

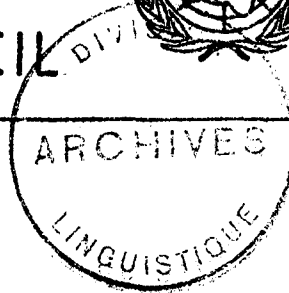
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PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND PROTECTION OF MINORITIES:  
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (NINTH SESSION)

ACTIVITIES OF UNESCO IN THE FIELD OF PREVENTION OF  
DISCRIMINATION AND PROTECTION OF MINORITIES

Communication dated 12 June 1953 from the Deputy Director-General  
of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural  
Organization to the Secretary-General

ODG/374.439

Sir,

I have the honour to send you the enclosed statement on UNESCO's work in connexion with the prevention of discrimination and the protection of minorities.

This report has been prepared in accordance with Resolution 443 (XIV), in which the Economic and Social Council invited UNESCO, "as a matter of high priority, to continue its studies and work on educational methods and projects best designed to overcome prejudice and discriminatory attitudes and measures and to report thereon to the Council in 1953".

I should be grateful if you would be so good as to submit the report to the Economic and Social Council at its sixteenth session.

I have the honour to be etc.

John W. Taylor  
Deputy Director-General

Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld,  
Secretary-General,  
United Nations,  
NEW YORK.

### INTRODUCTION

1. Respect for human rights, without regard to race, sex, language or religion, and the preservation of cultures are part of the purpose of UNESCO as laid down in its Constitution, and form the background of its programmes. Consequently, activities bearing directly or indirectly on the campaign against discrimination and on the protection of minorities pervade the whole of UNESCO's educational, scientific and cultural work. Thus, the scientific data and modern views on race questions collected by UNESCO touch on the fields of biology and genetics, as well as on sociology and psychology, cultural tradition, economic theory and the attitude of certain religions towards such matters. UNESCO's task is to arrange for the dissemination of such information among all sectors of world public opinion in the most appropriate form, by means of books and pamphlets and through the press, film and radio, and to make use of it as basic material in its efforts to combat prejudice with the help of that most powerful weapon - education at all levels.

But protection of minorities does not mean for UNESCO merely the study of the sociological, cultural and educational problems arising out of their social integration; it also means ensuring that their artistic and intellectual heritage and the genius of their culture are preserved. <sup>(1)</sup>

#### Educational campaign against prejudice and discriminatory attitudes and measures

2. UNESCO's educational programme is designed to apply the principles contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, so that in a general way it may be said to be wholly directed towards combating discrimination in all its forms and protecting minorities under the two headings specified in the Declaration,

#### General educational programme

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(1) The question of protection of the artistic and cultural heritage of minorities is not covered by Economic and Social Council Resolution 443(XIV). Hence, UNESCO's activities and projects in this field are not included in the present report.

namely (a) by providing educational opportunities for all, and (b) by improving educational standards so as to strengthen respect for human rights and promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and religious groups, thereby helping to consolidate the foundations of peace.

The development of UNESCO's activities with a view to achieving these two aims is described in detail in its annual reports to the Economic and Social Council.

It may be mentioned briefly here that with a view to ensuring educational opportunities for all, UNESCO assists its Member States in the three aspects of school education - in particular free primary education compulsory for all; fundamental education; and workers' education.

Apart from this, UNESCO's efforts to help its Member States to improve educational programmes and methods designed to foster international understanding include research on ways and means of developing the right attitude of mind in children, co-operation with youth organizations and movements, the improvement of textbooks, and teaching concerning human rights.

Educational  
campaign  
against  
discrimination

3. But UNESCO could not confine itself to such action against discrimination as is implied in the implementation of its general educational programme.

In the light of Resolution 116 B (VI) adopted by the Economic and Social Council in March 1948, and of the directives laid down by the General Conference of UNESCO at its fourth session in 1949, UNESCO has embarked on a systematic campaign of education in the broadest sense of the word, i.e. enlightenment of the general public, intellectual circles and school children. It is a campaign involving the dissemination of scientific data on race questions and the study of positive contributions to the solution of the problems relating to discrimination.

