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Honorary Member
of the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs,
Centres and Associations

UNESCO Clubs, paths of light



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Bureau for External Relations
Unit for Relations with UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations
(BRX/ACU)

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Published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
© UNESCO, 2000
Printed in France

BRX-99/WS/5 Rev.

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Towards a history of the Clubs
(1947–1996)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
With the assistance for the translation of the Felissimo Corporation

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You are paths of light: these are the words that sprang to my lips when I greeted the participants in the seminar *Understanding UNESCO and Practising International Life*, which the World Federation organized at the Organization's Headquarters in 1989, during the 25th session of the General Conference. Indeed, the Clubs bearing UNESCO's name provide it with hitherto unexplored channels for making its voice heard by communities which would otherwise probably never receive its message. They give shape to a new world that is generous and caring, imbued with fellow-feeling and peace-loving.

Ever since these Clubs first came into being, the respect and affection which the Organization has shown towards them have never been found wanting. On this fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of their movement, I want to assure them of my personal commitment to their cause. May we long continue to stand side by side in upholding and spreading the values we all share.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Federico Mayor', with a long vertical line extending upwards from the start of the signature.

FEDERICO MAYOR
Director-General
(May 1997)

***In memory of my friend KOICHI UEDA,
joint founder of the world's
very first UNESCO Association
(Sendai, Japan, 19 July 1947)***

***In tribute to the UNESCO Clubs,
Centres and Associations of the five
continents and to their – and our –
World Federation***

Introduction

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris – Thursday, 16 November 1995

The UNESCO General Conference, gathered before a distinguished audience, devoted the last day of its 28th session to formally commemorating the adoption of the Organization's Constitution in London fifty years earlier.

In the morning, the President of the General Conference, the Chairperson of the Executive Board and some fifteen Heads of State and of Government took the floor, and messages were also read out, in particular from Mr NELSON MANDELA, President of South Africa, and Mr WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America.

In the afternoon, addresses were delivered by representatives of the intellectual communities. Mr AMADOU-MAHTAR M'BOW, Director-General from 1974 to 1987, speaking of the "builders of UNESCO", began by referring to the pioneers present at the London Conference, to whom the Organization owed its Constitution, and to the broadening of "the Conference's horizons to cover the spiritual dimensions".

He went on to say: "While those first builders paved the way and laid the foundations, the edifice represented by UNESCO is an ongoing creation to which contributions are made by its governing bodies, its Secretariat and the entire intellectual and artistic community worldwide, all of which, from generation to generation, nourish it with the invigorating tonic of their ideas and enthusiasm and the strength of their convictions.... The members of the UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations have likewise always added to the wealth of the Organization with the fruit of their experience and have constantly demonstrated their dedication to its ideals and supported its action".

GOLLERKERY VISHWANATH RAO, a former senior member of the Secretariat who worked with all the Directors-General, then touched on some of the moments in his career that had left a lasting mark on him. Turning to AMADOU-MAHTAR M'BOW, he said: "...and you will remember, Mr M'BOW, that you and I worked together, in this same hall, when the first World Congress of UNESCO Clubs was held many, many years ago; today they number 5,000 all over the globe".

The artistic interludes between the addresses delivered by the distinguished participants included a performance by the members of a UNESCO Club from the Paris region, who recited and mimed a declaration on behalf of all the world's children.

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris – Monday, 4 November 1996

Fifty years ago to the day, UNESCO's Constitution entered into force with its ratification by a twentieth State: Greece. UNESCO thus became a reality.

Some 200 organizers, members and friends of UNESCO Clubs from 30 or so countries all over the world responded to the appeal of the World Federation. The crowded day they spent together was focused on the single theme of *Young people and UNESCO Clubs as UNESCO's Partners in the Twenty-first Century*, which they discussed in workshops from a variety of standpoints in line with the Organization's most important programmes. Emerging like a single tune in many keys from their discussions, reports and statements was the culture of the *invisible* and *intangible* which FEDERICO MAYOR has made the main theme of his action since his election as Director-General in 1987.

A brief tour of the world of UNESCO Clubs as seen from a few anecdotes

In Latin America, any place is the right one . . .

Some members of UNESCO Associations in Bogotá, Colombia, took their European guest in a cable-car to a beauty spot overlooking the city, where they were to have a picnic of grilled chicken and fresh fruit. While they were going up in the car, they talked so much about the work their clubs were doing that another passenger, who was intrigued and somehow attracted by what they had to say, butted into the conversation. By the time they arrived at the top, he had already learnt enough to start thinking in his turn about setting up a group of friends of UNESCO!

Just before the Regional Seminar on Literacy and Rural Advancement held in Ecuador in May-June 1983, the organizers took their guests from Paris on a guided tour of one of the magnificent churches in Quito. When they reached the sacristy, the small group was accosted by a local visitor, who had seen a television report on the seminar that was due to start on the following day. He recognized the organizers and started asking them a whole series of questions. Thus it was that a new UNESCO Club came into being on hallowed ground from the outset.

A moving tale from Morocco

TAÏEB was only too happy to tell this tale. The sky was falling down and a small bird was trying to hold up one of the pieces with its frail wings. A human being was passing by and started to jeer at it: "Poor little bird, do you really think you are strong enough to fight against the elements?". Although the bird was still trying to hold up the piece of sky with its tiny wings, it replied with the utmost seriousness: "My dear Sir, I am doing the best I can".

In TAÏEB's view, the moral of the tale was quite clear: like the bird, the UNESCO Clubs "are doing the best they can", with a determination amounting almost to self-denial.

Voices from Africa

This view would not be disputed by FRANÇOIS-XAVIER, the leader of a Zairean Club,¹ who wrote: "The Club realized that what we have to do in our rural areas is to foster in ourselves a fresh awareness of those who are least privileged, in short to take part in reshaping the world and rebuilding it, so that it will be a more just and human place. It is with this in mind that it was decided to set up a section called *Agir pour le tiers (Acting for other people)*, which will be responsible for engaging in humanitarian activities". He went on to say: "In our hearts, we are dying to act, just to do something, even if it is little, modest, makeshift and inadequate, to solve all the problems of our poor and deprived...".

This sense of commitment was borne out by FRANCIS, a Club organizer in Benin, who said: "In five years, my Club has set up 37 UNESCO sections or branches, 13 orphanages housing 583 children – we call them the 'children of hope' – 19 literacy centres and a farm for young people".

1. Zaire became the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1997. Since the facts recounted took place before that date, the terms "Zaire" and "Zairean" have been used here.

A growing sense of vocation in Europe

A new attitude of generosity and receptiveness to the outside world came to be taken towards people and things. In the case of H..., this was a family tradition. Some time after returning from deportation, his father, a former railway worker, founded a UNESCO Club in an inner suburb of a large European city, its membership consisting mainly of adults. The Club was quick to turn its attention to immigrant communities, in an endeavour to help them overcome the major problems of illiteracy, insecurity and poverty afflicting them. The young man regularly took part in the Club's activities, from which he learnt the lessons that were to have a lasting influence on his life and career. He is now his country's Minister of Foreign Affairs.

From the depths of a prison in Sri Lanka

"We are the children of 'Mother Lanka' serving terms of imprisonment...Hearing the message of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, we inaugurated a Club at Welikada Prison. This gave our lives a new and inspired light...Our UNESCO Club provided us with a dual service. Firstly, it helps to develop our personality, to abandon our weakness and to gain our necessities and enhance our conditions. Secondly, by starting educational classes, it helped us to widen the knowledge of our brother prisoners. This brought vast development in a short period. A large number of inmates were taught to read books...and to write essays and compositions. One of them said: 'At the time of admission to prison, I could neither read nor sign...but thanks to the UNESCO Club, I am now able to read the newspapers, understand and also able to write'".

What are these UNESCO clubs? Where did they come from? How did they spread? Where are they located? Over and above their apparent differences, do they display similarities? All these are questions to which an attempt is made to give an answer in the following pages.

1947-1949: UNESCO'S time had come

On Wednesday, 20 November 1946, in Paris, JULIAN HUXLEY,¹ the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for UNESCO, introduced the Commission's report to the Organization's General Conference at its 1st session. He engaged in a wide-ranging review of the work accomplished and of the options which the Commission was submitting to this, the Conference's second plenary meeting.

The delegates held their breath, mindful as they were of the fact that this all-important statement was something that went beyond a mere report and had all the makings of a full-scale manifesto. Nothing was left out, whether UNESCO's origins, the incisive interpretation of the fields of competence devolving upon it, the thinking behind the proposals put forward, the state of the world in the aftermath of the Second World War, the hopes which all the peoples of the earth placed in the new organization in the bid both to rebuild on the ruins left behind by the war and to pave the way for a common future free from all self-centred and partisan considerations, or, indeed, the difficulties that were liable to stem from the emergence of two diametrically opposed ideologies.

Fifty years later, this magnificent statement, so prophetic in many respects, has barely aged. It shows how farsighted the founders of UNESCO were: they had thought of everything, even including the specific needs of the peoples of the South, many of whom were still living under the yoke of colonialism, and the steps that would have to be taken to respond to their rightful aspirations.

1. A zoologist, philosopher, educator and writer, Julian Huxley, of the United Kingdom, was to become the first Director-General of UNESCO for a two-year term of office, at his own request. He was knighted in 1958. His successor as Director-General from 1948 to 1952 was Jaime Torres Bodet, the Mexican education specialist, diplomat, novelist and poet.

JULIAN HUXLEY had this to say when he came to draw the conclusions from his earlier remarks: "These hard facts of the present phase of history dictate a great deal of UNESCO's immediate policy and programmes in trying to realize its general and long-term ends. In regard to peace and security, for instance, they show the desirability of such projects as the following:...the creation of World Citizenship Clubs in schools all over the world; and every kind of exchange which will help to promote understanding between nations and peoples".

The message was heeded: in its conclusions, the Sub-Commission on Education recommended "immediate action to foster international understanding", which would be reflected, among other things, in "assistance to the international relations clubs" that had sprung up all over the world following the end of the war. For this purpose, the Secretariat was expected to work through the agency of the educational organizations and youth groups of the Member States, and to provide the information and facilities they needed.

This policy line was confirmed at the 2nd session of UNESCO's Executive Board in 1947. The international relations clubs were again cited in connection with education for the development of international understanding. In outlining the activities which the Secretariat would undertake in 1947, the Board yet again recommended that it help those clubs existing in primary, secondary and higher educational establishments and youth groups. In point of fact, this assistance was to be of a rather contingent nature, since the Secretariat was required only to answer requests for information on the methods and scope of these clubs in the various countries, compile data on their physical facilities, help them to exchange information and assist the relevant national and international agencies wishing to carry out surveys of international relations clubs all over the world. As can be seen, the programme outlined was still highly theoretical!

Indeed, without even waiting for the 2nd session of the Executive Board to end, the Director-General of UNESCO had already more than complied with its wishes: on 11 April 1947, he sent out to the Member States and international and national youth organizations a six-page memorandum entitled *Suggestions for international relations clubs or similar groups of boys and girls interested in international relations*, targeted on the 12 to 18-year age-group. Without purporting to be original, the memorandum set out to be a compilation of activities actually carried out by many such groups in a wide range of countries. Its aim was to encourage similar initiatives among other groups intent on contributing in their turn to promoting international understanding.

The document contained some 12 suggestions geared both to the period and to the age-group selected. These were: becoming acquainted with people of other

countries; carrying on international correspondence and exchanges; making a study of some countries other than the group's own; arranging an exhibition or series of exhibitions on another country or countries; learning about the United Nations and its auxiliary agencies; making a study of some important international topic; learning about some of the outstanding world-minded individuals of many countries; reproducing a session of an international organization; helping to interest and inform others in international affairs; celebrating special days of international significance; and helping the people of war-devastated countries. Each suggestion was followed by pointers to relevant practical activities that could be conducted. Readers of the document were asked to provide information on the work they were doing through either their country's Ministry of Education or the national or international headquarters of the youth organization of which they were members.

At the end of the same year, UNESCO published, in English and French, a 12-page pamphlet entitled *International relations clubs and similar societies in schools, youth organizations, colleges and universities*. This document went into three editions or reprintings between 1947 and 1949. No substantive changes were made to the original text in the 1948 and 1949 editions, which involved only minor stylistic amendments. The brochure was chiefly intended for young people in countries where there were not yet any international relations clubs, as well as for a wider readership than that for the memorandum published in 1947, as suggested by the specific reference made to universities in its title.

The pamphlet described the aims of these clubs, the ways in which they came into being and the activities in which they engaged. Even though it went back over some of the ideas already set out in the memorandum, it was clearer and more forceful and suggested a variety of activities, many of which were to become a regular feature of the UNESCO clubs fifty years later.

For example, the answer to the question "What can you do in your club?" was as follows:

"You can study and hold discussions on:

- life in other countries;
- current problems;
- the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies;

You can do something practical

You can take part in exchanges of information by:

- corresponding with a fellow member in another country;
- arranging social and cultural activities;

You can help war-devastated countries by:

- joining an international reconstruction camp;

working in a youth service or harvest camp;
attending regional or national meetings;

You can interest others in world affairs by:

writing articles;
giving talks;
running a club wall news-sheet ;
organizing meetings.”

To the question “Who runs the Clubs?”, the pamphlet gave the then highly novel reply: “The members themselves”.

The following call to action was emblazoned over the inside back cover: “Do not wait for somebody else, or think it doesn’t matter what you do. **START WORK NOW!**”.

At the request of the French Ministry of Education, UNESCO submitted a short document entitled *International relations clubs and youth groups* to the General Conference at its 2nd session, held in Mexico City in October 1947. This document proposed that the work already done should be continued, and several possible courses of action were identified, including the publication of short explanatory leaflets on some of the practical activities mentioned in the pamphlet, such as arranging correspondence with other countries, exchange visits, international reconstruction camps and national and regional conferences, as well as the best methods to adopt and the pitfalls to be avoided in preparing and conducting such activities. UNESCO also took pride in being able to provide information on “the most promising practices and activities undertaken by international relations clubs since the war in all parts of the world”. Furthermore, the Organization would encourage the formation of such clubs in instances where they did not yet exist by giving all possible help to those countries wishing to establish them. Lastly, UNESCO would cooperate closely with other organizations in holding annual gatherings of the most outstanding young people working in international relations clubs and would endeavour to encourage them by means of international competitions between their members. The document proposed that, at the same time, a group be made responsible for examining the work of the clubs and the methods used to foster international understanding in youth organizations. The author of the document concluded on an optimistic note by voicing the hope that UNESCO would be in a position to give even more effective assistance in 1948.

The General Conference’s Working Group on Education was only moderately enthusiastic about these proposals. Some of its members emphasized the danger liable to arise from over-extending UNESCO’s efforts in the education sector and were opposed to its spending undue time and energy on the project.

Other members of the Working Group were of the view that since the International Federation of Organizations for School Correspondence and Exchanges (FIOCES) was already working in the relevant fields, it would be preferable to help it pursue its activities rather than explore other avenues, no matter how promising those might seem.

In the end, the General Conference reluctantly approved the contents of the document which the Working Group had considered, but did not make available the human resources and funds to enable the Secretariat to implement the whole range of measures proposed. Even in those very early days – and although the term had not yet come into general use – the delegates were prompted by the concern for “programme concentration”. Years later, “concentration” was to become the leitmotif of many of their statements, although some of them still had no compunction about arguing in favour of adding a particular activity or policy line that would clearly have the opposite effect!

At this point in time, the Conference was apparently thinking in terms of restricting education for international understanding to schools and, without actually saying so, was reluctant to commit the Organization to the vast non-formal education sector, although it stressed the advisability of establishing contacts with youth groups and encouraging the organization of young people’s work camps. This, in fact, was the basis on which the *Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service* (CCIVS) was established in 1948.

At the same session, it was decided that the Enquiry on education for international understanding would be confined to teaching regarding the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies which, no matter how important, fell far short of the initial intent.

Even so, UNESCO attempted a few timid breakthroughs: in 1948, it concluded contracts worth US \$500 each with the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) and with FIOCES for programmes aimed at fostering international understanding among young people.

However, when the Director-General presented his report to the General Conference at its 4th session, held in Paris in 1949, he acknowledged with some bitterness that “For want of a qualified specialist, it has not been possible to provide all requisite assistance to the youth organizations endeavouring to foster international understanding”. He struck a more optimistic note when he reported that the pamphlet *International relations clubs and similar societies* was being reprinted in 10,000 copies in English and 5,000 in French, which were expected to meet “the large number of requests” recorded in the previous six months.

Under the heading *Children and young people*, in the chapter on education, the General Conference went so far as to instruct the Director-General to encourage youth movements to include, in their programmes, activities and education that would be conducive to fostering international understanding, and to help such movements to implement their programmes. There was nothing inconsistent or non-committal about this attitude. Throughout its 50 years of existence, UNESCO has had to contend with a whole array of long-standing dilemmas, especially in regard to the obligation incumbent upon it to spread the universal ethical values on which the ever-rising edifice represented by its achievements is founded, and to the obligation to produce results from the practical assignments with which the Member States entrust it. Among the foremost of these, at the end of the 1940s, was the mandatory reconstruction of a world stifled by years of chaos and destruction. From the outset, UNESCO was expected to perform miracles with the paltry resources it was granted. Clear-sighted observers weighed these resources against those being swallowed up by the arms race. JAIME TORRES BODET was the first person to be stirred to action: in 1950, he resigned his office as a mark of his disagreement at the huge amounts being invested in weaponry compared with those with which UNESCO had to manage. He withdrew his resignation two days later, but tendered it again in 1952, this time for good.

Whatever the so-called “budgetary” or “cash flow” problems – those harmless-sounding euphemisms designed to conceal an endemic poverty-stricken state – UNESCO was never to tire of proclaiming the values it enshrined. For the time being, it obviously sought or created every opportunity to make young people more attentive to the idea of international understanding. Children and young people attending school were alerted to it by means of the education they were given. This approach was to lead in 1953 to the establishment of the pilot programme known as the Associated Schools Project. However, in order to reach young people outside the formal school environment, the only course was to turn to the associations in which they came together and to provide these with a modicum of assistance.

No matter how sound this reasoning may have been, it was liable to have the effect of making a key aspect of the Organization’s mission dependent on the goodwill of movements which already existed. There was no focal point and no transmission mechanism making it possible for UNESCO to communicate directly with the large section of public opinion represented by young people.

JAIME TORRES BODET was to be instrumental in finding a solution to this dichotomy and in giving it a name.

1946-1949: The years of the pioneers

1. In Japan humiliated by defeat

“This is it, this is what I am looking for” shouted KOICHI UEDA, when he learnt of the opening in Paris of the 1st session of the General Conference of UNESCO from the morning paper of 25 November 1946, which also quoted the Preamble to the Organization’s Constitution.

As KOICHI UEDA read the words: “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed”, he felt as though an “electric shock” was running through his being.

This story is as familiar to the members and friends of the UNESCO clubs as that about the narrator dipping a small “madeleine” cake in his cup of tea is to the devotees of MARCEL PROUST. However, this electric shock did not have the effect of resuscitating the past buried deep in the subconscious or of summoning up the memory of walks past the houses of CHARLES SWANN and the Duchesse DE GUERMANTES, through which the child discovering them was reborn. Instead, it produced the vision of a future which transformed the faint beating of KOICHI UEDA’s heart, overburdened by the sadness and humiliation caused by his country’s defeat, into a paroxysm of joy.

For months, the young man sat doing nothing in the few square metres of the dismal garret in which he lived in Shanghai, where he had learnt of Japan’s surrender. “The inhumanity of war”, its disastrous consequences for the belligerent countries, including his own, and the lasting shock caused by the atom bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki all kept on going round in his head until the day when a “new conviction, new hope” burned in his mind and he realized that Japan could occupy a place in the world of the future only by becoming a peaceful country which would never again wage war.

He was repatriated from China and was sent to Sendai, where he served as a liaison officer between the American occupation forces and the governments of the prefectures in northern Japan. He was then given permission to start up cultural activities and exchanges between the two partners, in an endeavour to foster closer familiarity between them. As he was to write dispassionately some forty years later: "This was the beginning, though on a small scale, of my work for international peace".

Thus, the announcement of UNESCO's creation fell on fertile ground and lived up to the expectations of the young liaison officer. From then onwards, he dreamt of joining, in some way or other, in the great undertaking which, although having started at the other end of the earth, nevertheless involved the entire planet. An intergovernmental organization had come into being, but did it not call upon everybody to join in it? KOICHI UEDA was convinced of this when he re-read another sentence of the Preamble to the Constitution "...a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which would secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and peace must therefore be founded...upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind".

He then went on to study all the available documents on UNESCO. Gradually, the idea came to him of creating a non-governmental organization to cooperate with it. He could not wait to share with other people the dream taking shape in his mind and the guiding principles that he was beginning to flesh out.

Among KOICHI UEDA's friends was a professor of English literature at Tohoku University in Sendai, KOCHI DOI. Having lost a son in the war, he, too, denounced the absurdity of armed conflict and considered that it was of the utmost importance for Japan to regain its place in the international community through peaceful cultural exchanges.

The fact that they held the same views provided the spark needed, and the two men were soon to gather around them a hundred or so intellectuals, teachers and media professionals, including Professor TAKEO KUWABARA, a distinguished man of letters. Thirty years later, it was he who accompanied the young people selected by the Nipponese Federation to attend courses in different parts of Europe, with a mandatory visit to UNESCO Headquarters. On those occasions, Professor KUWABARA's voice rang out very often within the precincts of the Organization, which he always visited with the immense pleasure felt by someone who had rediscovered his country of adoption.

The Sendai UNESCO Association – the first such association in the world – was officially established on 19 July 1947. The Inaugural Assembly was held at

Tohoku University; it elected YASUTORI SATAKE, the University's President, as President of the Association and Professor DOÏ as Vice-President, while KOICHI UEDA was appointed its Executive Secretary.

Thirty years later, the participants in the First World Congress of UNESCO Clubs held at the Organization's Headquarters in April 1978 decided to celebrate *UNESCO Clubs Day* on 19 July each year. How many people still remember that?

The Association's founders informed UNESCO of their decision by sending a message which was read out at the 2nd session of the General Conference. The Director-General in person warmly congratulated them and took steps to ensure that books and documents would be sent to them on a regular basis. KOICHI UEDA undertook to translate JULIAN HUXLEY's book *UNESCO – its Purpose and its Philosophy* into Japanese.

Following closely behind, hardly two months later, the Kyoto UNESCO Association, with its 2,000 members, was formed. Its first President was Dr HACHIRO YUASA, President of Doshisha University, who took a similar path to that of KOICHI UEDA and his friends, in that he was humiliated at Japan's defeat, wished to see the country emerge from its isolation and put his faith in UNESCO.

Students in Sendai and Kyoto set up their own associations, and school-children the first UNESCO clubs. Since more and more groups of friends of the Organization were being formed, KOICHI UEDA felt that it was necessary to set up a national federation in order to coordinate them, and this was inaugurated in Tokyo on 1 May 1948.

Although they had no prior contact with UNESCO and were completely unaware of the messages that it had issued in its attempt to make young people more attentive to international understanding, many Japanese – largely adults, including university professors, members of the medical profession, journalists, writers and artists – turned to the Organization in much the same way as flowers long shut off from the light turn towards the sun and blossom in its rays. Because of all they had suffered during the war, their deeply-felt desire to turn Japan into a country occupied solely with works of the mind and culture by casting off the warlike urges of the distant and more recent past, was instrumental in bringing about a miracle in which their aspirations came to be identified with UNESCO's ideal.

The Japanese movement was to remain deeply marked by the features which it assumed from the very beginning, and associations composed of adults – indeed of pensioners – still occupy a pre-eminent place in it.

KOICHI UEDA went on to say: “Japan was able to become the 61st member of UNESCO in 1951 while it was still under the Allied Occupation Forces. This was the first opportunity for occupied Japan to open her closed doors to the outside world after the end of World War Two. The credit for this should go...to the non-governmental UNESCO movement”.

These were the very straightforward words in which he described the tremendous moral influence that Japan’s UNESCO associations wielded. This is the only known instance where the non-governmental sector applied itself to encouraging the involvement of the government in intergovernmental affairs.

2. When hope was reborn in Colorado (United States of America)

GENEVIEVE D’AMATO FIORE did not know KOICHI UEDA. She had not yet received a copy of UNESCO’s memorandum or pamphlet, but she took part regularly in the work of the Board of the Steele Community Center, which had been founded in 1937 by ROBERT W. STEELE as a venue for recreational and leisure-time activities for people of all ages in the city of Denver, Colorado.

Like tens of thousands of American women, she suffered anguish and heart-break throughout the war: her three brothers fought at the front, from which many relatives and friends were never to return. During these distressing times, women members of the Center were giving thought to ways and means of preventing such a nightmare from ever occurring again.

