

Hundred and sixty-first Session

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**COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY DEvised TO RAISE THE VISIBILITY
OF UNESCO'S ACTION THROUGH STRENGTHENING
THE COORDINATION OF INFORMATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES
WITHIN THE SECRETARIAT**

SUMMARY

Pursuant to paragraph 1 of 30 C/Resolution 51, the Director-General submits to the Executive Board the draft of a new UNESCO communication and public information strategy. This resolution was adopted following the deliberations of the Executive Board at its 156th and 157th sessions (156 EX/Decision 106 and 157 EX/Decision 10.4) on the visibility of UNESCO.

The proposed strategy is the result of a series of internal and external consultations and is based, in particular, on the recommendations submitted to the Director-General by the Expert Group that he established pursuant to 157 EX/Decision 10.4.

Decision required: paragraph 69.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Both the General Conference and the Executive Board have stressed in recent years the importance of providing UNESCO with an external communication and public information policy which can be used to support the promotion of its ideals, the implementation of its programmes and the mobilization of the resources necessary to its action.
2. After examining the recommendations submitted to it by the Executive Board following the debates held at its 156th and 157th sessions on the visibility of UNESCO, the General Conference at its 30th session invited the Director-General to “formulate a comprehensive strategy, and make a cost estimate of its implementation, devised to raise the visibility of UNESCO’s action, to strengthen the coordination of information and dissemination activities within the Secretariat, to develop cooperation with partners and to improve the quality of UNESCO’s productions, both written and audiovisual, and to submit proposals to that end to the Executive Board at its 161st session” (30 C/Resolution 51, para. 1).
3. A global approach to UNESCO’s external information and communication difficulties does not concern solely the Bureau of Public Information and the other dissemination services; it calls for the mobilization of the entire Secretariat, in particular the programme sectors, the services, centres and institutes at Headquarters and in the field, and the Sector for External Relations and Cooperation.
4. With a view to formulating the strategy recommended by the governing bodies, the Director-General decided to launch a process of internal and external consultation. To that end, he entrusted Mr George Malempré, Assistant Director-General in a personal capacity, with the mission of coordinating the work involved, assisted by Mr V. Defourny, evaluation specialist in the Central Programme Evaluation Unit (DG/Note/00/4 of 28 February 2000).
5. As part of the reform of the Secretariat, the Director-General decided to group under one directorate all the information dissemination services: the Bureau of Public Information, the Office of Monthly Periodicals, the UNESCO Publishing Office and the Cultural Events and Public Relations Division. The integration of these specialized services within a single entity is expressly designed to strengthen interaction among information specialists so as to build up a stronger and more coherent array of signals, leading to the development of greater synergy among these different services. However, it is not a matter of confining the problem of public information and communication at UNESCO to the Secretariat’s dissemination services alone.
6. When addressing the communication problems of an organization like UNESCO, two major pitfalls must be avoided. The first is to restrict communication to the tools and media of information dissemination. The second is to employ it indiscriminately so that everything by nature becomes communication. While the first is indisputably reductive, the second can give rise to great confusion. However, the communication and information strategy must cover the whole gamut of actions ranging from the most sophisticated undertakings requiring the involvement of professionals to the everyday practice of all members of staff in their dealings with the outside public. It is through all these channels that UNESCO displays itself to public opinion, and it is on the basis of the totality of signals it emits that the image of the Organization is forged in the minds of those with which it interacts.
7. The traditional tools of communication are essentially books, the press, radio and television. But the digital revolution, which has for some years been radically transforming the communication and information scene worldwide, is offering us glimpses of new,

unsuspected and promising ways in which the Organization can deploy its action and interact with the world.

8. UNESCO has begun to respond to this key development. This much is clear from the rapid growth of its website (more than 50,000 pages online) and the number of visits it receives (nearly one million each month). There can be no question that the Organization must continue to explore to the maximum the potential of these new media, but it will need to show great creativity to build bridges between the two banks of the digital divide. The strategy proposed in this document has been devised in the light of this revolution and having regard to the challenges it creates.

9. As invited by the Executive Board in 157 EX/Decision 10.4, the Director-General established an Expert Group composed of journalists, publishers and specialists in public relations and in the information sciences and new information technologies to advise him in the framing of a draft strategy.

10. The Group held two two-day sessions, one in September 2000 and the other in March 2001. The President of the Group was Mr Nils Gunnar Nilsson (Sweden) and its membership consisted of Mr José Joaquín Brunner (Chile), Mr Jean-Marie Brunot (France), Mr Pichai Chuensuksawadi (Thailand), Mr Tim Cullen (United Kingdom), Mr Andrej Gratchev (Russian Federation), Mr Manfred Harnischfeger (Germany), Mr Hisanori Isomura (Japan), Mr David Rose (United States of America), represented by Ms Katherine Smith (United States of America), Mr Allister Sparks (South Africa), Mr Ekwow Spio-Garbrah (Ghana), Ms Carmen E. Tipling (Jamaica), Mr Gebran Tuéni (Lebanon), Mr Dejan Vercic (Slovenia) and Mr Pere Vicens (Spain). Because of professional and personal commitments, Mr Pichai Chuensuksawadi was not able to participate in either of the meetings.

11. Apart from the final recommendations adopted by the Group, which are annexed to the present document, the work of the Group was reflected in two reports and a set of guidelines for the use of the Secretariat's information and communication services. The Group was also involved in the launching of several studies, mainly concerning UNESCO's public image:

- an experimental study in four countries on the perception of UNESCO, undertaken on the initiative of the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO;
- a study of UNESCO's image in about 30 press organs in different regions of the world over the past two years (1999 and 2000);
- a study to learn more about the public using the UNESCO website;
- a study on the readership of the UNESCO *Courier*;
- a preliminary study on the preparation of an editorial and graphic code.

12. The Director-General, who wishes to thank the Expert Group for its contribution, has taken account of its proposals and recommendations in the elaboration of the draft strategy. The strategy is also the outcome of many individual and collective consultations within the Secretariat during the past year. In addition, an informal group of Headquarters staff members working mainly within the information and dissemination services, submitted to the Director-General the results of a process of reflection undertaken in recent months on their own initiative and focused on the Organization's future action in the information and communication field. Their ideas and proposals were likewise taken into account in the preparation of the draft strategy.

