

GENERAL COMMENTS

Canada wishes to congratulate UNESCO for its significant accomplishments in results-based management and programme reform during the past biennium. These reforms began with the *Medium-Term Strategy, 2002-2007* (31 C/4) were further refined in the *Programme and Budget, 2002-2003* (31 C/5) and *2004-2005* (32 C/5), and we believe will continue to be reflected in the *Programme and Budget for 2006-2007* (33C/5).

We welcome the opportunity, therefore, to provide comments and recommendations for consideration in the preparation of the 33 C/5. As an overall comment, we found the *Questionnaire on the Draft Programme and Budget for 2006-2007 (Draft 33 C/5)* unnecessarily long, complicated, and repetitive. The questionnaire contains 49 paragraphs with each paragraph being followed by a series of questions. We have counted a total of 138 questions, with one paragraph (24) consisting of only 3.5 lines followed by a total of nine (9) distinct questions. The complexity of all of the questions in the *Questionnaire* requires extensive prior knowledge of UNESCO programmes and budgets, and resulted in considerable frustration for respondents during the consultation process.

We are also concerned that the format and length of the *Questionnaire* points to a larger problem with the final document (33 C/5). If the preparatory process is this complicated, we have serious concerns about the clarity, length and even the utility of the draft 33 C/5 that will emerge from the process.

The Questionnaire also takes a strong sectoral approach to the work of UNESCO which, while we understand this reflects the format of the current C/5, question how intersectorality or an interdisciplinary approach can be achieved when the orientation of the Organization is clearly not in this direction. The approach to the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development provides a clear example of this when it is only addressed in the context of Major Programme I (Education) despite the obvious linkages to Major Programmes II (Natural Sciences) and III (Social Sciences) and UNESCO's own insistence that Culture (Major Programme IV) is an integral part of sustainable development.

Canada also recommends that the Principal Priority in Major Programme V be reformulated as "freedom of expression and access to information." The previous emphasis on "access to information and knowledge for development" assumes that access to information is sufficient but overlooks the fact that without freedom of expression the information being accessed cannot be credible.

The 33 C/5 should also draw upon the research being undertaken, and the knowledge being created, by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. This research and knowledge will provide an invaluable tool in evidence-based policy development and will ensure that UNESCO activities are both timely and future-oriented.