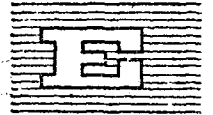


UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1196
19 November 1975

Original: ENGLISH/FRENCH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Thirty-second session

HUMAN RIGHTS AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The impact of scientific and technological developments on
economic, social and cultural rights

Report by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 1/

1/ Note by the Secretary-General: The present statement was furnished by UNESCO on 4 July 1975, and is intended to replace that part of the Annex to document E/CN.4/1083 which relates to UNESCO. The statement should be read in conjunction with document E/CN.4/1144, which is a report by UNESCO on the impact of recent scientific and technological developments on the rights laid down in article 26, paragraphs 1 and 2, and article 27, paragraphs 1 and 2, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

GE.75-11331

The problem of the impact of recent scientific and technological developments on economic, social and cultural rights concerns UNESCO under three headings, relating respectively to:

- article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its corollaries, articles 19 and 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its corollary, article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its corollary, article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Under these three headings, the organization is engaged both in the establishment of standards and in the implementation of research and study programmes.

I. The right to freedom of expression and the campaign against propaganda for war or for national, racial or religious hatred

Recent technical advances in mass information media are considerably increasing the dangers which may arise from the misuse of these media.

UNESCO has a crucial role to play in this respect; and it is endeavouring, with a particularly keen ethical concern, to promote the free flow of information and communication by normative and research activities.

In this area, it is working along two lines: its activities are designed, first, to encourage the use of mass information media in conformity with the elementary principles of human rights, and secondly, to use the power and coverage of the mass information media in promoting these same principles in the most effective manner possible.

For example, at its eighteenth session, the General Conference adopted a resolution authorizing the Director-General to prepare, and submit to it at its nineteenth session, a draft declaration on fundamental principles governing the use of the mass media in strengthening peace and international understanding and in combating war propaganda, racialism and apartheid.

Following an inquiry undertaken among professional organizations of the Press, cinema, radio, television and advertising, and after a collective consultation in 1973, the organization is now engaged in formulating flexible guidelines which might serve as a basis for national deontology codes designed to assist in developing, among the professionals of the media, that sense of responsibility which is indissociable from the full exercise of freedom of information.

The Secretariat is also to undertake a study with a view to defining in greater detail the concept of the "right of communication" and, in particular, the measures to be taken to facilitate active participation in the communication process at the international, national and local levels. This analysis will take into account the results of an inquiry to be carried out in consultation with member States, the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and the competent professional associations, and also the various points of view expressed at the eighteenth session of the General Conference and the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Conference on Communication, held at Bogotá in January 1975.

In pursuance of UNESCO's policy of promoting human rights through the training of information personnel, a project is to be launched to encourage instruction on the ideals and objectives of human rights, on the basis of a study of existing communications training programmes; in particular, new curricula will be prepared for regional and national institutions. In this research, the organization will concern itself mainly with the right to information in the light of the latest technological developments and will attempt, in particular, to determine the respective contributions of radio, television, the Press and the cinema to the cause of human rights.

II. The right to education

If UNESCO has a special responsibility, it is certainly in this area. The organization has therefore constantly applied itself to the task first of using experimentally, and later of developing, all the means which are available to teachers in this field as a result of technological developments, with a view to giving this right an increasingly concrete reality.

Its efforts have been deployed in two directions: first, establishment of standard rules to ensure that the benefit and content of education are accessible to all, without discrimination of any kind; and secondly, the widest possible realization of this right through the improvement and adaptation of the most modern methods and techniques.

With regard to the establishment of standards, the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, adopted by the General Conference at its eleventh session in December 1960, and the Recommendation on Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session in November 1974, constitute the ethical foundations on which the organization and its member States mean to base their activities for the promotion of knowledge. The last-mentioned Recommendation, in particular, represents a major step forward, in that it proposes rules of action in a particularly complex field which lies at the very heart of the organization's constitutional responsibilities. This instrument applies to all levels and all forms of education, and formulates guidelines which represent the fruits of the experience acquired by the organization and its member States over more than a quarter of a century.

