



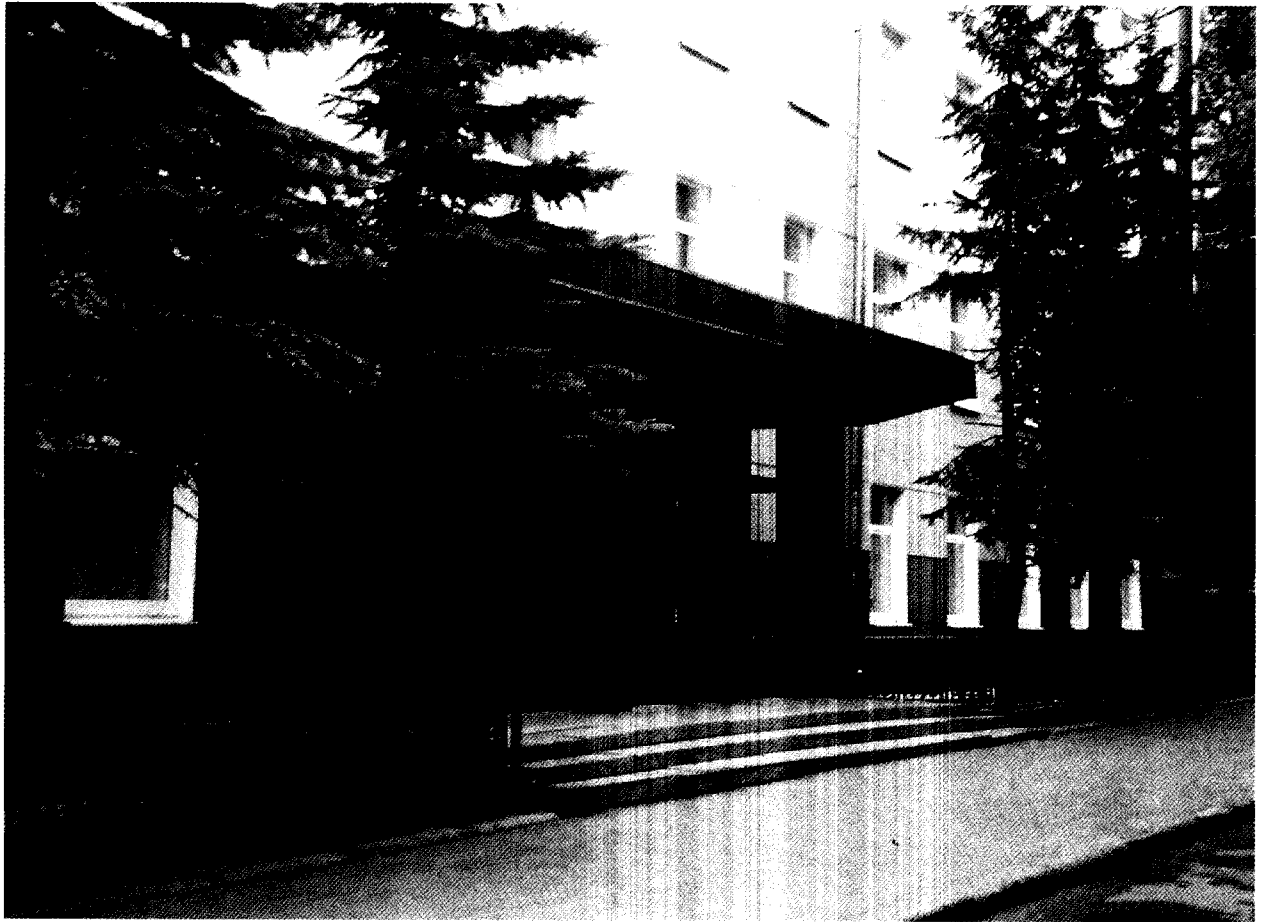
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
Organization des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture  
Организация Объединенных наций по вопросам образования, науки и культуры

# **MEETING OF EXPERTS**

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN EDUCATION FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

**18-19 February 2000, Moscow, Russia**

**Materials**



UNESCO INSTITUTE FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES IN EDUCATION IN MOSCOW

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# Introduction

## Objectives, organizations and outcomes of the meeting

In pursuance of the decisions of the General Conferences of UNESCO (30 C/Resolution 6) and bearing in mind the UNESCO document «Salamanka Five Years On. A review of the UNESCO activities in the light of the Salamanka Statement and framework for action on special needs education» (UNESCO, 1999), the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education organized the International meeting of experts on information and communication technologies for people with special needs. The meeting was held by IITE UNESCO on 18-19 February, 2000 in Moscow.

In 1994, more than 300 participants representing 92 governments and 25 international organizations met in Salamanca, Spain, at the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality, to further discuss the objective of Education for All by considering the fundamental policy shifts required to promote the approach of inclusive education. The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (SNE), adopted unanimously at the Conference, are based on the principle of inclusion **that regular schools should accommodate all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic or other conditions**. It reaffirms the commitment to Education for All, recognizing the necessity and urgency of providing education for all children, young people and adults.

*'Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all...'*

(Article 2 of the Salamanca Statement)

*'Educational policies at all levels,... should stipulate that children with disabilities should attend their neighbourhood school that is the school that would be attended if the child did not have the disability'*

(Article 18 of the Salamanca Framework for Action).

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action called upon UNESCO:

- To ensure that special needs education forms part of every discussion dealing with education for all in various spheres
- To mobilize the support of organizations of the teaching profession in matters related to enhancing teacher education as regards provision for special educational needs
- To stimulate the academic community to intensify research and networking and to establish regional centres of information and documentation; also, to serve as a clearing house for such activities and for disseminating the specific results and progress achieved at country level in pursuance of this Statement, and

- To mobilize funds through creation of an expanded programme for inclusive schools and community support, which would enable the launching of pilot projects that showcase new approaches for dissemination and to develop indicators concerning the need for and provision of special needs education.