13. From all the views gathered, there emerges a very clear convergence of opinion that the visibility of an intellectual organization like UNESCO depends above all on the validity of its objectives and priorities, the content of its programmes and the relevance of its responses to the expectations of the international community. In a hyper-mediatized world, the quality of UNESCO's messages and the targeting of its publics, combined with a monitoring mechanism for keeping in touch with public opinion, are instrumental in strengthening its identity and visibility. A new "culture of communication" should inform the action not only of the Secretariat but also of the Organization's Member States, its National Commissions and its various partners within civil society. As the Expert Group stressed in its conclusions, "communication in the 'information age' is not only important, it is a vital necessity for the success of any organization or company".

14. Since it has a special responsibility within the United Nations family, being the organization with communication written into its Constitution and a strong mandate to defend freedom of expression and the free flow of ideas by word and image, UNESCO should be the very model of openness and communication effectiveness.

II. THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

15. For several years, the governing bodies have drawn the Director-General's attention to the fact that UNESCO suffers from a lack of visibility (30 C/INF.9). Recognition of this fact was what prompted the current strategy. The Organization's visibility is meaningful only if it helps to deal cogently with the issues that it faces by virtue of its mandate. There is, in fact, nothing to be gained from promoting UNESCO's name if the substance of its action is neither relevant nor credible. The degree of visibility is one consequence of the performance of its mission, but is never in itself a yardstick of the effectiveness of its action. If there is a "virtuous" circle that leads through efficacy via credibility to visibility, there can also be an infernal spiral that loops around ineffectiveness and poor reputation, or "bad press", and becomes exacerbated with increased visibility.

16. The inquiry into how UNESCO is perceived conducted among opinion-leaders in four countries (Canada, India, Sweden and the United Kingdom) and among officials within the United Nations system clearly reveals that there is a broad measure of support for the original principles and mandate assigned to UNESCO, but that there are also many signs of frustration and disappointment vis-à-vis an institution that has embarked upon too many different fields, that does not possess resources to match its ambitions, and that tends to be stultified by a degree of bureaucracy. Comparison with the other agencies of the United Nations system in neighbouring fields is distinctly to its disadvantage. In contrast to other organizations of the system, UNESCO cannot illustrate its mission by a simple and instantly understandable image. From its multifarious missions there emerges an image that is complex, abstract and frequently hazy. Moreover, not being for the main thrust of its activity a "hands-on" organization, it frequently creates the impression of being a remote bureaucracy.

17. The mission assigned to UNESCO since its creation nevertheless enjoys an undeniable aura for a whole range of different sectors of the public. The same is true of several of the topics which it has made its priorities for some years (world heritage, education for all, ethics of science and technology, environmental protection, prevention of natural disasters, conflict-prevention, etc.). The major thrusts of its new Medium-Term Strategy are those that deal with the most burning issues facing the world today. Many of its programmes are rather favourably perceived in the professional circles concerned. Nevertheless, UNESCO, like other intergovernmental organizations, is feeling the effects of the general disengagement occurring within the public sector, and the Organization is today in danger of seeing its impact dwindle

in a mood of general indifference if it does not succeed in making its action, and its achievements, sufficiently clear and comprehensible.

18. If the blurred, splintered image projected by the Organization has hitherto been accentuated by a lack of coordination of its activities as a whole, it must also be acknowledged that the services responsible have also suffered for a number of years from a continuous depletion of their means of action. Guided primarily by strategies aimed at making savings and optimizing resources, the Organization has been led to undertake structural adjustments of the services concerned which have not been followed by any clear redefinition of their tasks.

19. By regarding the communication media as a set of programme support resources, the tendency has become established, as in most organizations, to reduce communication to the status of a tool and to focus attention too exclusively upon the production and dissemination of information. However, awareness is growing that the communication issue is far more closely bound up with the logic of action. What is the impact produced by such communication media? How do they contribute to achieving the expected results?

20. Accordingly, if one starts to think about the Programme in terms of communication, and to formulate communication in terms of results in relation to set objectives, both communication and public information become strategic components, intrinsically linked to the definition of programmes in which the identification, knowledge and understanding of the target populations always and necessarily precede discussions on the formulation of messages and the choice of means. This change, of course, is the linchpin of the communication strategy project that the Director-General intends to implement with the cooperation of Member States and their National Commissions, and with the Organization's partners.

III. MAIN THEMES AND MEANS OF ACTION FOR THE PROPOSED NEW STRATEGY

21. The main themes and means of action emerging from the new approach to communication and public information can be grouped under 12 major headings that include both strategic principles and practical mechanisms:

- Anchoring communication activities in the Programme
- Distinguishing substantive communication from institutional communication so that they are better coordinated
- Establishing a structure to manage communication in a strategic perspective
- Making communication a two-way process through responsiveness to target audiences
- Developing a communication culture
- Spreading the load by involving partners in communication activities
- Establishing an effective system of editorial and graphic identity, i.e. one that is understandable, consistent and eloquent
- Refocusing relations with the press

- Publishing a high-quality monthly periodical
- Refocusing publishing activities (printed, audiovisual and multimedia productions) to reach target groups more effectively
- Coordinating websites and expanding Web communication in the future
- Organizing cultural activities, at and away from Headquarters, that reflect the creative diversity of UNESCO.

Anchoring communication activities in the Programme

22. In future, public information, publishing, periodicals and communication in general should no longer be regarded as support services. They form an integral part of the basic programme, as the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr Kofi Annan, made a point of stressing in his comments on the report concerning a communication strategy for the United Nations “Global Vision, Local Voice”. Communication must contribute directly to the fulfilment of the goals and objectives pursued. The ultimate objective of strengthened communication and information activities is to enable UNESCO to serve the world community more effectively. Drawing upon its history, its mandate and above all its Programme, UNESCO – its Member States and its Secretariat – should build its reputation on the credibility and relevance of its action. That is the most important reorientation needed to improve the image of the Organization.

23. As was stressed by the Expert Group consulted by the Director-General, “the goal of communication/public information is to formulate and disseminate messages on the activities and concerns of UNESCO and to irrigate public opinion with the Organization’s values. In so doing it is essential to recognize that there is a close connection between programmes and activities on the one hand and the image of the Organization on the other hand”.