Some major novel -- and often experimental -- subjects, relating to the environment, population questions or the prevention of drug abuse, have recently been added to the more traditional school and out-of-school education activities.

Recent developments in educational material call for increased vigilance on the part of the organization; and the efficiency of this vigilance cannot be ensured by its normative character alone. The utmost attention is being given, not only to methods, but also to materials and techniques. In this respect, the organization's programme is designed especially to promote the innovatory approach which is essential for educational reform. The dominant theme is the dialectic between reflexions on the long-term idea of education and the day-to-day preoccupations of education authorities in member States.

A large number of studies undertaken or financed by UNESCO relate to salient features of the development of education -- i.e., to the application of new methods and techniques, particularly in the teaching of sciences and technology, education for rural development, adult education and literacy training. The aim is to create working tools, to enunciate guiding principles and to establish lists of material which can be used immediately in operational situations, by adopting in particular the network association method which combines systematic co-ordination with the decentralization of functions.

The Asian Centre of Educational Innovation for Development, established in 1973, is implementing a co-operation programme in a network of twelve national centres and national development groups. It is applying an integrated programme designed to promote innovation, encourage exchanges of experience and influence national reform policies on the basis of experimentation. With the same object in view, the organization established in 1974 an Educational Reporting Service for which the International Bureau of Education (IBE) is primarily responsible. This service is designed to keep education authorities -- particularly in developing countries -- abreast of innovations occurring in other countries and to put the producers and users of information on innovations in touch with one another.

As regards the details of certain recent activities, mention may be made of:

- the report (1974) on the experimental transnational reception of educational television programmes, and the prototype programme produced;
- the annotated bibliography, which is now in preparation, on the utilization of satellites for educational purposes other than television;
- three studies of computer-based models in educational institutions: first, a study of the computer installation at Zagreb University (Yugoslavia); secondly, a study based on the initial work started at the Universidad Industrial de Santander (Colombia); and, thirdly, an elaboration of a computer-based model using information provided by the Indian Institute of Technology at Kanpur (India).

These studies will be submitted to the Second World Conference on Computers in Education (IFIP) to be held in September 1975.

Also, to further the development of educational methods and techniques adapted to developing countries, four studies of examples of intermediate techniques were recently carried out, or are being carried out, with the aim of providing member States with information about educational alternatives adapted to their situation. They include an inventory of uses for low-priced materials and techniques, local techniques and simplified techniques, and a study of the use of locally-produced material for games in schools in the Ivory Coast.

Studies on the use of closed-circuit television for training teacher educators, undertaken in 1973, are being widely disseminated, while work is currently being conducted on a study of the same kind in a developing country and on a guide for member States on how to evaluate their projects.

In addition, a sub-regional seminar was held in Africa (Brazzaville) in 1974 with the object of enabling participants to learn about closed-circuit television recording techniques applied to class observation and teacher training.

A study begun in 1973 in co-operation with the International Film and Television Council on certain significant examples of the use of radio and television to reduce school wastage has now been completed, as has the handbook on "A Systems Approach to Teaching and Learning: a guide for educators in developing countries", and the survey of the use of the mass media to develop a scientific outlook and to encourage technological imagination in young people is about to be published.

In co-operation with the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training, Turin (Italy), studies have been undertaken on the costs of programmed instruction and the production of audio-visual teaching materials. The International Repertory of Programmed Instruction has just been revised, as has the guide to equipment for primary schools.

Numerous technical and economic studies are regularly undertaken in member States. In particular, a document on cost-effectiveness studies applied to the use of new educational media was prepared in 1974.

The Demonstration Centre in the Secretariat is contributing to the dissemination of information in the field of audio-visual teaching material.

To strengthen the realization of the right to education, the organization will, in the near future, be directing its efforts first to the task of improving the teaching and learning process and secondly to the development of the most modern methods and techniques. On the one hand, emphasis will be placed on the use of the psychology of the learning process in education and also on the use of new methods of communication; and, on the other hand, increased use will be made of advanced radio-television and space-communication techniques for the development of education and for ensuring that everyone, without discrimination, has the widest possible access to the various levels of education. Case studies, expert meetings and pilot activities, accompanied by systematic appraisal, should make an effective contribution to the improvement of the world education situation.