GENEVIEVE FIORE was therefore particularly delighted at being able to attend the Mountain Plains regional conference convened in Denver by the Information Committee of the United States National Commission.¹ This “pilot” Conference was organized in a bid to acquaint the American public more closely with the Organization’s aims, which this Wyoming-born daughter of Italian immigrants sensed as being capable of living up – partly at least – to her anxious expectations.

1. The National Commissions are bodies composed of the representatives of the government and of persons able to involve in UNESCO’s work the main national groups interested in the development of education, science, culture and information. Formally provided for in Article VII of the Constitution, the existence of the National Commissions – which is binding upon the Member States – is one of the most original features of UNESCO, the only agency in the United Nations system to associate the representatives of the intellectual community of those States in its work.

The Conference brought together 1,900 representatives of all kinds of associations, university faculties, schools and civic action groups. It was divided both into sections according to the topics studied and into groups – of farmers, workers, businessmen, members of the professions, women, the clergy, young people, and the like – and drew up specific plans and recommendations with a view to taking basic action at the grassroots level.

At the end of the Conference, the representatives of the Steele Center having taken part in it, and other members likewise looking for a solution to the problem of peace, reviewed the situation, but nobody was particularly optimistic at the outcome. What could the Center do for this thing called UNESCO? One Board member who had attended the Conference in his capacity as a retired teacher brandished a sheaf of UNESCO documents which he had brought back with him and said: “Who wants this junk? It will never work”. GENEVIEVE FIORE replied: “I’ll take it” and started picking up the papers which he had thrown on the floor in a fit of temper.

This set of documents, together with another set from the same Conference, were filed away in what was to become the UNESCO Group’s library. Indeed, the young woman, spurred on by her unshakeable conviction which the Conference had only strengthened, had no difficulty in imagining the creation of a Community UNESCO Group at the Center. She spent the whole summer going through the documents salvaged from the disaster. Even though the meetings to discuss the creation of a UNESCO Group held at the end of the previous month of May did not come to any definite conclusion, she persisted, luckily with the support of her husband JOHN R. FIORE and of FREDERICK G. ENHORM, Director of the Steele Center.

An opportunity that she was quick to grasp arose in the autumn of 1947. A trainee from the welfare service was assigned to the Center. Since she wanted to do her training among adults, the Director told GENEVIEVE FIORE that he felt it would be a good thing if an adult discussion group were set up. A committee composed of people interested in the matter met to discuss it. GENEVIEVE asked this committee whether it would agree to setting up a UNESCO Group on a trial basis for six months, after which the idea would be dropped if the outcome was found not to be favourable.

The UNESCO Group met for the first time at the Steele Center on 3 December 1947. Its birth certificate was signed, although nobody knew this at the time, least of all those taking part in the meeting! GENEVIEVE agreed to chair the meeting on what she thought was a temporary basis, but she actually discharged this function until 1 July 1953, when she was appointed Honorary President, a title

she still bears. Without realizing it, this group of friends of UNESCO was the third such body in the world, immediately after those of Sendai and Kyoto.

A start was made to spelling out the Group's objectives, in keeping with the founder's wishes. These were to convey to the Center's members and the community as a whole UNESCO's purposes and ideal, which were to promote universal peace, international understanding and cooperation, friendship and mutual respect through educational, cultural and scientific programmes. A planning committee was established to prepare future activities and met once a quarter during the first year.

The instigator of the "Steele Center UNESCO Association", which was the name subsequently replacing "UNESCO Group", was delighted: not only had the experiment turned out to be successful, but no time-limit was set on her Association's life.

The Association's initial activities were the outcome of choices to which it has always continued to subscribe. They took the form of lectures followed by discussions on other countries or international problems and above all of tangible gestures of solidarity towards the most underprivileged members of society. From 1948 onwards, while still the UNESCO Group, it acted on the Organization's recommendation that a school in a war-ravaged country be adopted. It so happened that the sister-in-law of one of the members was teaching in such a school in Siculiana, in Sicily. School materials and clothing for the 650 Sicilian schoolchildren were collected and dispatched to their destination. Some months later, the Group adopted a primary school on the outskirts of Athens through the good offices of a Greek member of the United Nations Secretariat who had been received by the Group in the summer of 1948. This was the beginning of a long series of acts of generosity.

Almost 50 years have now gone by, and the Association – since 1986, the UNESCO Association of Colorado – enjoys a reputation going far beyond the already vast area of Colorado and the United States, as a result of the correspondence and exchanges it keeps up with its opposite numbers all over the world.

In 1996, GENEVIEVE D'AMATO FIORE was still carrying her 84 years and 63 years of married life with undisguised coquetry and was sporting delightful flower-trimmed hats which heightened the teasing expression of her sparkling eyes. Since "her" Association first came into being, she has given more than 4,000 talks on the most varied subjects, starting – obviously – with UNESCO and the United Nations, but also on all kinds of local, national and world issues having a bearing on international bodies. In 1994, she launched a weekly radio programme called "Focus International", of which she is both the producer and host. The broadcasts often deal with educational subjects, which enable her to highlight UNESCO's action.

From the time the World Federation was established, she attended only one of its Congresses – that held in 1984. Was this because it took place in Japan, the cradle of the movement, or because it opened in Sendai, the cradle where that cradle was made? We do not know, any more than we know whether GENEVIEVE FIORE and KOICHI UEDA turned over together the pages of their recollections before these were scattered by the winds of memory to the four points of the compass. Did they ever meet? Did they recognize each other in the stifling heat of the Japanese summer? Were they amazed at seeing all around them the UNESCO Clubs of so many countries, like a vast gathering of descendants? Or did they communicate quite naturally in the language of the heart so familiar to them both?

3. Opening up Lebanon to the world in the midst of turmoil in the Middle East

GEORGES SKAFF, a student of law and literature at the Saint Joseph University in Beirut and the Higher School of Letters, was a very dynamic member of the Executive Committee of the Lebanese student union, the *Amicale des étudiants du Liban*. The 3rd session of the General Conference of UNESCO was held in his country in 1948.

The Conference was an unforgettable event for Lebanon and the whole of the Middle East because it was the first international meeting to be held in that part of the world. By inviting UNESCO to meet in its capital, Lebanon, which had been independent since 1943, looked forward to strengthening its position among the Arab countries and in its dealings with the Western nations. The countries of Western Europe were likewise anxious to enhance their prestige in the region, where some of them had been ruling powers, and they chose eminent public figures to lead their delegations.

The Government of the host country sought to arouse public interest in the Conference and, in liaison with UNESCO, organized a series of lectures on a wide variety of subjects with the backing of famous writers and international political figures.

In other words, Lebanon was caught up in a whirlwind of excitement. It would have been unthinkable for students not to take part. With all the self-assurance of youth, GEORGES SKAFF contacted the relevant departments of the Organization with a view to having seats for members of his Association reserved in the meeting rooms. UNESCO willingly agreed to the suggestion; it viewed with favour the possibility of gaining the attention of the young people attending the

meetings and, more prosaically, the prospect of being able to fill the rows of seats that were destined to remain empty after the first few days of exhilaration. It was agreed to reserve some twenty places, which GEORGES SKAFF would arrange to have distributed among his fellow-students; they were being introduced to international life by listening in to the meetings, an experience which some of them found fascinating.

Hence, GEORGES did not have much difficulty in creating a group of friends of UNESCO once the Conference was over. Not content with stimulating the students he knew, he had discussions with the Presidents of the two universities existing in Beirut, his own and the American University, and with the directors of independent higher educational institutions. Each of these appointed a delegate whose duty it was to set about recruiting other students.

In the autumn of 1949, the first contingent of the *Association des étudiants libanais pour l'UNESCO* was formed of about 100 students, obviously with GEORGES SKAFF as its leader. Its objectives were to spread the ideal of the United Nations and UNESCO, in order to inculcate in young people the spirit of solidarity, peace and understanding, in particular through the study of human rights and their application to international problems. The initiative was an important one, since it was the only movement openly advocating peace in a region at war.

Initially, the Association was active in the universities and then extended its activities to secondary schools and eventually to youth groups and non-governmental organizations. It became the *Association libanaise des amis de l'UNESCO*.

The Director-General of UNESCO, JAIME TORRES BODET, wrote to its President, expressing the hope that the core of students in the latter's country militating for peace and international understanding would grow in numbers and in strength. In 1953, the new Director-General, LUTHER EVANS, also wrote to GEORGES SKAFF: "I am pleased that, in Lebanon, I can count on the *Association des amis de l'UNESCO*, which you are leading with such skill... The success of our efforts will be dictated by the collaboration between us". The United Nations Under Secretary-General for Information, BENJAMIN COHEN, sent a message of encouragement. Moreover, the Association's activities were so resoundingly successful that the Secretary-General of the United Nations appointed GEORGES, who was then not more than 23 years of age, "Honorary Representative of the High Commissioner for (non-Palestinian) Refugees". By way of a practical detail, UNESCO sent the Association 15 reams of imitation art paper, which was unobtainable in Lebanon, as an end-of-year gift.

The Association organized a wide variety of activities, including lectures, concerts, film shows and gala evenings. For example, the Friends of UNESCO Ball

brought together the high society of Beirut. The top table was presided over jointly by the Minister of Education and the Minister of Information, GEORGES HÉLOU, who was to be President of the Republic from 1964 to 1970. It was the agreeable responsibility of this table to crown a “Miss Friends of UNESCO”, whose fame was by no means short-lived, since she was made responsible for presenting the Association’s monthly 15-minute radio programme. The Minister of Education, who gave the Association his full support, presented it with the then fabulous sum of US \$120.

The Lebanese friends of UNESCO scheduled the organization of a seminar on education on the United Nations and, bold as ever, invited the Secretary-General to open it. They knew that TRYGVE LIE¹ had to visit the region in connection with the negotiation of peace agreements and would be staying in Lebanon. They even went so far as to suggest that he delay his departure for another country, so that he could be with them on that occasion. This was unfortunately not possible, but at the press conference which he gave in Turkey just as the seminar was starting, he spoke in glowing terms of the Association. He arranged to be represented by the Director of the United Nations Office for the Middle East, R. BOKHARI, who came from Cairo. The Director-General of UNESCO delegated from Paris CAMILLE ABOUSSOUAN, a member of the Middle East Cultural Department and Lebanon’s future ambassador to the Organization.

At a time when environmental issues had not yet hit the headlines, the Association devised a plan for a training course for educational personnel on the protection of the natural world, and this again was a resounding success. The National Commission then requested the Association to act as its Youth Committee from 1951 onwards. In the same year, GEORGES SKAFF, who had amply proved his worth, was called upon to head the Commission’s administrative secretariat; he discharged this office until 1955, when he was recruited by UNESCO. His sense of ethical commitment, combined with his intimate knowledge of the Organization and the human qualities already mentioned, stood him in good stead when he came to discharge increasingly delicate responsibilities. Interrupting his international assignment, he accepted his government’s proposal to take over the duties of Secretary-General of the National Commission, which he performed from 1971 to 1978 before returning to his post at UNESCO.

1. Secretary-General of the United Nations from 1946 to 1952.

However, the gradual withdrawal of the Association's founder from the scene and the departure into the world of work of the students who had formed its core dealt it a fatal blow and it lapsed into a state of lethargy. It took on a fresh lease of life in 1972 with the return to Beirut of GEORGES SKAFF. Observing how vivid the prestige of the old Association had remained in people's memories, he founded the *Centre d'action et d'information pour le développement et la compréhension internationale*. Under the Centre's auspices, the Club-UNESCO Liban came into being.

Over the 15 distressing years when Lebanon was the victim of war and its horrors, the Club confined its activities to university circles, but the passing difficulties did not prevent it from publishing posters and leaflets and organizing public lectures. At the international level, it collaborated actively with the World Federation, which asked it to mount the exhibition in four languages *Multiplier l'action*, which described the activities of the United Nations, the Specialized Agencies and the World Federation itself on 37 display panels.

Lebanon's National Commission has now taken up the torch under the enlightened leadership of Dr HISHAM NASHABE. The *Centre d'action et d'information pour le développement et la compréhension internationale*, still headed by GEORGES SKAFF, provides schools or institutions running clubs with substantial assistance in the form of books and educational and cultural materials.

Like stars which are no longer visible but whose light still filters down to us, GEORGES SKAFF's life in Beirut is still marked by nostalgia, a sense of commitment and perseverance.

4. A founding speech in France

Some 500 heads of secondary schools met at the International Centre for Educational Studies in Sèvres for their annual training course. They invited the Director-General of UNESCO, JAIME TORRES BODET, to open it. This invitation was particularly auspicious, since the course was starting – not altogether by chance – on 4 November 1949, the day of the third anniversary of the entry into force of the Organization's Constitution. Moreover, from 21 July to 30 August 1947, the Centre had hosted the summer seminar on practical training for international understanding convened by UNESCO and attended by educational specialists from a large number of countries. Headmasters and school inspectors alike listened attentively: what ideas on education was the Director-General, who was unanimously recognized as having an incisive mind, about to put forward?

Referring to the 1947 summer course whose subject, he recalled, had been international understanding, JAIME TORRES BODET made his intention clear right from the start: "In your presence and coming from me, is it not advisable to ask how we can involve your adolescent pupils in the efforts which we are endeavouring to foster in all sectors of the population with the aim of promoting this state of mind?". He went on to say: "Whether we like it or not, adolescents in our day are cast into the maelstrom of international life...It seems clear to me that that this international solidarity into which they (the pupils) are drawn calls for worldwide civic education".

The tone was set and the Director-General warmed to his theme: "International civics will not be added to the other school subjects like a new cog to a machine....its aim will be to bring all knowledge together into a view of the world that must be both generous and wide-ranging, personal and universal".

Having paid tribute to the French education system which, in 1948, had included the teaching of civics as a compulsory subject in secondary education and had placed emphasis on international problems, JAIME TORRES BODET voiced his satisfaction at the fact that the study of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights had, at his request, been introduced into the sixth-form curriculum at the beginning of 1949. He underscored the merits of this move: "It is urgent to put people in a position where they can face up to the major issues of their time. This is not so much a question of adding more and more to the stock of knowledge, but rather of fulfilling the very function of secondary education, which is to shape their sense of judgement and to teach them to be objective and make use of their critical faculties". In his view, however, such a task should not depend on the teaching of civics alone: "On the contrary, it is most profitable to link the problems of the world to the regular and permanent work done in the classroom".

The Director-General then put forward a number of practical suggestions which were rather similar to those set out in the pamphlet on *International relations clubs and similar societies* and in a series of brochures entitled *Towards international understanding*. He stressed that: "These activities could take on greater scope within a 'club of friends of UNESCO'...In short, the idea is to introduce the international community into the lives of adolescents, in terms of both awareness and action, so that they can in turn be integrated into the world community".

The expression "*club of friends of UNESCO*" had been used for the very first time by the Director-General of UNESCO, the voice of authority! It had the merit of being both an appeal and a conviction, a proposal and a quiet affirmation of an obvious fact which the future was to bear out in numerous ways. There was a moment's silent absorption before applause broke out: JAIME TORRES BODET had spoken to the minds and hearts of these teachers.

And then suddenly the broad figure of a man sprang up, as if from nowhere, and bore down on the Director-General. This man gave his word that there would, in future, be such clubs of friends of UNESCO all over France. He was a man of his word, as evidenced by his whole life. In 1927, LOUIS FRANÇOIS founded a *School of Peace* in Marseilles where, as a young history and geography teacher, he used his own effective and boldly innovative method to teach his pupils, who were fascinated as much by the originality of his approach as by his almost unbearably piercing eyes and aquiline profile. Then the Second World War broke out and, as a reserve officer, he was called up for active service. At the time of the Armistice, he was on the headquarters staff of the 4th Armoured Division commanded by General DE GAULLE, whose aide-de-camp he became. In late 1940, he joined the Resistance and was a member of one of the most active and famous networks. He was arrested in 1942 and was deported to Germany at the end of the following year. He returned to France 18 months later, having lost 33 kilos.

In August 1945, LOUIS FRANÇOIS was appointed Inspector-General of Education and, some months later, Secretary-General of the French National Commission for UNESCO, a post which he occupied for 10 years.

He knew all about war, but he also knew about peace, since his time in captivity had not drained him of the unquenchable energy which, in the midst of the bloody conflict, made him think of ways and means of alerting young people to the need for a fraternal and caring world. He was therefore deeply affected when he heard JAIMÉ TORRES BODET pronounce those words which he himself had thought about for so long: "Peace is not an ideal of cowards. It demands more heroism than war... It demands intelligence and authority...".

LOUIS FRANÇOIS kept his word. At the 5th session of the General Conference, held in Florence in 1950, he was already able to announce with pride that 45 clubs had been created, with the threefold aim of learning how to make an objective study of contemporary major international issues; making young people aware of the fact that a whole new world order was being built; and enabling club members to realize that peace is impossible unless everyone does their utmost to "understand the different peoples of the earth, their ways of life, interests, customs and mental outlook". By 1955, there were 150 *International relations and friends of UNESCO clubs*. One year later, these clubs founded their national federation, which had 250 clubs among its members in 1960 and as many as 400 by 1968.

At the age of 92,¹ LOUIS FRANÇOIS was just as tall as ever and had lost none of his convictions. He saw UNESCO as having been, and as still being, a

1. In 1996.

powerful source of attraction to young French people, since it gave them a “political” ideal, in the highest sense of the term, even though politics as such could not force its way into schools. He contended that UNESCO organized international cooperation by fostering the free flow of ideas, knowledge and people; worked to reduce the scandalous inequality between rich nations and poor and bring a greater measure of justice to the world; and applied itself to bringing peoples closer together by infusing life into human rights and international understanding. In so doing, the Organization set itself up as the champion of a planet-wide democracy which tallied precisely with the French civic ideal enshrined in the celebrated motto *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*.

LOUIS FRANÇOIS could not resist the pleasure he derived from conjuring up the image of UNESCO which he had used to delight so many generations of young people, to the effect that the UNESCO Secretariat has the unenviable fate of occupying a kind of middle ground between the exalted ideal expressed in its Constitution and the down-to-earth world of the Member States, with their national ambitions and greed. He added, with a touch of indulgence: “Both the Secretariat and the Director-General need a great deal of diplomacy, patience and courage to keep UNESCO firmly rooted in the real world while remaining in the service of an international ideal of cooperation and peace”.

As an emblematic figure of the clubs of his own country and of those of many other countries and as a witness, in their eyes, of an age of ardent beliefs, LOUIS FRANÇOIS became the pilgrim of UNESCO from that memorable day in November 1949, when JAIME TORRES BODET kindled in him the strength that had only been waiting to exercise itself in the most noble of causes. There must be thousands of students, teachers and club members who still have precious memories of seeing his tall silhouette in their classrooms and schools, or in the places where they met or worked, his long outstretched arms pointing towards the infinite as if to embrace “OONESCO” – as he called it – with its wealth of hope and accomplishment, promise and certainty!

5. A programmed birth in the Netherlands

The UNESCO Centre for the Netherlands, known worldwide by its Dutch name *UNESCO Centrum Nederland*, owes its existence not so much to the stroke of genius of a particular individual or to a revelation, but to the determination of the National Commission, which quietly announced its creation at the 5th session of the General Conference, when it stated: “A small UNESCO Centre, created under

the auspices of the National Commission, started to operate at the end of 1948. Right from the outset, a large number of private individuals and organizations displayed their interest in this information centre, to which the National Commission granted a subsidy out of its budget”.

In the following year, the Commission continued to describe the Centre as being a “small information service”. At the time, it bore the name of *UNESCO Centre of Amsterdam*. It supplied articles to the press, organized radio talks and maintained relations with the country’s schools, to which it distributed UNESCO documents and films. It officially celebrated United Nations Day¹ by organizing a public meeting and briefing sessions for schools. Its Director, Mr LUNENBERG, gave lectures on the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies before a wide variety of audiences.

The Centre progressively became more professional-minded and was eventually granted formal recognition, since it became the UNESCO Centre for the Netherlands. Through its skillful public relations activities, it was able to work with the leading daily newspapers and specialist journals, whose task it made easier by preparing information that they could use directly, such as press releases and monthly newsletters.

At the same time, the Centre established closer ties with youth organizations and publicized the activities of international volunteer camps. It published and arranged for widespread distribution of a circular letter setting out the aims of the international relations clubs, and this encouraged the setting-up of a number of such clubs “with excellent results”. It also set itself the goal of promoting human rights teaching through the resources at its disposal, such as film shows, exhibitions, the circulation of documentation and the celebration of Human Rights Day on 10 December.

Its growing participation in international cooperation arose out of a rather poignant episode. The Netherlands was severely affected by flooding in 1953, when the Centre had already launched a campaign which events forced it to suspend. UNESCO lost no time in sending out an appeal to its Member States in a bid to collect funds by means of the Gift Coupon Programme, with a view to assisting the disaster-stricken population. The Centre accordingly redoubled its efforts: it introduced the programme in schools and voluntary organizations, which were quick to respond. The international community was helping those who helped themselves!

1. On 24 October.

As the years went by, the Centre stepped up its activities: it held press conferences and collaborated from 1957 onwards on the production of television films on UNESCO, including a series on the everyday lives of children in far-off countries, while at the same time organizing events calculated to capture the public's imagination. For example, the celebration of UNESCO's tenth anniversary was marked by a parade of 3,000 people in honour of the Organization and a ceremony at the Royal Institute of the Tropics.

Shortly thereafter, it was granted the status of a non-governmental organization sponsored by the National Commission and subsidized by the Netherlands Government and the Municipality of Amsterdam. It embarked on the publication of a Dutch version of *UNESCO Features*¹ and concluded agreements with the Belgian National Commission for the distribution of 1,500 copies of the newsletter in Belgium.

It gradually set up a network of local communities and UNESCO youth clubs which it convened from time to time. The people who took part in these activities still remember the conference held at Nijenbrode in January 1958, above all on account of the novel and stimulating nature of the issues raised, notably the mutual appreciation of the cultural values of East and West,² and subjects of more immediate national interest, such as the role of Dutch industry in UNESCO's technical assistance programme. The study groups set up at the Conference examined a number of problems which had not yet been spotlighted by the course of events, such as exchanges of individuals, the race question, the status of women, the organization of leisure-time activities and arts education.

The open-air assembly which the Centre organized for secondary-school pupils on United Nations Day each year and the programme it drew up for the young people of Amsterdam on Human Rights Day were to become red-letter days which nobody would miss for the world!

Henceforward, the Centre took charge of the promotion of the Gift Coupon Programme throughout the country and took advantage of this to alert schools, voluntary associations and the public at large to the situation of the countries in the southern hemisphere and to UNESCO's work. The volume of funds collected rose sharply from 100,000 guilders in 1959 to 150,000 in 1960 and 200,000 in 1961.

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1. The UNESCO Press Service, which started to be published in 1949, at first weekly and then twice-monthly.
 2. UNESCO's Major Project for the mutual appreciation of the cultural values of East and West lasted from 1957 to 1966.

In 1967, the Centre was appointed depository library for UNESCO's books and publications. At that time, more than 2,500 schools were taking part in its activities, 250 of which made regular contributions to the co-action effort.

Almost 50 years after its modest beginnings, the Centre was like a colossus and was still concentrating its activities on two equally important tasks which it had elevated to the status of missions. These were the provision of public information on UNESCO, with shifting emphasis according to what was most relevant at the time – currently this is literacy – and the collection of funds for international co-action. For a long time, together with the Nipponese Federation, it headed the list of contributors to the Organization's Gift Coupon Programme. What is perhaps less well-known is the long-standing role it has played in the promotion of UNESCO clubs, more than 50 of which it has organized and coordinated.

The Centre's success can be partly ascribed to the fact that it was managed without a break by the same person, which seldom happens. From 1955 to the end of 1989, it was headed by Dr F.H. TUNNISSEN, on whom the Netherlands' highest honour, the Order of Orange-Nassau, was conferred in 1980, in recognition of his 25 years of dedication to UNESCO's ideals. On 1 January 1990, the Centre's management was placed in the capable hands of MATHILDE GUURINK, who was Dr TUNNISSEN's closest collaborator for many years.

Even so, the Centre's long-serving management team was not the only factor in its success; indeed, it might even be said to have been rather negligible had it not been for the competence and judgement, the dedication and ideals of all those men and women who have watched over the UNESCO Centre for the Netherlands since 1949.

UNESCO's heyday, 1950–1970

A climate that was increasingly favourable to the promotion of the Clubs took hold at UNESCO. This was due to achievements in the life of the Organization which had beneficial side effects for the Clubs. It was also due to the favourable reactions to the distribution of the UNESCO *aide-mémoire* and brochure on international relations clubs and similar groups, and the dissemination of the speech made on 4 November 1949 by JAIME TORRES BODET. Lastly, it was due to the fact that UNESCO and its governing bodies – the General Conference and the Executive Board – did not remain unmoved by the initiatives taken by people whose charisma gave them moral authority over public opinion, an influence which augured well for young people.