24. It will therefore be important, in the framing of general strategies and when it comes to selecting more specific objectives, to determine as clearly as possible not only the desired results but also what changes are expected on the part of the target audiences. This preliminary analysis is essential for ascertaining the content of the messages that should be addressed to them and the media or channels that will need to be employed to make sure that those messages actually reach their targets and produce the expected impact. The effectiveness of communication logically depends on how well-matched target, message, and medium are.

Distinguishing substantive communication from institutional communication so that they are better coordinated

25. For the sake of clarity of definition and division of responsibilities, it will be important in future to distinguish communication about programme implementation from institutional communication, i.e. when the Organization speaks as an institution. These two facets of UNESCO’s communication strategy should be linked together and coordinated so as to convey a clear, consistent and dynamic image of the Organization.

26. The themes covered by substantive communication will of course be those of the Medium-Term Strategy. The choice of these themes, their relevance to global issues and their limited number are such that they can easily become emblematic. It is only logical that the content and formulation of communication objectives should be the responsibility of the programme sectors. Responsibility for the choice of all communication activities relating to

these themes, and for the piloting of such activities, will lie with the Assistant Directors-General and, by delegation of authority, with those responsible for the programmes concerned. The Medium-Term Strategy should provide for the preparation of biennial communication plans reflected in the successive programme and budget documents. The biennial communication plan, which will incorporate contributions from each sector, will specify the objectives being pursued, the audiences targeted and the key messages, and also the full range of communication media to be used and the resources assigned for the purpose. This use of strategic planning for communication will be based on a proactive approach and will dovetail fully with the overall strategic planning process.

27. The key messages conveyed by institutional communication will have a longer life, as they will be chiefly concerned with UNESCO's mandate and the values it promotes, and hence with affirming its identity as an international organization. Being by nature an international forum for dialogue, cooperation and solidarity, UNESCO has everything to gain, when speaking about itself, from highlighting the opportunities it affords, with all due respect for cultural diversity, to promote pluralism, foster consensus, rally support and elaborate common benchmarks and ethical principles. The never-ending process of building UNESCO is in itself a meaningful message in a world that is becoming increasingly aware of its complexity, its interdependence and its multi-polarity. Through institutional communication, UNESCO should be able to get across what it exists for and what it does. In some cases, this will mean using its logo to "underwrite" a particular action that it endorses; in others it will need to explain and make some people understand developments or changes in its organization; while in others again, at the local or international level, it will need to demonstrate its capacity to react and speak out on issues that concern it or on which it has a vision or ethical principles to put forward.

28. The main responsibility for such institutional communication lies with the Director-General. As will be made clear later, he will be assisted by a spokesperson in this task, but the Director of the Bureau of Public Information (BPI) will also have a role in dealing with all the facets and forms of such communication.

Establishing a structure to manage communication in a strategic perspective

29. The key ideas underlying the structural changes that the Director-General has decided to put into effect are, firstly, to enhance the responsibility of the programme sectors for substantive communication, and secondly, to seek greater synergy among the various communication actors. For this purpose, a Bureau for Public Information (BPI) has been established, which will perform all the duties previously carried out by the information and dissemination services, making full use of the new tool that is the Web, for which it has been decided to establish the new post of Editorial Coordinator. Within each programme sector's Executive Office, as in UNESCO centres, institutes and major offices, a specific pole of expertise in information and communication will be established. Similarly, a "communication" component will be more clearly defined among the duties of field unit directors. Within the Directorate, a spokesperson will be responsible for managing the Director-General's media agenda and for liaising as necessary between the ADGs and the Director of BPI. Given the workload and the availability that these duties will entail, the Group of Experts recommended that the functions of the Director of BPI and of the spokesperson be kept separate. The Director-General endorses this recommendation.

30. This reorganization of duties in the central services and the sectors also constitutes an appeal for enhanced interaction between the two, and collaboration mechanisms will be introduced to that end. Accordingly, as suggested by the Group of Experts, the Director of

BPI and the heads of sectoral communication units will form a consultation and coordination group that will guarantee information consistency and ensure quality control. These mechanisms will be flexible and light, as required by UNESCO's new alert and rapid-response approach to communication.

31. Given that the Group of Experts stressed the crucial importance of the choice of the person who will manage the entire communication mechanism, the post has been profiled so that the incumbent will act simultaneously as the strategist and the organizer of house-wide communication. A respected professional, the incumbent must have team spirit and an established reputation for integrity, inspiring trust both inside and outside UNESCO. Eventually BPI should be much more than a combination of the existing information and dissemination services. Its authority vis-à-vis the entire Secretariat will stem primarily from its capacity to give the sectors technical assistance and professional and strategic advice for the attainment of their communication objectives. BPI will spearhead an interactive and ongoing process of reflection (study and analysis of the present situation and the expectations of the various audiences), creation and professional achievement. This will require a resolute and methodical approach that no "recipe", fashionable formula or technique can replace.

32. Communication by the field units is also an important element of the overall mechanism. It is these units that are best placed to ensure that UNESCO's messages, action and information activities take into account and are geared to the situation on the ground. These units' directors and communication officers will consequently be involved in the design of and follow-up to the communication plan. They will receive training for that purpose, as will their colleagues at Headquarters.

Making communication a two-way process through responsiveness to target audiences

33. While the Secretariat has finely-tuned mechanisms for consulting the Organization's Member States, National Commissions and institutional and scientific partners in order to determine its priorities and forms of action, it has thus far conducted very few studies on how the Organization is perceived in the various regions of the world and by its various target audiences.

34. Following the suggestion of the Group of Experts, several studies have been carried out in the last few months to develop the capacity to listen and increase the Organization's sensitivity to opinion-related matters. After examining these findings, the Group of Experts recommended that this analytical dimension be taken into account and that systematic research be conducted on how UNESCO is perceived by the various audience groups. In its opinion, such research findings should form part of a "management chart" for managing communication as a whole and for ascertaining the extent to which the Organization's visibility has been enhanced among potential beneficiaries of its action. It is only on such a basis that the Organization may seriously calibrate and hence evaluate the improvement in its image and the effectiveness of its communication activities. It will thus be able to compare these precise images with those it would like to see in each of its target audiences, then establish communication objectives for each of those audiences, and lastly, identify action to be taken and the means (human, financial and technical) to be mobilized.