The Statement  
on Race

A. Dissemination of scientific data on race questions

4. A group of sociologists, psychologists and anthropologists convened by UNESCO in December 1949 drew up a Statement on Race. This was first of all submitted to a large number of experts, and in July 1950 it was issued officially and submitted to the Economic and Social Council. In Resolution 303 G (XI), the Council recommended UNESCO to "undertake ... preparation and widest dissemination of information through suitable books and pamphlets based on scientific knowledge as well as general moral principles ... designed to expose the fallacies of race theories and to combat prejudices which give rise to discrimination".

The publication of the Statement on Race had considerable repercussions throughout the world:

- (1) Among States. The Government of India was particularly anxious that the text of the Declaration should be given wide circulation. In November 1951, the Assembly of the French Union held a discussion on the Declaration which culminated in a vote in favour of including it in the school textbooks used throughout the French Union;
- (2) In scientific circles. Here the Statement aroused tremendous interest, and important discussions on the race concept took place in a number of countries;
- (3) In the Press. Up to the present, about 700 cuttings from newspapers and periodicals on the subject of the Statement have reached UNESCO, from 32 countries and in 14 languages.

5. This response may be regarded as the first fruits of the campaign. But of course it would have been too much to hope that the text of the Statement would be regarded as the last word on a subject so fraught with conflicting tendencies and methods. The interest aroused in scientific circles was accompanied by a certain amount of criticism, especially from anthropologists and geneticists, of some of the proposals and some of the wording of the Statement.

UNESCO accordingly called in twelve scientists with an expert knowledge of physical anthropology and human genetics, and in June 1951 they produced the text of a new Statement on Race and racial differences, incorporating in a general way the substance of the original statement and at the same time toning down or cutting out certain passages.

It was important, however, to avoid giving the impression that the new Statement was an ex cathedra manifesto put out by UNESCO as a final exposé of the race question. It was therefore submitted for examination to about a hundred of the most eminent anthropologists and geneticists. More than sixty of them expressed a generally favourable opinion on it, and the International Anthropological Congress held at Vienna in 1952 also supported it.

The text of this Statement and the commentaries to which it gave rise were published in April 1953 in a booklet entitled "The Race Concept: Results of an Inquiry".

Dissemination  
of scientific  
knowledge

6. The very obstacles encountered by UNESCO at that stage of its work illustrated once again the extreme complexity of the problem, the manifold nature of its roots, and the necessity for probing every aspect if a lasting impression was to be made on public opinion as a whole. Hence, in accordance with the wish expressed by the Economic and Social Council, UNESCO in 1950 embarked on the publication, under the title of "The Race Question in Modern Science" and "The Race Question and Modern Thought" respectively, of two collections of booklets dealing in turn with the historical, philosophic, economic, sociological, psychological, biological and religious aspects of the question, and intended for an educated public, and university circles in particular. Since 1951, attempts have been made through the Press and radio, and through the publication in 1952 of a popular work, to reach the mass of the public. In addition to all this, in 1953, UNESCO will make a start on the most difficult part of the campaign, the problem of primary and secondary education.

In university circles 7. The collection entitled The Race Question in Modern Science so far includes the following titles:

- Racial Myths, by Juan Comas (Mexico). Sets out the various theories on which racialism is based, and endeavours to show that they are scientifically worthless.

- Race and Psychology, by Otto Klineberg (United States). Describes and interprets the results of psychological and other tests carried out on members of various racial groups, and explains the part played by environment in the expression of intelligence and temperament.

- Race and Culture, by Michel Leiris (France). Attempts to get rid of the confusion between "culture" and "nature" in views on the various races of men, and explains the wide differences between cultures, with special reference to the influence of the cultural environment.

- Race and Biology, by L.C. Dunn (United States). Summarizes the latest theories on genetics as applied to the problem of race structure.

- The Roots of Prejudice, by Arnold Rose (United States). Reviews the psychological, economic and social causes underlying the origin and persistence of prejudice.

- Race and History, by Claude Lévi-Strauss (France). Sets out to show that the differences between societies are due not to biological accident but to types of civilisation which develop along different lines and in different circumstances and emphasizes the need for a variety of cultures.