The programme for 1951 which the Executive Board submitted to the General Conference at the session which was held in Florence reflected ongoing trends. Thus, for the furtherance of “mutual understanding”, UNESCO was to help its Member States to provide an education in conformity with Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, meaning one which was directed to the “full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It [education] shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.”

The Organization was thus acting directly, in its programme, on the commitment which it made when the Universal Declaration was proclaimed – the news of which reached Beirut during the third session of the General Conference – to disseminate information about the Declaration and to cooperate in its implementation. Indeed, UNESCO was immediately to

propose that the adoption of this basic text be commemorated every 10 December.¹

At the same time, the Organization endeavoured in every way it could to foster knowledge and the study of the Universal Declaration in non-educational environments, and as they came into being and took root, the Clubs proved to be highly dependable allies in this work of creating awareness, which they carried out with great idealism and enthusiasm.

The General Conference also invited UNESCO to support the action not only of the youth movements, which was by then a tradition, but also of the *bodies in charge of adult education*, to the extent, of course, that the action of both groups was of a kind to promote greater international understanding. The Clubs would not fail to take note of this broadening of scope.

In that same year 1951, the General Conference, which was decidedly in the mood to produce one innovation after another, authorized the Director-General to encourage “in collaboration with the National Commissions, the creation of financially independent clubs, associations, ‘Friends of UNESCO’ groups and centres, whose object is to make known and gain support for the purposes of UNESCO, and to provide them with suitable publicity material”. There are two new ideas here: first of all, the set of names given to the “Friends of UNESCO” which, subsequently, would all be used, besides many, many others; and the role of information activists assigned to them. The latter idea was to take root, since, starting from the 8th session of the General Conference (Montevideo, 1954) at which it approved the programme and budget for 1955 and 1956,² cooperation with the Clubs became the responsibility of the information services and ceased to be a fundamental responsibility of the “Department of Reconstruction”.

UNESCO continued to forge ahead. At its 6th session (Paris, 1951), the General conference entrusted it with the task of encouraging in 1952 the establishment of new international relations clubs, UNESCO Clubs, and international youth hostels and camps. To that end, it was to provide the National Commissions and national youth organizations with documentation. Several subjects which were seen as priorities were mentioned: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the

1. Ecuador was the first country in the world to make this proposal a reality by adopting a Decree, published on 25 April 1949, which established every 10 December as a “Human Rights Day”.

2. From 1946 to 1952, the General Conference met on an annual basis. It then began to hold biennial sessions, with the 7th session (Paris, 1952) adopting a programme and budget for the following two years for the first time.

concept of collective security, and the principle of mutual assistance. A budget of \$4,600 was allocated, with \$2,800 being earmarked for supplies of various types and \$1,800 for delivery of the literature using various modes of transport. Even for the period, this did not constitute enough printed matter to swamp the entire world ... Nonetheless, it was a step in the right direction.

Following an amendment submitted by the French Delegation at the same session of the Conference and approved by the latter, the Member States were invited for the first time to encourage ... “the establishment and development in schools and youth organizations of international relations clubs and UNESCO Friends Clubs.” LOUIS FRANÇOIS, a member of the French Delegation, was anxious to share the experience gained by the French with other countries, and sent the ball into their court, where it remained for some time.

Not that UNESCO was showing sudden lack of interest for this popular movement of support for its ideal and achievements; only that the resolutions which the General Conference continued to adopt at its various sessions until 1970 with respect to the Clubs, invited all the Member States to encourage their establishment and development. It was therefore the States which had to take the initiative, while the Director-General had to provide all necessary assistance and cooperate to ensure the development of the Clubs.

Resolution IV.1.5.15, which was adopted by the Conference at its 8th session, is noteworthy in more ways than one and deserves to be quoted in full: “Clubs of Friends of UNESCO

Member States are invited ... to encourage, under the auspices of their National Commissions, the establishment of Clubs of Friends of UNESCO which can publicize the work of UNESCO, the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies and study the problems of international cooperation, especially in UNESCO’s own particular fields.

The Director-General is authorized to give National Commissions any assistance needed in order to promote the establishment of Clubs of Friends of UNESCO in Member States and to facilitate and improve the activities of such clubs already in existence.”

The part of the resolution addressed to the Member States refers to the role assigned to the National Commissions in vague terms: it was “under their auspices” that the Clubs of Friends of UNESCO were created. No other resolution of the General Conference was to return to the subject, either to make further mention of it or to elaborate on it. The Charter of the National Commissions, adopted at the 20th session of the Conference, maintains total silence on the subject of Clubs.

This provision of the resolution lent itself to very different interpretations from one commission to the next, and even from one period to the next in the same country, depending on whether the commission concerned was authoritarian or liberal, strict or cavalier, maintained a strong presence or was in a state of weakness, was firmly established or called into question by repeated reorganizations and changes. In the final analysis, it was the way in which the commissions interpreted their role *vis-à-vis* the movement, the way in which the Clubs themselves reacted, depending on their particular situation and degree of maturity, as well as UNESCO's attitude, which together gradually established precedence in this domain.

Certain things held true in all contexts, notwithstanding the surrounding pragmatism. In this way, it was generally agreed that it was above all the National Commission's responsibility to promote the establishment of Clubs, and then to help such Clubs to function and flourish, and it was equally generally agreed that the official recognition of a group such as a "UNESCO Club" was the responsibility of the Commission. However, if the latter were behind the creation of a body responsible for the coordination of the Clubs, the national coordinating body would, from then on, be responsible for accepting any new Club.

The instructions given to the Director-General by the resolution of the 8th session concerned, on the one hand, the provision of general assistance and support to the commissions without placing any limits on such assistance, which one would expect to be intellectual, moral, technical, material and financial; and, on the other hand, *facilitating* and *improving* the activities of such Clubs, thus creating the possibility of direct interventions which were left to the entire discretion of the Director-General, who was not expected to overstep the mark.

It was at the 14th session of the General Conference (Paris, 1966) that the expression UNESCO *Clubs* appeared for the first time. It encompassed all the groups which bore the Organization's name, irrespective of the various names by which they called themselves or by which they were known, and it has become the generic term covering all such groups.

An event which was to have unsuspected significance took place in the life of UNESCO at the beginning of the 1950s. It was the establishment, in the Organization's Secretariat, of a specialized relief assistance service entrusted with the programme which had until then been a responsibility of the Department of Cultural Activities. The duties and responsibilities of the new service were meticulously defined. It was, first of all, to assemble documentation on the nature, extent and evolution of requirements, and then carry out its action in three areas: make material donations and provide services, set up a Relief Fund for giving direct

assistance to countries devastated by war; launch and conduct voluntary aid campaigns; assist the voluntary work camps which were engaged in reconstruction tasks, in accordance with UNESCO's aims, to become centres of international understanding and cultural development.

Initiated by DAVID LEFF,¹ the Gift Coupon Programme was established at the same time, and was an immediate success because of the simple way it worked. People and organizations wanting to give assistance bought the Coupons, whose value was expressed in United States dollars, and paid for them in their national currency. They sent them personally to the people in charge of the project they had decided to support, and interpersonal contacts were encouraged as a result.

At the same time, the scope of the rehabilitation programme narrowed somewhat to become more focused. It was now conducted in order to "help to make possible the full development of certain particularly important projects in the annual programme". In other words, the projects chosen by the Organization to benefit from relief assistance had to correspond to the priorities of its programme whose range and influence they increased. Another idea grew that relief assistance did not only show solidarity, but was also a means of making UNESCO's work more widely known.

Of course, donor activity had to be based on knowledge of the country in which the chosen projects were located, knowledge which covered all aspects of such countries – economic, political, and, above all, human and cultural – in order to upgrade the status of entire regions which the general public saw in a pessimistic light of poverty and under-development.

In regard to recipients, relief assistance also had positive effects in that it put greater emphasis on projects carried out in rural areas which were often far away from the national decision-making centres. It confirmed the initiators of such projects in their feeling that their work was useful because they were recognized by the international community, which instilled in them a desire to take control of their own destiny. Exchanges with donors also demystified an unduly idyllic conception of the technologically advanced countries, cut sacrosanct "progress" down to size, and revealed common human aspirations and shared values.

1. David Leff was one of the United States nationals, staff members of the Secretariat, who were forced to leave UNESCO in 1954 during the McCarthyist "witch-hunt", which did not spare the staff of international organizations.

Since it first came into being, the Organization has, of course, always advocated grassroots solidarity between communities. It expects this both to produce practical results, to assist the needy, and to yield moral results which by definition are difficult to measure, namely, the cultivation of a spirit of understanding and mutual respect. But with the changes made to the forms of relief assistance, UNESCO established a frame of reference for the work of all those who wanted to make their cooperation part of a coherent whole rather than to carry out solitary ventures. The Organization highlighted the ethical implications of its programme and its informative aspects. It made a point of compiling a list, soon to become a catalogue, of the projects which met the criteria it had established; such projects had to be put forward by their future beneficiaries and help to raise their standard of living.

The UNESCO Clubs quickly took to this programme, which enabled them to establish relationships in other countries and to collaborate in a work of justice and peace. At the time, the pioneers of the movement, the Nipponese Federation, the UNESCO Centrum of the Netherlands, the American Center of Denver and the French Federation all made commitments which they have never failed to keep.

The Public Liaison Division – PLD – came into being in the 1950s following the reorganization of the Rehabilitation Service. It formed part of the Office of Public Information, whose role can be summarized in this concise and eloquent phrase: *public information and international understanding*.

For its part, PLD was in charge of voluntary international assistance, cooperation with the UNESCO Clubs, the promotion and administration of the UNESCO Coupon Schemes, the documentation centre of the Office, collaboration with the National Commissions for their information activities, the programme of the *anniversaries of great personalities and events*, the Visitors' Service and the Gift Shop. In addition to these specific projects, information tasks of a general nature concerning the events devoted to human rights and education relating to the United Nations were carried out in cooperation with the relevant divisions of the United Nations and the education divisions of UNESCO. The responsibilities were immense and, in order to discharge some of them, the Division made use of the services of the other units of the Office which were in charge of relations with the media, newspapers, radio, television, cinema, and so on.

In chronological order, the first two Chiefs of PLD were JACOB ZUCKERMAN and PHILIPPE ROUX, who were men of high calibre. The former was the main “inventor” in 1948-1949 of the UNESCO Coupon Scheme. The initial idea of the programme was to assist the countries without convertible

currencies to import educational, scientific and cultural materials, books and equipment from the industrialized countries, paying for them in their national currencies. The system proved to be so convenient and reliable that its scope rapidly expanded to include other domains and other countries.

PHILIPPE ROUX, who was initially JACOB ZUCKERMAN's deputy before pursuing his career in Africa and then returning to Headquarters at the end of the 1960s to become the Chief of the Division, was a person who was well liked and respected by the world of the Clubs, which he always supported and encouraged in a benevolently effective way. He was one of the first people to truly believe in the Clubs and in their capacity to contribute to the work and influence of UNESCO, and to pay countless visits to them. It was thanks to him, and to his powers of persuasion, that many of the first generation Clubs came into existence.

JACOB ZUCKERMAN and PHILIPPE ROUX gave the Division the cohesion and internal unity that had been jeopardized by its many and varied tasks. Both of them knew how to build bridges between the different programmes, making them supportive of each other without compromising their independence.

The fact that the contact-person of the Clubs belonged to the information services of the Organization was to have far-reaching and long-lasting consequences on Club activities. For 30 years, the Division subtly oriented their studies and discussions by the circulation of written and audio-visual information concerning UNESCO's most outstanding projects, and the issues on its agenda and on that of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies. In the 1960s, such information concerned, *inter alia*, the peaceful use of atomic energy, the participation of young people in basic education and community development, technical assistance programmes, the world campaign against hunger and the first United Nations Development Decade. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights would, of course, be a recurring theme among the aims and activities of UNESCO and the United Nations.

The placing of PLD under the authority of the Office of Public Information also encouraged the Division to propose activities requiring small amounts of financial assistance to stimulate their implementation. These activities encompassed the distribution of documentation on the Organization and the production and adaptation of such documentation in local and national languages, and the organization of UNESCO "Weeks" and "Days", together with meetings and courses of study on very varied subjects. The promotion of voluntary international assistance was, of course, highly placed among the suggestions that the Division put forward, without ever imposing or restricting them, to the Clubs. The latter drew inspiration from them, but left their own mark on them.

Financial assistance was regularly forthcoming to promote the creation of new Clubs and to lend greater impetus to those which already existed. In 1967, for example, contracts were concluded to that end with the National Commissions of Dahomey,¹ France, Hungary, India, Senegal and Spain.

PLD regularly published tools which were indispensable to the Clubs: a Manual and an International Directory, several editions of which bore the rather long but explicit title of "Directory of friends of UNESCO clubs and similar associations and institutions existing in UNESCO Member States". Besides the Clubs themselves, the publication carried lists of United Nations associations and, in the case of certain countries, the national branches of the International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations (ISMUN). Passages were also included at the end describing the Associated Schools Project, the World Federation of United Nations Associations and ISMUN. Strangely, it was in such pages of the initial editions of the Directory that mention was first made of the UNESCO Clubs created by the United Schools Organization (USO) of India.

The Clubs have two aims: at the national level, they encouraged the development of a form of national and supranational civic awareness by stimulating interest in all that concerns the life of the people; at the international level they endeavour to expand abroad a spirit of understanding and cooperation. Working with a UNESCO Club is the best way of developing a civic mindedness on a world scale and at the same time of reconciling one's national obligations with those due to humanity in general.

Clubs take international relationships into account and examine national and international problems in relation to each other; they are open to everyone, form a meeting place where all points of view can be aired and help to develop mutual respect. Thirty years on, such a definition is still very much the right one.

As to the Manual, it is an abridged and somewhat modified version, adapted to the world at large, of the book *Les clubs UNESCO – pourquoi? Pour qui? Comment?* which is published by the French Federation of UNESCO Clubs. The Organization produces the English and French version of this 26-page Manual, and requests the Friends of UNESCO Club of Madrid to produce the Spanish version. The booklet defines the role of the UNESCO Club in a world which is undergoing profound changes, describes the organization and structure of a Club, and gives a general idea of its activities and resources. It is clear that the publication is aimed

1. In 1975, Dahomey became the People's Republic of Benin, and the adjective 'People's' was dropped in 1990.

first and foremost at the Clubs of young people who make up the majority of the movement. Thus, the 1969 version begins with a quotation from the speech made by RENÉ MAHEU¹ on 24 June 1968 during his inauguration of the fifth Regional Conference of European National Commissions in Monaco: “UNESCO must become the Organization of the young; the Organization in which young people should be able to put their questions – all their questions – freely, on a world-wide scale, to give form to their dreams by trying their hand at human cooperation, and to bring all the fervour and inexhaustible enthusiasm of their gifts and inventiveness to the service of disinterested action for peace.”

1. Director-General from 1962 to 1974.

More or less successful ventures, other approaches

The reactions of the Member States and their National Commissions to the attempts made by UNESCO to promote the creation of Clubs were immediate in some cases, delayed in others, while a third group of countries chose different approaches to securing international understanding, and other states either failed to react or have not yet done so. The following are some examples.

To begin with, several countries showed a high degree of optimism which was not borne out by future events. In **Belgium**, for example, the Ministry of Education informed students of UNESCO's wishes for the establishment of international relations Clubs. The heads of the Ministry were convinced that this initiative would "certainly arouse their enthusiastic interest" and placed high hopes, in this respect, on the National Commission which had been set up by the Decree of 1 July 1948. But disillusionment set in, and Belgium had to admit a few years later that the attempts to create UNESCO Clubs had not been successful. As a result, the Commission had to turn to groups which were already fully active in order to urge them to pay greater attention to international problems.

It was during the 1960s that the first Belgian Clubs appeared simultaneously in the country's two language communities, with the French-speaking community banking on the Associated Schools to branch out into out-of-school activities within the framework of Clubs. To begin with, the two movements merged in a National Federation at the beginning of the 1970s, before going their separate ways, although they still maintained informal links. In 1973-1974, the Dutch-speaking clubs established their own coordinating body, the Federation of UNESCO Centres (FEDUC), which, at the beginning of the 1990s, became the Flemish Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations.

The **Union of South Africa** had the same hopes when it published the UNESCO Memorandum, dated April 1947, in the Education Gazette of each province, hoping that it would lead to the emergence of international relations clubs. But the Memorandum met with no response, and the country was to leave UNESCO in 1956, returning to it 40 years later as the Republic of South Africa, which has been its name since independence. This time there was a very real possibility of creating Clubs under the initial impetus of students from other countries of sub-Saharan Africa who had gained experience in club activity within the context of their own groups and associations.

The **Swiss** experience bore some resemblance, in its initial stages, to that of Belgium. It had not been possible to establish Friends of UNESCO Clubs, according to the Secretary-General of the Commission, but the latter seized the opportunity of the Congress of the National Union of Students to invite them to form study groups in order to familiarize themselves with the Organization and its work, and to collaborate in its activities. Clubs were indeed created during the 1960s, proving to be among the most enterprising, as well as the most varied, thanks to their enrolment of young people and adults of both sexes. But this bright period would be relatively short and the Clubs were to cease to function a few years later without any sign that they could be revived in the foreseeable future. The Commission concentrated its attention on the development of an extensive and exemplary network of Associated Schools.

The goodwill shown by the **Haitian** Commission went unrewarded, and it reported that the National Commission had tried to organize UNESCO Clubs in the country's *lycées*, but that, unfortunately, the project had been unsuccessful. It fared little better 30 years later when three Clubs, which had been launched in schools in 1984, declined and ceased to function. These ups and downs did not stop it from turning its thoughts to a fresh departure, which materialized, starting in 1995, with the experimental establishment of a number of Clubs which were to be followed by many others. The experiment was successful because, two years later, the conditions were right for the creation, in the immediate future, of a National Federation.

As to the **Iranian** Commission, it was ready to take the plunge in 1956, using a cautious conditional tense to declare that an Association of Friends of UNESCO would be established, but realistically adding, "should the National Commission receive some assistance". It would seem that the assistance was not forthcoming or that the attempt was unsuccessful. Be that as it may, the project has been abandoned – at least for the past four decades, for no one can foretell the future.

In 1954, the National Commission for **Taiwan of China**¹ used the agency of the Chinese Association for the United Nations to assist educational establishments to establish groups of young people to promote the United Nations and UNESCO. The project led to the creation of a number of Clubs with an uncertain future. The aborted project was resumed 30 years later when a Chinese Group of Friends of UNESCO was founded in a secondary school in Beijing in 1985 to carry out scientific activities. The *Association of UNESCO Clubs of Beijing* came into being the following year to gather together the dozen or so Clubs which were then active and, a few years later, the movement spread throughout the country.

To begin with, everything went well in **Hungary**. The very first Club came into being in 1964, and its example was followed by others to such a point that, a few years later, there were more than 20 UNESCO circles in universities and cultural centres, and a number of Clubs functioning within the framework of Associated Schools. The activities demonstrated proficient eclecticism: the translation of UNESCO documents under contract with the National Commission, the study of human rights, commemoration of anniversaries and work aimed at protecting the environment, with the members of the Clubs proving to be such excellent linguists that they were readily recruited as interpreters and as guides for foreign dignitaries. The Documentation Centre set up in the town of Nyíregyháza provided Clubs and Associated Schools with information material and UNESCO publications, and was a catalyst for translations and adaptations.

But it was the exchanges which most delighted the Hungarian Friends of UNESCO, deliberately European exchanges which were aimed at Eastern and Western Europe. In 1972, the Club of the *Lycée* Laszlo I in Budapest began a fine and lasting friendship with the Italian Club of Coni against a background of Cold War. The almost insurmountable barriers which existed between these partners were overcome, thanks to the tenacity shown by both sides. Visits then took place which were the starting-point of cultural exchanges between Hungarian and Italian students, which were renewed every year thereafter, and which continue today despite the fact that the Hungarian Clubs no longer exist. Matters of the heart took centre stage in the exchanges between the UNESCO Club of the *Lycée* Szilagyí Erzsébet of Budapest and that of the *Lycée* Fustel of Coulanges in Strasbourg (France). Love thus carried the day when several young Hungarian women married

1. Taiwan of China was a member of the United Nations and UNESCO until 1971 when the People's Republic of China was recognized as the representative of China throughout the United Nations system.

men from Alsace and created a Hungarian Chair in the Faculty of Arts of the University of Strasbourg. Had the UNESCO Club become a marriage bureau? No one had thought of this branch of activity as a possibility!

However, the Hungarian groups experienced serious problems towards the end of the 1970s. Officially, they suffered from the too frequent changes of their leaders; unofficially, it was noted that their attention was over-enthusiastically focused on the West, and insufficiently on the East ... Silently and with dignity, they ceased to exist one after the other. Today, the National Commission has created fresh hope by announcing its sympathy with the movement, a possible prelude to its reactivation.

To turn now to the **Mexican Clubs**, they were immediately affected by a geographical limitation, the Federal Capital, and a natural one, since they prospered only in the "secundarias", or secondary schools. Nonetheless, they were established with great enthusiasm on the part of young people and interest on that of the National Commission, which recruited a part-time teacher who was responsible for liaison work with them and between them, and assisted them in their activities. When this young woman left, her post was left vacant and the movement declined inexorably before completely ceasing to exist. This is unfortunate for the country of origin of JAIME TORRES BODET, and unfortunate for the 40 or so schools in which the movement was based ... Twenty-five years were to elapse before its new departure, a modest one which, it is to be hoped, will be decisive.

Alongside these far from exhaustive examples, and instances of good and bad fortunes of the movement in several countries, there were others which were short-lived but attractive.

In **Turkey**, the Association of Students of the University of Ankara established a UNESCO Committee with the task of combating illiteracy. "The National Commission is wholeheartedly supporting the students' fine initiative and is participating in the drawing up of their plan of action." This support was again witnessed when the students of the political faculty of the same University created a Friends of UNESCO Club. These associations quickly fell into oblivion, however, and this is very regrettable because they were among the first to have given priority in their programmes to community development activities. The UNESCO Club for Girls, which was established in 1976 at the *Lycée Galatasaray* of Istanbul on the initiative of the French teacher, was to last only a little longer. The interest being shown today by the National Commission should encourage the Turkish groups of Friends of UNESCO to start afresh.

The life of the **Liberian Club** of the Friends of UNESCO was as short as that of its Turkish counterparts. Under the auspices of the National Commission,

the Club brought together former holders of UNESCO study and advanced training fellowships, as well as all those who were interested in the objectives and achievements of the Organization. Despite its premature end, it could be considered to have foreshadowed the *alumni* clubs which bring together former fellowship holders of UNESCO, and whose creation the latter has been promoting since 1993. Memory of this brief interlude had been lost to such an extent that on relaunching the movement, with the birth in April 1978 of the LUCA Club at the University of Monrovia, the Commission announced that it was the country's very first Club.

The **Monégasque** Association was to last longer. The Principality's Friends of UNESCO Club was established in January 1959, and held bimonthly meetings during which international problems and UNESCO's major projects¹ were examined and discussed and art slides produced by the Organization were shown, accompanied by commentaries. Informal talks were given by its members and by prominent figures from the artistic and literary world. A section of the Club was established within a sports and leisure association as a means of encouraging the young workers who were members to become involved in cultural activities and begin to learn about international issues. The Monaco Club became an associate member of the French Federation, attended several of its annual meetings and played host to senior staff members of the Organization before becoming dormant in the mid-1960s without any hope of being reactivated, or at least not at the time of writing.

Following the UNESCO suggestions that already active groups be used to promote international understanding, and General Conference resolutions advocating the creation of Clubs **and** Associations for the United Nations, some Member States turned to such Associations. The Associations which had already been set up afforded the advantage of having members who were well versed in the ideals and objectives of the United Nations family and very conversant with international issues. Alliance with such strong groups sometimes led to the establishment of Friends of UNESCO Clubs.

This happened in **Pakistan**, where the end of the 1950s witnessed the creation of a United Nations Association with a UNESCO Section which was supported by the National Commission and with which it collaborated closely. But the Commission went further, with the result that Clubs were set up with

1. In addition to the aforementioned Major Project on Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values, the General Conference approved two other Major Projects in 1956. They concerned the Extension of Primary Education in Latin America, carried out from 1957 to 1966, and Scientific Research on Arid Lands (1957-1962).

calculated slowness so that, after cautious beginnings and progression by fits and starts, they gradually established themselves until they were numerous enough to create a national coordinating body in the mid-1970s, and to remodel it in 1981 as part of a general reorganization of the movement.

