portion of the treasures in flames. The surviving pieces were packed into cases and transferred to the lower floors of the building. But the process of dissolution had begun: anarchy reigned, and subsequent visits told of widespread thefts. The doors had been blown open, rooms ransacked, and padlocks shot away. By the following year more than three-quarters of the finest pieces had disappeared. Today it is impossible to know fully what proportion of the treasures have been sold, destroyed, or simply abandoned.

Two decades of war - first against the Soviets and then against each other - have left

Afghanistan's cultural heritage in tatters. At the UNESCO world heritage site of Herat, for example, the last remaining minaret of the college of Queen Gohar Shad, which boasted, in the words of British travel writer, Robert Byron, “the most delicate tilework ever devised by man,” was destroyed in fighting in 1983, while one of the 3rd century megalithic statues of Bamiyan has been blasted by dynamite and rocket-propelled grenades.

Yet the evidence suggests that, with only a few notable exceptions, the physical damage of warfare is secondary to that inflicted by human negligence and, in the case of rogue excavations encouraged by arts and antiquities dealers, greed. It is the systematic plundering of ancient sites which has caused worldwide concern for the safeguarding of its heritage.

A number of sites have been singled out for particularly cruel attention by treasure-hunters. At Bamiyan, once a thriving centre of Buddhist culture and home to the largest statues of the Buddha in the world, the damage has been severe. Priceless frescoes which decorated the statues and surrounding walls, having survived in place for over 1500 years, have been systematically stripped from the walls. At the site of the 3rd-century Buddha, no trace remains of the wall-paintings which displayed a unique mingling of artistic styles, and had no parallel elsewhere.

At Mir Zakah, in the province of Paktiya, unofficial excavations in 1997 yielded huge quantities of gold jewellery and statues, as well as an estimated two to three tons of gold and silver coins - the largest ever discovered, anywhere, according to a leading numismatist. The entire find was smuggled from the country, and is now believed to be in the hands of Japanese collectors.

The Buddhist monastic complex of Hadda has been entirely denuded of its statues and sculptures by both war damage and theft; and at Ay Khanoum, the site of the easternmost Alexandrian city ever discovered, bulldozers and tunnels have been used to pillage the site. At Balkh, once a trans-continental caravanserai and one of the oldest conti-

A *mujaheddin* on guard duty in the ruins of the Kabul museum in 1995



nually-inhabited cities in the world, photos taken for the independent Society for the Preservation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage (SPACH) show the homes of wealthy military commanders decorated with two-thousand year-old marble capitals (the upper part of a pillar); others have built villas incorporating portions of gigantesque fluted columns unearthed during rogue excavations.

Although the illegal traffic in antiquities in areas under control of the Taliban has slowed, the activities of dealers elsewhere remain beyond the reach of a single government.

Efforts to enlist the help of foreign governments to prevent the importation of stolen artefacts have been hampered because Afghanistan is not a signatory either to UNESCO's 1954 convention and protocols on the protection of cultural property during war, or its 1970 convention concerning illicit trade in objects of cultural heritage. As such other states-parties are not obliged to help it recover property that has been stolen and spirited out illegally. Nor can any of those responsible for the wanton destruction of property in battle be brought to account.

This is a real tragedy for the "entire generation of Afghans (that) has grown up in exile without the slightest conception of the wonders that once existed in their nation," points out Nancy Dupree, the vice-chair of SPACH.

But not for them alone. No other country was more traversed in antiquity, or was

the meeting place of so many cultures and civilisations - Iranian, Indian, Central Asian and Far Eastern. At times they clashed, but at others they blended with unparalleled creativity, yielding rich fusions of artistic styles unknown elsewhere: Graeco-Bactrian, Indo-Parthian, Sino-Siberian, Kushano-Sassanian. The loss of this heritage is a loss for us all.

*James Lewis
journalist specialised in Afghan affairs*



At Bamiyan, the world's biggest buddha (54 metres) has also been claimed by the conflict

© YOANN O'CONNOR

Cambodia: lessons learned

The scars left by nearly 30 years of conflict are still raw in Cambodia. Among the most visible are the wounds inflicted on the country's fabulous cultural heritage, especially at Angkor, as a result of the hostilities and the complete breakdown of security and protection mechanisms for cultural heritage that it brought about.

Cambodia is one of the rare examples of textbook application of the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. At the outset, an attempt was made to transport major pieces to the safety of the museum in Phnom Penh and collections from Angkor. Other objects were buried around the site. When the Pol Pot regime fell in 1979, most of the works that had been hidden there were found intact even though the Museum had been reduced to a bat-infested ruin and most of the country's curators killed.

But Cambodia also highlights the weaknesses of the Convention that led to its review

and reinforcement via the second protocol, which deals especially with the problem of looting and pillaging as a result of conflict.