Furthermore, the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Conference also invited the Director-General to take steps in ensuring that the concerns of people with disabilities will be reflected throughout the Education Sector Activities, especially in policy and planning, as well as in the Culture and Communication Sectors. It also called for reinforcing the inter-agency collaboration with ILI, UNICEF and WHO.

In pursuance of the implementation of the 28C Resolution 1.5. adopted by the 28th Session of the General Conference, and in line with Article 4 of the Salamanca Statement, UNESCO organized an informal consultation in March 1995 with Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden, to discuss the project proposal '*Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes*' with the aim of mobilizing support from donor countries.

The '*Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes*' project is based on the principle endorsed at Salamanca, namely, that it is better and socially and economically more efficient to integrate – to include – children with disabilities and learning difficulties in mainstream school and regular education programmes than to segregate them in specialized institutions or, worse, not educate them at all.

The basic parameters of the '*Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes*' project place emphasis on:

- small scale pilot/demonstration projects with built-in dissemination strategies, i.e. to ensure sustainability and replicability
- capacity building in the form of trained teams of professionals at national, provincial and local levels
- upstream work to incorporate new initiatives into national planning
- genuine parental and community involvement in new initiatives
- benefits to a greater number of countries than those directly participating through networking and exchange opportunities, particularly at sub-regional level

The establishment of UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE) in Moscow, based on Resolution 6 adopted by the General Conference at its 29th Session is a part of an overall plan to reinforce the Organization's activities concerning the introduction and application of information and communication technologies in education.

The Institute, which benefits from the active and generous support of the Russian Federation Government is specifically authorized: to assist Member States in developing their national infrastructure in this field; to train educational personnel; to facilitate dissemination and exchange of information on the subject; to mobilize partnership within and outside UNESCO in all fields within the Institute's competence.

The 30th Session of the General Conference of UNESCO indicated the following priorities of IITE:

- An international network of national focal points established as an interactive system fostering the exchange of information and experience;

- An international project «ICTs in Education: State-of-the-Art, Needs and Perspectives» focused on national action plans and policy documents launched;
- A set of training and self-training modules for different categories of educational personnel prepared and tested;
- Partnerships and co-operation agreements with existing institutions, programmes and organizations established;
- National pilot projects launched.

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First day of the Expert Meeting.  
Discussion on the Analytical Survey.

Following the decision of the 30<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Conference of UNESCO (Paris, November 1999), IITE UNESCO launched an international project «ICTs in Education: State-of-the-Art, Needs and Perspectives» which will comprise several specialized data and knowledge bases. Taking into account that the UNESCO Member States showed their increasing interest in the problems concerning education of people with special needs, IITE plans to include relevant sub-system in the above-mentioned project and develop the IITE's training and re-training modules for educational staff on the subject.

Collecting and systematizing information on application of ICTs in SNE turned out to be the most important and complex task at the first stage. Stocking and analysis of this information should become a basis for true recommendations for policy-makers, educators, learners and designers of soft and hardware and teaching/learning methodology.

Starting the preparation of the meeting, IITE prepared the draft materials on the Analytical Survey «ICTs in Education for People with Special Needs». Specialists in the field of special needs education and information technologies from Great Britain, Sweden, USA and Russia participated in preparing these materials.

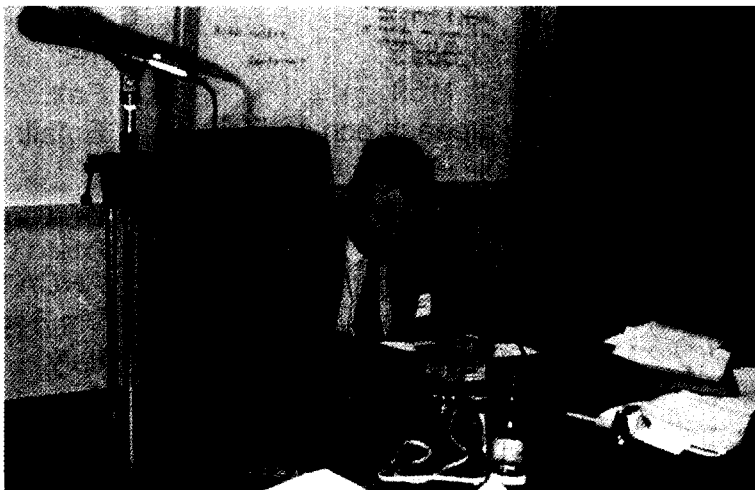
Within the framework of the project «ICTs in Education: State-of-the-Art, Needs and Perspectives» aimed at creating a sub-system on ICTs in special needs education, a preliminary questionnaire describing the necessary information fields of the prospective sub-system was propounded to experts.

In January 2000, UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education invited the specialists in the field of special needs education. Participants from 6 countries (UK, Slovenia, Italy, the Netherlands, Japan and Russia) including several representatives of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation and International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP) and UNESCO National Commission of the Russian Federation took part in the Meeting.

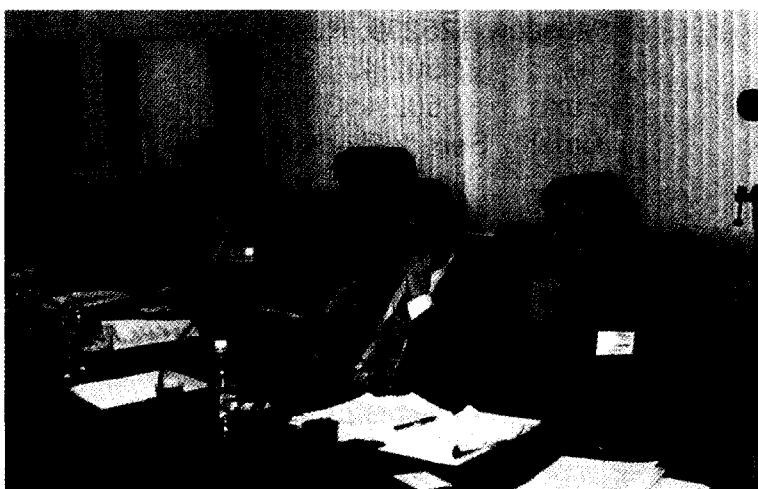
The participants and observers were high-ranking representatives of universities, Academy of Sciences, research institutes, educational staff, Russian policy-makers. Specialists in the field of special needs education from Great Britain, Sweden and USA took part in preparing the working materials of the meeting.