In **Austria**, the cooperation of the nascent Clubs with the United Nations Association and the UN's pre-existing Youth Clubs is so close that it is difficult to separate them from one another in their original stages. But is that really necessary? The time came, however, when the Friends of UNESCO declared their separate identity. But in December 1970, an irresistible mutual attraction brought the UNESCO Clubs and the United Nations Clubs together under the banner of a common "Working Group". The UNESCO Clubs separated from it at the end of the 1970s when they created their own Federation ... which was soon to attract the United Nations Clubs again! The resemblance, apart from their having identical objectives, seems to have resided in the age group of the members, who were almost all university students or young adults who had just started work. The National Federation, faithful to an old-established tradition, continues today to coordinate a dozen or so UNESCO Clubs and United Nations Clubs.

In **Yugoslavia**, priority was given to the United Nations Associations. By the end of 1953, the law faculty students of the University of Belgrade had already established the United Nations Centre for Law Students which organized conferences, discussions and film projections, and established a library which was designed to provide the students with information about the principles, organization and action of the United Nations. Following in the Centre's footsteps, other groups of United Nations Friends were set up, mostly in the large towns of the country's constituent republics; some of them created a UNESCO Section in order to become specialized in the fields of competence of the Organization and participate in its programmes. At the beginning of the 1970s, there were ten or so clubs, especially in the capital, which met in a Friends of UNESCO Club Centre. They lasted for a good 12 or more years. After this period, however, UNESCO Clubs proper were very rarely created, except in exceptional cases, examples of which are the Zagreb Club and that of Slovenj Gradec.

The Nordic countries, **Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Iceland**, enjoyed such a long and fruitful collaboration with the United Nations Associations of their respective countries that they did not see any need to create UNESCO Clubs. Astonishment thus greeted the miraculous appearance in Finland, in the 1960s, of a Club within the framework of adult education and of the *UNESCO Association of Helsinki Students*. The astonishment was at its height in 1967 when, springing up like lively little mushrooms, some 20 or so UNESCO Clubs appeared,

bringing together secondary school pupils who managed themselves, their associations and the liaising body. At the beginning of the 1970s, these groups dropped out of sight. The Club and the Association continued to operate for a while but also gave up in the end, faced as they were with such lonely isolation.

The Nordic countries, among the most generous where cooperation with the developing world is concerned, were perfectly content with two types of communication channels to spread the UNESCO ideal, namely, the Associated Schools for the school population and the United Nations Associations for the non-school population. The work of these two categories of partners was complemented by bodies carrying out humanitarian assistance and cooperation for development.

Certain countries immediately chose a particular way, entirely outside the context of the Friends of UNESCO Clubs, to awaken the interest of their young people in world events and to involve them in programmes leading to a better understanding of the ways of life and patterns of thought of other countries. But the UNESCO Clubs sometimes caught up with them.

The **United Kingdom** established its own strategy, using the immense resources of the Council for Education in World Citizenship (CEWC), which was founded in 1939 to promote studies and teaching aimed at contributing to mutual understanding, peace, cooperation and goodwill among all peoples. It is an autonomous body which represents local education authorities, teachers' associations, other specific educational bodies and youth associations, and it encourages the examination of international affairs in general, and United Nations issues in particular, in schools and young people's clubs throughout the country. Membership included 1,000 schools in the 1950s, more than twice that number 40 years later, and hundreds of youth clubs. The Council organized conferences, talks and exhibitions for them, and encouraged the participation of young people in international projects, including UNESCO's rehabilitation programme. It is responsible for the Associated Schools system in the United Kingdom, and has continued to accomplish its mission without letting itself be troubled by the United Kingdom's withdrawal from UNESCO.¹ Its multifaceted and multidimensional action leaves little room for initiatives from other bodies. The UNESCO Club of Belfast, founded in 1986 within the context of the Northern Ireland International Centre, is nowadays the movement's only embodiment in a country which, after all, was the cradle of the great movement which led to the founding of UNESCO.

1. The United Kingdom left UNESCO in December 1985, and became a Member State of the Organization once again on 1 July 1997.

In 1956, with a view to the better coordination of its collaboration with young people, the USSR created the Committee of Youth Organizations of the USSR with which the National Commission maintained permanent relations. The Committee had responsibility for promoting the international relations of Soviet youth. Two years after its creation, it was working in conjunction with 550 youth organizations belonging to 98 countries. It was put forward as the only means of salvation. UNESCO's efforts to attract the Soviet Union to join the ranks of countries with Clubs were, for many years to come, met with a wall of refusal. UNESCO Clubs – what for? Our young people are already doing the same things that these Clubs do, in particular in their activities as young Pioneers. This was the reply which was unfailingly given to the Organization. It is a well-known fact that the Clubs were a source of irritation for centralist regimes, irrespective of their political leanings, and that they were even afraid of them. All in all, it was to the Clubs' credit that their reputation sparked such reactions. Their independent thinking and freedom of action aroused suspicion in countries in which they were not very common and in which it was known that such Clubs would not readily put up with hindrances, and were still less willing to have activities imposed on them from the outside.

Starting in 1990, genuine UNESCO Clubs were established in all the Republics which then made up the Soviet Union, and their growth has been exponential since December 1991, especially in Russia.

There was an identical situation in the **Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic**, which also had a Committee of Youth Organizations. There again, the thaw came at the beginning of the 1990s with the founding of the *Ukrainian Association of UNESCO Clubs* which comprises some 50 youth, student and adult Clubs.

The **Dahomeyan** experience was rather different from the preceding ones, although its belated adoption of Marxist-Leninism gave a vaguely socialist air to a country which, as has already been stated, changed its name to that of the "People's Republic of Benin" in 1975. At first, Dahomey had no intention of establishing UNESCO Clubs either. But, as was the case in the USSR, in 1962 it assembled the previously separate youth movements into a single umbrella organization: the *Jeunesse nationale dahoméenne* (Dahomeyan National Young People's Association), which embraced all these young people from the most varied backgrounds and walks of life. It must be acknowledged that this was an effective way of preparing young people to live in a spirit of tolerance and mutual respect.

The Clubs began to be set up starting in 1967, with the financial assistance of UNESCO, and a Federation was established in December 1970 to coordinate

these bodies, which recruited their members primarily from schools. Nonetheless, adult associations existed in the rural areas, among them the *Regional Club for UNESCO* of Dassa-Zoumé which had some 12 branches. It concentrated on promoting agricultural development and the improvement of food crops.

The movement declined somewhat after that, but was relaunched with the creation, starting in 1975-1976 in public and private educational establishments, of school cooperatives which were managed by the pupils themselves and whose activities were the responsibility of the staff of those establishments. In May 1976, the cooperatives were authorized to encourage the creation of “specialized UNESCO units”. There were to be as many as 150 of these Beninese UNESCO units which, in 1982, revived the Federation and came out strongly in favour of a clear commitment to the fight against illiteracy. By the time the cooperatives ceased to exist, the young people had acquired a taste for the Clubs, which had become a part of their everyday lives. Another new departure! The progress made has been measured, and has yielded fine and plentiful rewards: 160 clubs in 1996, many of them in the rural areas.

The first generation UNESCO Clubs, 1950–1970

A number of movements which came into being in the 1950s have continued to grow steadily and can be seen, to this day, on the world map of UNESCO Clubs. A number of examples taken from different geographical regions will illustrate this steadfastness. Brief information is sometimes given on the progress of these movements, to show more clearly how they have developed.

The first groups of Friends of UNESCO came into being in the **Federal Republic of Germany**¹ in 1950, with those of Berlin and Munich in particular exercising considerable influence over the intellectual life of these two cities. In December 1955, the Berlin Association founded a UNESCO nursery school, in which pre-school children grew accustomed to being in the company of their young foreign classmates. Other groups which also subscribed to the ideal of the Organization came into being and maintained systematic relations with the National Commission. A Federation coordinated these 15 or so associations at the end of the 1950s. It held annual meetings in order to prepare its future programme and put forward suggestions concerning the activities of its members. UNESCO was represented at its meetings – Hattingen in 1959, Gauting in 1960, and so on – and granted it subventions to translate the Organization's publications into German and circulate them.

In its most recent form, the Federation now exists as the Forum of UNESCO Clubs, established in 1990 as a platform for the dozen or so German Clubs which are playing an increasing role in international assistance. The adult associations, which have gradually staked out their territory by recruiting mostly women, have founded youth sections and involved them in their work. They are

1. From 1949 to 1990, the date of the reunification, Germany was made up of two States: the Federal Republic of Germany, and the German Democratic Republic in the eastern part of the country.

also endeavouring to attract more men to swell their ranks. The UNESCO Club which was created within the framework of the venerable University of Leipzig is conducting high-level research on problems besetting society.

Teams of UNESCO students were set up in the **Republic of Korea** in 1953-1954. Each of them comprised some 50 young people from university colleges and universities. These teams offered their services to the localities which had recently been reclaimed from the regions devastated by war. From 1954 onwards, for example, groups of students worked during the summer and winter holidays in the region situated to the north of the 38th Parallel. These communities gradually organized and diversified their activities. In October 1958, they established the *Korean UNESCO Association* which collaborated with the National Commission and whose financial assistance would be of decisive importance for the beginning of the work to build the Korean UNESCO House. Three years later, ten storeys had been completed. The House stands in the centre of Seoul, a fine looking skyscraper which houses the headquarters of the National Commission. The parts of the building which the latter does not occupy are rented to public and private companies, and the resulting rent provides the Commission with a fixed income. It must be said that Commissions which can boast of being self-financing are very rare!

Clubs were also created in secondary schools and the teacher training colleges taking part in the Associated Schools system. In the 1960s, the Commission organized courses for university students in order to give them education and training in mutual understanding. The number of UNESCO Associations of students then expanded and, in December 1967, they founded the National Federation of the Korean UNESCO Students Associations (KUSA). The Korean Associations sought to instil new values into society so as to encourage creative and friendly cooperation based on mutual understanding. Exchanges began with the Japanese Associations and have developed steadily. They are aimed at softening the impact of the unpredictable and often stormy, and almost always hostile, relations between the two countries. International youth camps have been organized.

Following the Intergovernmental Youth Conference, held in Grenoble (France) in September 1964 with delegations from 71 countries, the Republic of Korea carried out a series of extracurricular activities on the basis of the recommendations of the Conference. The *Korea UNESCO Youth Centre*, which was launched in 1977, was to become the focal point for these activities and their continuation. The Centre organizes training courses, carries out research work on young people, publishes a review, opens its impressive documentary resources to a specialized public and cooperates with the UNESCO Clubs.

The Korean Friends of UNESCO had a dozen local associations which set up their National Federation in 1975, as well as student Associations whose number grew steadily, and a number of Clubs in the primary and secondary Associated Schools, as well as in teacher training institutions. Some years later, an umbrella organization called the Korean National Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations was founded to bring together local and student associations. The Korean groups played an important role in the emergence and growth of the Federation of Asia and, in 1995, their representative was elected to the Executive Board of the World Federation.

The proverb about great oaks growing from little acorns has been borne out in countries like **Ceylon**¹ and **Costa Rica**, in which almost unnoticed beginnings were to lead to robust and well-structured networks of UNESCO Clubs.

In 1954, the **Ceylonese** Commission reached an agreement with the heads of the teacher training college of Maharagama to organize an international relations Club in the college. The basic idea was to analyse the results of this initial experiment and to generalize the experiment if the results were promising. But for a decade at least, the term “generalize” was not really appropriate, given that in the mid-1960s only three Clubs had been set up and were functioning more or less continuously. It was only in the 1970s that a Federation of some 60 Clubs was established.

In that same year, 1954, **Costa Rica** espoused the two fundamental themes that were dealt with in schools within the context of education to promote understanding and international cooperation: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and knowledge of other countries. A noteworthy educational aspect of the application of this programme was the foundation of an international relations Club at the *Lycée* of Heredia. It was followed by others – a dozen in 1970, double that number five years later, and 36 to date – which were named Friends of UNESCO Clubs, and encouraged by the National Commission. The latter put fundamental emphasis on educational experiments which promoted national and international civic mindedness; and the very dynamic role played by VIVIENNE RIVERA DE SOLIS, for a long time Secretary-General of the Commission, surely had something to do with these choices. But again, such an attitude is hardly surprising on the part of a small country which is resolutely peace-loving and which, for many years, has boasted that it has no army. Furthermore, Costa Rica, which was the first Latin American country to introduce the UNESCO Clubs movement, very rapidly adopted the Associated Schools. These schools worked closely with the Clubs; so closely that, in 1981, the Commission established a

1. Ceylon became Sri Lanka in 1972.

unique national coordinating body for the two movements. There are only three or four of this type in the world, in Morocco and the Philippines in particular.

The history of the Clubs of Barcelona and Madrid (Spain) smacks of the legend or the saga.

That of Barcelona, which was founded in 1960, proclaims, with legitimate pride, that it is the oldest in the Iberian Peninsula. It has always been unfailingly dynamic. For many people, the vitality of the nascent Club was due to the fact that it represented a refuge for the Catalans who were opposed to General FRANCO's dictatorship, a place in which Catalan identity could be preserved and continue to be asserted. But VICTOR HURTADO I MARTÍ, President of the Club during the 1980s, felt that such an explanation was incomplete. It could be accepted, but with qualifications. In reality, the Catalan people saw themselves as the spiritual heirs of the first European Humanist Renaissance, that of the troubadours. They had always felt drawn by the principles underlying the creation of UNESCO, long before the Organization had formulated them, and had always attached great value to the human person and the possibilities of the latter's full development.

The *Friends of UNESCO Club of Barcelona or of Catalonia* (the name changed with different periods), received the support of prominent people from the Catalan cultural and educational world. Its work, although essentially cultural, artistic, educational and informative, attracted disapproval and retaliatory measures: closures and suspensions of activity were pronounced on several occasions by the authorities. But, like the Phoenix, the Club was always able to arise from its ashes and resume the thread of its ideas, thus demonstrating a tenacity which explains its longevity. When Spain became democratic once again, it was able to carry out its "*aggiornamento*" and redefine its overall objectives: promoting Catalan identity outside the region and promoting all other identities inside it, without ceasing to champion UNESCO and its achievements.

The *Friends of UNESCO Club of Madrid* (CAUM), established a year after its Barcelona counterpart, had an even more turbulent, and even dramatic, life. Perhaps because of its rejection of any diplomatic compromise or its unavowed taste for provocation, the Club's history was marked by various serious events: the non-approval of the Statutes of the Club, closure of its offices, withdrawal of the passport of the President of the Association, the imprisonment of the latter, and so forth. CAUM was thus subjected to a long list of humiliations during the first 15 years of its existence, and it reacted with the pride of the martyr who knows that his or her cause is justified. No doubt, the public distribution in the capital of a million copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was an unpardonable act of rebellion in a Spain which was not even aware of the existence of that fundamental text. No

doubt, too, a membership of 4,000, including clerics, students, workers, trade unionists and left-wing intellectuals, was a capital sin in a country in which the right of assembly was granted stingily, and in which the least deviation from the dominant ideology caused great irritation at all levels of power. The Madrid Club was defiant, and continued to conspire and enjoy itself; to conspire and wipe its tears. It was persecuted, but continued with its head held high. Indeed, it arrayed itself in the persecution to which it was subjected as if it were a festive garment. And it broke out in very loud applause when two Directors-General of UNESCO – RENÉ MAHEU and AMADOU-MAHTAR M'BOW – asked the government authorities for clarifications, interceded on behalf of the Club, had its office reopened and its President released. Excellent! UNESCO had had its back to the wall and had acted appropriately, standing up for its friends.

In fact, while proclaiming its endorsement of UNESCO's ideals and ethics, the Club cherished a dream of a "People's UNESCO" in which non-governmental entities would take centre stage and kick the States out! The Club added strong sympathy for the underdog to this unorthodox vision of international relations. This was one of the reasons behind its campaigns against all kinds of situations and conflicts in which it always preferred the most impoverished and the weakest to the well off. It was also one of the reasons for its disagreement with the Catalan Club, which it judged to be too aristocratic, too intellectual and too rich. The ancestral rivalry between the two major Spanish cities took an unexpected turn in this case. Some years later, the "UNESCO Centres" were rejected, beginning with that of Catalonia, because, although they were only relatively comfortable financially, they were seen as constituting a permanent insult to the spirit of equity and poverty which should prevail at UNESCO.

Dear CAUM! So touching in its excesses and contradictions; so moving in its sincerity, so monastic in its virtue and so intransigent in its prejudices ... Was the Friends of UNESCO Club of Madrid the Saint James¹ of the modern age?

The restoration of freedoms did not put an end to the tribulations of the Madrid Association, which fell victim to an attack in 1980 in which two of its members were seriously injured. An aid fund was started, and the Director-General contributed to it on behalf of UNESCO, paying a visit to the Club in April ... Dear UNESCO!

1. Saint James was one of the 12 disciples of Christ. He is best known for his Epistle in which he castigates the selfishness of the rich. He is the legendary Apostle of Spain, and the tenth century marked the beginning of one of the greatest pilgrimages in Christendom to Santiago de Compostela, where his relics are venerated.

The other contemporary Spanish Clubs, which were few, revolved for a long time around the Catalan and Madrid Clubs which had set them an example, so much so that they lacked a separate identity of their own.

In France, UNESCO Clubs prospered and grew in number, especially in secondary schools, thanks to the work of LOUIS FRANÇOIS, who left the National Commission in 1956 to devote himself to the educational duties of General Inspector of Schools. The Youth Committee of the Commission studied the possibility of expanding the Clubs into rural areas, among workers and in youth movements. It succeeded, to a certain extent, and Clubs were established in youth centres, associations devoted to mass education and rural hostels. There were fewer than half a dozen adult Clubs, however. Collective memory has, above all, recorded the existence of those of Bois-Colombes and Limoges which, for a long time, organized a diverse and close-knit community around original projects.

To support its promotional activities, the Commission published the booklet *Les clubs d'études et de relations internationales et les clubs amis de l'UNESCO*, whose title included the two or three names then used in France.

In 1952, 60 or so young people representing all the provincial Clubs spent a day at UNESCO Headquarters.¹ They went home full of confidence in the ideals and achievements of the Organization, of which they became enthusiastic supporters. The following year, the Club of Brest played host to 200 students and 25 teachers from 13 countries. It created an International Centre in Brittany which was open to foreign students and teachers.

A Congolese teenager very enthusiastically attended the meetings of the Club of the *Lycée* Clémenceau in Nantes, the town where he was at school. Nantes? How strange that an African should choose this town, which reached its economic zenith in the eighteenth century thanks to the notorious triangular trade!² HENRI LOPÈS explains it in this way: his family had relatives in Noirmoutier, a small island just a short distance from the Breton coast, and thus he could live in a part of the country where there were people he knew. The bimonthly meetings of the UNESCO Club gave the exile, who was a boarder in a *lycée*, the opportunity to meet other young people in an atmosphere of freedom which contrasted with classroom constraints, and these were moments of pure joy during which he was able to forget his loneliness. Forty years later, the former member of

1. The Headquarters of the Organization were situated in Avenue Kléber, in Paris, until the inauguration in 1958 of its Headquarters at the Place de Fontenoy, with later annexes being built in Ruc Miollis and Rue Bonvin.

2. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the triangular trade was a particular form of the African slave trade.

the Nantes Club still remembers those meetings at which matters and events were discussed which the students heard about nowhere else: social and development questions, and the critical analysis of the different types of political regime then in existence. The Club was an incomparable place of openness which focused on instruction in civics, made young people aware of universal values, and dealt with important contemporary events and subjects of all kinds which were indispensable for the education of the citizen and cultured individual. HENRI LOPÈS was won over to the grand ideals of solidarity, seeking after truth and understanding of others, and drew lessons from this which he has never forgotten. He has since climbed the ladder to fame: ministerial posts in his country, the vocation of a writer whose works are commented on in African schools, posts of Assistant Director-General in several UNESCO sectors and, then, of the Organization's Deputy Director-General for Africa. All this success has not affected the simplicity of a man who has had honours heaped on him. He reminisces about LOUIS FRANÇOIS convening the Nantes Clubs to tell them about "his" India and "his" GANDHI on returning from a session of the General Conference,¹ and the smile which then lights up his face gives it a youthful expression, as if such reminiscences restored to him the brilliant years of the young man who was getting to know UNESCO.

The French Clubs founded their federation in 1956, and met the following year in Chamonix in the presence of representatives of 13 European Commissions whose fervour for UNESCO Clubs was stimulated as a result. The *French Federation of UNESCO Clubs*² was represented in the National Commission. It changed its statutes so as to associate foreign Clubs with its activities. Its magazine *UNESCO et ses amis*, which was published with occasional assistance from the Organization, relayed or disseminated information from the Secretariat. The Commission distributed tens of thousands of copies in order to arouse the interest of the public in the Organization's objectives.

The Clubs participated actively in the Gift Coupon Programme, including the one launched by the Commission at the end of 1959 in aid of six centres for blind people. The June 1960 issue of *The UNESCO Courier* related this operation in which other youth organizations participated. "French scouts and UNESCO Clubs chalk up a success" ran its title, and it expressed wonder that 15 million

1. This was the 9th session, which was held in New Delhi in 1956.

2. It was initially called the "French Federation of Study and International Relations Clubs, and Friends of UNESCO Clubs".

francs had been collected in a single night. The implementation of the Gift Coupon Programme, responsibility for whose advertising in France fell to the National Federation, led to the creation of new UNESCO Clubs. The Federation also collaborated in the activities of the freshly inaugurated Visitors' Service at UNESCO Headquarters, putting temporary guides at its disposal outside working hours and thus facilitating the reception of a large number of visitors at weekends. At the end of the 1960s, it opened an International Documentation Centre for young people, French and foreign alike.

This fine balance was upset by the turbulent events of May 1968, when a vast movement of political, social and cultural demonstrations began in France, carrying young people with it and spreading to Western Europe and well beyond. The National Federation stood up for the young people who were demanding what it advocated and had been implementing since it was created, namely, the exercise of responsibility by schoolchildren and receptiveness to the outside world. But school life was disrupted, and the Clubs which survived were mostly those which sought to bring together people of different persuasions who could express their views without bias. Young people became more and more politicized, boarding schools almost ceased to exist, the timetables of the different classes diversified, excluding the free periods which had favoured meetings of UNESCO Clubs, and the school transport service reduced these possibilities still further, while other associations were created which proposed extracurricular activities to which the schoolchildren responded favourably. The National Federation fell back on about half of the 400 Clubs which it used to coordinate, but the creation of "Town Clubs" which were not centred on the school, and that of mixed Clubs which brought together young people and adults breathed new life into it, and it gained in added vigour what it had lost in numbers.

In **India**, the National Commission was placed under the authority of an Executive Committee which, meeting in New Delhi for the third time in November 1950, entrusted it with the task of creating a network of UNESCO Centres in the country. In July of the same year, the cultural subcommission of the Commission recommended to universities, student organizations and social education centres that they organize group discussions on UNESCO in order to arouse the interest of the public in its objectives and programme. In order to determine whether such a project could be carried out, the universities were requested to organize UNESCO Clubs which could receive and study documents on the Organization, carry out liaison work between the Commission, educational, scientific and cultural bodies and the various institutions of their regions, and publicize and explain the aims and activities of UNESCO.

Together, all these initiatives produced encouraging results, since by the end of the year groups of Friends of UNESCO had been established at Jullundur, Solan, Baroda, Bhopal, Aligarh, Rewa, Unnao, Allahabad and Sambalpur. Replies were expected from other universities. After this initial rush, five centres finally emerged and remained active, namely, those of Madras, Calcutta, Bombay, Chandigarh and Manipal.

On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of UNESCO, in 1966, the Commission redoubled its efforts and, within a short time, there were some 115 UNESCO Clubs and Centres, with the latter being established in most cases in university and municipal libraries, as well as in other community meeting places. They were requested not only to make the Organization and its programme known but also to take part in activities which were useful for the local communities. The **Indian Federation of UNESCO Clubs** was established in 1968 to bring together a number of these associations.

The *United Schools Organization* (USO) was founded in 1951 to encourage schools to support the United Nations. In 1964, it created a specialized branch, the *Council of UNESCO School Clubs*, to promote the establishment of Clubs in the schools which it coordinated. The 60 or so Clubs which were thus created at the end of the 1960s carried out activities which were primarily concerned with the commemoration of the anniversary of the United Nations, and of world and international Days proclaimed by the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies. Thanks to its proselytizing, the USO was soon in a position to found the United Schools International (USI), a network which was established in the schools of an increasing number of countries throughout the world.