III. The right to culture

Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights distinguish between the following two aspects of the right to culture:

- participation in cultural life;
- enjoyment of the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which one is the author.

On the second aspect, UNESCO has taken important normative action through the Universal Copyright Convention of 6 September 1952 - which was revised on 24 July 1971 and entered into force in its revised version on 10 July 1974 - together with its Protocol 1 concerning the application of the Convention to the works of Stateless persons and refugees, and its Protocol 2 concerning the application of the Convention to the works of certain international organizations.

The first session of the new Intergovernmental Copyright Committee will be convened in 1975.

The International Convention of 26 October 1961 for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organizations, the Convention of 29 October 1971 for the Protection of Producers of Phonograms against Unauthorized Duplication of their Phonograms, and the Convention of 21 May 1974 concerning Programme-carrying Signals transmitted by Satellite, have been adopted under the joint auspices of UNESCO, the International Labour Office (ILO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in respect of the first two, and under the joint auspices of UNESCO and WIPO with respect to the third. All three Conventions are deposited with the United Nations.

Under the terms of the last-mentioned Convention, which does not concern direct broadcasting, every contracting member State undertakes to take adequate measures to prevent the distribution on or from its territory of any programme-carrying signal by any distributor for whom the signal emitted to or passing through the satellite is not intended.

Following upon the Secretariat study on the desirability of adopting an international instrument on the protection of translators, the possible scope of such an instrument and the method which should be adopted for this purpose, the General Conference, at its eighteenth session, requested the Director-General to prepare a draft recommendation to member States for submission to the General Conference at its nineteenth session in 1976.

The activities of the International Copyright Information Centre include, in particular, the provision of assistance to developing countries in regard to bibliographical information and in preparing inventories of their needs, selecting appropriate titles, seeking qualified translators, and identifying copyright holders. It serves as a link between publishers in those countries and copyright holders.

The Centre is continuing to study the economic and financial aspects of the transfer of copyright, and of the possibilities, ways and means of setting up an international fund to compensate authors whose works are used in the developing countries and to prepare an international instrument to avoid the double taxation of royalties remitted from one country to another. UNESCO is responsible for publishing the Copyright Bulletin, which is intended for information and for the purpose of unifying, as far as possible, the national bodies of laws on this subject.

In the coming years, the organization will continue its studies on the protection of translators, on the photographic reproduction of works protected by copyright and on problems connected with the use of electronic computers and similar equipment, and the use of audio-visual cassettes and records, and finally, on the problems raised by wire programme distributing and cable television.

The question of the protection of folklore as part of the national cultural heritage is currently being studied, with a view to determining methods of legal protection at the international level.

This brings us to article 27, paragraph 1, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 15, paragraph 1(a), of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which state that everyone has the right to participate in the cultural life of the community.

The General Conference, at its eighteenth session, authorized the Director-General to prepare a preliminary study and a preliminary draft recommendation on the action to be taken to ensure that the people at large have free, democratic access to culture and participate actively in the cultural life of society. This draft will be submitted to a special Committee of governmental experts and then to the General Conference at its nineteenth session.

The establishment of the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture is also designed to achieve the same objective. The Secretariat will continue to give special attention to the technical and administrative arrangements necessary for the operation of the Fund, and to methods of obtaining voluntary contributions.

The preservation and presentation of the cultural heritage likewise contribute to the achievement of this objective. The following three legal instruments are deposited with UNESCO:

- the Convention of 14 May 1954 on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict;
- the Convention of 14 November 1970 on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property;
- the Convention of 16 November 1972 concerning the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

The Recommendation of 14 December 1960 concerning the most effective means of rendering museums accessible to everyone, the Recommendation of 19 November 1968 concerning the preservation of cultural property endangered by public or private works, and the Recommendation of 16 November 1972 concerning the protection, at national level, of the cultural and natural heritage, are to be supplemented during the nineteenth session of the General Conference by an international regulation concerning:

- the exchange of original objects and specimens among institutions in different countries;
- the preservation of historic quarters, towns and sites, and their integration into a modern environment.