On the second day of the meeting the Special event was held to acquaint the participants with the Russian experience of ICTs usage in special needs education. Within the framework of the Special event the experts visited the Moscow Center of Complex Rehabilitation of the Deaf with the Bauman Moscow State Technical University.

At the end of its work the meeting of experts adopted the Recommendations addressed to UNESCO, Member States and UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education. The participants of the meeting of experts made particular suggestions on the Analytical survey and the questionnaire and pointed out their importance. Experts recommended to continue the work under these documents under the leadership of Prof. A. Edwards – Chairman of the meeting of experts, Member of IFIP, IITE accepted it with gratitude.



Chairman of the meeting of experts – Prof. A.Edwards



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## **Preparation of the Meeting**

The Meeting was prepared by IITE in co-operation with the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation and International Ware Centre for Higher Education International Links, Peoples Friendship University of Russia. Before the meeting IITE established contacts with high-class specialists in the field of ICTs usage in education for people with special needs from the UNESCO Member States and USA and invited them to take part in the meeting or in the preparation of its working documents.

Striving to ensure an active and fruitful run of the Meeting, IITE prepared the necessary documents and materials (See Annex 2: «List of the Documents»). All the documents were prepared in English. Provisional agenda and Provisional time-table were sent to the participants and to the authors of the Materials for the Analytical survey personally in advance as working materials for the Analytical survey «ICTs in Education for People with Special Needs». On the eve of the Meeting a full set of the documents and materials was handed to the participants and observers. For this Meeting the Institute in co-operation with SPECVUZAVTOMATIKA DB (Rostov-on-Don, Russia) and specialists of ICTs usage in education for people with special needs from USA, UK and Sweden elaborated the Materials for Analytical survey in the field as a basis for discussions. This document as well as the main working document outlined the programme and major themes of the meeting as a basis for discussions.

Besides, a special questionnaire was proposed to the participants of the meeting, which was designed by the basic organization implementing the project within IITE activities to create a global information base «ICTs in Education: State-of-the-Arts, Needs and Perspectives». The main purpose of the questionnaire was a creation of an information sub-system «ICTs in Education for People with Special Needs» and it offered a possibility to discuss with the participants of the meeting the necessary information fields, parts of the data base and the ways of getting the information needed for it.

To conduct the meeting, IITE UNESCO provided the equipment for demonstrations and for simultaneous translation, and the sound recording was installed at the IITE Conference hall where the Meeting took place.

## **Programme of the Meeting**

According to the adopted agenda, the Meeting conducted its work in the plenary session and discussions. The plenary session of the Meeting was dedicated to the discussion of the UNESCO role and policy in extension of application of ICTs in special needs education and to working out recommendations on organizing the IITE UNESCO activity in this field.

The first day plenary session included presentation of the Draft materials for the Analytical survey «ICTs in Education for People with Special Needs» made by the invited speaker and the discussion of the necessary supplements to the provisional survey by the participants.

Besides, the following themes were discussed:

The creation within the framework of the IITE UNESCO project «ICTs in Education: State-of-the-Art, Needs and Perspectives» of a special sub-system «ICTs in Education for People with Special Needs».

The establishment of a series of modules for training, self-training and re-training modules of educators of people with special needs within the framework of the inter-

sectoral UNESCO project «The Status of Teachers and Teacher education in the Information Society» and their inclusion in the IITE's education programme.

The second day plenary session included the Special event dedicated to the meeting of the participants of the conference with the Russian specialists in the field of education for people with special needs. The event was prepared with the participation of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation and included both appearances made by the main specialists of Russia and visiting the Bauman Moscow State Technical University where the deaf students and those suffering from the diminished hearing also study.

In addition to the plenary sessions and discussions, the acquaintance with the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation as well as a cultural programme for the participants were organised.



Deputy Minister of Education of the Russia Federation Elena Chepurnykh  
at the opening of the Special event

**LIST OF THE DOCUMENTS**

**Working Documents**

- IITE/MOS/ME1/00/DOC.1
- IITE/MOS/ME1/00/DOC.2
- IITE/MOS/ME1/00/DOC.3
- IITE/MOS/ME1/00/DOC.4

**Provisional Agenda  
Main Working Document  
Questionnaire**

**Materials for Drafting the  
Analytical Survey «Information and  
Communication Technologies in  
Education for People with Special  
Needs»**

**Information Documents**

- IITE/MOS/ME1/00/INF.1
- IITE/MOS/ME1/00/INF.2
- IITE/MOS/ME1/00/INF.3
- IITE/MOS/ME1/00/INF.4
- IITE/MOS/ME1/00/INF.5

**First Announcement  
Provisional Time-table  
Special Event. Provisional Time-table  
Provisional List of the Participants  
List of the Documents**

**Reference Documents**

- 30 C/5
- 30 C/REP.6
- IITE/MOS/WP2000/INF.1
- IITE/MOS/WP2000/INF.2

**30<sup>th</sup> Session,  
UNESCO General Conference.  
Draft Programme and Budget  
2000–2001**

**Report by the Governing Board on  
the activities of the UNESCO Institute  
for Information Technologies in  
Education (1998–1999)**