The prime mover of this movement was a man of energy and passion, JIYA LAL JAIN, whose entire life can be said to have been devoted to the creation and, subsequently, the expansion of the United Schools. As tireless as he was ascetic, JIYA LAL JAIN travelled throughout India and the world to convince people of his ideas, and most of the time he was successful, contriving to avoid any obstacles which threatened to block his path. A daring impulse led him to establish an Arab office of the USI in Bahrain at the end of the 1970s. He spent most of the year there, with the rest of his time being devoted to promoting or establishing United Schools in a wide variety of contexts.

In conjunction with the Indian Federation and the *National Federation of UNESCO Associations in India*, established in 1974, the United Schools Organization set up, in December 1979, a Coordinating Committee of Indian Clubs, in particular to ensure their representation at the international level, a representation which was not facilitated by the superabundance of coordinating bodies,

each of which was jealously attached to its members. Ten years were to pass before the *Confederation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations of India* was established in April 1989. It was based on the Indian Federation of UNESCO Clubs, the Council of UNESCO School Clubs of USO, and the *Indian National Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations*, which had been set up in 1985.

The constitutive meeting of the Federation took place at USO Headquarters, a charming place to stay and work underneath its leafy branches. It was built on land which was once far from the heart of the city, but which is today in the very centre of a residential area. USO Headquarters attracts visitors of all ages and nationalities, and it hosts training and refresher courses for heads of USO, its Clubs, and the Indian Confederation. JIYA LAL JAIN has won his wager – and so had India, for it is no simple matter to coordinate a thousand or so Clubs spread out over a vast territory and bringing together people with very heterogeneous cultures, languages and concerns.

The year 1950 marked a decisive stage in the relations between **Italy** and UNESCO, according to the country which, that same year, welcomed the 5th session of the General Conference to Florence. As was the case in Lebanon in 1948, it was an event which enabled large sections of the population to become better acquainted with the Organization and its objectives. The National Commission took advantage of this favourable atmosphere to create numerous Friends of UNESCO Circles, in Rome, Florence, Milan, Ferrara, Rimini, Bari, Naples, Venice, Modena, Pavia, Palermo and Genoa, in particular. These Circles, which often worked in conjunction with universities, strove to disseminate the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and members of the Commission took the floor during their meetings, in particular those which commemorated Human Rights Day. The Rimini Circle organized mass education and international civics courses.

In 1951, the *Italian Society for International Organizations* (SIOI) launched international relations Clubs on the initiative of groups of students. In May 1953, the Commission established a Committee bringing together youth groups which were pursuing cultural, educational and recreational goals. The Committee founded an international relations club and established contacts with the Friends of UNESCO Circles of various towns.

Some years later, Clubs were established in schools, often in collaboration with the Associated Schools. This was one of the spin-offs of the meeting held by the French Clubs in Chamonix in 1957, in cooperation with their Commission. The Italian Commission was represented there and, following the meeting, began to examine a series of proposals which could encourage the progress of Clubs in

schools. The other groups of Friends of UNESCO, especially those which were active in an out-of-school environment, were supported either by international bodies, such as the Red Cross, or by national ones, such as the *National Union for Combating Illiteracy* (UNLA) and SIOI. The 25 or so Clubs linked to UNLA were to be found in centres of popular culture, and united to form a Federation in the 1960s, but their life expectancy proved to be short. However, the distinction remained between the Clubs of the north and centre of the country which were mostly in schools, and those of the south and the islands, which were always linked to UNLA.

Fairly quickly, then, Italy acquired a highly diversified movement which recruited school and non-school young people and adults, and which carried out both the traditional activities of the Clubs of the period, and community and rural development work in the *Mezzogiorno*, that is, in all the southern regions of the Italian peninsula and islands which were relatively underdeveloped. Such a situation encouraged people to understand the problems faced by Third World countries and prompted spontaneous gestures of solidarity.

The nature of the Italian Clubs changed as the years passed. The UNLA Clubs and UNESCO Circles were gradually replaced by the school Clubs, adult associations and UNESCO Centres which appealed to the movers and shakers of a particular city, with the participation of the region and, sometimes, even national bodies. A number of these organizations still collaborate with SIOI.

The UNESCO Centre of Florence, which was founded in 1972 and is a meeting place for UNESCO Clubs and Associated Schools of Tuscany, is exemplary, with its programmes which give pride of place to information on UNESCO, international assistance, action to promote books and the habit of reading, better understanding of modern art, the environment, human rights, disadvantaged groups who do not always spring to mind, such as children in hospital and the elderly, and migration movements – for Italy cannot forget that it is a country of both immigrants and emigrants.

This building with its carefully balanced operations, which is being constantly visited by Clubs from all corners of the world in the knowledge that they will be received in a friendly and sensitive way, derives its personality from the human qualities of a major figure of the movement, its founder and director, MARIALUISA STRINGA, “la STRINGA” as she is affectionately called by all those who have had the privilege of meeting her. What does it matter if she cannot go anywhere – at home or abroad – without stacks of various documents, among which she can never find the right one when it is needed; what does it matter if she loses her personal effects – beginning with her umbrella and travelling bag – in the

places she passes through, resulting in anxious phone calls from one UNESCO office to another to track down these indispensable belongings which may be lying on a chair, under a table or behind a door; what does it matter if, at meetings, she is unfailingly one agenda item ahead or behind! La STRINGA is well loved for her generosity and great kindness; for her immense capacity for work and her girlish sense of wonder; for her quick pen and constantly alert mind.

The **Japanese** Associations, about 100 all told in 1951, undertook activities such as seminars, the publication of periodicals and dissemination of the concept of human rights. Their Federation held regular periodical general assemblies. Immediately after the admission of Japan to UNESCO, the President of the Federation, Mr FUJUYA, regaled the Federation's 7th assembly (Sapporo, Hokkaido, August 1951) with an account of the proceedings of the 6th session of the General Conference, which he had attended. The assembly examined the guiding principle of the Federation and how it could collaborate in the execution of UNESCO's programme.

In 1953, Japan began to participate in the application of the rehabilitation programme, organizing a publicity and fund-raising campaign in May. The National Commission said that it was assisted in its role of coordinator by two major private organizations, the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan (NFUAJ) which enjoyed legal status and was a legal entity, and the *Japanese Federation of Student Friends of UNESCO*, founded in 1950 by the Clubs of various higher education establishments and universities. It comprised 80 establishments in 20 districts and had a membership of 3,000 students.

Three times a month, NFUAJ published the *UNESCO Shimbun*, which carried news of the National Commission and of the Federation, together with translations of articles and photographs from the *UNESCO Courier* and UNESCO information. The Organization provided financial assistance for the cost of translating the articles taken from its periodicals.

The newly-created National Council of Advisors of High School UNESCO Clubs held annual general meetings. Its membership increased rapidly and a balance was struck between the Associations brought together by NFUAJ and the member Clubs of the Council – numbering 210 and 230 respectively in 1975, and 260 and 210 twenty years later, at a time when the activities of the youth Clubs began to expand rapidly again.

After occupying an important place among its activities, international assistance became a pilot programme of NFUAJ in 1969. The programme enabled the Federation to come to grips with reality and increase the size of its audience. A gulf had been opening up between the idealism of the Federation and the problems

affecting the country and the world as a whole which was in danger of cutting off the former from the latter. In 1952, when the Nipponese Commission was being set up, the Federation discussed its own *raison d'être* and decided to continue, taking the view that, because the Commission was a government body, it could easily become an institutional part of the political system, whereas the UNESCO Associations and their Federation should be committed to human and moral values. But the full consequences of this debate had not been fully weighed. For to restrict oneself to the grand ideals of the Organization and to be a movement which took no interest in political and practical issues presented the drawback of being isolated from the general public and its aspirations. The gradual, and subsequently total commitment of the Federation and its member Associations to international assistance provided the answer to a debate which, for years, had been taking place in all the bodies and at all times in the life of the Japanese Associations which were more and more convinced that a detached saintliness brought no reward, and that the only way they could maintain their credibility was to become fully involved in everyday issues while, at the same time, remaining true to their original guidelines.

The issue of assistance brought crucial questions into the arena of discussion – education, the cultural and natural environment, living conditions, the advancement of the status of women, action to combat discrimination, racism, the furtherance of peace, etc. Moreover, having escaped from the unavoidably limited framework of its Associations, the Japanese Federation was able to bring the real questions into the spotlight and, using the mass media to the fullest extent in order to recruit well-wishers, raise fresh funds for its cooperation work, and increase the awareness of a public which was naturally generous and prepared to be mobilized to the full, provided it could clearly see the reasons why its assistance was being sought.

Since they were first created in 1962, the **Malagasy** Clubs had given top priority to youth work camps and, as far as possible, tried to foster contacts between young people living in towns and those living in the countryside. They had sought, in this way, to induce these two categories of adolescents, who at best had poor knowledge of each other and at worst distrusted each other, to know and appreciate each other. With much clear-sightedness, the Clubs felt that it was easier to preach comprehension and respect for distant communities, which one would perhaps never meet, than to ensure the existence of concord and harmony between people who were in frequent contact and tended to turn their backs on each other at the first difference of opinion, or who lived in the same country but had no opportunity of meeting each other, and were likely to hold stereotyped views of each other.

The young people and their National Commission were equally clear-sighted with respect to the ways in which the movement was to be organized to enable it to become firmly established and to grow. On 4 November 1965, they created the *Union of UNESCO Clubs of Antananarivo* which flourished at a time when the Clubs of many other African countries were still in their very early stages. In 1974-1975, a nation-wide Association was formed which became a Federation in 1976 and continued the tradition of work camps in rural areas, with very practical objectives: the building of a leprosy hospital, a school, a minor road and a field hospital; the harvesting of coffee, restoration of a royal well and public gardens; the maintenance of a wash-house and a swimming pool, etc., activities to which a new component was added: informing the rural population about UNESCO.

UNESCO Clubs were first established in Senegal in 1967 thanks, in large measure, to the understanding shown by the then Minister of Education, who was none other than AMADOU-MAHTAR M'BOW, Director-General of UNESCO from 1974 to 1987. The first Club was established in the town of Fatick, 150 km from the capital, in an out-of-school framework. It brought together students, pupils, teachers, manual workers and farmers. The Club, which was set up on the initiative of a young intellectual called MBANICK NDIAYE, carried out, *inter alia*, a survey on the fundamental role played by oral tradition in African history, organized literacy instruction in rural areas, and took part in farm life. It thus harmoniously combined intellectual activities and development tasks, a twofold tendency which the Senegalese Clubs still pursue, paying ever greater attention to the ethical dimension of their action, which is expected to contribute to the exercise of democracy and promotion of public spiritedness.

MBANICK NDIAYE used the experience gained to write and defend a dissertation on the contribution of UNESCO Clubs to the development of non-formal education in Senegal. At a time when demonstrations by students and pupils were gathering momentum in Europe, the Senegalese movement began to spread to lycées in May 1968. The Clubs held their first seminar in 1971 and established their National Federation in 1975; 20 years later, it comprised some 50 Clubs.

The Senegalese Federation, which brings together rural Clubs, urban Associations, youth Clubs and adult groups, organizes biennial training courses. It unfailingly invites Clubs from neighbouring countries and individuals who wish to acquire the experience they need to be able to launch a movement in their respective countries. It thus makes an effective contribution to the growth of the Clubs on the African continent.

Although one must beware of over-simplification, the spheres of activity of the UNESCO Clubs during their first two decades can be summarized as follows:

- teaching about the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies*
- information about UNESCO, both within the Club and in its environment, in the broadest sense of the term*
- awareness and dissemination of the values guiding UNESCO's action, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*
- study of international problems*
- the practice of solidarity, very often through the Organization's assistance programme*
- knowledge of other countries, civilizations, ways of life.*

These activities were aimed at promoting better understanding of other human groups and, thus, at propagating the international understanding which it is UNESCO's mission to translate into everyday reality.

For the present, with few exceptions, the Clubs of the countries which were then described as "underdeveloped" were too few in number and poorly organized for their participation in the movement to change its course and make it take as yet unexplored directions. But they were blazing the trail with beacons in the form of their concrete activities, which were highly relevant to the problems affecting their peoples and to the affirmation of those peoples' identity.

Other chronological landmarks

- 1951 Foundation of UNESCO Clubs in several provinces of Thailand, with the collaboration of schools. After the country had joined the Associated Schools Project, the activities of the Clubs and these schools drew ever closer together, to the point of merging
- 1956 Foundation of the first UNESCO Club of Israel in one of the youth hostels set up in 81 school centres to foster the integration of the school in the life of the community
- 1957 Foundation of the first UNESCO Club of Tunisia
- 1958 Foundation of the UNESCO Club of the “Rissalat at talib” Association of Tangiers (Morocco); the Club played a leading role in the formation, in December 1975, of the Moroccan Federation of UNESCO Clubs, whose first President was Mohammed Ben Messaoud, the President of the Tangiers Club, who is still discharging his duties in the Club
- 1959 Foundation of the first UNESCO Club of Mali
- 1960 Foundation in Jerusalem (Israel) of the International Cultural Youth Centre, with the participation of young Jews, Muslims, Druzes and Christians; the Centre soon became a breeding-ground for UNESCO Clubs
- 1961 Foundation of the UNESCO Club of Luxembourg, probably as a result of the visit to the country by a French Club and the resulting exchanges. Subsequently the members of the Luxembourg Club would be mostly adults
- 1963 Foundation of the first UNESCO Club of Cameroon, a prelude to the rapid development of the movement; established in 1969, the Cameroonian Federation was one of the first African bodies to coordinate Clubs

- 1964 Foundation of the first UNESCO Clubs of Egypt
- 1968 Foundation of the UNESCO Club of Jakarta (Indonesia) and of the first UNESCO Club of Zambia
- 1969 Foundation of the UNESCO Club of Salé (Morocco), which is still active
- Foundation of the first UNESCO Club “Jeunes Sciences” (Youth – Sciences) in Upper Volta,¹ an outpost of a network of the Clubs which were established to foster a scientific and technological turn of mind in young people
- Foundation of the first UNESCO Club in Ecuador at the Aguirre Abad National College in Guayaquil
- Foundation of the UNESCO Club of Malta, which, since then, has contributed to the cultural, artistic and sporting life of the country, and played host to countless visitors from other Clubs and countries; its founding President, Albert V. Rutter, who is still in office, is popular among UNESCO Clubs the entire world over.

1. Upper Volta became Burkina Faso in 1984.

UNESCO to the fore, 1970–1999

After 1970, the pendulum swung back in the direction of UNESCO. The 16th session of the General Conference (Paris 1970) authorized the Director-General to develop UNESCO Clubs. Two years later, the 17th session recommended that he encourage them to carry out public information activities and intensify efforts “to promote the growth of UNESCO Clubs and their coordination at the subregional, regional and international levels”. The same refrain, to a slightly different but more insistent tune, was repeated at the 18th session, where the Director-General was asked “to encourage the establishment of UNESCO Clubs and Associations and the development and coordination of their activities”.

Beginning with the 20th session, resolutions unreservedly backed the rapid creation of a World Federation, and subsequently its activities, while inviting National Commissions to provide support for the Federation and step up their assistance to the UNESCO Clubs in their respective countries.

Thenceforward, the resolutions on the UNESCO Clubs adopted at each session of the General Conference stressed the shared responsibility of the Organization and the Commissions in not only propagating and coordinating the movement but also upholding the World Federation. The General Conference, on four occasions from its 22nd to its 25th sessions, underscored the role of UNESCO Clubs and Associated Schools in international education and in implementation of the 1974 Recommendation.¹ In consequence, both UNESCO and the National Commissions were invited to strengthen the two movements and the complementarity of their work, and to support the World Federation's efforts to bring Clubs and schools closer together.

1. This was the “Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms”.

In the meantime, the budget outlook became clearer. At its 16th session, the General Conference approved for the first time a separate appropriation line – \$40,000! – for UNESCO Clubs. The funding grew more substantial. Appropriations for 1973-1974 nearly doubled, to \$76,450. They continued to rise for the following biennial budgetary period (\$110,900), and the periods after that: \$143,500 (1977-1978), \$181,000 (1979-1980), \$326,000 (1981-1983).¹ The allocation remained steady at \$217,400 during the next two budgetary periods, plummeted to \$171,000 in 1988-1989, rose to a small peak of \$215,000, then soared spectacularly to \$402,500 for the period 1992-1993 as a result of personal intervention by the Director-General (FEDERICO MAYOR since 1987), who found that the amount set aside for UNESCO Clubs was too miserly.

What was the money used for? To cover two kinds of expenditure: (a) administrative overheads, management and mission expenses and (b) contracts for Club activities.

Everything was billed to the Secretariat services, whether communications costs – postage stamps, telephone, telegrams, telex and fax – or photocopying and publishing (paper, photo-engraving and book-jackets). In addition to these fixed costs, all sorts of tiny amounts were needed for providing modest rewards for Clubs, and prizes for competitions that they organized, such as UNESCO publications, subscriptions to its journals, medals, photographs, slides, or articles on sale at the souvenir shop.

Mission expenses had also, of course, to be paid out of the same budget. Clubs, unaware of this fact, had difficulty in understanding why Secretariat members were always reluctant to accept their invitations. The truth was that money spent on travel correspondingly reduced funds that could otherwise have been used for contracts of financial assistance to Club activities. International civil servants therefore sought to get the most out of their travel by opting for missions where they could meet Club representatives from several countries or which were decisive in launching, regenerating or bolstering a Club movement. This did not apply to inexpensive journeys to places not far from Headquarters or true invitations with all expenses paid, but these were the exception.

The bulk of the money earmarked for cooperation with UNESCO Clubs went to contracts concluded with National Commissions, federations of Clubs and a few particularly active single Clubs. The funds obviously had to be distributed

1. The General Conference at its 21st session (Paris, 1980) adopted on that occasion only a three-year programme and budget, so as to bring the UNESCO budget cycle into line with that of most of the other Specialized Agencies of the United Nations system.

with care according to circumstances. Top priority had to be accorded to the launching of new Clubs and helping their initial activities. The same applied to national assemblies preceding the establishment of a federal body or for Club activities that helped to enhance the Organization's prestige. UNESCO, in allocating the remaining part of the budget, abided by the priorities set by its governing bodies. In 1975-1976, for example, the top-ranking themes were International Women's Year, the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, Human Rights, and the Environment. Ten years later, the focus was on certain major programmes included in the Medium-Term Plan. The Clubs were called upon to help in implementing them. The programmes included Education For All, the Sciences and their Application to Development, Culture and the Future, and Peace, International Understanding, Human Rights and the Rights of Peoples.

The contracts were absurdly few and paltry in comparison with the size of needs and expectations. Moreover, Clubs in the technologically advanced countries were in exactly the same position as those in the developing countries. All were voluntary non-governmental organizations. They all had to resort to feats of imagination and invention in gleaning financial contributions from different sources. Even though the contracts were parsimonious, they did have positive fallout. They proved UNESCO's concern for the bodies that carried its name, and enabled these bodies to go up to possible sponsors and say, "Look, UNESCO is helping us. What can *you* do to help?"

The 1990-1991 budgetary period was the first one in which the allocation for UNESCO Clubs also included the subvention for the World Federation. The Division made it a point of honour not to scale it down, despite the budget squeezes that unfailingly take a toll on Secretariat appropriations during the second year of the biennium.

Another type of aid inaugurated by UNESCO during the 1970s was intellectual participation. This entailed helping National Commissions to devise the best strategies for launching, strengthening and expanding the Club movement. Direct help was provided to Clubs whenever they sought advice on the sorts of activities that would enhance their credibility and efficiency, when they asked to be put in touch with Secretariat specialists, or when they were looking for partners inside the movement – whether for undertaking joint projects, pooling experience or taking part in particular operations that paralleled their own choices. UNESCO's overriding determination to assist the Clubs impelled it to arrange contacts between them and national and international non-governmental organizations, experts, Organization projects in the field and its decentralized units.

The Division had no qualms about applying psychological pressure. It pleaded the case for the Clubs inside the Secretariat. There were several sides to this “propaganda” work. The first job was to convince people not only of the movement's *raison-d'être* and potential but also of its ability to implement programmes that were important for UNESCO. This meant dispelling the Clubs' sometimes insipid image of earnest young men and sensitive young women brimming with good intentions but ill-prepared to carry out real operations. The companion aspect of awareness-raising was incorporating the UNESCO Club movement in the relevant parts of action plans and inducing programme sectors to provide it with financial aid for particular tasks falling within their sphere of responsibility.

Psychological action was also concerned with winning over National Commissions which were sceptical about the Clubs' importance or which, for all sorts of reasons, were at odds with their Clubs. Where this was the case, UNESCO acted as peacemaker, soothing egos on both sides and pointing out the benefits of a complementary approach in which each had a part to play without loss of identity or loss of face.

UNESCO further helped to develop the movement by disseminating specially tailored information to National Commissions (whose training courses included an item dealing with the Clubs), to non-governmental organizations (taking advantage of their various meetings), and to people wanting to join in the work of the Organization (but who might not know how to go about it).

The Division's publications policy at the time reflected the desire to help Clubs in working and exchanging ideas, to provide National Commissions with arguments for introducing the Club movement and to supply clear, straightforward information for the purpose.

The two publications then existing, whose usefulness stood in no need of proof, were remodelled.

The complicated title of the *Directory* was dropped; in 1971, it became the “International Directory – Clubs of the Friends of UNESCO”. In the 1973 edition, the Club title was further shortened to “UNESCO Clubs”. As more Clubs were formed in more countries, the mention “United Nations Association” disappeared, except in cases where Clubs did not exist or where Associations were sufficiently resolute in their support of UNESCO to act as models. The publication's layout was changed at the same time. It became pocket-sized, with an attractive cover, as easy to slip into a handbag as to put on a library shelf.

The then Director-General, AMADOU-MAHTAR M'BOW, honoured the 1975 edition with a Preface whose last two paragraphs we cannot resist quoting:

“Regardless of whether their concern and preoccupation are problems of development, the defence of human rights, the promotion of social justice or the vital problems which hang over mankind’s present and future, and on whose solution it may even depend for its very survival, the UNESCO Clubs remain true to their mission of fostering international friendship, cooperation and peace, which is the common denominator of their rich, numerous and varied activities.

I attach great importance to these Clubs, which have demonstrated their devotion to the Organization, and I hope that the movement may spread further to new countries and new social spheres, while continuing to draw its inspiration from an Organization whose constant aim it is to pay increasing heed to the sufferings of the world but also to its hopes.”

The *UNESCO Club Manual* also underwent changes. The slim typescript of old was replaced by a more elaborate document. The first new-look version came out in 1972, International Book Year, which was more than a coincidence. Credit for this initiative was due to the Clubs and Associated Schools of Europe. In the final resolution of their first meeting (Trogen, Switzerland, 15-19 July 1970), they expressed a wish that a Manual on the Clubs and Associated Schools be published in the near future. The wish was not wholly granted, however, since the various versions of the Manual never concerned more than the UNESCO Clubs. The Associated Schools obtained their own Manual later on.

The 1972 edition of the Manual took the shape of a working document whose only ambition was to set out information of use to the Clubs. They and the National Commissions were invited to add to this information and make it more comprehensive. This probably explained its frugal appearance. The drafting of the text was the outcome of close collaboration with the French Commission, which had expert knowledge of everything to do with UNESCO Clubs. The Manual was divided into two parts:

- A. Aims and means**
 - I. UNESCO Clubs, historical and geographical background
 - II. The role of the UNESCO Clubs
 - III. Means of action and activities of UNESCO Clubs

- B. Structure and operation of the Clubs**
 - I. The members of a UNESCO Club
 - II. The administrative structure of a UNESCO Club
 - III. Resources of Clubs

The first version contained four Annexes. The first listed the statutes and rules of procedure of the French Federation of UNESCO Clubs. The second described the programmes and functions of the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan. Annex III provided “an example of Club activities: the report by the *club bamakois des amis de l'UNESCO* (1971)”. Annex IV gave the list of National Commissions for UNESCO.

Although this experimental new version of the Manual was distributed amid frenzied applause and ecstatic reactions, it did not excite any comments for reshaping or even altering its content. UNESCO therefore retained the original plan, and once every two or three years produced an update noting the most important recent activities of the Clubs and developments in their system of organization. Items deemed stale or outdated were deleted as and when they could be replaced by more up-to-date information.

The Manual's appearance improved when it was given a rich blue cover decorated with a white dove. But the inside pages remained formal and unattractive. Despite this, its success has remained steady for well-nigh twenty years. Obviously, its readers care less for its aesthetic charms than for the sublimity of its prose. The latest edition of the Manual (1990), an almost complete reworking of the earlier editions, reflects the profound changes that have taken place within the movement. It falls into three main parts: part one, general information, modes of organization of UNESCO Clubs; part two, means of action and activities of UNESCO Clubs; part three, structure and operation.