In the ten years that followed the end of hostilities, the focus was put on reconstructing the country. No surveillance of Angkor was undertaken during the 1980s. Antipersonnel mines strewn around the temples were the only obstacles standing in the way of looters and thieves.

It was only in 1991, after the signing of the Paris Agreements on Cambodia that UNESCO and the Ecole Française D'Extrême-Orient (EFEO) went back to Phnom Penh and realised the extent of the damage. Despite the presence of 22,000 UN peacekeepers in the region, the looting of Angkor increased at an extraordinary pace during this period. "Every week, we could see fresh traces in the temples of looting that had taken place there. Thieves were paid by middlemen hired at the request of certain individuals based in Thailand and

Putting an end to the looting is one thing. Finding and retrieving the stolen objects is another //



One of Angkor's Apsaras, intact



Her lookalike, decapitated by looters

© UNESCO/CLAUDE JACQUES

other neighbouring countries, who in turn were acting on behalf of North American, Japanese and European clients," explains Etienne Clément, UNESCO's representative in Cambodia.

On February 9, 1993, the Conservation at Angkor, which housed some of its most extraordinary and valuable pieces, was attacked in the middle of the night. An anti-tank weapon blew off the front door, and a security guard was killed. Some 15 statues were stolen. The finger was pointed at the Khmer Rouge, who were still active in the region and desperately in need of funds. But other rumours also implicated the rich military leaders of the government's army.

UNESCO, in collaboration with the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and Interpol, launched a protection programme that was later further supported by French action. A 500-strong force of "cultural policemen" was created. Then, based upon inventories compiled by EFEO and UNESCO, ICOM published a brochure called "Looting in Angkor." It gathered together photos of more than 100 major works that had gone missing. Today only 19 have been identified and eight returned.

These measures, along with relative peace and the revival of tourism to Angkor have slowed the looting there. But the destruction of the country's infrastructure during the war was so complete that other important sites remain isolated and unprotected. "Angkor is just a tiny part of Cambodia. From Preah Khan to Preah Vihear, the Banteay Chmar temple, Sambor Prei Kuk, Beng Mealea, the temples of the River of a Thousand Lingas, Phnom Chisor – they are

all truly marvelous monuments and sites," says Claude Jacques, a specialist in ancient Khmer empire inscriptions.

Putting an end to looting is one thing. Finding and retrieving the stolen objects is another. "It is extremely difficult to fight against the illegal trafficking of cultural property," says Etienne Clément. "Demand for such works is high, and the Cambodian government is still emerging from war. But we have noticed big improvements in the past year. The Banteay Chmar temple (in Cambodia's northwest) is now under guard; the Ministry of Culture is preparing a media awareness campaign; and in 1999 the United States prohibited the import of certain kinds of cultural artefacts." Neighbouring Thailand has also agreed to join in the fight against the haemorrhage of Khmer heritage. A *bas-relief* from Banteay Chmar and various other objects discovered on sale in a Bangkok antique shop have, for example, recently been returned to the museum in Phnom Penh.

The second protocol of the Hague Convention greatly increases the likelihood of legal action against occupying forces which pillage and loot. It is not retroactive, but it could serve as a powerful deterrent in the future. As a signatory to the protocol, Cambodia actively participated in all preparatory discussions. It has yet to ratify it. But the will to overcome the administrative and procedural difficulties and do so is real. The country knows only too well the high price to be paid by cultural heritage as a result of conflict.

Frédéric Amat
journalist, Phnom Penh

Angkor: last November, bandits with a jack-hammer smashed a statue that hid a treasure trove in one of the towers of the Pre Rup temple



© BEATRICE PETIT



COMMUNICATION

MANIFESTO FOR EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL TELEVISION

"Television, (...) the most powerful communication vehicle on earth, cannot allow itself to be a commodity subject to market forces alone..." So begins the Manifesto for Educational and Cultural Television, which UNESCO Director General Koichiro Matsuura and the President of the International Association of Education and Discovery Television Companies (AITED), Jérôme Clément, officially presented at headquarters on April 7th. The Manifesto promotes the role of television for educating for peace and social cohesion, for promoting cultural diversity, education for all and the dissemination of scientific knowledge.

UNESCO Web Prize up for grabs! Calling all graphic designers.... the UNESCO Web Prize 2000 is now open. Two prizes of \$5000 each will be awarded to the winners of the free theme and peace categories respectively. Each participant may create one website in one of the two categories. The free theme category invites artists and designers to interpret UNESCO's main areas of

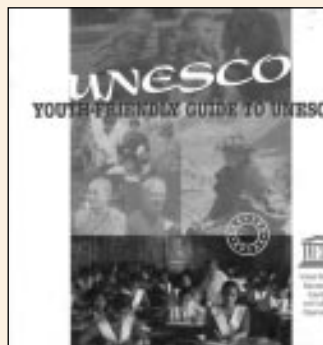
competence such as: cooperation in education, culture, and communication, possibly related to UNESCO's priority groups (women, young people and the least developed countries) and multiculturalism. The second category invites participants to interpret the theme "peace". The deadline for on-line registration is Thursday, 1 June 2000 (6pm Paris time). <http://www.unesco.org/webworld/webprize/2000>.