**List of the Meetings Held by IITE  
List of the IITE Projects and Partners**

**EDUCATION AND INFORMATICS.  
Proceedings of the Second  
International UNESCO Congress, 1–5  
July 1996, Moscow, Russia.  
IITE UNESCO. Volumes I–IV, in two  
books.**

## **ANNEX 3**

### **AGENDA**

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Election of the Chairperson of the Meeting
4. Election of the Rapporteur
5. Presentation of a Draft of the Analytical survey on information and communication technologies in education for people with special needs
6. Round-table discussion
7. Adoption of the Recommendations of the Meeting
8. Other matters
9. Closing of the Meeting

## **ANNEX 4**

### **TIME-TABLE**

#### **FEBRUARY 17, Thursday**

<b>20.00</b>	Arrival of the participants of the Meeting Reception on behalf of the Director of IITE
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## **FEBRUARY 18, Friday**

- 10.00** Opening of the Meeting
- 10.00 – 10.20** Welcome address by the Director of IITE
- 10.20 – 10.50** Introduction of the participants
- 10.50 – 11.00** Adoption of the Agenda
- 11.00 – 11.10** Election of the Chairperson of the Meeting
- 11.10 – 11.20** Election of the Rapporteur
- 11.20 – 11.40** ***Coffee-break***
- 11.40 – 12.00** Presentation of the draft Analytical survey «Information and Communication Technologies in Education for People with Special Needs». – Dr. G. Evreinov
- 12.00 – 13.00** Discussion of the Analytical survey
- 13.00 – 15.00** ***Lunch time***
- 15.00 – 16.20** Round-table discussion:
- The UNESCO role and policy in the field of application of ICTs in education for people with special needs
  - Prospects of creation and the main characteristics of an information sub-system «ICTs in Education for People with Special Needs» within the framework of the international project «ICTs in Education: State-of-the-Art, Needs and Perspectives»
- 16.20 – 16.40** ***Coffee-break***
- 16.40 – 18.00** Continuation of the discussion:
- Training and re-training of personnel for teaching people with special needs
  - Educational modules for training and self-training of people with special needs
- 19.00 – 20.00** ***Dinner time***
- 20.00** Moscow city sightseeing tour

## **FEBRUARY 19, Saturday**

- 10.00 – 11.20** Continuation of the discussion  
Preparation, discussion and adoption of the Final Document
- 11.20 – 11.40** ***Coffee-break***
- 11.40 – 13.00** Special event. Presentation of experience usage of ICTs in education for people with special needs in Russia
- 13.00 – 15.00** ***Lunch time***
- 15.00 – 17.00** Special event. Continuation
- 17.00 – 17.15** Closing of the Meeting  
Free time. Departure of the participants

## **FEBRUARY 20, Sunday**

Departure of the participants



# Executive Summary

## Opening Session

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The Meeting was opened on February 18, 2000 in the Conference hall of the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education. Director of IITE Prof. V.Kinelev welcomed the participants and expressed his gratitude to the Ministry of education of the Russian Federation. The experts introduced themselves, and Mr. V.Kinelev presented other participants, observes, invited speakers (see Annex 1 – List of the participants).

Best greetings and wishes of success from the UNESCO National Commission of the Russian Federation were conveyed to the participants of the meeting by Mr. V.Sokolov, Deputy Secretary-General.

The Agenda and Timetable (see Annexes 3 and 4) of the Meeting were adopted.

According to the items 3 and 4 of the Agenda, the participants elected Dr. A.Edwards, Member of IFIP, as the Chairman and Mr. J. van den Broek, Manager, Kompagne BV (Netherlands) as the Rapporteur of the Meeting.

## Plenary Session and Discussions

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Mr. Kinelev told the participants about the purposes of the establishment of the UNESCO IITE and surveyed the projects implemented by IITE.

Opening plenary session, Director of IITE Prof.V.Kinelev expressed his views on the main goals and purposes to be achieved as the result of the expert meeting. He stressed that the modern state and prospects of ICT's development create conditions for solving one of the most important and human tasks of the present and future education and full integration in the world of knowledge, art and culture for those people who because of their physical and other defects missed this possibility.

Mr. V.Kinelev pointed out that the main task of the expert work at the meeting was to determine the role of IITE and UNESCO in the field of application of ICTs in education for people with special needs.

The materials for the Analytical survey «Information and Communication Technologies in Education for People with Special Needs» were presented by invited speaker Dr. G Evreinov, Senior Research Scientist, Computer Centre of Rostov State University. This paper was composed of the materials presented by Dr. Kevin Carey, Director HumanITy, England, Dr. Kent Saxin Hammarstrom, Researcher, Swedish Institute of Computer Science, Uppsala and Dr. Marshall H.Raskind, Educational Consulting, USA

In the round-table discussion the participants of the Meeting considered two main questions:

- The UNESCO role and policy in the field of application of ICTs in education for people with special needs and
- Prospects of creation and the main characteristics of an information sub-system «ICTs in Education for People with Special Needs» within the framework of the international project "ICTs in Education: State-of-the-Art, Needs and Perspectives"

The participants paid great attention to the necessity of creation of the data base reflecting the real appliance of ICTs for people with special needs in various countries. Besides, the participants focused on the problem of standardtization and expressed the idea of fusing special and secondary schools.

Great consideration was paid to the problem of training and re-training of personnel for teaching people with special needs and the necessity of creating educational modules for training and self-training of people with special needs.



