

REPORT: CANADIAN COMMISSION for UNESCO
Annual General Meeting,
Held at the Westin Hotel, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

March 15-17, 2007. Ottawa.

UNESCO AGM THEME: Linking Networks, Sharing Ideas.

TRANSLATION:

Simultaneous translation was available in both French and English.

IHTEC Members in Attendance: Julia Morton-Marr, Rose Anne Dyson.

SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

1. UNESCO's Secretary General, Smith, in Paris had recently resigned.
2. UN Reform has begun and UNESCO discussed the consolidation of various sectors.
3. UNESCO gathered emails from their workshops, hopefully to build networks.
4. Youth were used as rapporteur's for the workshops. They did well, but didn't include in their verbal reports, sufficient questions and statements from the floor.
5. UNESCO is requesting that knowledgeable people, hold workshops for Government at all levels.
6. Cities must increase their efforts re planting biodiversity. NOT ONE MORE SPECIES CAN BE LOST. "The cost of inaction has been evaluated by the Stern report at more than 5,000 billion dollars pg1 Migratory species reveal the true impact of climate change pg2" Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, keynote speech.
7. Consumerism of natural resources must slow.
8. UNESCO calls for more municipalities and cities to join the "Coalition of Municipalities Against RACISM and Discrimination".
9. Celebrate International Day for Biological Diversity May 22, 2007.
10. UNESCO produced the following documents:
 - a. Annual Report of the Secretary-General 2006.
<http://www.unesco.ca/en/default.aspx> and look under NEWS for PR as a pdf.
 - b. List of AGM Participants.
 - c. Coalition of Municipalities Against RACISM and Discrimination; Book and CD in French and English. Contact: elisabeth.barot@unesco.ca
 - d. Water - a shared responsibility: The United Nations World Water Development Report 2, Executive Summary. www.unesco.org/water/wwap
French and English

- e. Literacy for life Summary: Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report 2006. www.efareport.unesco.org and www.unesco.org/education/efa
 - f. The Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights: [from theory to practice. English and French. www.unesco.org/shs/ethics](http://www.unesco.org/shs/ethics)
 - g. Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights. www.unesco.org/shs/ethics
 - h. Establishing Bioethics Committees Guide #1 and #2 www.unesco.org/shs/ethics
 - i. Education for Sustainable Development CD Rom English and French.
 - j. Social and Human Sciences UNESCO newsletter.
 - k. Learning to Live, Living to Learn: Perspectives on Arts Education in Canada. Preliminary Report on Consultations conducted by UNESCO CCU http://www.unesco.ca/en/interdisciplinary/artslearning/documents/LearningtoLive_LivingtoLearn.pdf
 - l. Education Today: HIV and AIDS Education an under-exploited potential. www.unesco.org/education
 - m. Youth X change; www.youthxchange.net towards sustainable lifestyles training kit on responsible consumption - The Guide. UNEP www.unep.org
 - n. A Sense of Belonging - Canadian Diversity Opportunities and Challenges: A Report. An overview and analysis of Canadian Trends Concerning Multiculturalism and Diversity. March 2007. UNA-Canada. www.unac.org and <http://www.unac.org/sb/index.asp>
 - o. Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics - Teacher Workshop - Einstein Plus. International Teachers' Workshop on Modern Physics. Apply by April 12, 2007
 - p. Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics - Student Program - International Summer School for Young Physicists. www.youngphysicists.ca Apply by April 17, 2007.
and Parks Canada
 - q. Your Biosphere Reserve: Creating a Sustainable Future. A Community Guide to Canada's Biosphere Reserves. English and French. Links:
 - i. Canadian National Committee for MAB www.unesco.ca
 - ii. [Canadian Biosphere Reserves Association www.biosphere-canada.ca](http://www.biosphere-canada.ca)
 - iii. Canadian Network for Biosphere Reserve Research and Thinking (CanBRAT) - graduate students, reserachers and undergraduates working on or in biosphere reserves in Canada and around the world. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CanBRAT>
11. IHTEC prepared 'Where As' statement that would better reflect such urgencies for "UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development" which was emailed for consideration to Secretary General David Walden.