YOUTH

Youth-friendly guide to UNESCO

In 1995, youth was designated as one of UNESCO's priority groups. But it is not always easy for young people to understand what the organisation does for them. The "Youth-Friendly Guide to UNESCO" aims to fill the gap. Available in three languages (English, French and Spanish) the booklet covers: UNESCO's purpose; the programmes that work for and with youth; and how young people can actually get involved with the organisation. The guides are available from the Youth Coordination Unit, fax 33 1 45 68 57 90, or email ucj@unesco.org. The guides will also be available online within the near future, at <http://www.unesco.org/youth>



WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

Photobank on line

<http://www2.unesco.org/photobank>

UNESCO now offers online access to its remarkable collection of photographs and slides covering a wide range of subjects related to the organisation's field of competence: education, science, culture and communication. The collec-

tion was started in 1946, when UNESCO was founded and contains more than 10,000 digitised images. More will become available as the rest of the collection is digitised. This service will soon be developed to allow professionals and other users to obtain reproduction rights online. At the moment the photobank is available for consultation and acquisition.



The citadel - Bukhara (Uzbekistan)

© UNESCO/E. BAILEY



SOCIAL SCIENCE

URBAN LIVING

UNESCO's Management of Social Transformation programme (MOST) has launched a project to improve the training of professionals working in city management, such as urban planners, architects, geographers and engineers. The project will kick off in the Latin American and Caribbean region, where several training workshops will be organised. A UNESCO chair of urban management and social sustainability has been established in Guadalajara (Mexico), and ano-

ther on earth architecture in Switzerland. It is foreseen that the project will be extended to the Asian and Arabic regions at a later stage. By using relevant technologies, theories and methodologies, the project aims to overhaul the development and management of urban services. The project will focus on the relationship between universities and society, academic theory and practice, and the relationship between innovation and professional competence.



EXHIBITION

Colombia in Paris
A Colombian Cultural Week at UNESCO headquarters from April 5-18 included a tribute to the painter Dario Morales (1944-88), who lived and worked for the last 20 years of his life in Paris, along with an exhibition of the work of 59 Colombian artists living in France. The Contemporary Dance Company, led by Frenchwoman Marie-France Delieuvin and Colombian Alvaro

Restrepo, gave a performance on April 6. Restrepo trained with Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham in New York, and his work is considered in the avant-garde of modern Colombian dance. Other associated events included



Pulsar, a work by Gustavo Nieto

CULTURE

NEW HERITAGE CHAIRS

The first UNESCO Chairs in Cultural Heritage in North America and the Asia Pacific Region will be created at the University of Laval (Quebec, Canada) and Deakin University (Melbourne, Australia). Both have been established within the framework of the Forum UNESCO-University and Heritage, which groups close to 200 universities in 65 countries. The Forum was created by UNESCO and the University of Valencia (Spain) in 1996 and has already given rise to 25 projects such as the restoration of wooden houses in Istanbul (Turkey) led by the University of Lund (Sweden) in cooperation with the universities of Yildiz and Zeyrek.

1300th birthday for epic poem
The 1300th anniversary of the epic poem Kitab-I Dede Qorqud was Celebrated in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, in April. The presidents of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizistan and Turkey as well as UNESCO Director-General Koichiro Matsuura attended the celebrations. This poem was orally transmitted until its transcription in the 15th century AD. Oral traditions are the wealth of the world and the precious inheritance of generations, nations, peoples and regions, Mr Matsuura said. He added the poem was an example of intangible heritage, which UNESCO is preparing to recognise along with natural and cultural heritage.

Bibliobus

UNESCO has given mobile libraries to El Salvador, Nicaragua and Venezuela. The library buses, handed over by UNESCO Director-General Koichiro Matsuura to those countries' ambassadors on April 20, were among \$560,000 worth of material which included a bus for each country and 60,000 books for El Salvador and Venezuela.

The presentation was connected with the World Book and Copyright Day on April 23 and was part of the Books for All programme funded by a special budget and promoted by UNESCO. The programme makes books



From left to right: José Ramiro Zepeda Roldán (El Salvador), Ximena de los Angeles Flores Loaisiga (Nicaragua), Koichiro Matsuura, UNESCO's Director-general and Hiram Gaviria Rincon (Venezuela).

available to poor people in towns and the countryside in several Latin American and Caribbean countries and provides training

workshops to encourage people to read. The Books for All programme will soon be extended to Africa and Asia.