Prof. Kiyoshi Amano (Japan)



Dr. Joost M. van den Broek (Netherlands)  
and Dr. G. Evreinov (Russia)

# WORKING DOCUMENT

## INTRODUCTION

1. According to the Constitution of UNESCO, the Organization gives «fresh impulse to public education ... by collaborating with Members, at their request, in the development of educational activities; by instituting collaboration among the nations to advance the ideal of equality of educational opportunity without regard as to race, sex or any distinctions, economic or social...»<sup>1</sup>
2. Acting in the field of special needs education, UNESCO considers such basic documents as:
  - Rehabilitation Act of 1973, P.L. 92-112, 29 U.S.C. 794 (1980);
  - P.L. 100-407, The Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act, 1988;
  - NIST (1994). The Information Infrastructure: Reaching Society's Goals. Gaithersburg, MD, National Institute of Standards and Technology;
  - United Nations (1994). The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. New York, NY, USA, United Nations Department of Public Information: 41;
  - United Nations General Assembly (1994). Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disability, United Nations Department of Public Information;
  - World Health Organization (1997). ICDH-2: International Classification of Impairments, Activities, and Participation. A Manual of Dimensions of Disablement and Functioning. Geneva, World Health Organization.
3. In keeping with its intellectual and ethical mandate, UNESCO over the past ten years<sup>2</sup> has been developing its Education for All (EFA) strategies and programmes aimed at providing basic education for all children and fostering literacy and non-formal education among youth and adults. Providing Education for All is regarded as the key to sustainable social and economic growth and response to the needs and rights of individual. In ninetieth EFA strategy was completed by the programme of reforming education in the perspective of education for all throughout life.<sup>3</sup>
4. Education for All assumes that all children can study despite their circumstances.<sup>4</sup> Within the framework of EFA a particular attention is paid to those who has special educational needs, including unreached, disabled, gifted, marginalized, etc. From the beginning the EFA strategy was oriented to providing various marginalized/excluded

<sup>1</sup> Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Adopted in London on 16 November 1945. Article 1. – Basic Texts, UNESCO, Paris 1998.

<sup>2</sup> At the final session of the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, 5-9 March 1990), the participants adopted the **World Declaration on Education for All** and endorsed the **Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs**.

<sup>3</sup> Medium-Term Strategy, Paragraphs 81-91.

<sup>4</sup> International Consultative on Education for All. UNESCO, 4-6 December 1991. Final Report, p.11

groups with special programmes, specialized institutions, specialist educators. Lately it was recognized that such approach was insufficient in regard to the requirements of people with special needs because of frequent negative results of exclusion. They include: differentiation turning into a form of discrimination, placing children and youth outside the common school and university life and later leaving adults exterior social and cultural life on the whole.

5. New vision and new approaches were elaborated at the **World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality** organized by UNESCO in Salamanca, Spain, on 7-10 June 1994. There were more than 300 participants representing 92 governments and 25 international organizations. The inclusive education became the central idea of the **Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education**. The principal of inclusion means that ordinary schools should accommodate all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic or other conditions.
6. In the Salamanca documents the term '**special educational needs**' refers to all the children and youth whose needs arise from disabilities or learning difficulties. Among them several categories are mentioned: disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children belonging to linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children representing other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups.<sup>5</sup> **The experts of the present meeting are invited to define what categories of people with special needs will be the subject of the discussion.**
7. As it was especially emphasized at Salamanca, human differences are normal and learning must accordingly be adapted to the needs of the child rather than the child fitted to preordained assumptions regarding the pace and nature of the learning process. The point is to match the curricular content and method to the individual needs of pupils and to provide teacher training in special needs education and the establishment of suitably staffed and equipped resource centres to which schools could turn for support.<sup>6</sup>
8. UNESCO continues to work with groups of countries and with single countries to support policy formulation for inclusive education, as well as to support system management and implementation of inclusion policies. This work is carried out through advisory services, technical assistance, networking with research institutions, inter-agency collaboration and seminars. UNESCO monitors the progress, e.g. it prepared a Review **Salamanca: Five Years On, A Review**.<sup>7</sup> The Section for Special Needs Education of UNESCO Education Sector disseminates information on activities related to inclusive education and special needs education.<sup>8</sup> This Section also takes care of dispatching publications and documents requested by the Member States, NGOs, institutes and individuals.

## **ICTs: Enlarging the Opportunities or Widening the Gap?**

9. UNESCO strives to tailor its strategy and priorities to new major challenges and

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<sup>5</sup> Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, Par.3. – UNESCO, 1994.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., Par. 4, 9, 10.

<sup>7</sup> Salamanca: Five Years On. A Review of UNESCO Activities in the Light of the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education. – UNESCO, 1999.

<sup>8</sup> See: <http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/sne>

opportunities arising in all its fields of competence, particularly education, in the information age. The participants of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International UNESCO Congress on Education and Informatics (Moscow, July 1996) adopted the Declaration in which they appealed to the governments, educational authorities, business and industry, to strengthen their joint efforts in this field seeking new patterns of co-operation to ensure the availability of adequate ICTs at all levels of education for the ultimate benefit of learners within the framework of lifelong learning for all.<sup>9</sup>

10. The rapid development of information and communication technologies and their application offers new opportunities and new challenges for the humanity. The rate of changes in the technologies connected with presentation, access and exchange of information accelerates. New technologies, being the means, lead to transformations in the content and forms of education. But it should be recognized that progress in ICTs, changing the society in general and education in particular does not effect everybody in the same manner.
11. There are alternative developments of special needs education in relating to application of ICTs. The first, optimistic scenario is based on wide opportunities given by these technologies, such as providing education by distance learning for those who have no possibilities to attend normal schools and universities, computer-aided learning, substitution technologies of learning for impaired, etc. Tim Berners-Lee, W3C Director and inventor of the World Wide Web revealed that "the power of the Web is in its universality. Access by everyone regardless of disability is an essential aspect."
12. There are several important and successful initiatives in making ICTs of service for people with special needs.
  - *The Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)*, in co-ordination with organizations around the world, is pursuing accessibility of the Web through five main areas of work: technology, guidelines, tools, education & outreach, and research & development.
  - *The Information Technology and Disability Alliance (ITDA)* has also been established to improve general design by developing measurable criteria and concrete guidance for accessibility. Product fluidity will impose a particularly heavy burden on learning and training.
  - *Technology Initiative for the integration of Disabled and Elderly people (TIDE)* has not only contributed to the social objectives of enhancing independent living and social integration through technological applications, but has also contributed to the creation of an important market in new products and services, which meet the needs of older people and people with disabilities. This has been done through co-operation in R&D projects of research centres, commercial and industrial companies, rehabilitation and care professionals, public and private services providers, and the last but not the least users and their organization.
  - *The Association of Professionals + Users AAATE* was established to stimulate the advancement of assistive technology for the benefit of persons with disabilities including the elderly people. Its main activities are to create the awareness of assistive technology; to promote Research & Development of this technology; to contribute to knowledge exchange within the field of assistive technology, e.g. by arranging conferences; to promote information dissemination.
  - *RESNA* is accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and International Standards Organization (ISO) to develop standards for assistive technology.