35. With the assistance of the Internal Oversight Office and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the Director of BPI will be asked to devise instruments for listening to outside audiences. As the Organization's members and institutional partners (States, National Commissions, international and regional governmental and non-governmental organizations) already have avenues for expressing their views on the Organization's future, the focus should be on listening to public opinion from circles concerned with UNESCO's fields of

competence, but less familiar with the Organization. Mechanisms will be established which are conducive to providing quantitative, qualitative and comparable data. In this connection, cooperation and operational support will be sought from the Member States. In order to determine how world opinion leaders perceive UNESCO on the basis of what they read in the press, the Secretariat will establish a permanent instrument for analysis of the international press similar to that tested. The method used has helped to record in comparable fashion the main items of information concerning UNESCO published in 1999 and 2000 in some 30 international press organs. This analysis will be a useful adjunct to the methodical monitoring via the Web of media coverage and the inventorying of relevant articles.

Developing a communication culture

36. The consultations have shown that deep-seated changes of individual and collective behaviour must be made within the Secretariat in order to bring about a general outlook in which communication and information exchange becomes a genuine *modus operandi*. This will entail developing new approaches to working and maintaining relations with all of the Organization's services and partners involved in programme implementation. The fact is that each member of the Secretariat is either a good or a bad communicator. This capacity for personal and strategic communication depends on the individual's motivation, knowledge of the Organization's issues and objectives, and technical and relational skills. Two approaches will be used to encourage these deep-seated changes: first, use of the Intranet as a gateway to common working tools and as a carrier of rapid and pervasive internal communication, and secondly, the development of training in communication.

37. The Intranet will be completely redesigned to become a mandatory and useful tool for everyday work. Displayed on the screen immediately upon connection with the Organization's server, it will allow all members of the Secretariat direct access to topical information of the day and to the Organization's computer applications such as SISTER, FABS, the telephone directory and meeting room reservation services. By this means, all staff members will be kept informed of the priorities and key messages that will enable them to become the Organization's active ambassadors. Similarly, opportunities for rapid and efficient interaction by electronic means (electronic messaging, video conferencing, etc.) will be encouraged and facilitated, paying particular attention to the integration and involvement of staff in field units. As the Group of Experts has stressed, good internal communication is vital to boosting staff motivation and mobilizing them to attain the Organization's objectives and programme implementation.

38. As the Group of Experts has drawn the Director-General's attention to the need to include in his entourage persons with a good communication profile, in other words professionals endowed with listening skills (interpersonal listening and sensitivity to social changes), clarity of expression, creativity, analytical ability and overall understanding of the situation and objectives of the programme, BPI, in cooperation with the Bureau of Human Resources Management, will devise training modules in communication, with objectives geared to the target audiences. First and foremost, the aim will be to train sectoral communication teams together with those BPI officers whose tasks will be strategic rather than technical. The purpose of the first module will be to compile a set of common references aimed at galvanizing Organization-wide communication. The second module will seek to make Assistant Directors-General aware of the responsibilities that will henceforth be theirs in the field of communication. The third module will be designed to develop the ability to communicate with the media among Assistant Directors-General and programme officers who will be identified as potential UNESCO message-bearers in various key fields, and who should be in a position, in agreement with the Director-General, his spokesperson and the

Director of BPI, to help to share and amplify the Directorate's statements on topical issues and the Organization's core messages. Lastly, the fourth module will be designed for Directors and professionals in field units.

Spreading the load by involving partners in communication activities

39. Even if UNESCO were substantially to increase its resources aimed at raising its visibility, its efforts would in any case remain inadequate relative to the legitimate expectations of the citizens of Member States regarding the promotion of the ideals that the Organization embodies and symbolizes. While its communication resources are now particularly diminished, it is clear that one of the Organization's strengths is its ability to mobilize and forge partnerships. The International Year for a Culture of Peace has shown how several million people could rally to a movement initiated by UNESCO. The Associated Schools Network and the UNESCO Associations and Clubs are another example of the way in which it is possible to multiply in a sustained manner the effect of the Organization's action. Extensive networks in governmental and non-governmental circles thus serve to foster genuine sympathy for the objectives pursued. Numerous individual and collective offers of cooperation in various forms are received, and it often proves difficult to respond adequately to the offers of help and services generated in this way.

40. So, to mobilize greater support for the Organization's missions, the Secretariat should spread the load. This will entail ceasing to assume sole responsibility for the communication and amplification of key messages and involving more systematically partner-intermediaries able to provide extra leverage for the dissemination of information through their networks and play an active part as stakeholders in communication activities. The aim will be to devise for its partners clear and operational proposals for action alongside UNESCO. Depending on the aims in view and by means of a more efficient system for managing rosters of partners and exploiting the possibilities of office technology, the Secretariat will address such appeals to Member States, National Commissions, NGOs and IGOs maintaining official relations with UNESCO, and parliamentary bodies as well as to companies and even individuals. Numerous prominent figures who show an unflinching attachment to UNESCO, in particular Goodwill Ambassadors, should be more closely associated than in the past with the Organization's public action. Moreover, in agreement with Member States and National Commissions and along the lines of the mobilization already initiated with the world heritage cities and the collaboration with existing associations for municipal cooperation at the regional and international levels, actions targeted at municipalities should constitute a priority approach to partnership in future. Regional and municipal authorities exercise important functions in some of UNESCO's fields of competence, primarily education, the social sciences and culture. Since UNESCO has set itself the aim of mobilizing support in connection with a series of vital challenges for humanity, it is logical that communication and public information should constitute a powerful lever for such mobilization.

Establishing an effective system of editorial and graphic identity, i.e. one that is understandable, consistent and eloquent

41. The Expert Group recommended that UNESCO should acquire a more focused and consistent visual identity. The preliminary study submitted to it on this subject highlighted how disorganized and chaotic the present graphic system is. While the logo derives an unquestionable strength from being well-known, the variations on the official emblem and the random use of numerous secondary logos representing key components of the Organization's programme (World Heritage, MOST, MAB, IOC) make for a muddled visual impression.