At the World Education Forum in Dakar (Senegal)

“Education will never live up to its promise unless there is a quiet but fundamental revolution in the way teaching takes place.”

Koichiro Matsuura
Director-General UNESCO

“...getting the last 5 to 30% of children into school is likely to require more innovative approaches - and be more expensive - than the first 70 to 95%.”

Carol Bellamy
Executive Director, UNICEF

“No country with a viable and sustainable plan for achieving Education of All will be unable to implement it for lack of external resources (...) Whether money, people or know-how, we will work with our partners to make it happen.”

James Wolfensohn
President, The World Bank

“Aids constitutes one of the biggest threats to the global education agenda, because what HIV the AIDS virus - does to the human body, it also does to society.”

Peter Piot
Executive Director, UNAIDS

“There can be short-term solutions to world problems but education is the only long-term solution.”

Victor Odonez
Principle Resource Person, WEF

“We have been called partners for years, good intentions have been made known, but when it comes to action NGOs have not been recognized.”

Jennifer Chiwela
Ghana-based People Act Foundation





EDUCATION

Waseda University signs up

One of Japan's leading private institutions of higher education, Waseda University, has reinforced its cooperation with UNESCO. Under a new agreement signed by Director-General Koichiro Matsuura and Takayasu Okushima, the President of Waseda University, the Tokyo-based establishment will provide academic expertise and technical assistance for those UNESCO activities which fall within its domains of competence.

Notable examples of past cooperation with the University include: the restoration of Angkor Wat in Cambodia; the discovery - with the help of satellite technology - of an ancient Egyptian tomb in Dahashur (near Cairo) by a team from the University contributing to UNESCO's Space Archaeology Project; and a project to construct a high definition image and sound database of World Heritage sites. The two bodies will meet at least once every three years to define new programmes and evaluate those already existing.



© AFP/SEVILLOU

"Knowledge is Freedom": UN Secretary General Kofi Annan marks the point at Dakar

FROM WORDS TO ACTION

Delegates from 181 countries attending the World Education Forum in Dakar (Senegal) adopted a Framework for Action committing their governments to achieve quality basic education for all, with a special focus on education for girls.

The six goals they have set themselves include; expanding and improving comprehensive early child care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children; ensuring that by 2015 all children, especially girls, children in difficult circumstances and from ethnic minorities have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality; ensuring that the learning needs of all young people are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes; achieving a 50% improvement in the levels of adult illiteracy by 2015; eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality by 2015; and improving all aspects of the quality of education to achieve recognized and measurable learning outcomes for all - especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

More details at <http://www2.unesco.org/wef>

Projects for Palestinians

The UNESCO/Palestine Committee met at headquarters on April 19-20 to discuss various projects for the future including training for teachers, the establishment of kindergartens, the creation of virtual libraries, literacy centres for women, a Palestinian history museum, and the continuing development of the Palestinian press agency, WAFA.

Funds will now be sought for these projects which will be carried out under UNESCO's Programme for Palestine.

The Palestinian Minister of Culture, Yasser Abed Rabbo, thanked UNESCO for its ongoing support in the reconstruction of a Palestinian cultural identity, saying that: "I don't think there can be any real Palestinian development, without the preservation of the history and culture of our people..."



SCIENCE

Biosphere reserves

The *Bulletin of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves*, no. 8, January 2000 has surfaced again after a year's absence. This issue reports on reserves set up since 1998 and on various workshops and training courses. The workshops include one on planning resources available in European reserves, held in Spain in June 1999, and another on the relationship between local people and the environment in biosphere reserves, which took place in the Czech Republic in May 1999. The newsletter also reports on a post-graduate regional school in the Congo for development and management of tropical forests.



FACTS IN FIGURES

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- \$8 trillion dollars has been spent on nuclear weapons alone since 1945. Estimated public expenditure on education during the same period represented less than 0.5% of this.
- Most industrialised countries maintain a ratio of at least one researcher for every 500 inhabitants. The ratios in the developing countries are generally below one researcher for every 2,000 inhabitants.
- 29 countries around the world don't have any daily newspapers.

- There is on average one television set for every four inhabitants of the world. In the more developed regions, there is one television for every two persons, and in the less developed regions there is one for every six persons.
- To purchase a computer would cost the average Bangladeshi more than eight years' income; the average American just one month's salary.