- Significance of Racial Differences, by G.M. Morant (United Kingdom). This booklet shows that, from the biometrical standpoint, the features of the different races overlap considerably and that while the physical differences between them are strongly marked, there is no proof that the same is true of their mental characteristics.

- Race and Society, by Kenneth Little (United Kingdom), discusses different types of society that have found different

solutions for the problems raised when different races meet, and traces the fluctuations of prejudice in relation to the economic or other changes affecting a social group.

- The Race Concept: Results of an Inquiry, a work already mentioned, contains the text of the 1951 Statement on Race, together with comments by anthropologists and geneticists.

A new booklet, Race Mixture, by Harry L. Shapiro (United States) brings the number of works of a scientific nature, published in this collection since 1950, up to ten.

Another collection, The Race Question in Modern Thought, will begin with the publication of a series of works that will bring together authoritative opinions on the attitude to this problem of the different religions - Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, etc. The first of these publications The Catholic Church and the Race Question, by R.P. Yves Congar, O.P. (France) will shortly be published. A study by Professor Leon Roth (United Kingdom), of Jerusalem University, on Jewish Thought as a Factor in Civilisation will appear in the same collection.

Among the  
general public

8. UNESCO's campaign against discrimination is being constantly waged among the general public and is one of the most important features of its general information programme.

The scientific data collected have served and continue to serve as a basis for the following:

for articles intended to provide documentation for the Press through the bi-monthly UNESCO's Features service, issued in English, French and Spanish to some 3,400 publications in 87 countries and territories;

for one of the 1952 numbers of the monthly UNESCO Courier published in English, French and Spanish, with a circulation



of nearly 40,000, intended particularly for educational circles and for the Press of Member States; a similar number will be published in 1953; for a quantity of wireless broadcasts and especially for the UNESCO World Review broadcasting bulletin in English, Spanish or French, distributed weekly to all Member States;

for drafting, in very simple language, the popular science booklet What is Race? Evidence from Scientists, printed in English and French, (November 1952) in 36,000 copies, illustrated with numerous diagrams and drawings (Spanish edition in preparation);

for preparing exhibition items and making enlarged photographs, visually demonstrating the possibility of understanding between different races. These exhibition panels are available for use by National Commissions and Member States of UNESCO.

Elementary and  
Secondary  
Education

9. A final, more arduous stage remains to be accomplished: this covers the campaign against racial discrimination in school teaching. The programme for 1953/1954, adopted by the General Conference, provides for the publication of pamphlets intended as a guide for primary and secondary school teachers giving lessons to their classes on the race question, in order to counter prejudices at the age when they begin to be formed. Experts will be responsible for drafting these handbooks which, before publication, will be submitted for comment to the UNESCO National Commissions.

(B) Surveys on Positive Contributions towards the Prevention of Discrimination.

10. Together with its research work and dissemination of data on the present standpoint of science and philosophy with regard to racial discrimination, UNESCO has undertaken practical surveys into the position of the problem in different Member States.

Very many publications have already appeared on the question of hostility between races and ethnic groups but instances of positive contributions towards the solution of those problems have not been given the same attention either by men of science or by the public.

Nevertheless, it is an important fact that there are countries with populations differing in racial and national origin, religious belief and cultural background but living in harmony and one that may well have far-reaching repercussions on the race question as a whole. The need to study the positive aspects of relations between these groups has been recognised by the UNESCO General Conference, which during its fifth, sixth and seventh sessions authorised the Director-General:

- to undertake an investigation into the relations between races and ethnic groups in Brazil (resolution 3.22, Programme for 1951).

- to undertake, in collaboration with the Member States concerned an inventory and an examination of the efficiency of the methods and techniques employed for facilitating the social integration of groups which do not participate fully in the life of the national community by reason of their ethnical or cultural characteristics or their recent arrival in the country (resolution 3.32 of the Programme for 1952);

- to collect scientific information on the progress made through education by members of ethnic groups which are still being integrated in modern society (resolution 3.7621 of the Programme for 1953/54).