42. While in the longer term there could be a case for modifying the main logo, the priority should be to demarcate a “graphic territory” for the Organization and to define precise and strict rules for the use of the logo so as to give it the stamp of a unique “institutional signature” or of an element in a co-signature or partnership. A branding system of this kind would help to establish a clear connection between the Organization and its programmes and achievements, as well as to create a unifying style. While it is obvious that the new visual identity would quickly manifest the intended change of direction, the Organization would also derive great benefit from having an editorial code enabling it to shape in similar fashion the articulation of its ambitions, missions and priority objectives.

43. With a view to defining this graphic territory and editorial code, the Secretariat has sought to identify, with the help of external specialists, the symbolic lines of force of the new Medium-Term Strategy, which could underpin the Organization’s visual and editorial output in the future. Initial conceptual and creative research has highlighted in the draft strategy three major ideas: creative diversity, the catalytic role of UNESCO, and the Organization’s fertilizing and mobilizing function in the shaping of a world in which cultural and material wealth is shared more equitably. It has been found that these key values could easily be given combined expression in the metaphor of the “delta”. The initial sketches having shown that this idea is conceptually and graphically exploitable, further research is under way to refine what will become the Organization’s graphic and editorial code in line with the Medium-Term Strategy.

Refocusing relations with the press

44. Analysis of the coverage of UNESCO over the last two years (1999-2000) in some 30 news publications with an international and regional readership has shown that major UNESCO events (the World Conference on Science, the Dakar Forum, the inclusion of new sites on the World Heritage List, the election of the Director-General, etc.) have a marked impact on the media. Articles reflecting unfavourably on the Organization have been very few (3%). This study has revealed that the Organization’s name is widely associated with the world heritage, which is not surprising. More unexpectedly, on the other hand, education figures in less than 10% of the published articles. The African media are proportionately more interested in the social sciences and communication than those in the other regions of the world. Journalists show genuine interest in various topics within UNESCO’s fields of competence, but their relative scepticism concerning the institution and its forms of action is equally apparent.

45. These diagnostic pointers prompt the Director-General to refocus efforts aimed at the press by making the Assistant Directors-General responsible in the first instance for media coverage in their respective fields of competence. The creation of the function of spokesperson for the Directorate and the reorganization of the press service within BPI should help to boost this media communication based on the substantive programme elements of greatest interest to the print and audiovisual media.

46. The programme sectors will seek to establish relationships of trust and partnership with the specialized press in their respective fields. These sustained contacts, based on the expertise and value-added dimension of a unique international organization such as UNESCO, will tend to ensure regular press coverage in print and on the air. The agreement concluded with CNN television, involving the regular supply of news sequences on UNESCO that the channel undertakes to broadcast several times, is a good example of an approach that will be pursued more widely. Not only will partnership ventures with the media be organized proactively in connection with programme objectives and key events, but those in charge of

communication in the sectors will have the task of responding reactively on UNESCO's behalf so as to draw attention to ethical guidelines in debates on current affairs and to volunteer the Organization's services to solve the problems posed. The established offices away from Headquarters will be ideally placed to ensure a reactive presence close to the ground and to adjust the corresponding messages in consultation with the focal points for communication in the sectors.

47. The Secretariat will make it a general rule to speak to the press, through press releases or conferences, only when the Organization has an original point of view to put forward. The Secretariat, with the support of the Bureau of Public Information, will establish personal relationships of trust with the networks of journalists concerned with UNESCO's activities, placing the emphasis on the debate on substantive questions as distinct from the bureaucratic aspects of the life of the Organization. The Organization's visibility and credibility will in this way be strengthened.

48. When major events are organized away from Paris, relations with the press will be better entrusted to subcontractors, chosen in consultation with the National Commissions. In such cases, as in its advisory role in relation to the sectors, BPI will contribute through its knowledge of the media world to establishing the partnerships most appropriate to the objectives in view and the activities planned.

Publishing a high-quality monthly periodical

49. The UNESCO *Courier* and *Sources*, the two monthly periodicals published by the Organization, are of remarkable quality, which the Expert Group did not fail to note. The former offers an original multicultural approach to major subjects in a changing world, in keeping with the pluralism promoted by UNESCO. The latter contains institutional information and reports that highlight the relevance of the Organization's action. Counting all editions (those produced at Headquarters and co-editions produced away from Headquarters), the monthly circulation of the *Courier* amounts to some 150,000 copies, whether complimentary or sold. In addition, the *Courier* website has about 40,000 visitors per month. The monthly circulation of *Sources* (Headquarters editions and co-editions) comes to 53,000 copies, not counting its distribution as a supplement to a Chinese scientific and cultural newspaper with a print-run of 150,000 copies.

50. For several years now a question mark has hung over the future of the UNESCO *Courier* as a result of its constantly declining readership. Monthly sales of the Headquarters editions (English, French and Spanish), which amounted to some 200,000 copies in the early 1980s, have regularly dwindled ever since. When the new format was launched in summer 1998, circulation had fallen to 43,000 and is now around 39,000. While the decline in circulation has been slowed down, it could not be halted and the gap between income and expenditure continues to widen. Since it has proved impossible in recent years, and remains so today, for the Organization to make a matching increase in the regular programme resources invested in the *Courier* (approximately \$4 million in document 30 C/5 Approved), the accumulated deficit, amounting to over \$1.5 million as of 31 December 2000, has had to be covered from the Publications Fund.

51. Attention should also be drawn to the gap that exists between the readership that is claimed to be the "real target" (young educated adults from 18 to 25 years old) and the actual profile of subscribers whose average age, according to a recent study carried out in France, is 55. In other words, and in spite of the efforts made to renew the presentation, approach and style in order to adapt them to the tastes and expectations of young people today, it seems that the *Courier* has not really won back its target readership and is living on its reputation which,

though once illustrious, is now a thing of the past. New subscribers in the youth group tend to be unpredictable and, after a trial period, do not renew their subscriptions.