●●● Source: UNESCO's Institute for Statistics





BOOKS

Inventory of Monuments at Pagan

Volume Seven

Monuments 1737 - 2064

By Pierre Pichard

Kiscadale/EFFO/UNESCO 2000

650 FF, 99,90€



Seven volumes published, nine still to come in this inventory series which is testimony to the splendor of this once fabulous city. Pagan, in central Myanmar, was founded in 849. Architecture was the dominant art of the time, - sculpture and painting playing a subordinate role. Pagan contains the largest surviving group of buildings in brick and plaster of the many thousands that once stood in various parts of South Asia. The colossal Buddha images enshrined in the temples were built of brick and finished in stucco, gilded and decorated, but, on some older icons this process has been repeated many times destroying their authenticity. Most of the temples of Pagan were abandoned early on, so they still show their original characteristics, whereas temples in modern cities have been repeatedly and drastically restored. This makes Pagan a veritable treasure trove for art historians and heritage experts. The inventory - destined for professional use - contains detailed measurements and black and white photographs of the various temples, gates and interiors, taken from several angles. Pagan is not on the World Heritage List.

Underwater archaeology and coastal management

Focus on Alexandria

Coastal Management

Sourcebooks 2

UNESCO Publishing, 2000-05-03

185 FF, 28,20€

What sets Alexandria apart from other coastal cities is not so much conflicts over contemporary uses of coastal resources, but rather conflicts between the city which is Alexandria today and the cities it has been in the past. As Alexandria struggles to renew its urban core, to resolve problems of traffic, to restore housing for a burgeoning population, everywhere it is confronted by the



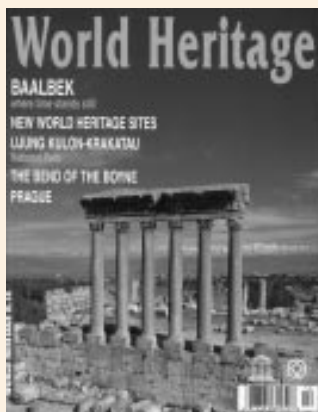
archaeological remains of its remarkable past. A breakwater in an inconvenient location has triggered debates that oppose the underwater archaeology of the Pharos with the onshore Qait Bey fortress, confronting heritage managers with the harsh realities of urban expansion and industrial development. In this second Coastal Management Sourcebook, 27 contributions unite expertise from a wide range of disciplines and fields. These complementary papers open the way to solutions that might allow Alexandria to harmonise its past with its present.



PERIODICALS

WORLD HERITAGE

World Heritage No. 14, features the temples of Baalbek in today's Lebanon. Built of stone blocks weighing up to a 100 tons, the temples were listed in the fifth century as among the 'wonders of the world'. The remains are splendidly photographed for this issue. The accompanying text provides historical background plus more up to date information on the site, such as the recent



opening of two museums in the ruins. The Valley of the Boyne in Ireland which houses the greatest collection of European Megalithic art is also presented in this issue. The Newgrange is one of three tombs on slightly raised plateaux in the low-lying landscape. Sunlight penetrates the tomb, built in 3,200 BC, every year at the wintersolstice, illustrating the importance of rituals for Stone Age man. Other subjects this month include the city of Prague in the Czech Republic, and the colonial city of Colonia del Sacramento in Uruguay. The Ujung Kulon/Krakatau World Heritage Site in Indonesia is also covered. The park includes the famous Krakatau volcano and enfolds the largest tract of lowland tropical rainforest in South East Asia.

The UNESCO Courier

A photo essay "the soul of Old Cairo" opens this month's *Courier*. The journal's main dossier treats biodiversity. "Biodiversity is the essence of life. Without nature's tremendous variety, our planet would be hostile to human life. Our existence and well-being on Earth depend upon learning how to preserve this diversity. To do so, we must strike a new balance with nature and commit to sharing its precious resources more fairly between the haves and the have-nots." Other newsworthy themes covered include the environmental impact of recent wars, the pollution of the Balkans and Asia's alternative television. An interview with Brazilian couturier Ocirar Versolato on hybrid creations winds up the issue.



●●● To find out more

Publications and periodicals are sold at UNESCO's bookshop (Headquarters) and through national distributors in most countries. For further information or direct orders by mail, fax or Internet: UNESCO Publishing, 7 place de Fontenay, 75352 Paris 07 SP. Tel. (+33 1) 01 45 68 43 00 - Fax (33 1) 01 45 68 57 41. Internet: <http://www.unesco.org/publishing>





What price a tap?

SCIENCE *Hard and fast commitments were lacking at last month's World Water Forum in the Hague, where participants divided into two opposing camps*

WATER: HUMAN RIGHT OR COMMODITY

Between March 17-22, some 3500 people participated in the Second World Water Forum meeting in The Hague (Netherlands). The meeting was held on two levels, public and ministerial. The public meetings, attended mostly by NGOs and private water companies, (state-run utilities were glaringly absent) discussed a number of questions relating to the environment, information access, cooperation, financing and water management. The second, ministerial part of the conference brought together more than 170 ministers and government representatives.

