
GENERAL COMMENTS

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

We welcome the opportunity, therefore, to provide comments and recommendations for consideration in the preparation of the 32 C/5. As an overall comment, we found the *Questionnaire on the Draft Programme and Budget for 2004-2005 (Draft 32 C/5)* focused more on the 31 C/5 than it did on the 32 C/5. We also found that the emphasis tended to be on format rather than content, and that this presented difficulties for respondents during the consultation about programme and budget issues.

We wish to strongly recommend that sustainable human development be added to the 32 C/5 as a third cross-cutting theme. UNESCO will have a major role to play in the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and this will only be accomplished if all Sectors work together to ensure that UNESCO's contribution is significant, relevant and enduring. With respect to the two existing cross-cutting themes, we favour them being maintained, but encourage their integration into programme activities in a more holistic way.

Canada also notes that there is no reference to follow-up to world conferences in the *Questionnaire*. As we have noted in previous responses, less emphasis should be placed on large conferences that result in solemn declarations and instead place greater emphasis on the national/international follow-up initiatives to conferences that have already taken place. These follow-up initiatives will allow for an exchange of experiences about the ongoing processes, and the difficulties, successes and challenges encountered. They will also result in conference declarations moving from theory to practice.

The 32 C/5 should also draw upon the research being undertaken, and the knowledge being created, by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics especially in the follow-up to the Dakar monitoring process. 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.

Similarly, UNESCO must focus its activities on providing leadership and direction rather than implementing a series of small development projects. In doing so, it must seek active partnerships and co-operate with other organizations that have the requisite experience in implementing projects at the regional, sub-regional and country level.

As an upstream agency with an ethical mandate, UNESCO has from its inception established new parameters for international debate and intercultural dialogue on a myriad of issues pertaining to education, the sciences, culture and communication. We sincerely hope that the 32 C/5 will continue this tradition.