52. These crucial questions in regard to the UNESCO *Courier*, whose cost in 2000-2001 comes to \$6,456,300 as against an estimated income of some \$900,000, can no longer be ignored, despite the symbolic and emotional attachment to a magazine that has been published for over 50 years and a reluctance to think solely in terms of economic logic. The chronic difficulties facing the periodical press as a whole, in the industrialized countries too, are simply making the challenge even greater. Unable as he is to invest in the *Courier* the additional resources that would give it a chance of attracting a new body of subscribers and hence of having a minimum impact as a magazine aimed at a worldwide readership but with a present circulation of only 150,000 copies, the Director-General will be obliged to halt publication of the UNESCO *Courier*, as it now appears in tandem with another more recent monthly periodical.

53. With regard to *Sources*, given its close links with the life of the Organization, its lower cost (\$1.2 million) and its irreplaceable role as a means of institutional communication, the Director-General intends not only to keep it going but even to broaden its circulation, including by electronic means, so as to continue to inform the networks of partners and provide them with copy linked to ongoing activities. To increase its circulation, the form of cooperation worked out with the newspaper *China Youth Science and Technology*, which distributes the Chinese version of *Sources* as a monthly supplement, could serve as a model and encourage other organs of a similar type to follow its example.

54. To fill the gap created by the disappearance of the *Courier* and to maintain and even increase UNESCO's participation in the exchange of ideas on global issues, the Bureau of Public Information will endeavour, in agreement with the programme Assistant Directors-General, to establish lasting partnerships with a number of press organs by negotiating, for example, a right of periodical publication in certain specialized magazines with distribution networks and an established readership far in excess of anything that UNESCO could ever hope to obtain through its own unaided resources. Following the example of its cooperation with CNN, UNESCO could also contribute to the educational supplements of some major daily newspapers, co-author special issues of large-circulation periodicals or even increase its presence in those journals of the voluntary sector dealing with priorities that the Organization has in common with certain non-governmental organizations.

55. The Director-General is well aware of the attachment of many Members of the Executive Board and the staff of the National Commissions to the UNESCO *Courier*. However, its continued publication could not be contemplated and would not make sense unless the necessary resources could be found to undertake a promotion policy worthy of that name, something which has always been lacking, which could reach a large number of readers and build up their loyalty. This would involve a twofold increase, at the very least, in the budgetary allocation assigned to the *Courier*, i.e. a total of some \$8 million. This eventuality could only be considered if the General Conference were to agree to increase by that amount the budgetary ceiling of \$544 million initially recommended by the Executive Board. It would also involve a redefinition of the target readership of the *Courier* and the consequent reshaping of its editorial content.

Refocusing publishing activities (printed, audiovisual and multimedia productions) to reach target groups more effectively

56. There exists in UNESCO a real culture of the written and printed word. So much so that a significant number of activities culminate in the production of documents whose purpose

and usefulness have not always been fully worked out. In such cases, their distribution and dissemination create problems of cost and logistics that tend to outweigh their function as integral parts of the programme implementation process and the achievement of expected results. The strategic approach to communication activities under which public impact takes first place should permit a substantial improvement in effectiveness and an allocation of human and financial resources more in keeping with the desired results.

57. Today, the UNESCO Publishing Office (UPO) is in an ambiguous position. As the Publications Board pointed out at its last session, UPO does not enjoy complete editorial freedom and finds itself obliged to publish works that it knows in advance will have a hard time finding their place in the book market. That being so, as the Office is unable to finance production costs from its own funds, the sectors find themselves obliged to bear the costs as if they were publishing at their own expense, thus reducing the role of “publishing house” to that of printer. In consequence, the published works are not quite documents forming part of the programme implementation structure and not quite books submitted to the judgement of the public via the market. This situation inevitably results in a very mixed catalogue of titles that are difficult to sell in spite of numerous efforts to improve and revitalize the network of agents. The figures for the best sellers – a few tens of thousands of copies for about 20 titles over periods ranging from 2 to 20 years – illustrate the difficult situation of an in-house publisher.

58. To increase the effectiveness of written and audiovisual productions, the Secretariat will in future make a very clear distinction between documents, reports, periodicals, newsletters and other types of material whose production and dissemination to specific target groups are among the programme objectives on the one hand and, on the other, the publishing of books, films or documentaries that take those objectives further by broadening the potential impact to include indirect target audiences. Logically, the costs arising from the former should be covered by the budget for programme activities since such products constitute one of the main modalities of their implementation, whereas in the latter case the aim will be to establish contact and enter into negotiations with outside publishers or producers in order to find the most satisfactory solutions for all parties, including the target audience.

59. The UNESCO Publishing Office will, as a consequence of its integration into BPI, have to be reorganized in keeping with the following principles: development of assistance to the sectors for the purpose of ensuring a perfect match between the objectives pursued and the means chosen to attain them and identification of the best outside services for the design, production and distribution of these programme-related documents, reports, periodicals or other products; capacity-building with a view to contacts, negotiations and licensing arrangements with outside publishers and producers in order to obtain the best possible conditions for co-publishing or co-production ventures – this approach, which UPO has already used in the past, becoming the preferred method for everything aimed at a wide audience not directly targeted by programme activities; concentration of management of the existing catalogue by use of the Internet and subcontracting.

Coordinating websites and expanding Web communication in the future

60. The digital revolution is already helping UNESCO to fulfil its missions more effectively and to establish a more interactive relationship with its various audiences. The most spectacular turning point in recent years has been the creation of a UNESCO website that is growing rapidly (50,000 pages spread over some 50 decentralized sites) and is increasingly popular (the million visitors a month mark was passed in March 2001). This success and the relatively low cost of production should certainly spur the Organization to greatly increase its

use of the Internet and even to treat it as a tool for implementing programme activities. However, UNESCO could not, without betraying its purposes, embark on such a venture while leaving by the wayside all those who are as yet unable to benefit from these technologies. The “digital divide” does indeed exist and calls for a prudent, yet creative and bold approach that is respectful of those who are today trudging along “information footpaths” and who should be able to get on to the “information highways”. For these reasons composite solutions combining traditional means of communication and information with the new media will be utilized for some time to come, but this should not hinder the quest for intensive exploitation of the new possibilities.