The Manual, at first printed by the Organization in English, Spanish and French, was later published in Arabic as well. It would be no exaggeration to say that the Manual is one of UNESCO's best-sellers – even if it is distributed free. It has been the subject of countless translations and adaptations. Its editors take special care over the adaptations. They suggest, for example, that only extracts accurately describing the situation in the countries concerned or information on the specific nature of each movement should be translated into other languages.

The Manual is a “heavyweight” working instrument unsuited to people wanting quick information on the Clubs. In 1972, the Division, highly conscious of this, drew up an Information Note on UNESCO Clubs, condensed into a few pages, whose appearance was no more alluring than that of the Manual. The Note was then slid into a collection of booklets entitled “What is...?” published by the Office of Public Information. Thus it was that “What are: UNESCO Clubs?” with its red print on a white cover, handy format and easy-to-read layout, came into being. Long after the Office stopped publishing the “What is...?” series, the booklet lives on. It has been adapted many times over, and so reaches a much wider reading

public than the Secretariat's original Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish versions.

Finally, *Inter-Clubs UNESCO* was born. The “finally” does not signify that the bulletin was long in taking shape. The UNESCO Clubs had for some time been clamouring for a journal in which they could find items of news on their counterparts' activities and which would – why not? – accept their own contributions and comments. The first issue came out – another bow in the direction of International Book Year – in 1972. It was a strictly home-made article. Its cover, like that of the following issue, was drawn by a member of the Secretariat and Friend of the Clubs. The 13 pages of news were written in the languages most commonly used by the Clubs in their dealings with UNESCO, i.e. English, Spanish and French, but were not translated, except for the editorial and some news briefs on the Organization. The bulletin was duplicated and hand-stapled. But it recounted the activities of a score or more Clubs, and that was the main thing. Issue number 2, although not much more handsome than its predecessor, also came out in 1972¹ but it ran to a full 17 pages and again gave news of Clubs in twenty or more countries. Clubs around the world, decidedly easy to please, hailed this lowly publication that spoke directly to them about themselves; it was “their” newsletter and they adopted it as their own. Many saw themselves mirrored in it, since their own publications, if any, were not exactly sumptuous either. The more sophisticated Clubs or Federations were polite enough not to criticize the ugly duckling. Everyone began sending in articles, photographs, poems and stories. It was a flood tide that would not stop.

Inter-Clubs UNESCO did the Clubs proud. From 1973 on, issues contained an average 30 pages. This had grown to 40-50 by the end of the decade and, in the 1980s, soared to 60 pages or more. In 1973, the UNESCO graphic workshops provided a professionally-crafted cover design. For ten years, the publication changed covers annually and was properly bound. Photographs were published for the first time in the 1976, No.2, issue. This meant that, from then on, photographs from the Clubs could be used.

In 1977, a flourish of trumpets: the bulletin appeared in three separate language editions, English, Spanish and French. The editorial board, swelling with pride, dropped the appellation “bulletin” and replaced it with the more noble term “magazine”. This great advance, however, camouflaged a hidden pitfall. Contributions were still being written in the three languages mostly used for reporting news. Before a version could be printed, the pages drafted in one language therefore had to be translated into the two others and revised.

1. From the beginning it was decided that *Inter-Clubs UNESCO* would come out half-yearly.

This was when the *Inter-Clubs UNESCO* saga turned into black drama. Despite friendly pestering of translators and delicately-phrased reminders to the print-shop, delays piled up. Between the time a manuscript was received and the publication of the first language edition, a year usually elapsed. Clubs often sent in their contributions long after the event that they were reporting. Editing the manuscript was also something that did not happen overnight. The result was fudging and subterfuge. Dates were transformed into airy approximations, “It was then that the Club decided to...”. Imperturbable in the midst of this editorial morass, JEAN-BAPTISTE DE WECK, who had replaced PHILIPPE ROUX at the head of the Division in 1973, would utter the calming phrase, “The activities of UNESCO Clubs are eternal.” He was right. A set of the publication's issues provided a composite image of the movement and answered the queries of anybody wanting to promote the movement without being too sure of how to proceed or which activities to favour. *Inter-Clubs UNESCO*, along with the Manual of which it was the extension, played a news-spreading role of the utmost importance, which its tardy publication did not impair.

In 1979, the magazine inconsiderately launched an Arabic version, with the idea of increasing the number of UNESCO Clubs speaking the language. After a few issues, the attempt was abandoned. The less than meagre results did not warrant the human and financial investment involved.

In the early 1990s, *Inter-Clubs UNESCO* was revamped. Its cover carried a montage of photos from the inside pages. The text, pruned and condensed, presented a selection of tautly edited news. The issues were numbered consecutively instead of being renumbered each year. A Russian edition, much appreciated by the growing number of Clubs in Eastern Europe, was launched with the double issue 2-3 of the “New Series”.

International cooperative action continued to be one of the Division's strong points. In 1976, the programme's English title was changed from “UNESCO Gift Coupon Programme” to “UNESCO Cooperative Action Programme”, soon abbreviated to “Co-Action”. The *bons d'entraide* or Gift Coupons, often confused with UNESCO Coupons, were superseded by UNUM cheques,¹ which continued to take the United States dollar as their benchmark currency. In 1976-1977, events took a decisive turn for UNESCO Clubs. For the first time, the Programme catalogue was opened to development projects undertaken by three Clubs. These were the building of a community centre in Oveng-Yemevong (Cameroon), the

1. UNUM = UNESCO Unit of Money.

organization of classes, including literacy and vocational training for women, for shantytown dwellers in Bogotá (Colombia), and the purchase of a Jeep to enable the Mangalore Club (India) to do the rounds of its adopted villages more easily. From then on, the Clubs could be viewed as contributors to and beneficiaries of the Cooperative Action Programme. Previously, some of them had received small sums of money from the Programme, but they had been beneficiaries of a well-oiled system rather than acknowledged instigators of development action in their communities and worthy as such to appear in the Cooperative Action catalogue. A page had been turned.

When JEAN-BAPTISTE DE WECK arrived in the Division, another path was opened. He came with a “dowry”, namely his duties as co-ordinator of UNESCO relations with foundations, which he continued to discharge. Like his forerunners, he was concerned with consolidating the Division's programmes. He therefore endeavoured to persuade the foundations with which he was in contact to set up “UNESCO Centres” well enough equipped to play a useful role in the movement. His infectious enthusiasm led to the opening of several Centres, in Western Europe especially, and spread the word to various clubs which, sometimes years later, became UNESCO Centres in their turn.

Everything had been running too well in PLD. One day, the Division's name was changed, but not for the better. In early 1977, it took on the title “Division for the Dissemination and Promotion of Information” (DPI). The anonymous authors of this barbarism, with its four nouns ending in “-ion” and triple genitives in the Spanish and French versions, showed no signs of repentance or remorse. But, at least, the Division kept all its prerogatives.

Decidedly, everything was going too swimmingly in DPI. This time, the Office of Public Information, to which the Division had been attached for thirty years, was “streamlined”. The DPI disappeared, or was rather blown apart, in 1985. Its programmes were scattered to the four corners of the Secretariat without any concern for their unity. What was to be done with the UNESCO Clubs programme? Should it be linked with the Associated Schools, whose aims were the same as the Clubs'? Perhaps, except that the whole of UNESCO was, and is, devoted to peace, international understanding and human rights. Not a very powerful argument. Was it reasonable, moreover, to unite in the same service the Associated Schools Project, which was a teaching project, and a movement whose members operated in all sorts of spheres? What about tying the Clubs in with youth activities? All right, but Club members, like the readers of Tintin comics, are aged anywhere from 7 to 77 plus – were there not more and more senior citizens clubs being formed?

What, then, was the answer? Why, to bring together the UNESCO Clubs and the National Commissions! In 1986, the Division for Relations with National Commissions opened its doors to the programme and its little team. It became the “Division of National Commissions and UNESCO Clubs”. From the outset, the Clubs showed their dismay at what they saw as an unnatural alliance of institutional partners with their movement, which was staunchly non-governmental. Their fears proved groundless, however, and they quickly bowed to the evidence. In many cases, permanent relations with the Commissions have strengthened the Clubs and, above all, lent impetus to the creation of new ones.

As to the Commissions, most of them eagerly accepted the UNESCO Clubs and made frequent requests for financial help to launch or support their movement. Moreover, the standards governing allocation of funds earmarked for cooperation with National Commissions now included strengthening the links between the Commissions and the Clubs and carrying out joint projects. Certain Commissions took umbrage, however, at what they felt was a stain on their original purity: are they not singled out in the Constitution? Experience triumphed over their misgivings. The gradual sharing of UNESCO collaboration among these partners, dissimilar but born to understand and complement one another, had wonderfully good repercussions on both Commissions and Clubs. It smoothed the way for dialogue, exchanges and joint projects which had a mutually invigorating effect.

The UNESCO Clubs programme still, for a while, stayed near to the dear old Office, since they shared the same administrative unit, “External Relations and Public Information”. The Office soon moved out and began leading its own life. But the bonds remain; they are timeless.

The second generation of UNESCO Clubs, 1970-1990

A movement gathering strength

“I wish to take this opportunity of drawing attention to the work carried out among the public by UNESCO Clubs. There are at present some 1,300 of these Clubs, set up under the auspices and with the assistance of the National Commissions and usually working in close liaison with them in 55 Member States. Their means and methods of action vary greatly from country to country, but they generally give proof of an enterprising spirit and a disinterested devotion to UNESCO's ideals that make them most useful auxiliaries and outposts for promoting the Organization's work and spirit, particularly among young people. I cannot too strongly urge National Commissions to give them all possible assistance in the countries where they already exist and to promote their establishment in those where as yet they do not. They may develop into a most useful supporting movement.”

This tribute to the Clubs by Director-General RENÉ MAHEU in his 1970 report was striking proof of the value which the Organization attached to them and of their increasing visibility on the national and international plane.

The National Commissions of the newly independent **African countries** felt that the Clubs were an effective means of involving all levels of the population in the development tasks that were becoming urgent. In societies with only a very flimsy voluntary sector, a UNESCO Club offered a highly flexible and non-binding framework for people wanting to make themselves useful. Besides, the vast range of things to be done in a Club appealed to many people who found answers to their questions there or discovered learning and leisure programmes unlike anything they could have imagined.

The enthusiasm stirred by the Clubs in the new African Member States was not always to the liking of the youth organizations established by the single party in many of them. It was clear that young people preferred the Clubs, which did not make them toe the party line and which they could join of their own free will.

Inevitably, jealousies sprang up and clashes occurred. These had to be overcome or transcended. The Clubs had sometimes to put a damper on their activities when their success caused too much displeasure. Where party youth associations objected to the creation of a Club, suspecting that it might trespass on their turf, the Club's promoters had to use all their diplomatic skills and ruses to achieve their goals. Their techniques were clever and even amusing, such as the appointment of the political youth movement leader to be head of a new-born Club.

Irrespective of the situation in each country, the African Clubs made spectacular progress. Between 1969 and 1975, for example, their number rose from 80 to 350. In 1983, they numbered 824. In 1989, there were 1,398 and in 1995, 1,924.

At first, the Clubs took hold most readily in francophone Africa. Those in the pioneer countries – Cameroon, Mali, Senegal, Madagascar, Dahomey/Benin, Upper Volta/Burkina Faso – grew in number. Elsewhere, the movement quickly became installed – in Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Central African Republic, Congo, Chad, Zaire, Guinea, Burundi, Niger, Rwanda, etc.

National coordinating bodies, preceded in some cases by a co-ordinating bureau or committee, were instituted. They provided the nucleus for larger-scale federations.

The English-speaking Clubs – with notable exceptions such as Nigeria, where a federation was inaugurated in 1971 at the urging of the fifty existing Clubs and the National Commission – were slower in starting. Examples: Ethiopia, where the Clubs' ups and downs matched the country's political zigzags; Kenya, where the movement was launched in the 1970s; Zambia, too, where it became established on a wide scale. Zambia had the distinction of being home to a single Club – the only one of its kind for a very long time – as far back as the 1960s. Towards the end of the 1960s, quite a few Clubs began appearing in Sierra Leone and Ghana. Ghana, somewhat like Zambia, had experimented with a single Club fifteen years earlier. Clubs in Malawi and Uganda followed some ten years later.

One country occupied a pivotal position, despite its geographical location. This was Mauritius, a bilingual and multiracial State. Mauritius could claim 45 Clubs in 1971, and 80 just two years later. Its National Commission, rightly proud of this astonishing figure given the smallness of the island, published the brochure "UNESCO Clubs: The Mauritian Experience" in 1976. A new edition was printed in 1980.

It is true that Africans are great fans of UNESCO Clubs, and that the National Commissions make great efforts on their behalf. Their region is the only one where Commission-organized conferences systematically adopt resolutions

concerning the movement. The 3rd Regional Conference,¹ for example, advised the Commissions to create Clubs in their countries and strengthen those that already existed, as well as assisting them in both their work of popularizing UNESCO's ideals and their organization of cultural activities in their respective settings. The 4th Conference² advocated the holding of the first regional conference of African Clubs. The 5th Conference³ proclaimed its support for the World Federation and reiterated its wish to see Clubs set up all over the region.

Whenever Clubs in a country showed signs of weakening, their Commission wasted no time in convening "recovery" or "organizer training" seminars to rekindle the flame.

The Clubs in Africa are also the ones which, despite the expense – not entirely covered by UNESCO aid – meet together most often. They congregate usually by subregion, and so keep costs down. The Clubs of Central Africa provide an instructive example. They assembled for the first time in Cameroon in 1976 with two important items on their agenda: the role of UNESCO Clubs in supplying information about UNESCO and partaking in its work; and UNESCO Clubs as nuclei for economic and social development. In 1977, the organizers of these Clubs took part in a training seminar in the Central African Republic. Yaoundé was again the venue for their second Congress in 1979. They met in the Congo in November 1981, then in Kinshasa in August 1985 to exchange views on participation by UNESCO Associations and Clubs in economic, social and cultural development. They gathered again in Zaire in December 1989 to study the role of youth in the World Decade for Cultural Development.

National meetings of all kinds are held in Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Upper Volta/Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Congo, Senegal, Togo, Zaire, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Zambia. To date, major regional meetings have taken place in Côte d'Ivoire (1981), Cameroon (1986) and Togo (1997). It must be said that anglophone Club attendance at the first two of these was sparse.

Often these Clubs have a sharper and more realistic perception of the problems to be solved than Clubs in other parts of the world. They roll up their sleeves to set things right in very short order. This has been the case – to name a cause which has a very strong rallying effect – with the protection of their environment.

Benin in August 1985, Burkina Faso in July 1985 and 1987 and again in July 1989 and 1990, the Congo in November 1987, Togo in July 1988 and 1990 and Mali

1. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1974.

2. Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 1979.

3. Yaoundé, Cameroon, 1983.

in April 1989 launched invitations for reforestation work. The recruiting of volunteers – local or national, subregional or international – varied according to available resources. Increasingly, the campaigns attracted participation by young people from European Clubs, in Belgium, Spain, France and Italy. Young Europeans adored these operations and, once they became acclimatized, pitched into them with gusto. With the passing years, certain Clubs in their region became co-organizers of projects on African territory.

The African Clubs, for their part, were overjoyed at the chance of working together and sharing the satisfaction of the job being done and then finally accomplished. These reforestation projects, of which there were many, nearly always involved three phases: the planting of saplings under the supervision of expert agronomists; raising the awareness of villagers and educating them in the conservation of their natural environment; cultural activities which included reaching out to the culture of the area chosen for the project and to the cultures of participants from neighbouring or more distant countries.

Other objectives were sometimes assigned to these project sites: literacy training, development of creativity, fraternization between the local population and the young people on the project, farming activities, etc.

It is interesting to note that the gregarious instincts of the African Clubs, their frequent meetings in different countries, their visits to one another and their exchanges have never produced institutionalized groupings. These Clubs seem to prefer alliances forged around particular projects rather than more elaborate structures which, in any case, their scant resources could not operate and make effective. The very lively “Cultural Festival of the West African University UNESCO Clubs” (FESCUAO), focused especially on projects associated with the World Decade for Cultural Development, is a perfect illustration of this principle. A basic characteristic of the African Clubs seems to be this wisdom by which they concentrate their resources on activities that generate fairly long-term practical programmes.

At subregional meetings or pan-African conferences, pleas were sometimes made to establish coordinating bodies at these levels. The subregional conference already mentioned, held in Brazzaville in November 1981, instituted a “Subregional Conference of Central African UNESCO Clubs and Associations”. But once the initial excitement had faded, either these plans did not get off the ground or they came to nothing.

Club development in the **Latin America and the Caribbean** region was much less spectacular. Except in Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Jamaica, where the movement forged boldly ahead, Clubs were few and far between and, once set up, did not try to put down roots. During the period, between one and

five Clubs were seemingly quite enough for such countries as the Dominican Republic, Dominica, Cuba, Guyana, Brazil, Salvador, Guatemala, Chile, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay. Peru – where the city of Arequipa, a home to specialized Clubs, boosted the national average – had a few more, although still fewer than ten. Argentina was better provided, although the figure was below twenty. The Clubs in certain cases, where they existed, tended to be confused with the Associated Schools or with United Nations Clubs. As a result, they had no clear identity.

As a rule, the National Commissions were not prepared to do battle to remedy the situation. Many of them were also the seat of incessant change. Each new Secretary-General had to become familiar with UNESCO before getting to know the groups that voluntarily supported its work, let alone expanding their number and improving their organization.

Few though they may have been, the Clubs, often composed of professionals working in UNESCO's fields of competence, were vigorous. For these people, the Club was a laboratory and a channel for publicizing their own work. The Clubs had the great merit of existing and extending into most of the region's States, where in the past they had been very rare indeed.

It was a situation that did not lend itself to federation, even at subregional level. The attempts to introduce supranational coordinating bodies did not stand the test of time. The desire expressed by the Central American and Panamanian Clubs in 1972 to set up a subregional federation never went beyond the laudable intention stage, even though a start was made at giving it substance in 1974.

In this context, the exuberant activity in the four countries mentioned earlier stood out in contrast. The movement in each of them proceeded without a break, along a steadily rising but never dizzying curve. At every stage, progress was consolidated.

In Colombia, the membership base had changed. In 1971, the Colombian Clubs, which had first enrolled families, created a federation encompassing forty or so associations. This federation ran out of steam and went adrift. The renewal was led by groups of a completely different kind which redefined goals and strategies and, at their third national congress at the end of 1980, federated once again. The Colombian Association of UNESCO Clubs organized training courses, seminars and workshops, and established Clubs of a highly specialized nature.

Same days, other ways in Costa Rica. There, as we have seen, Clubs and Associated Schools worked in tandem and launched memorable national activities. It was one of the few countries to encourage the setting up of Clubs in primary schools and nursery schools. Children's Clubs for science were formed in the

1980s. A special coordination system for them, then about forty in number, was set up during the same period.

The thirty or so Clubs in Ecuador, sober and deliberate but vibrantly alive, also had youngsters in their ranks, but these were mainly adolescents and students. They founded their federation in 1982, along with an information centre that had an extension in the city of Guayaquil, the great economic metropolis where most of the country's Clubs were located. They met together under the federation's auspices at periodically-held General Assemblies and did all they could to shake the Bolivarian countries out of their torpor where UNESCO Clubs were concerned.

These countries took the initiative in organizing subregional or regional meetings of UNESCO Clubs. On the agenda were very specific subjects that the Clubs had already explored or which would open avenues for innovative practical action by the Clubs. During World Population Year, for example, San Jose hosted a Central America and Panama Club seminar on youth participation in the framing of population policies. In 1985, two regional meetings were held, one in Quito and the other in Bogotá. The first took the shape of a seminar-workshop on alternative communication and education. The theme of the second was the promotion of the printed word and the reading habit.

The Jamaican Clubs marched steadily on with a blend of serious-mindedness and enthusiasm. They knew that they could always count on the support of their National Commission. Its Secretary-General, SYLVIA THOMAS, had held the job for many years – something almost unheard-of in the region. Trained as a teacher, she was a firm believer in the educational importance of the movement. There was a stream of workshops, study courses and training seminars to which representatives of National Commissions of other countries in the subregion were invited as observers. The Jamaican Clubs acted as a model for promoting the Friends of UNESCO in the Caribbean. The goal would be achieved in the final decade of the century.

Despite the fact that Puerto Rico is a State associated with the United States of America, its geographical location and the activities of the Puerto Rican UNESCO Association warrant the inclusion of the Association among the Friends of UNESCO in Latin America and the Caribbean. Following its foundation in 1973, it engaged in a multitude of cultural activities and campaigned in favour of preserving the island's Hispanic character. It is now crusading for a healthy environment. Its founding President, ANTONIO J. MOLINA, is a Club movement figure with a warm personality. His unflinching humour and simplicity have earned him everyone's respect and affection.

Clubs in the Latin America/Caribbean region may have been slow in making their presence felt but, applied to Clubs in the **Arab world**, this would be something of an overstatement. The best that can be said is that, during the period, their number increased and they gained in maturity. But their dynamism could not be compared to that of other regions.

This was not, however, for lack of meetings designed to get the movement off the ground. In Rabat, May 1976, six countries invited by the Centre for Coordination among Arab National Commissions for UNESCO drew up plans for spreading the movement, and stressed the need for an effort to propagate Clubs throughout the Arab world.

In December 1979, the very first meeting of the Arab Commissions of the Gulf decided to encourage the creation of UNESCO Clubs in the sub-region where, as the participants remarked, they were probably unknown. Nothing happened. Only Kuwait took action and persevered. In 1983, it set up a Club of young men and women at the University. It later managed to survive the turmoil of the Gulf War, in the course of which its premises were ransacked and its documentation plundered.

The Tunisians attempted a breakthrough in November 1981. They held a subregional seminar on out-of-school science activities and the popularization of science and technology in Arab countries. The hope was that the seminar would lead to the creation of science-centred Clubs. Nothing came of the idea.

In 1987, Kuwait was again the place where National Commission representatives from nine countries gathered for the same purpose. The importance of the Clubs was stressed, leaders related their experience and prospects for the future were discussed.

Once more in Morocco, a training course for organizers in 1989 was intentionally broadened to include representatives of nine of the region's National Commissions.

None of these endeavours achieved its purpose. The pioneers of the movement – Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Lebanon and later Yemen – finally remained its main actors.

In 1973, Tunisia hosted the international worksite of UNESCO Clubs and Associated Schools organized in conjunction with UNESCO's Tunis-Carthage project. Tunisia also saw the inception in August 1978, at the initiative of the nation's Clubs, of the Assembly of Mediterranean Clubs concerned with Issues of Communication and Culture. The Assembly continued its work in France (1979), Malta (1980) and Morocco (1982), where the subject of cultural heritage preservation was debated in the eminently suitable setting of the city of Fez. A further

meeting in 1989, again in Tunisia, dealt with cultural and environmental development in the Mediterranean Basin. Tunisia launched the UNESCO Club of the Medina, linked to the Organization's scheme for safeguarding the old city of Tunis. It was in Tunis, finally, that, thanks to the Club of Kâlaa-Kebira, one of the Clubs' most original projects was brought to fruition. Its subject was the olive-tree, symbol of civilization and peace, and connecting link among the Mediterranean countries. The Club convened an international meeting on the theme, attended by other Clubs from Bulgaria, France, Greece, Italy, Morocco, Spain and Yugoslavia.

The efforts made in Morocco – where, as in Tunisia, the Clubs bore the dual title UNESCO/ALECSO¹ – were equally meritorious, and the Clubs just as valiant and committed. The Tangiers Club organized many and varied activities. The Kenitra Club focused its imaginative efforts on such central issues as human rights and peace. The United Nations Secretary-General awarded it the “Messenger of Peace” distinction. In Khémisset, the Moroccan Federation acquired a site upon which, in 1980, the Director-General laid the foundation-stone of what would become the UNESCO Centre for the meeting of cultures. Its programme featured work by UNESCO Clubs and Associated Schools, training courses, cultural events, and meetings of all kinds. Club members from very different countries came to spend time in the oasis, in the meditative atmosphere of its fragrant eucalyptus trees.

Egypt's Clubs, all school-based and not very different from the Associated Schools, devoted themselves to teaching and information on the United Nations and UNESCO. The Commission followed their progress with benign attention, seeking to unite, consolidate and encourage them.

The UNESCO-Lebanon Club, pursuing its action in extremely difficult circumstances, made its influence felt in student circles and contributed its experience to the World Federation.

There is a dawning movement in Yemen where, thanks to the obstinacy of FATHI BEN MAHMOUD, Director of the Tunisian Federation and World Federation Vice-President for the Arab States, on mission in the country as a UN expert, Clubs have begun to appear. It is to be hoped that they will take root and serve as a model for other countries in the region. May this fresh hope be realized.

Alongside these well-organized and enterprising movements, other timid attempts did not last long. This was the case with Jordan and Bahrain. The school Clubs which opened up there very soon collapsed. The same happened in Iraq, where the Club founded at the Basrah Institute of Technology rapidly folded.