Further, the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies in Asia (Yogyakarta, December 1973), recognizing that, in order to ensure the right of a nation to culture, as well as broad democratic access to it, it is essential that Governments establish and implement clear and coherent cultural policies designed to achieve this aim, recommended to Asian member States (Recommendation No.1) that they create economic and social conditions which ensure that the general public has free democratic access to culture, and recommended to UNESCO (Recommendation No.19) that it consider means of ensuring that all people have the opportunity for free access to and participation in the cultural life of society.

It should be mentioned, also, that the problems raised by the impact of science and technology on the development of cultural values were analysed by the Director-General in a statement to the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (document A/9227 - "Human rights and scientific and technological developments"). The statement by the Director-General was published by the Secretariat under the title "Culture in the contemporary world: problems and prospects".

The organization is currently making preparations for the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies in Africa, to be held at Accra in October/November 1975. Experts, research establishments and universities in African countries have been asked to carry out studies with a view to the preparation of the Conference's working document.

Work is continuing on the studies of problems encountered by member States in Europe in preparing and implementing cultural policies. These studies are being undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies in Europe (Helsinki, 1972).

A meeting of experts was held at Warsaw in September 1974 on the training of cultural development planners, arts administrators and cultural activities organizers, and a survey was carried out in co-operation with the International Institute for Music, Dance and Theatre in the Audio-visual Media (IMDT), with a view to preparing experimental curricula for cultural development workers.

The Secretariat has begun to provide assistance for the establishment of two pilot training centres for cultural activities of workers whose field of action will embrace a whole region, one in Tunisia and the other in co-operation with the Mauritian Cultural Institute (ICAM).

The Clearing House and Research Centre for Cultural Development collects and analyses information, including information on research, in connexion with cultural development and on legislation on culture.

The Secretariat has drawn up a provisional list of bodies dealing with documentation and research for cultural development, and studies have been undertaken of the situation with regard to research in these fields, as well as on cultural indicators and the preparation of a thesaurus of cultural development.

The organization is also providing assistance in the experimental establishment of national clearing houses and research centres for cultural development.

Lastly, UNESCO encourages the international circulation of cultural works, the dissemination of works of art, the publication of low-cost art books and the translation of texts which are particularly representative of the various cultures of the world.

These data-collection and research efforts will be continued - especially in regard to the thesaurus - with the aid of a computer, in order to elaborate a common terminology for cultural development as soon as possible.

National and regional institutions are encouraged to develop their research and experimental activities with a view to the compilation of an international thesaurus. Automation of card files of research institutions and experts, by means of the Data Retrieval System for the Social Sciences (DARE), will be continued, as will the publication of monographs and studies of particular countries or on certain aspects of cultural development.

The development of cultural tourism, as a result of recent advances in transport, has already enabled several member States to finance the preservation and presentation of certain monuments and sites. But tourist influxes, when they exceed a certain level, may affect the socio-cultural context and lead to changes which endanger cultural values. The organization is preparing to undertake an interdisciplinary study on the development of tourism and the preservation of traditional cultural values.

Through national teaching and research establishments, and through the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (Rome), the organization is encouraging research on the contribution which recent scientific and technological developments in the field of the preservation and presentation of monuments and sites can make to the promotion of the right to culture.

The preservation of historic quarters, towns and sites, including in particular their integration into a modern environment, is one of the most urgent problems raised by industrial development. Studies have already been carried out or are being carried out in a number of countries where the situation is particularly serious.

