



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

General Conference
35th session, Paris 2009

inf

Information document

35 C/INF.44
6 November 2009
Original: English

**ORAL REPORT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF
THE JOINT MEETING OF COMMISSIONS**

Mr David Hamadziripi (Zimbabwe)
Vice-President of the General Conference

18th plenary meeting, Friday 23 October 2009

Mr President of the General Conference,
Mr Director-General,
Excellencies,
Dear colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to present this Oral Report of the Joint Meeting of Commissions to the plenary of the General Conference.

The President of the General Conference opened the proceedings by welcoming the delegates and explaining the tasks attributed to the Joint Meeting. The Chairpersons of the seven commissions were present during all our deliberations and I wish to thank them particularly for their presence and support.

The Joint Meeting of Commissions had before it four major items for discussion and debate. These were:

- Item 3.1** Review of the Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4)
- Item 3.3** Preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2012-2013 (36 C/5)
- Item 4.2** (i) Consideration and adoption of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2010-2011 (35 C/5) – Part II.A: Intersectoral platforms, and (ii) Draft resolutions proposing amendments (with budgetary implications) addressed to two or more resolutions contained in Volume 1 of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2010-2011 (35 C/5 Rev.)
- Item 4.3** Adoption of the Appropriation Resolution for 2010-2011.

Introductory remarks

Before examining the first item on the agenda, namely the review of the Medium-Term Strategy, five Member States commented on the procedure that should have been followed with respect to the preparation of a draft resolution on item 3.3 by the Secretariat, which should also have involved the General Committee in the process.

The representative of the Director-General, the Assistant Director-General for Strategic Planning, Mr Hans d'Orville, provided information on the work undertaken by the Secretariat. The Joint Meeting then requested the Secretariat to prepare a pertinent draft resolution for its consideration under item 3.3.

Review of the Medium-Term Strategy, 2008-2013 – Item 3.1

The Assistant Director-General for Strategic Planning introduced the item by recalling that the Medium-Term Strategy 2008-2013 (34 C/4) was a rolling strategy. Document 35 C/10 (Implementation of 34 C/Resolution 1 concerning recommendations for the rolling Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4) and the future procedure for consideration by the General Conference regarding the Draft Medium-Term Strategies of UNESCO) reported on the action and position taken by the Executive Board and the Director-General. He then called the attention of the Joint Meeting to the draft resolution 35 C/COM.PRX/DR.2 contained in paragraph 23 of the report of the PRX Commission which had already addressed the preparation of future C/4 Medium-Term strategies.

Preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2012-2013 (36 C/5) – Item 3.3

The item and document 35 C/7 were introduced by the Assistant Director-General for Strategic Planning, who underlined that it was the first time that a Joint Meeting was examining this issue

instead of separate debates by the main commissions. He pointed out that document 35 C/7 contained a succinct listing of programming principles and approaches which should inform the preparation of the next C/5 document.

Twenty-two delegates took part in the ensuing debate. Most speakers were satisfied with the contents of document 35 C/7. They reaffirmed their agreement with the priorities set in document 34 C/4, including the pursuit of internationally agreed development goals and the Millennium Development Goals, and renewed their strong support to the two global priorities – Africa and gender equality. It was noted that the input from the future forums and ministerial forums and round tables should be reflected into the programming. Regional consultations with National Commissions were also deemed essential in this context.

Overall, delegations expressed their satisfaction with the current structure and format of the C/5 document, as well as the strong focus on a results-based approach, which should be pursued and further refined in document 36 C/5. Member States pointed at some programme priorities which they proposed for inclusion in the next C/5 document. These are: in education, EFA, which, to some, needed additional resources, literacy, teacher training, adult education and lifelong learning, higher education, TVET; in natural sciences, climate change and policy advice and capacity-building activities; in the field of social and human sciences, MOST was seen as an essential programme; in culture, emphasis was placed on intercultural dialogue; in communication and information, freedom of expression was described as one key issue of our times, with one representative calling for the creation of a global monitoring report on freedom of expression and the media. Other specific issues mentioned during the debates included the pursuit of the intersectoral platforms and the need to sharpen their expected results. The importance of statistical tools was also underlined.

UNESCO, it was affirmed, should be a top-notch upstream policy adviser and capacity-builder, and an intellectual forum for consideration of strategic issues. Many Member States were of the opinion that, especially in times of crisis, UNESCO had to make the most efficient use of the resources allocated to it.