1. ALECSO = Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization.

It is not easy to find a valid explanation for the Arab world's general lack of interest in UNESCO Clubs. A number of reasons have been put forward. They are consistent, but do not entirely clear up the mystery. First, the frail peace in the Middle East at the time could explain a certain turning inwards and the fact that people's minds were taken up with issues more pressing than the setting up of an associative network. The organizational system of the National Commissions was another factor. Few of them had a full-time secretariat exclusively devoted to UNESCO. The assignments of most of them covered all the intergovernmental bodies of which their countries were members, including ALECSO (already mentioned) and ISESCO.¹

Bizarre prejudices aggravated a situation that was already badly stalemated. The Secretary-General of one National Commission in the region, when asked why his Commission showed no concern for the Clubs, replied that where he lived the word "club" signified "night club" or "striptease joint", so there was no hope of successfully launching a UNESCO Club. The idea of using some other name seemed not to have crossed his mind.

Funny stories aside, the fact remains that Clubs in the region are the opposite of plentiful. In a part of the world so rich and varied, with a history laden with fruitful interchange, there are fewer than a hundred of them. Clubs with an adult membership have a better chance of survival than associations subordinated to schools. Indeed, they celebrate their tenth, twentieth, twenty-fifth anniversaries. The action of all of them is characterized by idealism and creativeness. They welcome participation by other groups from either their own country, such as the Associated Schools and cultural and scientific bodies, or from countries abroad, with a marked preference for the Mediterranean Basin.

These thinly scattered Clubs, which do not seem particularly disturbed at being so few, act as markers for the movement, signposts that point the way ahead.

The great event for the Clubs in **Asia** was the founding of a regional coordinating body. This had been one of the main conclusions of the meeting – following on from the study meeting on Club activities held in March 1970 – for promoting UNESCO Clubs in South-East Asia, attended by ten countries in Tokyo in October 1971. A Committee, whose secretariat was provided by the Nipponese Federation, was appointed to study the proposal. It met again in Tokyo in 1972, then in Paris during the 17th Session of the General Conference. Representatives of UNESCO Clubs in India, the Republic of Korea, Japan, Nepal and the Philippines drew up the draft statutes.

1. ISESCO = Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

These were approved during the regional meeting for the promotion of UNESCO Clubs in Asia held in Tokyo and Kyoto in July 1974 and attended by representatives of sixteen Asian countries. The “Asian Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations” (AFUCA) was thus officially inaugurated. KIYOSHI KAZUNO, President of the NFUAJ, was elected President of the AFUCA. TADA0 TAKEMOTO, Secretary-General of the same host Federation, was appointed to the office of Secretary-General of the new body. India and the Republic of Korea shared the Vice-Presidency. TADA0 TAKEMOTO, a man of letters, had a serendipitous command of French. It was he who coined the French title “*Fédération asiennne*”, copied from the English “Asian Federation”. “*Asiennne*” was a neologism in French, but it stuck. TADA0 TAKEMOTO, a disciple and adept of the eminent French author and statesman, ANDRÉ MALRAUX, was fond of regaling the Nipponese Federation and then the “*Fédération asiennne*” with Malraux memories and quotations which the members of the two Federations did not understand but sat through with indulgent resignation.

An unusual group was present at the birth of the Asian Federation. Its members belonged to the “Itinerant Training Course for UNESCO Club Leaders from Africa and Europe”. The itinerant training course, which was organized by UNESCO, received funding from three sources: the “Commemorative Association of the Japanese World Exposition” solicited by the NFUAJ, the NFUAJ itself, and the National Commissions of the countries to which it travelled. Sixteen young people had been carefully selected to take the course – six from francophone and anglophone Africa,¹ and ten from Central, Western and Southern Europe.² A member of the UNESCO Secretariat accompanied them, counting and recounting them at each land and air transport connection so as not to mislay anybody.

The stopover in Tokyo was the most important leg of the journey. It provided an opportunity to hear Asian country delegates comment on the state of the movement and the measures required to spread it.

The opening speech by the representative of the Director-General of UNESCO staggered the audience – Africans, Asians and Europeans alike. The learned and likeable Assistant Director-General spoke about two words in five of his address in English. Wisely, the text of the speech had, at the very last minute, been passed around. The Assistant DG, a Latin American senior civil servant, had

1. Cameroon, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal.

2. Austria, Cyprus, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Poland and Yugoslavia.

come straight from a symposium on communication planning and policies in his region. Jet lag, a sleepless night and hectic days were not the ideal preparation for handling a language in which he was not fluent at the best of times. But he was also a victim of bad luck. He had conscientiously taken the precaution of having his speech recorded by a British colleague whose impeccable pronunciation was the fruit of many years living and studying in Cambridge. His idea was to familiarize himself with the recording so as to reconstitute its sounds before his audience when the time came. When he took off from Buenos Aires, at the start of his long voyage, he laid the precious tape recorder on the seat beside him and inadvertently touched a button. When he pressed the playback command upon arrival, the machine produced the deafening roar of a jetliner taking off and climbing, instead of the polished accents of the Queen's English. Sportingly, he took the misadventure in good part and a few days later exacted his revenge, rhetorically speaking, by delivering a very elegant address in his mother tongue, Spanish.

After the big meeting in Tokyo, the African and European "itinerants" went to Kyoto, in the company of the Secretary-General and two other officials of the Nipponese Federation, to attend the picturesque Gion Festival held every year in July. With the same Japanese escort they went on to visit the Republic of Korea, where they stayed with families in Seoul, spoke with members of the students' associations, and were received by the Minister of Education and the top authorities of the National Commission. They continued their tour to the Philippines and India, where they were again memorably welcomed, holding working meetings with members of both countries' Governments and Commissions. In India, for example, they were received by the Director of the UNESCO regional office and by JIYA LAL JAIN. The latter welcomed them on a bare stony field, site of the future headquarters of the United Schools Organization.

The Itinerant Course deserves a special mention because it enabled leaders from the three regions where the Clubs had developed most successfully to live and converse together for several days, and to form relations which are still alive and active twenty years later. A good third of the African and European participants continue to militate for UNESCO and the Club movement. Only the young Ethiopian did not experience the Course's follow-up. He met a tragic end. Girma the educator, the barefoot literacy teacher, went back to his country's hinterland to bring knowledge to the rural population. Caught, or caught up with, by mercenaries or disbanded soldiers, he lost his life, the victim of an error, revenge or murderous inclinations – we do not know which.

The Asian partners, in collecting the resources needed for the course, showed admirable foresight, since the event gave a fillip to the movement in the

three regions concerned, and also to exchanges among them. It lent sense and substance to “international understanding”. It opened vistas for cooperation to all who were associated with it, and made it possible to compare ideas and methods, to everyone's benefit. It is a great pity that, for want of money, such a rewarding operation has never been repeated.

The Asian Federation drew inspiration from the experiment, however, and in 1975 organized a training course for youth Club organizers from six countries (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines and Thailand), all of whom travelled to Japan. In the second phase of the course, six young Japanese in turn travelled to the participants' home countries. A second course along the same lines was held two years later.

The Executive Committee of the Asian Federation met regularly in one or other of the countries where it had a member, and at UNESCO: in the Republic of Korea in 1976, UNESCO Headquarters in 1978, India in 1980, etc. A large-scale translation operation was launched to adapt the Organization's *UNESCO Club Manual* into various Asian languages as a means of furthering the movement's development in the region. A guide to UNESCO Clubs in Asia was issued, and AFUCA began publishing its newsletter, the title and periodicity of which changed as time went by.

Publishing and training formed only a part of the Federation's activities. It also involved itself in intellectual cooperation. One example was the symposium of Asian writers held in Tokyo in 1982, in conjunction with UNESCO and the Japanese PEN Club.

The Federation was less inspired when it decided in the late 1980s to change its name to the “Asia and Pacific Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations”, thereby signalling its intention to unfreeze the situation in the Pacific countries. Except for an insubstantial and short-lived association in Australia (Queensland), there were no Clubs in these countries. But a change of name was no substitute for determination on the part of the relevant National Commissions. UNESCO Clubs did not figure on their list of priorities, even at the bottom, and the situation remained unchanged in the subregion.

The Clubs' progression in Asia continued steadily. A federation was founded in Bangladesh in 1976 and was succeeded ten years later by a “National Association”. The same title was used in Nepal for an association created in 1988. In Thailand in 1970, the Commission established the “Centre for International Understanding”, whose membership included hundreds of schools and colleges. The few officially recorded Clubs which belonged to it were not really distinguishable, however, from the Associated Schools or United Nations Clubs. The Philippines did not draw any very clear distinction, either, between Clubs and

Associated Schools. More than a hundred of these twin-featured associations flourished there.

The Clubs in Sri Lanka, after a short period of relative decline, regained their vitality in 1980 thanks to the efforts expended by the Minister in charge of UNESCO affairs. There were a hundred of them in late 1983 and about 150 ten years later. They could boast of having invented an idea that existed nowhere else: the creation of Clubs inside jails.¹ Their members, a “captive” audience indeed, enthusiastically attend literacy and general education classes, and practise activities which will help them to lead normal lives once they have served their sentences. In addition to these rather unusual adult Clubs, Clubs for young people thrive and multiply.

In the countries that have been a traditional driving force – the Republic of Korea, India and Japan – the number of Clubs has continued to grow and their support base and organizational methods have been consolidated, while care is taken to diversify them.

Asia, the cradle of the movement, has maintained its comfortable numerical head start, although Africa is not far behind. The last challenge in the region is to win the Pacific over to the UNESCO Club cause. There is no reason why the combined energies of UNESCO and the regional (well, almost regional) Federation should not one day prevail.

A regional federation, where the Clubs in **Europe** are concerned, has proved to be an elusive goal. The desire for it was born in 1970 but, a good quarter of a century later, it has still not been fulfilled. The idea germinated in Trogen (Switzerland) at the first meeting of European UNESCO Clubs and Associated Schools. It was floated again at a number of international gatherings. But the federations concerned, while loudly voicing their support for the creation of a regional coordination system, remained strangely coy. None of them really wanted to take on the burden of sustaining a body which would add to its already heavy domestic responsibilities and would entail substantial costs.

In fact, what Europe are we talking about? In Western Europe, the Clubs are widely spread, well established and engaged in a broad range of activities. In Central and Eastern Europe, on the other hand, they were still in their infancy, busy trying to win recognition and acceptance in their own lands. Many people used this imbalance as an argument for postponing a decision.

Starting in 1981, the World Federation monopolized available energies and the old dream of a European federation faded. It was revived in 1990 at the meeting

1. One of these Clubs is mentioned in the Introduction.

convened in Strasbourg by the French Federation and attended by Clubs and National Commissions from twenty-one of the region's countries. *Perestroika* and *glasnost* were working like yeast in dough. The Soviet Union and many other countries of the same political persuasion were beginning to show serious interest in the movement. It was high time to take stock of this new situation. The meeting, while deferring such tedious chores as the drafting of provisional statutes, recommended setting up an informal coordinating apparatus which, to begin with, would gather and disseminate news on Club activities so as to increase exchanges, and enable everyone to know what was happening in other countries and to become involved if they wished. Setting in motion the shaping energy for a European federation would have been a great step towards its creation. The French Federation and the UNESCO Centre of Oporto, with a bravery verging on foolhardiness, volunteered to set the ball rolling. In the end, the encounter never took place.

The European Clubs did not lose heart and returned to the attack in 1993 when they gathered at the new regional conference in Kiev, and in 1995 at the World Congress in Sinaia (Romania). They set up a working group to ... (the old refrain).

Was the European Federation finally on the right track? Would it at last emerge from its limbo? How was it that a continent the size of Asia took so few years to set up its co-ordinating body whereas the Europeans, in their much tinier area, ran out of steam just trying to see how they might establish theirs? A surfeit of scruples or perfectionism? Timorousness or ineffectualness? Lack of political will? But, hush! it is probably better to keep mum about the great European Federation pipe dream and let the working group appointed in 1995 do its best to pick its way through the booby-traps in a, let us say, foreseeable future, and give substance to an ambition nursed for more than twenty-six years.

In any case, for the Clubs in the region the humming and hawing around the European Federation were merely a side-show. They went on growing in numbers, strength and unity, as may be seen from the Italian Clubs which founded their federation in 1979. The following year *Notizario*, surely one of the best Club-designed organs of information, began publication. In December 1981, the Italian Federation, located in Florence, the city of its Secretary-General, MARIALUISA STRINGA, moved into the historic Cloister of Fuligno, the only 11th-century monument still standing there. It was a highly symbolic step. The UNESCO Club of Coni, and the Centres of Milan and Turin, came into being in the early 1970s.

The year 1973 witnessed the birth in Oakland, California, of the United States UNESCO Association. The Association quickly took on the appearance of a mini-federation with its Clubs established in the Universities, under the guidance

of a former UNESCO grant-holder, DOROTHY HACKBARTH. It was proof of how much she had been influenced by the Organization's ideals. After the United States' withdrawal from UNESCO, effective in December 1984, the association "Americans for the Universality of UNESCO" was set up with the energetic backing of a former Deputy Director-General of the Organization, JOHN E. FOBES. The association joined the World Federation, with which it maintains friendly and cooperative relations.

Clubs proliferated in Cyprus, chiefly in secondary schools; they made a beginning in Greece; they reformed their structures in Austria and Flemish-speaking Belgium. At the same time, the Brussels Association of Friends of UNESCO sprang up and flourished. In 1985, it launched its art magazine "*Les nouvelles du patrimoine*" (Heritage News). The magazine's professionalism has won it a constantly expanding readership. The Maltese Club confirmed its good reputation with the high quality of its activities.

In Spain, the inhabitants of Madrid and Catalonia buried their differences and co-founded in December 1984 the "Spanish Confederation of UNESCO Clubs", which was joined by the Catalan Federation, including the UNESCO Centre of Catalonia. The Centre, created in the 1980s by several foundations and supported by the autonomous government of Catalonia, is the venue for frequent meetings of a high intellectual calibre. It produces not only prestige publications such as its "Catalonia" magazine, in several language versions, but also folders and fact-sheets – often derived from United Nations or UNESCO documents – intended to aid the Clubs and Associated Schools of the Autonomous Community in their work.

The UNESCO Centre of Oporto, long unrivalled for the lofty standards of its encounters, was founded within the ANTONIO DE ALMEIDA Foundation. It contributed, by dispatching documents and sharing its experience, to the awareness-raising which preceded the launching of UNESCO Clubs in the African countries whose official language was Portuguese. The Centre of the Netherlands, meanwhile, continued along its upward path.

The life of the French Clubs was dotted with important events. The *Maison des Clubs UNESCO* opened its doors in October 1974. Thousands of young people and adults from all over the world, whether or not they are UNESCO Club members, coming in groups or as individuals, are warmly received there, finding a place to stay in the heart of Paris. The *Cercle UNESCO RENÉ MAHEU*, created in Troyes, is destined for a radiant future. In Lyon, the International Centre for the Study of Oligo-Elements, an offshoot of the Rhone UNESCO Club, is the meeting-point for a network of scientists hailing from all over the globe. In

December 1987, it held an international symposium at UNESCO Headquarters, by 300 researchers and practitioners from forty countries.

The Young People's Organization for Environmental Preservation was founded in Ireland in 1983. The National Commission recognized the associations within it which adopted the name of UNESCO-ECO Clubs as UNESCO Clubs. On the other side of the border, the Belfast UNESCO Club was one of the main architects of the establishment and running of the "One World Centre", inaugurated in September 1987 by a group of associations. The idea was to provide teachers with information on how to treat development subjects in the classroom, to organize interdisciplinary workshops on certain aspects of these issues and to offer its visitors a continually expanding reference library. All over the United Kingdom, the Friends of the Organization, like their American counterparts, were dismayed by Britain's withdrawal from UNESCO. In 1986, they founded the "United Kingdom Association of Friends of UNESCO", which agitated for the UK's return to the great international precinct. When the return became a probability, the Association changed its name to the "United Kingdom Forum for UNESCO".

Casting our eyes eastwards, we find Bulgaria, whose attitude in regard to UNESCO Clubs contrasted strongly with that of the other countries in the subregion. Thanks for this were due mainly to LUDMILA JIVKOVA, daughter of First Secretary of the Communist Party, TODOR JIVKOV. Realizing that the young people in her country needed a breath of fresh air, she encouraged international exchanges. It was thus that a first UNESCO Club was founded in December 1971 at the University of Sofia Law School. The Bulgarian students' club for scientific expeditions was rewarded for its international activities by being officially declared a UNESCO Club in 1975, under the title "NEK Club". It had responded to UNESCO's appeal to save Carthage by sending teams of young researchers who had helped in the discovery of a submerged suburb of the ancient city. A few years later, it took part in the 1300th anniversary celebrations of the State of Bulgaria by mounting the expedition "Cuba 1981". The Chairperson of the Board of Administration of the NEK Club, Edouard GUECHEV, several times elected a member of the World Federation Executive Committee, became the main advocate of the Federation in the subregion. At the same time, the Club organized activities to become the meeting-point for Clubs from Western, Eastern and Central Europe. In 1976, a third Club was constituted at the Faculty of International Relations of the Karl Marx Higher Institute of Economics. Ten years later, the Véla Blagoéva UNESCO Club for Women was inaugurated by the Director-General of UNESCO during the 23rd Session of the General

Conference held in Sofia. Then, in the late 1980s, the UNESCO Club of the city of Varna, devoted principally to cultural and information work contributing to the renown of UNESCO, was founded. In the meantime, Clubs were being formed in Associated Schools.

The fate of the Polish Clubs was less enviable. Like some of their counterparts in Hungary, a number of them had gone to work in the cosy and easily controlled framework of the Associated Schools. They made no progress and did not succeed in modernizing themselves. In 1986, a bold initiative led to the setting up of the “Association of Friends of UNESCO”. It had the intention of being a driving force. Twenty or thirty societies went along at first, but soon cut adrift, and the Association sputtered. It picked up momentum again in the 1990s.

SLOVENJ GRADEC, a small Yugoslav town a few kilometres away from the Austrian border, had a unique place in history. In its mountainous landscape, the last battle of the Second World War was fought – one week after war had ended. Following a long succession of pro-UN activities marked by the visit of the Secretary-General in person, a UNESCO Club was founded there in 1987 in a gallery of modern art. Two years later, the Club hosted the first conference of Balkan country UNESCO Clubs on the theme “Our cultures, our common good”, attended by 25 people from 7 countries. The conference recommended the extension of the movement and its coordination in the Balkans. Although there was no second meeting to check on the progress made, the Club of SLOVENJ GRADEC was named “Messenger of Peace” by the United Nations Secretary-General. It survived the events of the early 1990s and found itself the only Club in the brand-new land of Slovenia.

As in Bulgaria, a forceful woman was responsible for the founding of the Soviet Clubs in 1989. ROSA OTOUNBAYEVA, President of the Soviet Union National Committee and member of the UNESCO Executive Board, noting that Clubs existed in many other countries, wondered, “Why not here?” She was able to introduce them without too much difficulty. Attitudes had changed since the all-powerful Committee of Youth Organizations had objected to their creation. A year later, a national meeting set up the “Soviet Association of UNESCO Clubs”. It was remarkable in being a coordinating body with virtually no Clubs to coordinate. They would follow later.

The years 1989–1990 also marked the beginning of the movement in Ukraine and Belarus, along with the foundation of their respective national associations.

With the exception of the Nordic countries, traditionally resistant to the idea of UNESCO Clubs, the movement was spreading throughout Europe.

The second generation of UNESCO Clubs, 1970-1990

Ethics and solidarity

In the years between 1970 and 1990, UNESCO Clubs worldwide experienced an unprecedented development in their activities, coinciding with a growth in their numbers.

At the same time, the type of work the Clubs were doing in industrialized countries, particularly in Europe, changed radically, owing to a number of factors.

First, there were changes and developments within UNESCO and the fact that Clubs were increasingly looking to it for inspiration. Following decolonization, especially in Africa, and the new memberships of the United Nations and the system's Specialized Agencies that ensued, UNESCO in its traditional functions placed much emphasis on aid to development – subsequently referred to by the less paternalistic term of “cooperation for development” – which then became the spearhead of its work, leading to concrete and militant action.

The proliferation of Clubs in the southern hemisphere and the contact established between these Clubs and those in the northern hemisphere gave the latter a more comprehensive view of a world in the midst of change and the duties consequently incumbent upon them in a spirit of fellowship and justice. Another result of these exchanges with Clubs in the new countries was to reveal a range of activities hitherto neglected by Clubs in other countries.

Finally, the events of May 1968 mentioned earlier affected the whole of Western Europe, inspiring the continent's young people with the conviction that they must become agents and actors of change within their societies instead of submitting to it passively and that they were called upon to take in hand their own destiny and help young people of other countries to do the same. International Youth Year (in 1985), with its triple theme of “participation, development, peace”, was to epitomize this new awareness and lend it new impetus.

The programmes of the older Clubs ceased to be mainly theoretical and became genuinely dynamic. Two meetings illustrate this change. The October 1971 meeting in Tokyo, to which the NFUAJ invited the Clubs of South-East Asia, recommended unconditionally that the UNESCO Club should be rooted in its local community, reflect its aspirations and respond to its needs. It was the actual experience of the Clubs from developing countries in Asia which attended the meeting that inevitably inspired such a clear and definite recommendation.

Five years later, a seminar for experienced leaders of European Clubs (Sofia, October 1976) advocated that Clubs should make the transition from purely informative activities to action in accordance with UNESCO programmes. This did not mean that the Clubs should renounce the responsibilities which they assumed so well with regard to information about UNESCO and its work and an introduction to world problems. However, information and the study of crucial questions were henceforth to form the basis for “operational” work (in UNESCO parlance), which would be all the more effective for being better informed and more clear-sighted. This approach was based on that of the Organization itself, constantly moving from discussion to action and back to discussion, learning from the successes and failures of work in the field.

Clubs in developing societies did not require meetings in order to decide to embark on activities of use to the people around them. However, meetings did allow them to pool experience and identify recurring features. All their meetings stressed the Clubs’ role in development and the need for them to be involved in tasks such as the elimination of illiteracy, advancement of rural areas, education, rediscovery and preservation of cultural identity, and encouragement of a scientific approach, to name but a few of the most frequent. The Club was regarded as a unit of social and economic development; joining it meant undertaking to collaborate in building the nation and eliminating the causes of hardship affecting it.

These Clubs engaged in intense intellectual activity, while their information work to publicize UNESCO, what it represented and where it was tending, was in every way equal to that of Clubs in the industrialized countries.

It is here impossible to relate in detail the activities of all the Clubs on all fronts; this would amount to compiling a necessarily tedious list or paraphrasing the information in the UNESCO Clubs Manual.

However, two basic features were to be found in **all** UNESCO Clubs, whatever their composition, location and specific objectives: **ethics and solidarity**. It is difficult to separate the two, in that the latter is constantly being nurtured by the former, while the former is embodied by the latter. It was their combination which gave the UNESCO Clubs movement its character, coherence

and purpose. Ethics and solidarity were asserted with renewed vigour during the twenty years in question, and it is these two aspects that we shall now consider.

1. Ethics

The 1976 Sofia seminar, mentioned on a number of occasions owing to the importance of its conclusions, defined plainly and pertinently the characteristics shared by all Clubs: a firm belief in UNESCO's ideals as set forth in its Constitution and a personal commitment of its members to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The seminar requested that this definition appear in the UNESCO Clubs Manual, and it was included forthwith.

In this respect, UNESCO Clubs were following the lead of the Organization's Directors-General, who never tired of reiterating the ethical foundations of the Organization's work; groups taking UNESCO as their point of reference drew their own *raison d'être* from the same fountainhead.

When UNESCO was celebrating the twentieth anniversary of its foundation, RENÉ MAHEU wrote that the main bulk of UNESCO's role and work was not technical; it was ethical. UNESCO's objectives were essentially moral. Education, science and culture, whatever their eminent intrinsic justifications were, in the eyes of the Constitution, only approaches and means to an end ... UNESCO's mission and ultimate *raison d'être* were to use them to establish in every individual's and every people's innermost conscience the rules of justice and tolerance which, in the final analysis, would determine freedom, servitude or death.

Upon receiving His Holiness Pope JOHN PAUL II at UNESCO Headquarters in June 1980, AMADOU-MAHTAR M'BOW declared, "[UNESCO] sets out to be the catalyst of a moral conscience on the scale of mankind as a whole, for its activities lay emphasis on the primacy of human dignity, of the brotherhood of peoples, and of the indivisibility of the historical heritage which they share".