Survey in  
Brazil  
(1951-1952)

11. The survey in Brazil, begun in 1951, was conducted in the regions of Bahia and Para and in the towns of Salvador, Recife, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. UNESCO, in some cases, entrusted the work to local scientific organizations, and in other cases to research groups specially set up for the purpose.

At Recife the Instituto Joaquim Nabuco took, as its main subject of research, ethnical relations as manifested in the different religious cults, Catholic, Protestant and Afro-Brazilian.

At Salvador (Province of Bahia), where the largest concentration in Brazil of ethnic groups of African origin is to be found, surveys were conducted by the Fundação para o desenvolvimento da ciência na Bahia. Biographical data on men and women belonging to different ethnic groups and holding important posts, were collected with the purpose of assessing the effect which their racial origin had had on their career. The results of this survey have been issued in a report entitled The Coloured Intelligentsia in a Brazilian Town, by Thales de Azevedo, (Brazil), published in 1953.

UNESCO asked a group of Brazilian and American experts working in the Bahia area to undertake research into the problem of relations between races in rural communities. This work was carried out in the Monte Santo and Sao Francisco de Conde areas and on the central Bahia plateau; they were also conducted at Garupa in the Amazon valley. The results of the work have been published in a volume entitled Race and Class in Rural Brazil.

Two Brazilian experts were asked to study the effects of industrialization on racial relations at Rio de Janeiro. A report on this study has been published under the title of The Negro in Rio de Janeiro: a society in transformation, by L. A. Costa Pinto (Brazil), together with an analysis of the position of coloured people in the Brazilian capital in every field of life.

At Sao Paulo and in the surrounding districts studies in racial relations and the origin of racial prejudices among school children have been made by Brazilian and French experts, in some instances in collaboration with students of the University of Sao Paulo, Faculdade de Filosofia and the Escola de Sociologia. The results of the various surveys undertaken have been brought together in a single volume to be published shortly.

The reports on the investigation in Brazil will be published in 1953 and 1954 as a collection entitled Race and Society, the first volume of which will be Race and Class in Rural Brazil.

Survey of the measures taken to facilitate social integration of minority groups.

12. In view of the difficulty of drawing a **practical** distinction between racial discrimination as such and discrimination due to differences of an historical, cultural or linguistic character and the overlapping of these problems in a number of countries, UNESCO felt, by 1952, that it should extend its studies to this far wider field. In accordance with resolution 3.22 of its Programme for 1952, quoted above, it has undertaken an inventory of the methods and measures adopted by government organs and private associations to reduce the tensions created by the existence of ethnic and cultural minorities.

The work included under this heading is as follows:

In the United States, the American Jewish Committee has prepared a digest of the methods adopted to promote anti-discriminatory legislation, together with a survey of the results achieved. This work will contain various sections, among the most important of which are: the problem of discrimination from the employment angle; measures other than legislative for the prevention of discrimination; the adoption of special legislation; the Federal Government's endeavours to abolish discrimination at the administrative level; the part played by States, municipalities and private associations. Further, Professor Harry J. Walker (United States) of Howard University, Washington, is summarizing the research so far done on the participation of negroes in the social life of the United States.

In Mexico, the Instituto Nacional Indigenista under the direction of Professor Alfonso Caso (Mexico) is preparing a summary of the different policies pursued by the Government in order to assimilate indigenous populations. This work is not merely an historical account, but also contains a sociological analysis of the favourable or unfavourable results of this policy. It is intended to facilitate the work of the Governments of other Latin-American countries which have to face problems similar to those which Mexico has had to solve.

In the French West Indies Mr. Michel Leiris, an ethnographer, after conducting an on-the-spot survey, is compiling a work dealing with the problem of assimilating West Indian negroes on the lines followed in Mexico. He will describe the endeavours made by France to integrate the coloured population with the French community in the West Indies.

In Brazil, Dr. Darcy Ribeiro, a senior official, and at the same time a distinguished ethnographer of the Department for the Protection of Indians has undertaken to describe the aims and methods of this institution and give an account of the results achieved.