12. IHTEC asked when the UN system of accounting would be updated to include women's work and the planet's existing biodiversity. Until this is achieved, the planet will continue to be denuded.
13. IHTEC enforced that the Canadian endorsement of UN Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, must be fully implemented.
14. IHTEC invited many to view Talking Communities online Conference Rooms and use of webcasting using iVisit.
15. IHTEC strategically spoke on the Identification for 100 PeaceWomen in Canada and handed out the forms in English and French.
16. IHTEC has much to offer UNESCO. We are considerably ahead of similar projects that appear to be underway in developing a clear focus on how sustainability education can be introduced into schools. This in response to escalating incidents of violence in schools, and in shifting the paradigm away from consumer driven lifestyles to a reverence for peace and biodiversity.

GENERAL

Thursday, March 15, 2007

An evening reception preceded the two day meeting offering good networking opportunities. It included a delightful performance by guitarist Andrew Mah. Over 200 people attended the conference. Many of them were young people - evidently an unprecedented number - were in attendance throughout the AGM. They were actively involved in making presentations in workshops, in discussions which followed and in giving reports at plenary sessions at the end of each day.

Friday, March 16, 2007

The keynote speech was given Sat. a.m. by Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biodiversity and Culture. His complete speech is available on <http://www.biodiv.org/default.shtml> Numerous figures were given on the growing rate of biodiversity loss and evidence of a link between the speed of disappearance with that of the loss of indigenous groups in tropical regions. Djoghlaif emphasized the importance of transformative change in large urban centers where reverence for biodiversity must be cultivated. The majority of the world's population now lives in cities and in the future this trend will continue to increase.

A weakness in his speech was the lack of acknowledgment or reference to the role of popular culture and communications technology in shaping attitudes toward biodiversity. Billions of dollars now spent annually in advertising and marketing goods, including popular culture commodities, were not discussed. He was asked by IHTEC member Rose Dyson, how he envisaged the role of communications technology which now fosters and reinforces consumer driven life styles that are at odds with the paradigm shift toward more sustainable goals he called for. He responded that technology can be used for either good or bad purposes but avoided comment on how we begin to change direction in favour of long term sustainability.

Another question on water resources was asked by IHTEC member Michael Wheeler. It is interesting that Ahmed Djoghlaif wrote a significant paper on March 22 for “World Water Day” <http://www.biodiv.org/default.shtml>

WORKSHOPS:

Friday

- (1) Achieving Education for All through partnerships
- (2) Working together to address global environmental changes.
- (3) Intercultural Dialogue for a Culture of Peace.

The latter included presentations on ways in which young people are learning to network using the Internet to address racism and discrimination. Conflict resolution techniques are being employed to address youth violence in schools and places where young people congregate in communities. A presentation was made on the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination, contact elisabeth.barot@unesco.ca for an appeal for help from everyone. Missing again, however, was any acknowledgment or stated objectives to address the ways in which racist, violent and misogynist lyrics in hip hop music such as rap and video games fuel the problems. Councillor Pam McConnell is the member designated to represent the City of Toronto on this Coalition.

Saturday

- (1) Building networks to address local and global issues.
- (2) Innovative means to promote knowledge sharing.
- (3) Understanding the impact of climate change on Northern Communities in the context of the International Polar Year - Circumpolar Change Game.

Presentations in the workshop on innovative means to promote knowledge sharing included presentations from “TakingITGlobal and the Canadian Network for Third Age Learning. The former involved an explanation of Internet use and the need for greater availability to youth in particular. The latter focused on new learning opportunities, through use of the Internet and otherwise, for seniors who are now living longer, in better health, with experience and education that could be better harnessed in reaching goals for sustainability. For example, in smaller communities, adults often have better access to elected members of Parliament than they do in large urban centers, making it easier to press for social changes in policy. Cautions against too much naive enthusiasm about what communications technology of any kind can do to bring about the paradigm shift we all agree is needed were largely ignored. Examples were given of how production and distribution of electronic technology does not come without environmental costs, how accumulating computer equipment that quickly becomes obsolete is posing disposal problems, that computers given to many schools a decade ago are now too expensive to repair and that research shows the growing obesity crisis amongst people of all ages in developed countries has been brought on in part by the sedentary nature of electronic technology use both

for entertainment and learning purposes . The mood among youth in the room and in the report later given in the plenary tipped toward a heartfelt urgency to relieve highschool students of their perceived deprivation in areas where they are known to use their lunch money at noon and rush to the nearest Internet café for networking exchanges.

On the whole, it was apparent following workshop attendance and participation, that communications technology for widespread provision of sustainability education, was not used only spoken about.