By uniting these people it was hoped that the forum would come up with some real commitments from participating governments. But the resulting ministerial declaration – the forum's

main focus – did not come to any regulatory or financial conclusions, and created more of a divide than a consensus. The declaration emphasised that the “the common goal” was “to provide water security in the 21st century”, and that this would mean “ensuring that freshwater, coastal and related ecosystems are protected and improved; that sustainable development and political stability are pro-

moted, that every person has access to enough safe water at an affordable cost to lead a healthy and productive life and that the vulnerable are protected from the risks of water-related hazards.” However, stressed the critics, it did not recognise water as a basic human right, but rather as an economic good.

“If the ministers had signed a document promising to legislate for the pro-

tection of water as a fundamental human right, and to give us adequate financial support, they would really have been taking action,” said Christine Bismuth from the NGO Water Solidarity Europe.

Instead, said Anne Olivier, from the NGO Action Against Hunger they chose to view water “users” as water “clients.” For Ms Olivier, there is no doubt that “water is a basic human right (which is not even saying that access to it should be free)” and this means that “it cannot be compared with an economic commodity, subject to market laws of supply and demand like any other commercial commodity.”

For Eveline Herfkens, the Dutch minister for development and co-operation, the issue is not about replacing public water monopolies with private water monopolies, but how to find the estimated \$180 billion needed to solve the inequalities in water access around the world.

So, what are the answers? Despite the stalemate, all agreed that finding solutions that complement existing systems is paramount.

Answers could come from the public as well as the private sector, perhaps with the two working hand in hand – or even community management of water resources. This is the direction promoted by the World

MORE KNOWLEDGE FOR BETTER MANAGEMENT

●●● UNESCO will host and help get underway an ambitious United Nations World Water Assessment Programme. The initiative was announced by UNESCO's Director-General, Koichiro Matsuura, on World Water Day (March 22nd), at the Hague Forum. The programme's main aim will be to help developing countries to improve their monitoring, assessment and reporting capacity, with particular focus on water quality, human health and river basin management. It will also serve to help avert conflicts that could arise from the world's growing water shortage. The programme will publish a World Water Development Report every two years, with the first due out in 2002.

Water Vision project, based at UNESCO headquarters (see Sources no.121). Franck Rijsberman, the project's deputy director says that in underlining the importance of private water management, they wanted to place the emphasis upon "small entrepreneurs - local farmers or community groups, not on big multinationals."

In the South, where the rural population is still very important, increasing num-

bers of small private or community groups already work in this way. After an initial investment from local or international ngos, or private funding, these groups become owners of the water infrastructure; they manage it and have access to all information. They are responsible for setting a price for water. They also tend to reinvest their profits back into their communities. "In this way, control is really in peoples' hands," says Jan

Teun Visscher from the International Water and Sanitation Centre.

In urban areas, the issue is different. The funds needed to participate in community management of water are out of the reach of small local investors, and when the public sector cannot foot the bill, the water multinationals step in. But multinationals do not reinvest their capital locally, argued several water ngos at the Hague Forum.

This harsh perspective pushed numerous countries from the South to emphasise, in an annex to the declaration, the importance of a regulatory framework in the case of partnerships, so that the local population can truly control the management of their own water. Anything less, they considered, would be a surefire recipe for social conflict.

*Cristina L'Homme
The Hague*

ARMENIA'S NEW WINDOW ON THE WORLD

YOUTH *The Armenian Federation of UNESCO Clubs helps young people get a grip on the information revolution*

It is hard to talk about progress and development, when less than 1% of the population owns a computer and only a few more people, generally in the administration or business, have access to the internet," explains Tigran Hakobyan, the director of the Armenian Government's Information Department.

It is a frustrating situation for the Republic of Armenia, which during Soviet times, had a high ratio of college graduates, numerous scientific and research centers and a modern hi-tech industry. Then came the devastating earthquake of 1988 which killed some 55,000 people, which was followed three years later by a painful transition to independence. The war with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh also took a heavy toll. Thus for the last decade, the priority for most people has been basic survival.

Against this backdrop, science and education have suffered. At a time when computer literacy is a must for development, many uni-

versities and colleges have no computer classes and cannot provide students with access to electronic data. "Even my alma mater, Yerevan State University, has less than 200 computers for its 21 departments, 1,145-member faculty and more than 7,500 students," states Dr Hrant Jamharyan of YSU's Education Department. State programmes in computer education and on-

the-job training seem pretty distant, while the fees charged by numerous computer training companies are too high for young people.

"I spent my last high school year in Banks, Oregon (USA), through a foreign exchange programme and I got used to the wide opportunities of the internet. One can imagine my state of mind when I came back home and

found I couldn't use it any more," explains Anna Hovhannisyan, a student in foreign relations at Yerevan State University. "I got really inspired when my professor told me about the Center."