In the Federal German Republic the UNESCO Institute of Social Sciences in Cologne has undertaken an analysis of the attitude of the rising generation to ethnic groups other than their own and to assess the influence of events and new trends in education on their ideas as to human relationships with those groups.

In Yugoslavia a group of sociologists under Professor Milos Radojkovic of Belgrade University is making a study of the main trends of Yugoslav policy in regard to national minorities and of its endeavours to preserve the character peculiar to each of these, whilst avoiding antagonisms. The study will also include an assessment of the results achieved and will indicate the difficulties that have been met. Special attention will be paid to educational methods considered to have been successful.

Surveys  
undertaken  
within the  
field of  
UNESCO  
studies  
of tensions

13. It may also be of interest to mention, in this connection, some work carried out in 1951 and 1952 within the field of UNESCO studies of tensions in social change, especially as regards the implementation of a resolution authorizing the Director-General "to study, in agreement and collaboration with a Member State which has newly gained its independence, the methods employed to reduce internal social tensions".

In 1951, UNESCO sent an expert, Mr. Gardner Murphy, to India. There he organized a number of research teams which were asked to study various social tensions. Among these, tensions between different religious, racial or cultural groups were given considerable attention.

UNESCO undertook, in 1952, to supply similar assistance to Israel. The studies made there were partly concerned with tensions between groups having different cultural traditions.

Another experiment of a positive nature, also coming under studies of tensions, was attempted with some interesting results.

With the idea of studying the influence of human contacts on the development of children's attitudes to persons of a different race from their own, Mr. H.E.U. James arranged for a class in an English school to be taken over for a fortnight by two coloured teachers. The lasting change in the opinions of these children who, up till then, had looked with disfavour on coloured people in general, was the subject of a work published in 1953 under the title, "The Teacher was Black".

Studies in the  
progress  
achieved by  
ethnic  
groups  
through  
education

14. The surveys described above are principally concerned with legislation. Another field of great importance remains to be explored. Under a decision taken by the General Conference at its seventh session (Resolution 3.2621), UNESCO is to carry out, in 1953 and 1954, an investigation into the progress made through education by members of ethnic groups **which** are still being integrated in modern society.

In other words, it is attempting to develop its campaign against discrimination and racial prejudice by attacking the very heart of the problem: the progress that members of certain ethnic groups have made in assimilating features of modern civilisation. The purpose of these enquiries is to collect detailed information on the intelligentsia at present emerging in a number of under-developed areas. The successful way in which some men and women in the course of a few years have managed to pass from archaic cultural standards to the complexities of modern life is not properly realized or appreciated by the general public. These far-reaching changes, which are taking place under our very eyes disprove, better than all the works of the geneticists and anthropologists, the dogma of racial inequality and demonstrate the unity of the human race. These surveys have, furthermore, the advantage of making known the difficulties surmounted by this new intelligentsia in its conquest of science and Western technical processes. Those who desire to assist them should also be better informed on the psychological motives which prompt them to become the instruments of cultural change no less astonishing than those that take place in the areas most remote from the great centres of civilization.

#### Conclusion

From what has been said it will be seen that UNESCO has refrained from dealing with such a complex and controversial problem by any direct intervention in the educational field.

Before making the facts available to the teaching profession it was necessary to be sure that they covered every aspect of the question and enjoyed the practically unanimous support of scientific circles. It was also important to keep the interest of such circles constantly alive to the problem and to work on public opinion so as to ensure that the work done in the schools was not isolated in a hostile atmosphere.

For this reason the problem of combating racial prejudice will only be taken up at primary and secondary school level this year, and supporting action for the activities planned will be continued amongst scientific circles and the general public.

Furthermore, there can be no question of UNESCO employing new methods in a field where so many different methods, legislative, educational and psychological, have been employed. It must rather assess the effectiveness of these methods and put the results of its reasearch at the disposal of the Governments and private organizations that are combating discrimination.

Lastly, UNESCO is not losing sight of the need to co-ordinate its work with that of the United Nations and to this end detailed reports on the development of its programme have been submitted to the Sub-Commission for the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities, which considered them at its third, fourth and fifth sessions.