Some delegations suggested that the following principles, methods and modalities be considered to enhance the work of the Organization: increased focus on core priorities; enhanced results-based management; increased resources devoted to programme through savings in administration and support services as well as innovative financing mechanisms; better-attuned involvement in the United Nations reform; increased emphasis on South-South and North-South-South cooperation; strengthening collaboration with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Many representatives voiced their expectation that the external independent evaluation would provide them with tools to enhance both the management and strategic orientations of the Organization.

The meeting considered 35 C/Joint Meeting/DR.1 originally submitted by Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, co-sponsored by six countries and supported by 13 countries, which was amended after lengthy debates.

The Joint Meeting took up 35 C/Joint Meeting/DR.2 Rev. which was introduced and further orally amended by the representative of Morocco on behalf of over 70 co-sponsors. She noted that in times of crisis with increased tension, xenophobia and racism, it was imperative to address issues pertaining to human rights, intercultural dialogue, social cohesion, tolerance, and shared values. Thirty-eight delegates took the floor to express their full support for the draft resolution and for the proposed programme of action on the culture of peace contained therein which was viewed as a future-oriented means for UNESCO to return to its fundamental mission and gain visibility internationally, nationally and locally, while strengthening its role as an intersectoral and intellectual organization. Most of the representatives expressed their conviction that addressing the culture of peace was part of UNESCO's core mandate and had direct roots in its Constitution. It was also

suggested to relate UNESCO's action to the Action Plan for the *International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World*.

The Joint Meeting then adopted the draft resolution as amended in the course of the discussions.

**Consideration and adoption of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2010-2011 Part II.
A: Intersectoral Platforms – Item 4.2**

The Joint Meeting then turned to the intersectoral platforms and the related proposed programme resolution contained in paragraph 07000 of document 35 C/5 Rev. Volume 1.

Seven delegations took the floor. While recognizing that UNESCO's programme sectors constituted a real potential for the Organization to address global issues and position itself within the multilateral system, concern was expressed about the functioning of the intersectoral platforms, their capacity to deliver and the insufficient information about the results achieved and the resources allocated to them. It was noted that the modality of the intersectoral platforms was not sufficiently discussed by the Executive Board during the preparatory process of the 35 C/5 document. Delegates however agreed that this new modality should be implemented and refined further. Some delegations emphasized that such platforms must have pertinence and relevance for addressing global challenges.

The Assistant Director-General for Strategic Planning recalled that detailed replies had been given on the intersectoral platforms to the Executive Board in the statutory EX/4 documents, including financial information. He also shared some lessons learned during the initial phase of implementation of the intersectoral platforms.

Some delegates pointed out that amendments to the draft resolution on the intersectoral platforms in document C/5 Rev. had not *strictu sensu* followed the established procedures for amendments to proposed resolutions in document 35 C/5 Rev. Nevertheless, these delegations, in a spirit of consensus agreed to continue working on the amendments proposed.

Following the adoption of the draft resolution on the intersectoral platforms, some delegates also expressed their dissatisfaction inasmuch as they considered that there was insufficient information before the General Conference for a fully-fledged consideration and requested the Director-General in future to provide such detailed information to enable delegations to make a full assessment.

The Commission then adopted the Resolution contained in paragraph 07000 of document 35 C/5 Rev. as amended.

Draft resolutions proposing amendments (with budgetary implications) addressed to two or more resolutions contained in Volume 1 of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2010-2011 (35 C/5 Rev.) – Item 4.2

The Joint Meeting then turned to the examination of 35 C/DR.4, presented by the Russian Federation, and after a debate agreed to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the amendment proposed therein on the understanding that funding from UNESCO will have to come from extrabudgetary funds up to an amount of \$100,000.

The Joint Meeting then examined 35 C/DR.10, presented by the Islamic Republic of Iran and after a debate agreed to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the amendment proposed in the document therein as amended orally by the Islamic Republic of Iran, on the understanding that all activities flowing from this amendment would be funded from extrabudgetary resources.

Preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2012-2013 (36 C/5) – Item 3.3

Finally, the Joint Meeting reverted to the draft resolution prepared by the Secretariat on the various debates that took place at the present session, especially in a ministerial context, on item 3.3. It recommended the adoption of the draft resolution to the General Conference.

* * *

Ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to express my deep gratitude to all the distinguished delegates who participated in the debates of the Joint Meeting of Commissions for their excellent contributions and for the spirit of consensus which prevailed throughout our discussions.

I thank most particularly my colleagues, the Chairpersons of all the Commissions, who also attended our meetings.

Finally, let me also express my thanks to the representative of the Director-General, as well as to the Secretariat of the Joint Meeting, for their unwavering support in the course of our work.

I believe that the outcome of this unprecedented Joint Meeting is extremely positive for the Organization, and for all of us members of this House.