The Armenian Information Technology Community Center (AITCC) is a project of the Youth Initiatives Supporting Center (YISC), one of the departments of the Armenian Federation of



"We couldn't wait for the government or some kind "uncle" to do something"

UNESCO Clubs. "We couldn't wait for the government or some kind "uncle" to do something. It was our own responsibility and job to get things moving," explains YISC Director Mher Gabrielyan. "We were happy to see our proposals met with understanding and were supported by UNESCO's Infoyouth programme, which gave \$12,000 for computer hardware and related activities."

WHOSE TURN NOW?

Providing free access to relevant databases and communication means for dozens of ngos, scientists and students with only four computers looked unrealistic at first. But training courses helped to prepare people with technical skills who in turn became tutors for new trainees. A time sheet and schedule were all it took to sort out daily activity. The AITCC opened on

January 21 and hasn't looked back.

"Now I'm back in the stream. I can follow the news in politics, in overlapping sciences, and I also widely discuss them with a growing circle of friends. What's more, I have even started to study French," says Anna.

The project is essential not only because of the information and communication services it provides, but also because it gives young people hope. Many have felt neglected in this new environment, with few opportunities for exciting leisure and lack of interesting contacts.

The AITCC doesn't aim to resolve all those issues immediately, but it is now a focal point for those ready to apply their energy and knowledge for society's benefit.

"Besides helping to improve my journalistic

skills, the Center gave me the chance to feel needed and useful. I've found new friends, acquaintances, hobbies and now I've completely gone into work but you know I really do like it," says Rebecca Hakobyan, one of the first trainees and active members of the AITCC.

NEW HORIZONS

"The center is a proper forum for all interested young people in discussion, and action. It is really important for our generation to be heard and understood. I think that's the key."

Dr Boyan Radoykov of UNESCO's Infoyouth programme visited Armenia in March to get acquainted with the work of the AITCC, as well as with situation of Armenian youth in general. As a result Infoyouth has tentatively agreed to fund a new project - the Employment Database on the internet. Planned to become an

integral part of the AITCC's work, it will help to tackle one of Armenia's most crucial problems - unemployment. More than 50% of Armenian young people are on the hunt for a job.

"It is quite absorbing to see how first steps in one project drive you into implementation of totally new beginnings. The idea to develop a network in the provinces, the Employment Database and the connection to Infoyouth are important on national, regional and international levels," concludes Gabrielyan. "The center is a kind of multiplying force and its future success in a difficult environment depends greatly on our ability to think in terms of follow-up activities and future projects."

*Tigran Houhannisyan
Yerevan*

"INSIDE, WE ARE THE SAME"

CULTURE *A travelling exhibition highlights the discoveries of a group of young Europeans retracing the Slave Route*

It is said that a dream can guide and also reveal a human being. Indeed a dream come true did just that for 14 young people who, last year, undertook a nine-month sea voyage over the nefarious Slave Route.

Accompanied by two adults, the French and Belgian 11 to 16 year olds embarked on two 13-metre sailing vessels to retrace the route of the old slave ships. They departed from Nantes, on the Atlantic coast of France on September 27, 1998, spending a month each in Senegal and then Haiti, and passing through Gambia and the Dominican Republic. Organised by the French association La

Baleine Blanche (The White Whale) and with patronage of UNESCO, the adventure aimed at enabling the young sailors to better understand each step along the triangular route of horror, violence and oppression. The group documented the voyage and now a collection of souvenirs - photographs, poems, and a fresco - form the basis of a travelling exhibition which visited UNESCO headquarters in Paris from April 25 to May 5. The collection has also been published as a book (available by correspondence, see box).

Apart from revealing the reality of the Slave Route, the experience also led the adolescents to reflect on



Offering a message of hope

human relations in general. Jacopo, Blandine, Prune, Ana, Benjamin and their friends, agreed that probably the most important aspect of the trip was mee-

ting other children of their own age, and seeing how they live - often in quite another world. The young travellers were shocked and revolted to learn that chil-

dren of their own age may, today, be living under forms of modern slavery, exploited, including sexually, abandoned by their families for economic reasons and used by employers who house them under inhuman conditions. Nonetheless, they held out hope. "The slave traders linked the three continents to make money. We covered the same route to form links of friendship," noted Jacopo.

In Senegal, the young sailors deposited messages in the House of Slaves in Gorée and staged a play on the problem of *sans papiers* (immigrants without documents) with children of their own age. In Haiti, some of them visited a centre for street children while others went to a school where they helped paint a 2.2m fresco.

Jacopo formed a friendship with two street children, Matino and Daniel. Only Matino was attending school, selling cigarettes on

the side. Daniel, who didn't go to school, lived on an abandoned cargo ship and managed to earn a meagre living watching over the boats.

