

I. INTRODUCTION

The Director-General of UNESCO considers his Working Document for consultation on the Draft Medium-Term Plan for 1996-2001 and the Draft Programme and Budget for 1996-1997 as a sort of "table of contents." This is how he described it in the letter (CL/3345) that accompanied the document. The letter and its two appendices can be found in Appendix A.

While we recognize the difficulty of preparing a document that is intended as both a brief guide for the future and the basis for concrete action for the next two years, we were struck by the fact that the dividing line between the future 28 C/4 (Medium-Term Plan for 1996-2001) and the 28 C/5 (Programme and Budget for 1996-1997) is often quite unclear. Consequently, in our response, it has sometimes been difficult to target our remarks as specifically as we would have liked on either the 28 C/4 or the 28 C/5.

Despite this problem, we feel that the 38 paragraphs of the Working Document provide interesting material for reflection and we thank the Director-General for straying from the beaten path in inviting us to consider a Plan and Programme that differ from those of the past. He will doubtless be disappointed to note that for reasons we explain further on, we are not ready at this point in time to support some of the radical changes proposed.

From the outset, we want to point out as a general principle throughout that we place great importance on the use of non-sexist language in all UNESCO documents, and particularly in the Medium-Term Plan and the Programme and Budget. It would be opportune for UNESCO to apply the rules that it has itself adopted on this subject, considering that we are only a few months away from the United Nations World Conference on Women planned for September 1995 in Beijing.

The following document was prepared by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO following widespread consultation with Canadian specialists in UNESCO's fields of competence, both within the Canadian Commission for UNESCO and elsewhere. The federal, provincial and territorial governments submitted their comments and opinions to the Canadian Commission, as did a large number of non-governmental organizations, professional associations, research institutions and individuals.