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<sup>9</sup> Education and Informatics: Proceedings of the Second International Congress. Vol. I. – IITE, 1997.

- *The International Conference for Computers Helping People with Special Needs* is one of the most important meetings in research efforts and scientific integration investigating the problem, barriers and their elimination.

**The experts could share their opinions on possibilities and effectiveness of ICTs application in education for individual categories of people with special needs.**

13. Another, pessimistic scenario for special needs education in information age means increasing isolation of people with sensory, mental or physical disturbances, infringement of their right for education as a result of inaccessibility to ICTs and absence of accommodation/adaptation of technologies, devices and learning methods to their special needs. This menace is real both in exclusive and inclusive forms of learning.
14. UNESCO attracts attention of the international community to this problem. Thus at Salamanca it was declared: "International co-ordination should exist to support universal accessibility specifications in communication technology underpinning the emerging information infrastructure".<sup>10</sup> World Conference on Higher Education (Paris, October 1998) underlined the role of ICTs in enhancing of accessibility of education for all and in the elimination of inequality.<sup>11</sup>
15. In 1988 and 1995 UNESCO published *Reviews of the Present Situation in Special Needs Education*. The last one was based on data for 1993-1994 gathered in 63 Member States on policies, legislation, administration and organization, teacher training, financing, and special education provision. Unfortunately there was no section in the Review (as well as a question in the questionnaire sent to contributors to the research) relating to ICTs in SNE. The use of ICTs was reflected only in replies about teacher training: Costa Rica and Kenya had referred to distance education programmes.<sup>12</sup> Gradually it became clear that the application of ICTs in education, including special needs education requires specific UNESCO activity and research, including investigation projects in the area of designing new methods and educational tools for special needs.

## **IITE Functions and Priorities**

16. The UNESCO General Conference at its 29<sup>th</sup> Session (October 1997) adopted the Resolution 6 on Establishment of the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE) as an integral part of UNESCO and approved its Statute. According its Statute, the main goal of the Institute is to contribute to the design and implementation of UNESCO programmes in regard to the application of information and communication technologies in education.

To that end, the functions of the Institute are:

- to promote the collection, analysis, dissemination and exchange of information on the use of information and communication technologies in education;
- to provide at the request of Member States advisory services and promote studies in Member States on the application of information and communication technologies in education;

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<sup>10</sup> Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, Par.3. – UNESCO, 1994.

<sup>11</sup> «World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century», Article 12. – UNESCO, 1998.

- to offer technical assistance based on research findings in the design of curricula and courses on the use of information and communication technologies in education;
  - to organize pre- and in-service training, including open and distance education, for educational personnel on the use of information and communication technologies in education, giving priority to developing countries and countries in transition;
  - to foster the development of UNESCO's regional programmes on the application of information and communication technologies in education in all Member States and in particular in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.<sup>13</sup>
17. The 30th Session of the General Conference of UNESCO pointed the priorities of IITE and results expected to the end of the biennium 2000-2001:
- An international network of national focal points established as an interactive system fostering the exchange of information and experience;
  - An international project «ICTs in Education: State of the Art, Needs and Perspectives» focused on national action plans and policy documents launched;
  - A set of training and self-training modules for different categories of educational personnel prepared and tested;
  - Partnership and cooperative agreements with existing institutions, programmes and organizations established;
  - National pilot projects launched;
  - IITE Bulletin published regularly.<sup>14</sup>

## Researching Application of ICTs in SNE: First Steps

18. Following the mandate of IITE its international Governing Board adopted several projects, and among them the project 'ICTs in Education for People with Special Needs' aimed at providing an access to electronic educational materials for this category of learners. Besides it is planned that later the corresponding training modules will be elaborated. The IITE Governing Board strongly supported this project and pointed to its humanistic character.<sup>15</sup> **The experts of this meeting are invited to discuss possible trends of the development of the project, to define main target groups and to suggest international partners for this project.**
19. Starting the investigation IITE met such difficulties as lack or fragmentary character of information on the use of ICTs in SNE. That is the reason of drafting the first Analytical survey on this issue. **The experts are asked to examine preliminary materials and are invited to make recommendations on the content and structure of the survey, its volume, and advice the author unit.**
20. Collecting and systematization of information on application of ICTs in SNE seems to be the most important and complex task at the first stage. Stocking and analysis of this information should become a basis for true recommendations for policy-makers, educators, learners, and designers of soft and hardware and teaching/learning methodology. ICTs in SNE could not be regarded apart of ICTs in education in general. According the decision of the 30<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Conference of UNESCO, IITE will launch to the end of this biennium an international project «ICTs in Education:

<sup>12</sup> Reviews of the Present Situation in Special Needs Education, p.24 – UNESCO, 1999.

<sup>13</sup> 29 C/Resolution 6.

<sup>14</sup> Draft 30C/5.