UNESCO's Secretary General, Smith, in Paris had resigned. This occurrence is marked by an urgency to have him replaced as soon as possible. Smith's committee work on UNESCO reform will not be shelved but acknowledged with the recommendations implemented.

A brief women's caucus meeting over lunch on Saturday. It afforded the opportunity to focus attention on the need for amendment of the Criminal Code to include gender in the section on hate propaganda law. There was discussion on the Canadian endorsement of UN Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. It is really not possible until women can expect the same protection from violence and hate propaganda as people of varying races, visible minorities, religions, sexual orientations and disabilities now have under this section. There is jurisprudence to demonstrate that the Ontario Human Rights Code, in particular, would be greatly invigorated by such amended legislation. The Ontario Commission on Human Rights, is currently chaired by former Toronto Mayor, Barbara Hall.

ACHIEVEMENTS

C-CAVE brochures were made available at the meeting. A complimentary copy of *MIND ABUSE Media Violence In An Information Age*, by Dr. Rose Dyson, was given to David A. Walden, Secretary General to the Canadian Commission. Also a copy of *The Learning Edge*, Winter, 2007, CASAE editor Rose Dyson.

VOW flyers inviting others to host their new exhibition "Building Peace; Making History" were given out.

IHTEC met with the UNESCO Associated Schools coordinator, in Canada. There are 6,000 such schools in the world. UNESCO was given IHTEC brochures, and technology demonstrations on the website. IHTEC's follow up is to request that Associated Schools consider participating in the International School Peace Gardens (ISPG) program, as a curriculum for sustainability education. ISPG will help with Climate Change.

IHTEC prepared 'Where As' statement that would better reflect such urgencies for "UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development" which was emailed for consideration to Secretary General David Walden. See below...

Draft Education Statement for UNESCO

March 17, 2007

Whereas United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization - UNESCO (CCU) is the lead organization for Education in the United Nations system, and has a major role for innovation in Education around the globe;

Whereas UNESCO (CCU) stimulated the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the UN Decade of a Culture of Peace for the Children of the World;

Whereas UNESCO (CCU) has initiated Education for All; and primary education is included in the Millennium Development Goals;

Whereas the International Holistic Tourism Education Centre - IHTEC has ECOSOC NGO in 2005 has status at the United Nations and that IHTEC's International School Peace Gardens was included in the student's statement at the Annual UN Students Conference on Human Rights in 2005;

Whereas IHTEC's School Peace Gardens was also included in the statement at the UN Teachers Conference on Human Rights in 2005 as one of the important tools for education for Peace & Sustainable Development, that IHTEC be called upon to help facilitate this process;

Where as Education developed by and for the Industrial Era has failed to protect planet earth, there is now an increasing urgency for a paradigm shift and immediate action on education at all levels including the UN system, Nations, Politicians, Corporations, Universities, Colleges, Schools and Individuals for Climate Change, Peace and Sustainable Development; We call on UNESCO (CCU) to ensure that education for Climate Change, Peace and Sustainability be fully implemented globally in every school.

We call on UNESCO (CCU) as the lead organization to implement sufficient funding for every Nation State in the UN System, for the implementation of Education for Climate Change, Peace and Sustainability, for every school.

Respectfully submitted by
Dame Julia Morton-Marr, IHTEC, Mover
Dr. Rose Dyson, IHTEC, Seconder.

FOLLOW UP

IHTEC call for Papers:

Event: A virtual online Roundtable discussion in Conference Room 2. Password: toured

Date: May 22, 2007

Topic: “The Role of the International School Peace Gardens in Sustainability Educational Curriculum”

Curriculum Papers to cover; conflict resolution, social studies, geography, biodiversity, climate change, environmental education, inter cultural-understanding, peace education, sustainability education, substance accounting, citizenship, community service, outdoor education, maths and biological sciences, language arts and performing arts.

Final Date for papers: May 1, 2007.

WHO THIS REPORT WILL BE CIRCULATED TO:

As members of a network of Civil Society Organizations / NGO's and Society's: this Report will be shared with the following organizations: Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE), Canadians Concerned About Violence In Entertainment (C-CAVE), Canadian Voice of Women (VOW), Council on Global Issues, IHTEC, World Citizens, Science for Peace (SfP), Healthy Media Choices (HMC), Phi Delta Kappa (PDK) and Others.