61. Although the Clearing House has in recent years taken the necessary steps to facilitate technically the development of UNESCO’s Intranet and Internet sites, there has so far been no systematic coordination among all those responsible for the sites and sub-sites with a view to improving Web services. Coordination of this kind was initiated when work started on the draft strategy. A parallel study aimed at learning more about Web users revealed that a majority of visitors to the UNESCO site are between 18 and 34 years old, come mainly from Europe or North America and have a high level of education. They use UNESCO’s website mainly to find official documents and they consult above all the education site. Their satisfaction rate is high (88% for content, 90% for presentation). They express the wish to participate in UNESCO activities via the Internet and to receive an electronic newsletter.

62. Internal consultations have revealed the need for all members of the Secretariat to be perfectly familiar with the content and language used for the dissemination of information material on the UNESCO website. The Director-General has therefore decided to create, within BPI, a Web Coordination Unit which will work in close cooperation with the Division of Information Systems and Telecommunications (DIT) as well as with the programme sectors and central services both at Headquarters and in field offices. This new Web Coordination Unit will also be authorized to manage the most important home pages and to adapt the general configuration of the website as well as its presentation, bearing in mind the new graphic standard to be used for the next six-year period. The sectors, in perfect keeping with the principles outlined above, will continue to be responsible for the content and approaches of their sites. As indicated in the Draft Medium-Term Strategy, they will apply themselves with even greater determination to the development of portals and electronic networks in order to contribute to the building of a knowledge society. The harmonious coordination between substantive communication and institutional communication on the Internet will in future be the responsibility of the new Web Coordination Unit.

Organizing cultural activities, at and away from Headquarters, that reflect the creative diversity of UNESCO

63. In the last few years there has been a widely acknowledged and appreciated improvement in the cultural events taking place at Headquarters. The exhibitions, concerts and special events proposed and/or organized under the auspices of Member States or in collaboration with UNESCO’s partners provide the various sectors of the public in Paris with concrete and tangible opportunities to get to know and appreciate the cultural riches of numerous regions of the world. For many artists, the exhibition of their work at the Headquarters of UNESCO is a matter of pride and status and often receives considerable coverage in the media of their own countries.

64. This policy will be pursued and all Member States and partners will be invited to display at UNESCO Headquarters the best of their cultural production and their achievements in the Organization’s fields of competence. The Secretariat, in managing the schedule and use

of the space at Headquarters, will endeavour more particularly to optimize the planning process and ensure even greater publicity for these special events, which should be concerned first and foremost with programme objectives. In order not to confine the benefits of this mixing of cultures, BPI will look for ways and means of presenting some of these events in other regions of the world, in agreement with the National Commissions concerned and making use in particular of the field offices.

65. The reception of visitors and the management of the main public areas (halls of the Fontenoy, Bonvin and Miollis buildings) also express, in their way, the Organization's desire to improve its communication and so regain the visibility which it needs. The forthcoming renovation of the buildings will provide a unique opportunity to rethink their use of space, to make them more communicative and attractive and thus instruments of public relations.

IV. BUDGETARY AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

66. If one compares the funds at the disposal of certain public bodies and private firms, it is clear that the resources of the UNESCO Secretariat are particularly limited for the purpose of developing its external communication and enhancing its visibility.

67. At the same time, the budget devoted by the Organization to its information and communication activities is particularly high in relation to available resources. In document 30 C/5 (Approved and adjusted), the resources allocated to the information and dissemination services (including the Cultural Events and Public Relations Division, now part of BPI) amount to \$23,008,900 (\$16,605,100 for staff costs and \$6,403,800 for operating costs). These figures should be compared with those allocated to the Social and Human Sciences Sector (approximately \$28 million, including staff costs and field expenditures), to activities in the field of culture (\$12,350,000) or to communication (\$12,500,000). Naturally, UNESCO has to provide information on its activities in order to ensure its visibility. However, it is obvious that, in the final analysis, the most effective way of guaranteeing its visibility is through the scope and impact of the activities themselves.

68. Accordingly, in the context of document 31 C/5, which will constitute the transitional stage of implementation of the new communication strategy, and a total budget allocation reduced in the case of BPI to some \$20 million, the Director-General proposes:

- to implement the new lines of emphasis of the communication strategy as set out above, possibly revised in the light of the recommendations of the Executive Board and the General Conference;
- to review the structures and post descriptions for staff members of BPI in order to adapt them to these new priorities;
- to entrust the future Director BPI with the task of undertaking an evaluation of the skills available and to redeploy these in the most sensible possible way, identifying such training as might be necessary to enable BPI staff to discharge competently the new responsibilities that might be assigned to them;
- to establish a post of spokesperson within the Office of the Director-General;
- with regard to the programme sectors:

- to appoint, within the executive offices, a staff member to be responsible for communication and public information and to set up, in accordance with the size of the entity, a team bringing together those staff members who have hitherto been responsible for publications, periodicals, information and documentation centres and the sectoral websites, it being essential that these last should in particular enjoy greater professional recognition;
- to transfer to the focal points for communication attached to the Assistant Directors-General such staff as need no longer be maintained within BPI, taking account of the new distribution of roles in matters of public information and communication within the Secretariat and the outsourcing of certain tasks;
- to ensure, in consultation with Director BPI, that sectoral communication plans are drawn up and that provision is made for the corresponding funding in the communication plan for the biennium.

V. DRAFT DECISION

69. At the conclusion of its deliberations, the Executive Board may wish to adopt a decision worded as follows:

The Executive Board,

1. Having examined document 161 EX/43,
2. Referring to 30 C/Resolution 51, paragraph 1, adopted by the General Conference at its 30th session, by which it invited the Director-General “to formulate a comprehensive strategy, and make a cost estimate of its implementation, devised to raise the visibility of UNESCO’s action, to strengthen the coordination of information and dissemination activities within the Secretariat, to develop cooperation with partners and to improve the quality of UNESCO’s productions, both written and audiovisual, and to submit proposals to that end to the Executive Board at its 161st session”,
3. Recalling, moreover, the decision that it took, at its 157th session, following the discussions held on the visibility of UNESCO, inviting the Director-General to “establish a group of experts with the task of looking into the functioning of the public information of UNESCO” (157 EX/Decision 10.4),
4. Thanks the Expert Group for its contribution and for the recommendations that it addressed to the Director-General, which are annexed to document 161 EX/43;
5. Welcomes the decisions taken by the Director-General, in the months after he took office, in order to give effect to the above-mentioned recommendations, which led to the establishment of a Bureau of Public Information (BPI) and to the formulation of a communication strategy project;
6. Notes with satisfaction the trend that has occurred since the Executive Board opened the debate on UNESCO’s visibility, thanks to which communication is now located at the very core of the implementation of the Organization’s objectives and programmes;

7. Stresses that responsibility for making UNESCO more credible and visible both in public opinion and vis-à-vis its existing and potential partners does not lie solely with the Secretariat, but must be shared with the Member States of the Organization and their National Commissions;
8. Approves as a whole the communication and information strategy as proposed by the Director-General in document 161 EX/43;
9. Invites the Director-General to take the necessary steps in order to implement the communication and public information strategy having regard to the resources allocated by the General Conference at its 31st session.