<sup>15</sup> Report by the Governing Board of UNESCO Institute for information Technologies in Education (Moscow) on the Activities of the Institute (1998-1999) to the 30<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of UNESCO, Par.20.

State-of-the-Art, Needs and Perspectives» and will establish an international network of national focal points as an interactive system fostering the exchange of information and experience.<sup>16</sup> **The experts will be acquainted with these activities and invited to discuss possibilities of establishment of a sub-system «ICTs in SNE» within the framework of planned information system «ICTs in Education: State-of-the-Art, Needs and Perspectives».** The experts are kindly requested to recommend the needed structure, indicators, and parameters of the sub-system, as well as to improve the structure and indicators of the Questionnaire «ICTs in SNE» in a view of its sending to national focal points<sup>17</sup>, experts and interested organizations for getting information.

## **From Collecting Information to Dissemination and Training**

21. Keeping in line with the decisions of the General Conference of UNESCO, IITE plans to disseminate in print and on Internet-site the results of researches and arrange the exchange of information, experience, success stories and examples of good practice in the field of application of ICTs in SNE. **The experts are asked to recommend the best ways of dissemination and suggest the names of other experts experienced in the use of ICTs in SNE for forming relevant data bank.**
22. The last but not the least task for IITE is to collect and adjust exchange of the existing training modules on ICTs in education, including special needs education and to assist in elaboration of new ones. This work comprises structuring on a module educational programme on ICTs oriented on different levels of education, subject areas, categories of learners (pupils, students, teachers, teacher educators, administrators, decision-makers) and their types according to physical and mental peculiarities, etc. **The experts are invited to contribute to design of the model structure of the educational programme on ICTs in SNE and advice the most effective training modules.**
23. On the first stage IITE intends to reveal and pay particular attention to the modules with multiplying effect. In line with the UNESCO intersectoral project «The Status of Teachers and Teacher Education in the Information Society» IITE accentuates the need for teacher pre-service and in-service training modules. Within the framework of this project special emphasis will be placed, on the one hand, on imparting competencies in the use of new net technologies to teachers and other educational personnel and, on the other hand, on the more effective use of media technologies (e.g. television, radio, phones) in the training and re-training of teachers and teacher educators on a large scale.<sup>18</sup> **The experts are asked to make recommendations on content of more needed and useful training and re-training modules for teachers of people with special needs, as well as on possible forms of their elaboration, dissemination and carrying out.**

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<sup>16</sup> Draft 30C/5, Par. 01443.

<sup>17</sup> By the middle of February, 2000, 17 Member States proposed national focal points for IITE.

<sup>18</sup> Draft 30C/5, PAR. 01240.



## Special Event

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The Special event was opened at the Conference hall of IITE UNESCO on February 19, 2000 by the speech of the Deputy Minister of Education of the Russian Federation Elena Chepurnykh. She greeted the participants of the meeting and Russian specialists in the field of education for people with special needs and ICTs usage. In her report she familiarized the participants with the Russian experience, problems and possible problems of the Ministry to accelerate the introduction of ICTs in the system of education for people with special needs both in secondary schools and in the system of professional and higher education.

Mrs. Chepurnykh expressed her hope that IITE UNESCO would help to integrate the corresponding structures of Member States of UNESCO and to exchange experience in such an important field as the usage of ICTs in education for people with special needs.

Dr Y.Sereda, Deputy Director on Information Technologies of Apple Distinguished School # 1126 (Russia) demonstrated the experience of the appliance of new information technologies in Russian secondary schools for children with special needs. He gave comments to the examples of ICTs usage for various forms of defects. In his report he demonstrated the examples of the usage of ICTs both in the process of education and in the system of additional education and special schools (boarding-schools).

The report by Dr. G.Nicotra (Italy) was devoted to the European experience of ICTs usage in the music education of the blind and vision-impaired people.

During the meeting the Russian specialists had the possibility to ask the experts about the international experience and tendencies of the ICT's usage in education for people with special needs, to learn about the international projects in this field.

In the afternoon the participants visited the Moscow Center of Complex Rehabilitation of the Deaf with the Bauman Moscow State University – one of the largest, oldest and respected technical universities in Russia which has been using a successful programme for the hearing-impaired students during past six years. Students from 68 Russian regions and CIS countries use new information technologies in their study and will have a 'regular' university diploma. The experts and the participants of the meeting visited the classes of hearing-impaired students groups of the Bauman University.

On the closing of the Special event at the end of the Experts Meeting, the Director of IITE UNESCO expressed his gratitude to the administration of the Bauman Moscow State Technical University and the Director of the Center of Complex Rehabilitation of the Deaf. He also expressed the trust that this meeting would be the starting point of the future programme activity of the Institute and IITE would become one of the UNESCO centers of accumulation and exchange of modern international experience in the ICTs usage in education for people with special needs. He invited all the participants of the meeting to further cooperation and expressed gratitude for their active and fruitful work.

**Special event  
within the framework of the Expert Meeting  
on ICTs in Education for People with Special Needs**

**TIME-TABLE**

**FEBRUARY 19, Saturday**

- 11.40 – 11.50** Opening of the Special event
- 11.50 – 12.10** Information on the state-of-the-art, needs and perspectives of special needs education in the Russian Federation. Dr. Elena Chepurnykh, Deputy Minister of Education of the Russian Federation
- 12.10 – 12.30** Presentation of the experience of ICTs usage in the Russian specialized secondary schools. Dr. Yuri Sereda, Deputy Director on Information Technologies, Apple Distinguished School # 1126, Moscow, Russian Federation
- 12.30 – 12.40** Presentation of the PLAY Project (EC).  
Dr. Giuseppe Nicotra, Project Co-ordinator, PLAY2 Project, Italy.
- 12.40 – 13.30** Round-table discussion on application of ICTs in special needs education. Participants: international expert group and Russian specialists
- 13.30 – 15.00** *Lunch time*
- 15.00 – 16.30** Visit to Moscow Center of Complex Rehabilitation of the Deaf with the Bauman Moscow State Technical University (MSTU). Presentation of the experience of application of ICTs in special needs education. Dr. Alexander Stanevsky, Associated Professor, MSTU.
- 16.30** Closure of the Special event

## Closing Session

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By the end of the Meeting the drafting group collected, analyzed and generalized presented conclusions, oral proposals of the participants and the Chairman, Prof. A. Edwards delivered the Draft Recommendations. These several amendments were unanimously adopted (see Annex 7: «Recommendations»).