The conclusions of these studies will be analysed with a view to identifying principles which are generally applicable, especially in regard to architectural conservation measures and the new socio-economic factors which must be taken into account in the renewal and use of historic quarters, towns and sites in a modern setting. Later, it is planned to extend this programme to ethnographic zones. Thus, in its initiatives concerning the preservation and presentation of the cultural heritage, UNESCO is adopting a dynamic approach; and its action is by no means designed solely for the benefit of the élite. Making use of the most recent developments, it is trying to enable the public - every public - to have wide access to the cultural heritage; and, in so doing, it is faithful to one of its permanent objectives, which is to contribute to the democratization of cultural action. UNESCO's international campaigns for the preservation of monuments which testify to the creative genius of man, his struggles, his hopes, his beliefs and his artistic sense, are having very extensive effects.

A second aspect of this fundamental human right, which is embodied both in article 27, paragraph (1), of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in article 15, paragraph 1(b), of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, is the right to share in and enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications.

Here, too, UNESCO is playing an essential role, both normative and operational.

At its eighteenth session, the General Conference adopted on 20 November 1974 a Recommendation on the Status of Scientific Researchers, which deals with the civic and ethical aspects of scientific research, at the stages of the training, orientation and professional career of the researcher.

A new programme entitled "Science in the 70s" was inaugurated in 1973. This was designed to link the study of the human implications of scientific advance to the promotion of public understanding of science and its relationship to society. Two Symposia, one on "Science, Ethics, Aesthetics" in July 1974, and the other on "Scientific Advance and the Role of Youth" in September 1974, gave this endeavour a very promising send-off.

This three-part programme is being implemented with the support of a high level advisory group. In the first place, a symposium is to be organized in Asia in 1975 on the socio-cultural aspects of science and technology in the development process and on the role played in this process by young scientists and engineers. Special attention will be given to the specific problems of developing countries. The main trends of opinion emerging from this meeting will be disseminated within the international scientific community in order to encourage it to orient its activities towards the study of specific problems and to consider its role and its image in relation to science and society. Two further meetings will be held in 1975 and 1976, one to consider the effect of scientific disciplines and new technologies on the social condition of man, and the second to study the effects of technological innovation on man's cultural environment. These activities will be undertaken in consultation with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences (CIOMS).

A second aspect of the programme will be the elaboration of measures to enable developing countries to obtain easier access to modern science and technology. In this context, a study will be undertaken of appropriate means of reducing the scientific and technological gap between developed and developing countries. This study will relate more particularly to the social use of the evaluation of technology, technological forecasting and the transfer of science and technology proper.

The third aspect will be the strengthening of UNESCO action to improve public understanding of the meaning and importance of scientific and technological advances and their relationship with society, particularly by the preparation of printed and audio-visual material.

The journal Impact continues to be published quarterly; and, each year, the international Kalinga Prize and the UNESCO Science Prize will be awarded to persons who have made a particularly outstanding contribution to the popularization of scientific and technological knowledge and to scientific research.

The use of scientific and technological developments in the interests of peace and social progress, and more especially the problem of the application of science and technology to development, will be discussed in a series of publications on the role of international organizations in the changing structures of international relations; one volume will deal with efforts to eliminate the gap between different levels of development, while others will be devoted to the question of international transport and communications and the protection and sharing of the common heritage of mankind.

Lastly, UNESCO is to publish an annotated bibliography and a report on research trends in the study of the social and economic consequences of disarmament. This report will deal essentially with the urgent need to utilize scientific and technological developments in the interests of peace and social progress.

Scientific and technological developments are creating new problems in the human rights field. In order to deal with these problems, the following two research projects are to be carried out: first a study of the interrelations between population, family planning and human rights problems, and secondly, in collaboration with CIOMS and the Mario Negri Institute, a study on the consequences for mankind of the new powers conferred on it by scientific and technological developments in the medical sphere.

In the human rights field also, following a meeting of experts to be held in 1976, the organization is to prepare teaching material for natural science faculties, which will place special emphasis on the normative problems that have arisen as a result of recent scientific and technological developments.

As part of the vast project included in the scientific programme "Science in the contemporary world", the Division of Philosophy is also conducting research on the human aspects of scientific advance. This research is focused for the time being on neo-biology and ethics in the industrialized countries and countries in the process of industrialization. It will deal more especially with problems of "birth, life and senescence".