At first, the young Europeans felt sorry for the "poor kids" thinking they must be very unhappy. But after spending some time with them "we realized," related Blandine "that by saying such things we took away what was most precious to them: their honour, their code of ethics, their pride. For even if they have nothing, even if they live in misery, they know how to laugh, play and have a good time. They are really just like us. Inside, we're the same." One year has gone by, but, as Doudou Diene, who heads UNESCO's Division for Intercultural Projects explained, "the children will for many years continue reflecting on their experience. Visiting the historic sites on the route, and in a

way reliving what happened at each place, taught them far more than their history books, especially since textbooks, up until now, have never really probed the full consequences and realities of the slave trade. "It was important," he added, "that young people obtain first hand, in depth knowledge," and not only with regard to

human rights. "Among other revelations, they realised, for instance, that many of their musical tastes, like rap and salsa, are directly linked with slavery." The whole venture, he said, was part of the real job - that of "unchaining memory".

Cristina L'Homme

VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY



La Baleine Blanche, (The White Whale) a French association, has been organising maritime expeditions since 1983 to enable young people to discover their planet and report back on their

findings. Before being accepted for such a voyage, a child must attend two preliminary sessions to judge his or her aptitude and motivation: the first, a one-week boat trip, and the second, two weeks in the mountains. The cost of this expedition, met by several sponsors came to almost \$5000 per child.

La Baleine Blanche: 33 2 40 69 67 38
baleineblanche@nao.

COWS AND COMPUTERS

EDUCATION *Computer training and animal husbandry are among the top priorities for Bosnia and Herzegovina's shattered communities*

UNESCO's Sarajevo office has been banking on education to help improve the lives and earning capacities of Bosnia and Herzegovina's many war widows and those whose husbands have been left invalid by the conflict or who have disappeared. These women are often the sole breadwinners for their families. Their need for support remains immense.

In the north-eastern Bosnian industrial town of Bijeljina, for example, UNESCO joined forces in 1998 with the women's non governmental organisation Nada (Hope) and the Kurjak menswear factory - to provide training, leading to a

qualification and a guarantee of employment, afterwards. The factory lacked skilled machine operators and was only able to function at 20% of its capacity. Transport, working materials and a hot meal were provided by the firm, but the training was funded by the United Kingdom. A total of 52 women passed the exam at the end of the training. "Most of them took up the jobs on offer" says Kay Lisengard, formerly of UNESCO Sarajevo. "The others have a skill which they can take with them wherever they go."

In the Zivinice region, UNESCO is working with another women's associa-

tion, Sumejja, to improve the lives of the several hundred women there who're now the sole providers for the families.

Basic computer literacy and animal husbandry were identified as the top learning priorities for these women. Computer training was subsequently organised in a village school, thus allowing teachers and pupils to benefit from the equipment as well. To address the need to improve milk and meat production UNESCO, working through Sumejja, bought 12 inseminated cows and gave them to the poorest families, with the agreement that the calves would, in turn, be given to other

poor families identified by association. Basic veterinary training on care for the animal and common ailments was provided to the women, and the veterinary surgeon was also "on call" to help during the birth of the calves.

"The cow ends up with two 'mothers' looking out for its welfare both before, during and after the birth. One is the owner of the cow and the other the future owner of the calf," explained Mr Lisengard. "The interest in this arrangement is that the knowledge is passed on with the calf."

From Countdown (no.20 March-May 2000)

Next month's issue :

THE RISE AND RISE OF NGOS

LIBRARIES FOR ALL



on UNESCO's calendar

29 May to 7 July

INTERNATIONAL COURSE ON WOOD CONSERVATION TECHNOLOGY
In Oslo (Norway), the ninth six-week course on the conservation of cultural heritage made of wood, organised under the auspices of UNESCO

5 to 9 June

BEIJING + 5

In New York (USA), the UN agencies and ngos will assess progress made since the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing (China) in 1995

5 to 12 June

WORLD MOUNTAIN FORUM

In Chambéry (France) more than 130 countries will participate in the first "mountain summit" under the patronage of UNESCO and the FAO, to discuss the economic, environmental and political challenges of these regions

26 to 30 June

CULTURE AND HIV/AIDS

In Dakar (Senegal), a workshop aimed at improving understanding of the role of a population's lifestyles and beliefs in the spread of AIDS; organised by UNESCO and the African Itinerant College for Culture and Development

26 to 30 June

COPENHAGEN + 5

In Geneva (Switzerland), UN agencies and ngos will assess progress made since the World Social Summit held in 1995

26 June to 1 July

WORLD HERITAGE

At UNESCO headquarters in Paris (France), the 24th session of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee

3 to 7 July

OUR UNDERWATER HERITAGE

At UNESCO headquarters in Paris, a meeting of experts working on the future convention for the protection of the world's underwater cultural heritage