The participants called UNESCO and its Member States to turn their attention to the fact that real breakthroughs in special needs education could be provided by introduction of ICTs in their learning, training and self-training.

Experts recommended that IITE should finalize the preparation of the Analytical survey «ICTs in Education for People with Special Needs» taking into account the comments and suggestions of the participants. Experts recommended to continue this work under the leadership of Prof. A. Edwards and to publish the Analytical survey as a UNESCO document.

The participants of the Meeting favoured the IITE UNESCO plans of establishing an information sub-system «Information and Communication Technologies in Education for People with Special Needs» within the framework of the IITE international project of creation of the information system «ICTs in Education: State-of-the-Art, Needs and Perspectives». In order to tackle these tasks, the participants of the Meeting suggested that IITE UNESCO should continue its work to create a special questionnaire concerning the usage of ICTs in education for people with special needs for the UNESCO Member States. The participants of the expert meeting made particular suggestions on the elaboration of the questionnaire, which IITE accepted with gratitude.

The participants of the meeting expressed their hope that IITE UNESCO would become an international clearing house for the application of ICTs in education, in particular in special needs education, and promote exchange of information and experience in this field.

The experts wished that on the basis of the IITE UNESCO education modules on application of ICTs in special needs education, first of all such modules for teacher training and re-training should be developed within the framework of the intersectoral UNESCO project «The Status of Teachers and Teacher Education in the Information Society» and included in the IITE educational programme

The participants included in the final document their gratitude to IITE for the organization of the Expert Meeting and also their appreciation to the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation and the Bauman Moscow State Technical University (MSTU) for their support in the organization of the successful contact during the Special event with the Russian specialists in the field.

Mr. V. Kinelev expressed his gratitude to the participants for their contributions to the success of the discussions and hoped that the Meeting would become the starting point of the IITE permanent activities in the field of application of ICTs for people with special needs, and declared the Meeting closed.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**The participants of the Expert Meeting** on Information and Communication Technologies in Education for People with Special Needs held by the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE) on February 18–19, 2000 in Moscow,

**Recalling** the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993), in which the education of persons with disabilities was avowed an integral part of the education system,

**Pursuing** the UNESCO goals and strategies of providing education for all throughout life and education without frontiers,

**Noting** with satisfaction the growing engagement of UNESCO in improving special needs education and **sharing** the main principles of the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education adopted at the World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994),

**Being sure** that the application of information and communication technologies is indispensable in modern education and doubly advantageous for people with special needs who should benefit from distance and computer-aided learning, substitution and assistive technologies, etc.,

**Recognizing** that the further development of special needs education, in particular inclusive education should be supported by the introduction of ICTs in educational process and relevant teacher training,

**Being convinced** that the organization of international co-operation, exchange of knowledge and experience in the application of ICTs in learning and teaching should improve national approaches to special needs education,

**Having been informed** about the main trends of the IITE programme activities and some IITE projects for 2000–2001, and having been acquainted with the experience of application of ICTs in special needs education in the Russian educational system,

**Having discussed:**

- The role and strategy of IITE in the field of the application of ICTs in special needs education;
- The possibility of elaboration of an information sub-system «ICTs in Education for People with Special Needs» within the framework of the IITE international project «ICTs in Education: State-of-the-Art, Needs and Perspectives»;
- The main trends of educational support and support education for all and elaboration of educational modules for training of people with special needs and relevant teacher training;
- The materials for the Analytical survey «ICTs in Education for People with Special Needs»;
- Draft Questionnaire «ICTs in Special Needs Education» aimed at studying the present situation and needs for the application of ICTs in special needs education,

**Recommend:**

- UNESCO and Member States should turn their attention to the fact that real breakthroughs in special needs education could be provided by introduction of ICTs in their learning, training and self-training;
- IITE should become an international clearing house for the application of ICTs in education, in particular in special needs education and promote exchange of information and experience in this field. The examples of good practice of application of ICTs in exclusive and especially inclusive education of people with special needs in countries with different economic, social and cultural environments should be found and disseminated;
- There is a need for stocking existing data and knowledge bases on the use of ICTs in special needs education and making it available for learners with special needs, their teachers, teacher trainers, other educators, and decision-makers, in particular through the IITE information facilities. Thus, for this purpose an information sub-system «ICTs in Education for People with Special Needs» within the framework of the IITE international project «ICTs in Education: State-of-the-Art, Needs and Perspectives» should be created. Specialized questionnaires are necessary for its continual up-dating and replenishing;
- Education modules on application of ICTs in special needs education, first of all such modules for teacher training and re-training, should be developed within the framework of the intersectoral UNESCO project «The Status of Teachers and Teacher Education in the Information Society» and included in the IITE educational programme;
- IITE should prepare the Analytical survey «ICTs in Education for People with Special Needs» as a UNESCO document corresponding to the ideal of education for all throughout life. The document should constitute a support for policy-makers, high-level educators, scientists, researchers and practitioners in setting and resolving problems of introducing and using ICTs in special needs education.

The participants expressed their gratitude to IITE for the organization of the Expert Meeting, Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation and Moscow Center of Complex Rehabilitation of the Deaf with the Bauman Moscow State Technical University (MSTU) for having hosted the Special event within the framework of the Meeting.

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