ANNEX

**Communication and public information strategy proposals for UNESCO
recommended by the Expert Group**

Studies undertaken in preparation for the Expert Group's second meeting have shown that while there is strong support for UNESCO's principles and mandate, and for the Director-General's reforms, there is a widespread perception that UNESCO suffers from a stifling bureaucracy, poor communications, and an unfocused image because of its diverse activities. While matters of bureaucracy fall outside its mandate, the Expert Group adopted the following guidelines and recommendations to meet the clear need for improved communication and public information.

1. Communication in the "information age" is not only important, it is a vital necessity for the success of any organization or company.
2. Communication should no longer be seen as a support service but as an integral part of the substantive programme, a view strongly expressed by the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, in his comment on the report on a strategic communications programme for the United Nations, *Global Vision, Local Voice*.
3. UNESCO has a special responsibility within the United Nations family, being the organization with **communication** written into its Constitution and a strong mandate to defend **freedom of expression** and **the free flow of information, by words and images**. UNESCO should be the very model of openness and communication effectiveness. Communication should become UNESCO's mode of operation, not only for message distribution but as a continuous dialogue between UNESCO and its constituencies and beneficiaries.
4. The goal of communication/public information is to formulate and disseminate messages on the activities and concerns of UNESCO and to irrigate public opinion with the Organization's values. In so doing it is essential to recognize that there is a close connection between programme and activities on the one hand and the image of the Organization on the other hand. It is critically important that the rhetoric of communication/public information does not go beyond the reality of what the Organization is actually doing.
5. Communication/public information must be based on professional knowledge of **what** to communicate, **with whom** to communicate, **how** to communicate, and **when** to communicate. This professionalism must include a service mentality so that external audiences come to see the communication/public information staff as well informed, listening and highly responsive.
6. In order to stress the importance of communication in UNESCO, and in line with the model at the United Nations, the person responsible for communication/public information must be part of the Director-General's immediate central team and have the position of Deputy Director-General.
7. The DDG for communication/public information (DDG/CPI) should be a highly respected professional in the field, who would have overall responsibility for UNESCO's communication/public information. This individual must be a team player and at the same time have an established reputation of integrity to be trusted both inside and outside UNESCO.

8. One of the main tasks for DDG/CPI is to transform the house of discordant voices into a house of communication. This will require systematic training in communication/public information skills involving all categories of staff, both at Headquarters and in the field, in addition to building awareness in other parts of the vast UNESCO network. UNESCO staff should be encouraged to become active ambassadors for the Organization.
9. DDG/CPI should also be responsible for internal communication (except staff/administration relations). This is critically important to ensure that all UNESCO staff are familiar with the Organization's priorities and core messages, and are informed about new developments and breaking stories affecting UNESCO. Good internal communication is vital for staff morale.
10. It will be the task of DDG/CPI and his or her team to develop communication/public information strategies and tools for various categories: general media, specialized media, non-governmental organizations, the scientific community, teachers, National Commissions, the private sector, etc., using the most relevant and up-to-date techniques.
11. Besides the DDG/CPI there should be a spokesperson for the Director-General, working in close cooperation with DDG/CPI. In view of the workload and the demands of availability, it is important that these two functions be kept separate.
12. Every major programme sector of UNESCO should have a communication/public information unit (or at least a CPI officer) which is close to its sector on the one hand, and which cooperates with DDG/CPI on the other hand. The head of the central communication office and the heads of the sectoral communication units form a corporate communication team. A mechanism needs to be devised that will ensure communication consistency and "quality control". Joint agreement on staff appointments, budget and work programme should be considered. These arrangements must be established in a light and flexible manner which is in accordance with the new agile, rapid-response approach to UNESCO communication.
13. A small advisory team of communication and information experts, brought in once a year, could be of strategic value.
14. Cross-sectoral programmes and activities will be of special importance in coming years, and therefore require special attention. A communication unit devoted to follow-up to the Dakar Framework for Action should have a strategic position and adequate resources.
15. Special attention in the training scheme will be devoted to the role of National Commissions, transforming them from what are all too often "missing links" in the chain of communication into strategic links. A programme for young journalists as trainees, both within National Commissions and at Headquarters, could be developed.
16. UNESCO needs a more focused and consistent visual identity. This could be achieved with a stronger system of branding, with a modernized logo and a consistency of design, colour and typeface. The problem of the diversity of activities could be overcome with a system of co-branding, in which the UNESCO logo is used together with a graphic design identifying the particular programme sector or specific activity.
17. The perception of UNESCO among various audience categories in different countries should be the subject of continuous research. The results of such research and the utilization of UNESCO's public information products should be used as a continuous management device to improve the visibility of UNESCO among its constituencies and beneficiaries.

18. The vast array of prizes, special days, and so forth, needs to be rationalized, but the “best-selling items” of UNESCO, like the World Heritage List, World Press Freedom Day and World Book and Copyright Day, should be further developed through image-building efforts, especially in local media. At the same time, two or three major campaigns every year should be conducted globally around well-defined, well-prepared issues, close to the heart of UNESCO’s mission.

19. UNESCO, with its background and mandate, must build its reputation on **credibility**. That is the key strategy and that is how the image of UNESCO may be improved.

20. The ultimate purpose of intensified communication/information activities is to improve the service UNESCO offers to the global community.