In the words of FEDERICO MAYOR, "UNESCO's basic ethical role is to nurture a culture of peace – culture being used in its broadest sense to encompass education, science and communication, indeed all aspects of social life. This peace culture is one embodying those essential attributes of free intellectual inquiry and exchange in a spirit of democracy, solidarity and mutual respect prescribed in UNESCO's Constitution".

Meanwhile, the Clubs seized every opportunity of publicizing and reiterating their ethical role, as is shown by a number of events selected to illustrate this.

In October 1972, the first Bolivian seminar on UNESCO Clubs, Associated Schools, and youth hostels brought together in Quito young people from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela to examine how young people might be involved in work for international understanding and how to consolidate peace. At their 28th Convention, held on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the movement, the Japanese Associations, for their part, were asking, "Can the peace of mankind be realized?". Their Federation published three hundred pages of "propositions for the peace of the world". They returned to this subject at their 37th Convention, which dealt with peace-building. In El Salvador, the Federation of United Nations Information Clubs (comparable to UNESCO Clubs) made its principal objective the dissemination of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In Italy, the Florence UNESCO Centre and the Italian Society for International Organizations celebrated the anniversary of the Universal Declaration by holding a meeting for young people on the problems of international understanding and educational methods to promote it. The event was so successful that activities covering several weeks around 10 December were thenceforth organized every year.

The celebration of International Women's Year in 1975 spawned numerous initiatives. For its annual study days, the French Federation chose the subject of women and their place in political life; the Tangiers Club planned three days on women; the UNESCO Affairs Society in Enyiogugu (Nigeria) attracted a large audience for two days of discussion, talks and films about women, stressing the need to ensure that women have the same rights as men in both theory and practice; in Sri Lanka, vocational training courses were started for young women to help them achieve practical independence and thus to improve their status.

The International Year of the Child mobilized just as much energy, since it gave rise to activities in Argentina, Austria, Colombia, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Ghana, India, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malta, Mauritius, Morocco, Nepal, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Senegal, Spain, Tunisia, etc. Here again, it was a matter of underscoring the rights of a very vulnerable section of the population which, in certain circumstances, is subject to exploitation, and whose need for protection and affection from the adult world is not always sufficiently recognized.

During the International Year of Disabled Persons, UNESCO Clubs throughout the world loudly demanded rights for disabled people and claimed the latter's rightful place in everyday life by identifying and strengthening methods of combating exclusion and integrating the disabled into a society which tended to disregard and, ultimately, marginalize them.

Following directly on from these landmarks, attention continued to be focused on meetings concerning peace, human rights and international understanding, as demonstrated by the Colombian Clubs' first symposium on human rights, held to celebrate thirty years of UNESCO.

Hosting the Mediterranean Clubs in Istres, the French Federation proposed a discussion of how to promote information on human rights outside schools; it devoted its annual study days to the question, "What is the position of human rights in today's world?". Two years later, the town of Istres was again the setting for a course (national this time) on how to promote the knowledge of cultural values and mutual understanding among children belonging to different civilizations coexisting in the same community. The French Federation once again addressed ethical questions by studying the connection between UNESCO ideals and specific Club activities, showing, through analysis, that the precepts of the Constitution were the leaven for the action which naturally followed from them and embodied them.

In Brussels, the Belgian Associated Schools brought together representatives of Clubs and schools from twenty-six African and European countries to consider how arts education could contribute to the development of international understanding and thus how to redirect this education in order that it might play its full role.

The Jamaica Clubs turned their attention to young people's involvement in establishing a new international economic order and building peace "in the minds of men", while at their Third National Assembly the Ecuador Clubs agreed that they must take a firm stand against every type of violation of human rights, whether committed on their own soil or in other Latin American countries. Their next meeting in 1985 took the theme of human rights and peace. Shortly afterwards, and thousands of miles away, the Moroccan Federation organized study days on human rights with participation not only by the country's Clubs and schools but also by members of other youth bodies which had to be made aware of the problems as well.

In 1983, the UNESCO Clubs and Associated Schools in Costa Rica held their first "Peace Week". At their suggestion, a presidential decree was promulgated establishing the second week in June every year as "Peace Week". Following their example, young people at the UNESCO Centre in Florence initiated what then became a regular event by enabling the city's young people to award a world prize for peace and international understanding to celebrate the thirty-seventh anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Since then conferred annually, the prize is awarded to distinguished figures from the worlds of politics, the arts, the media and sport.

The Argentine Clubs organized study days on education for peace and disarmament. Clubs in the Federal Republic of Germany invited their counterparts from Belgium, Chad, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Pakistan to a collective discussion on international understanding as a road to peace. The Madrid Club sponsored a congress of educators for peace. The Philippines National Commission held an international work camp for world cooperation and peace with young people from three regions, with UNESCO Club members and Associated School pupils participating.

The UNESCO Centre in Oporto held a seminar on peace, human rights and the instruments pertaining to them, during which the concept of democracy in Africa and the African Charter of Human Rights were addressed. The Togo Clubs held a forum on disarmament, peace and development.

For the tercentenary of the promulgation of the Black Code,¹ the Senegalese Federation invited specialists on slavery and the slave trade from Africa, North and South America, Europe and the Caribbean. They met on Gorée, an island close to Dakar that was one of the main centres of the slave trade, to examine the effects of the Code in a variety of fields and open up new avenues of research.

In their untiring pursuit of justice and their constant efforts to ensure that human rights were better publicized and respected, the Clubs used an array of methods to combat apartheid and the arms race (both conventional and nuclear): meetings, information campaigns, exhibitions and symbolic marches were combined to denounce these two evils which, in different ways but to the same degree, violated the right to life and freedom of individuals and peoples.

The two decades from 1970 to 1990 witnessed the creation of bodies which displayed their ethical commitment in their titles: the Centre for International Understanding (in Bangkok) and the Information and Action Centre for Development and International Understanding (in Beirut), which have already been mentioned; the UNESCO Club for Friendship and Peace in the capital of Benin; the Congolese Club for Peace Education in Pointe-Noire; the Human Rights Defence Council in the Peruvian city of Arequipa; and the House of Human Rights in Quito, defined as a study, reference and action centre and to which the Madrid UNESCO Club, approached by the World Federation, donated books and information kits.

1. The *Code noir* or Colonies Code drawn up by Colbert, a French statesman under Louis XIV, was published in March 1685, two years after the death of its author; this code confirmed the status of slaves, who could be bought, sold and hired and who enjoyed no civil status.

Junior members of the Coni Club in Italy became “human rights ambassadors” in their schools, where they endeavoured to promote study, in all classes, of the Universal Declaration and to derive from it practical lines of action for schoolchildren; the Director-General demonstrated his sympathy by giving them a certificate. The Friends of UNESCO Club of Venezuela created a Peace Park covering 240 hectares, in which heads of state and government planted trees symbolizing their countries.

The same years saw a rallying of associations predating the UNESCO Clubs with regard to the values on which the latter prided themselves. In France, the *Maison de la négritude et des droits de l’homme* (Centre for Negritude and Human Rights) joined the National Federation in April 1976, and the story of this centre is so pleasing that it would be a pity not to relate it here. RENÉ SIMONIN was an active member of the community in the district of Champagne in Haute-Saône. Delving into local archives, he found the register of grievances¹ which the villagers had addressed to the King of France, LOUIS XVI, on 19 March 1789. His attention was attracted by Item 29 of the register: “The inhabitants and community of Champagne cannot think of the ills suffered by the Negroes in the colonies without their hearts being filled with the keenest sorrow at the thought of their fellow creatures, bound to them by the additional tie of religion, being treated more harshly than beasts of burden ... For this reason their religion commands them most humbly to beseech His Majesty to contrive the means of making these slaves subjects of service to king and country”. In 1971, the International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, RENÉ SIMONIN suggested to Champagne Town Council that it might establish a Centre for Negritude and annually commemorate the “wish expressed by the forebears” whose descendants were still living in the area. The town council assented to his wish, and, in November the same year, LÉOPOLD SÉDAR SENGHOR, then President of Senegal, granted his patronage to the Centre, which shortly afterwards became the *Maison de la négritude et des droits de l’homme*.

The Italian Centre of International Correspondence for Peace and Universal Brotherhood was accepted as a UNESCO Club. This conversion was decided upon in a Paris restaurant where the Centre’s members were lunching before going to UNESCO Headquarters for a guided tour. Their conversation

1. Registers of grievances (*cahiers de doléances*) were the documents in which the assemblies prior to the States General recorded the complaints and wishes which their representatives were to put forward.

attracted the attention of JEAN-BAPTISTE DE WECK, who, after a few words exchanged between the two tables, finished his meal at that of the young Italians; he told them about the Clubs, their strength and their usefulness – and persuaded the Centre to join them!

As to the Clubs' publications, they were plentiful, and there were even publications **about** the Clubs, paying tribute to their ethical role. One such was the information dossier devoted to them by the Catholic International Education Office (OIEC) entitled *Working for Peace – The UNESCO Clubs*. Among the causes explaining the expansion of the movement were listed “its independence from any political party affiliation, the free and spontaneous character of its constitution, the variety of its contacts and lines of approach, its dedicated resolve to play its part in creating a climate of friendly understanding between peoples by helping them to learn to get to know and respect each other better”. These virtues were clearly recognized by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, since in addition to the previously mentioned Kenitra Club in Morocco and Slovenj Gradec Club in what is now Slovenia, he awarded the distinction of *Messenger of Peace* to the two African Federations of Burkina Faso and Togo.

The Clubs' documents were intended to encourage greater knowledge of and research into human rights in order to help enforce them.

This was the idea behind the Clubs' translations of the Universal Declaration into national or local languages: Catalan, Maltese, Kannada,¹ Bribri,² Quechua,³ Fon and Gun.⁴ The authors did not confine themselves simply to adapting or translating the Declaration but supplemented it with illustrations, explanations, teaching suggestions, and recommendations for activities. In Costa Rica and Ecuador, Club members visited the Indian communities for whom these translations were intended and went over each article with them, dwelling on current applications regarding the exercise of civil, political and other rights.

The Friends of UNESCO Club of Buenos Aires published the Declaration of the Rights of the Child illustrated with children's drawings; this was a prelude to all the later work of Clubs throughout the world on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which, since its adoption by the international community, had inspired numerous initiatives, such as the information and training seminar for head teachers of schools held in Kinshasa by the Dibua Dia

1. A language of southern India, spoken mainly in the State of Karnataka.

2. A language spoken by natives of Talamanca in Costa Rica.

3. Language of the ancient Inca Empire, now spoken mainly in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia.

4. Languages spoken in Benin.

Ditumba school, the location of both a UNESCO Club and an Associated School.¹

The French Federation, whose ethical commitment was at one with its origins, published documents such as *Racismes et droit à la différence* (Types of racism and the right to be different) and *La Déclaration universelle a quarante ans* (Forty years of the Universal Declaration). In collaboration with the League for Human Rights, it published a work entitled *La conquête des droits de l'homme* (Winning Human Rights), which was a collection of basic statutes from Magna Carta in June 1215 to the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment adopted on 26 November 1987 by the Council of Europe. The Madrid UNESCO Club brought out a widely distributed booklet containing the covenants on economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights adopted in the wake of the Universal Declaration. The World Federation devoted one of its *Confluences* documents to UNESCO and human rights; other projects carried out by the Federation or under its aegis are described in the sections devoted to it. The "Espoir" Club in Benin, author of the translations mentioned above, drafted a practical guide for teachers of human rights.

2. Solidarity

These initiatives for propagating an ideal found their counterpart in an equally varied and exciting array of actions aimed at practising active solidarity: a solidarity which was not mere lip-service and confined to case studies alone but set out to remedy situations felt to be intolerable and helped to change attitudes and ways of thinking so as to achieve recognition of human beings in all the fullness of their rights and dignity. Action to combat social, economic and political injustice, racism, sexism and many other kinds of discrimination formed part of this approach.

For Clubs in developing countries, solidarity was not something to be discussed or measured; through force of circumstance, it was automatic. Accordingly, as already noted, the meetings of these Clubs were motivated more by the concern to establish priorities, agree on strategies and combine efforts than to decide to embark on actions whose urgency and absolute necessity were recognized by everyone. This was all the more clear for Club members who, as school-

1. In 1996, the school's UNESCO Club was awarded the King Sejong Literacy Prize for having taught thousands of people to read and write.

children or students, were receiving an education to which most of the other young people in their countries had no access; rightly considering themselves privileged, they felt accountable to those who had not been so fortunate.

In Nigeria, the inaugural conference of the National Federation in 1971 passed a resolution urging every Club member to make one illiterate person literate every year and to pass the word on to others.

A Mali Club examined the problems arising from the use of the French alphabet for literacy work in vernacular languages; it concluded that it would be advisable to adopt an alphabet adapted to the transcription of Bambara and then prepared an experimental Bambara spelling-book before embarking upon an education campaign.

Nepalese Clubs conducted literacy campaigns during the long school holidays. A group of students accompanied by one or two teachers would go to a selected village and organize classes for children during the day and adults in the evening. Basic rules of health and hygiene were also covered.

The Chad and Côte d'Ivoire Clubs, the University of Monrovia Club and the Beninese Ahwlikponuwa Club organized training workshops for literacy workers and improved their methods of involving young people in rural development; another Beninese group, the previously mentioned Peace and Friendship Club, displayed originality by combining literacy and environmental protection in a pilot project called *Reading and writing in green spaces*. The Kenitra Club in Morocco organized a national symposium on the role of literacy in human development. The Second Pan-African Conference of UNESCO Clubs devoted part of its work to recording and encouraging Club activities aimed at the endogenous development of Africa.

An association of retired teachers in Costa Rica formed themselves into a UNESCO Club in order to pursue post-literacy activities; the same country then saw the establishment of a "voluntary literacy workers" club whose main objective was to help to reduce illiteracy and provide technical training. From similar motives, the Ecuador Federation mobilized its Clubs to eradicate illiteracy in the last decade of the century, and to that end set up teams of young volunteers to join the national literacy campaign promoted by the authorities.

The projects of the Malagasy Clubs, some aspects of projects organized by other African Clubs, and the substantial participation of Clubs in developing countries in the main International Years (facts already mentioned) were all tokens of their determination to grapple with harsh reality whilst constantly bearing in mind the unenviable fate of many of their fellow creatures for whom they felt solidarity and a sense of responsibility.

Like the initiatives to reduce illiteracy, thousands of others were aimed at improving conditions of health, hygiene and nutrition for the least privileged sectors of the population.

Some Clubs adopted long-term strategies to support whole communities reduced to poverty and hardship. Two cases demonstrate the value of this type of solidarity.

In 1985, a group of Argentine students and young professionals identified with the themes of International Youth Year. It formed itself into a UNESCO Club and took the name of "ALBERT SCHWEITZER" in acknowledgement of the deep love of humankind felt by the famous doctor and theologian and embodied in his humanitarian work. The Club then drew up a development project which it called *National Conscience*.

Providing social assistance based on voluntary work, the project focused on a Patagonian town situated in the midst of the semi-arid zone of the Andes cordillera and, as such, lacking all means of transport and communications. The objective was to encourage development of this community which had been cut off from progress because of its isolation and to preserve the indigenous cultural heritage. Intelligence and logic underlay the Club's plans: setting up a library (the first in the area) combined with a toy library, organizing musical, artistic and sporting activities with the pupils of the only school, providing school equipment and games for the children, giving the community more information, and setting up a cooperative (also the first in the area), preceded by a training course for the people who were to run it. The cooperative was inaugurated in July 1987, making it possible to alleviate the food deficiencies affecting the community during the long winter months when the cold is very severe.

The "ALBERT SCHWEITZER" Club made a record of the area's oral tradition: songs and poems blending poetry, stories of the past and folk music were recorded, and traditional craft trades were listed. One task followed another for the Club volunteers, and each was a feat in itself, since it involved travelling more than 2,000 kilometres. There was also movement in the opposite direction, with the visit to Buenos Aires of 34 young people from the Andes, who were introduced to the city and met schoolchildren from the capital.

The relevant authorities in the province of Neuquén, where the project was being carried out, lent essential support, providing a site for construction of the cooperative's final premises, commissioning windmills and installing electricity; all of these were minor victories for the Club in catalysing energies, and steps towards improving the community's living conditions. Club members also showed themselves skillful in gaining the support of the Presidency of the Republic and the

Argentine authorities at all levels. They presented their project, which in the meantime had been included in the UNESCO Co-Action Programme, at the Second Congress of the World Federation. CARLOS DANIEL FONTANA, the Club President, and GUILLERMO RICARDO LARA, its Secretary, together with all the young people in the Club, succeeded through their perseverance in moving mountains – almost literally!

In Mangalore, a city in the State of Karnataka in India, the story began one day in June 1972 when Father LAWRENCE D’SOUZA, a teacher at Saint Aloysius College (run by the Society of Jesus) came across a magazine article encouraging schools to set up UNESCO Clubs. When asked, the pupils decided in favour of such a club, which was created on 5 July 1972. The Club initially sought to complement and diversify the teaching already provided. Documents on 135 countries were gathered, and the young people collected flags, stamps and coins from all over the world. They thus learnt to think internationally and acquire an outlook which inclined them towards understanding.

Starting from the idea that India was a country of villages and that anyone who wanted to develop the country must begin by developing the villages, the Club decided shortly after its inception to adopt a village in order first and foremost to ensure that the children were provided with schooling and to raise the standard of their school. They visited “their” village frequently, conducted surveys there and noted the problems while constantly conferring to find suitable solutions. However, the village was quite remote, and it was difficult to travel there and back in a day.

Alerted to these obstacles to the Club’s work, UNESCO turned the purchase of the jeep coveted by Club members into the object of a co-action project (Reference: UCA-14) and rallied the friends of the Organization.

The Club’s contacts with the Japanese Associations began in 1974, well before the launch of the project. The adopted village had been victim of a tragic fate: it had been engulfed by floods, and the inhabitants, who lived on the plain, had lost their homes and all their belongings. They had taken refuge in the school, perched on a hill. Father D’SOUZA sent a distress call to UNESCO, which immediately referred the matter to the Nipponese Federation, and the Federation published the Mangalore letter in its *UNESCO Shimbun* periodical. Its members became aware of this Indian city for the first time; they took action, and lasting contact was established. Help poured in, and the valiant Club was able to undertake the necessary rehabilitation.

However, the Club was still waiting for its jeep ... Finally the sum was raised and the jeep made its triumphal entry into Saint Aloysius on 28 October 1981.

Together, the contributions from the Nipponese Federation, the UNESCO Centre in the Netherlands, the Italian Federation, the UNESCO Association of Colorado, and Dunkeld Girls' School in Belfast had made possible the purchase of the long-awaited vehicle!

From then on, things happened very quickly. The Saint Aloysius College Club, together with the other Clubs which had been set up in the meantime, undertook a campaign to adopt village schools. A few years later, 27 had been adopted, besides 19 Ashram schools.¹

The friendships formed with the donors deepened and donations continued to arrive. The Clubs used them for new projects: building schools, kindergartens and playgrounds, buying teaching and scientific equipment, etc.

Despite his modesty, Father D'SOUZA became famous; he was fêted as an apostle of solidarity and cooperation and a model of devotion to the poor and all those bruised by fate. Invited to speak all over the world, he did so: he talked about the humble beginnings of the first Mangalore Club, the birth of numerous other Clubs (45 in one year!) as a result of his determination, the establishment in 1985 of the Indian Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations, his 115 Clubs today, the UNESCO Anthem composed in the 1970s, and the links with the Asahi Seimei Club in Japan since 1985, among other things.

But Father D'SOUZA felt that he had better things to do than rest on his laurels; he embarked on another, equally ambitious, project in aid of the tribes of Untouchables living in an endemic state of backwardness. The tasks of eliminating illiteracy and providing basic education which he had set himself and which he shared with many of the Federation's Clubs were crowned with striking success. His eight books on the Untouchables, including some written directly in English, have been reviewed in all latitudes, and the Asahi Seimei Club has translated several of them into Japanese.

When, in 1993, the Indian Federation received the Noma Literacy Prize from UNESCO, the Clubs of many countries felt honoured, and when it celebrated the tenth anniversary of its foundation they all felt included!

It was also inevitable that some people would form themselves into a UNESCO Club for purposes of self-help – self-solidarity, so to speak.

This is what happened in 1980 in the Senegalese village of Sanghé Douka, 8 kilometres from the city of Thiès. The women, most of whom were illiterate, decided to work for the economic and social development of their village.

1. Ashram schools are boarding schools set up by the Government for underprivileged sections of the population.

Encouraged by the young schoolteacher VICTOR SÈNE, a member of the Senegalese Federation, they formed a UNESCO Club, the better to combat the scourges threatening them: rural exodus and deculturation.

The Club was advised by a “Committee of wise persons” to ensure that decisions had general approval and that initiatives did not run counter to the villagers’ traditions, customs and personalities. Relying on fundamental values and aspirations and the real potential of the land, the two hundred women in the Club decided to set up the collective facilities considered necessary: needlework, carpentry, dyeing, embroidery and childcare workshops, a day nursery, and shortly afterwards a rural maternity clinic. A community field was marked out, and a sanitation programme vigorously pursued; stoves which used excessive quantities of wood or charcoal were abandoned in favour of new ones which both used less and were more environment-friendly.

The Club members turned to the outside world to supplement their limited resources. UNESCO put them in touch with a German women’s Club which happened to be looking for pen friends in Africa. Messages were exchanged between the Senegalese village of Sanghé Douka and the German town of Frankenthal, and a friendship sprang up.

In July-August 1983, a four-week work camp organized jointly by the Senegalese human development authorities, the Senegalese Federation, the World Federation and UNESCO brought together young people from Frankenthal and three African countries. Three projects were to be launched: the literacy campaign which the Sanghé Douka women had requested the Senegalese Federation to prepare for them, a reforestation project and the building of the day nursery.

Relations with the German Club were strengthened and crystallized by a twinning and visits. European aid was welcome in order, among other things, to obtain medicines, build a millet mill, finish fitting out the workshops, provide educational materials and complete the day nursery, which also functioned as a multipurpose centre where classes were held in literacy, health and nutrition. The German authorities also took an interest in such well-run projects and were involved in them through their embassy in Senegal.

Thanks to the dedicated persistence of its women, the village of Sanghé Douka has become the symbol of a community anxious to create a brighter future for its children and the site of praiseworthy achievements emulated by many of the neighbouring villages.

For Clubs in industrialized countries the necessary solidarity involved understanding the complex situations faced by the countries of the South and their nationals living in industrialized countries – with concrete action often following.

In 1971, the International Students Club of Vienna celebrated in its own way the International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. It mounted a “free rooms” campaign in order to demolish the prejudices which led landlords to refuse to rent their rooms to foreign students for no other reason than their nationality or the colour of their skin: Might some of these landlords have been afraid that the students’ colour would rub off on the sheets? The Club distributed 18,000 letters explaining the situation of foreign students in Austria, urging the public to understand and help them, and requesting landlords not to turn away possible lodgers without even having spoken to them. The campaign, which was well supported by the media, spread to other university towns and rallied other student associations. Its success was such that the number of landlords won over to the antiracist cause was sufficient to lodge all foreign students easily and even to obtain accommodation for families of Asian or African origin who had been unable to find any before. Names of obdurate landlords were put on a blacklist, and a general boycott by everybody involved in the campaign prevented these recalcitrants from finding any tenants – even Austrian ones!

When the European UNESCO Clubs and Associated Schools met again in 1974, in Poland this time, there was a working group to study the theme of European young people in relation to Third World problems. The Austrian Clubs ran a seminar on children in industrialized countries and developing countries.

For two years in succession, the French Federation made development aid the focal point of its study days; it concluded that its primary duty was to cooperate with immigrant workers in their attempts to acquire education and assert their rights. Accordingly, the Poitiers Club set up an Immigrants Committee to take more effective concrete action, the Bois-Colombes Club gave private coaching to immigrant children to help them catch up on their education, and the Avallon Club organized matches between teams consisting of foreigners and locals in order to overcome mutual prejudice.

Marseille, a city with a large foreign population, was host to an international youth symposium on migrant workers as a follow-up to the recommendations of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination which followed the International Year of the same name. Young people from Algeria, Belgium, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, the United States and Yugoslavia reviewed such questions as the civil, social and political rights of migrant workers, ways of combating racial prejudice concerning them, and the social advancement of foreign workers and their families. The discussion was broadened a few years later to the Fourth World – the impoverished underclass of the rich countries – and the French

Federation then worked with associations concerned with improving the lot of this sector of the population.

In Toulouse, the headquarters of the Midi-Pyrénées Regional Council of UNESCO Clubs, centres were opened to receive immigrants: the one bearing the name of RENÉ MAHEU, who had been a native of the city of Saint-Gaudens near Toulouse, was specifically intended to accommodate workers and refugees from South-East Asia. Solidarity here took various forms: education was provided, reading and writing were taught, training for various occupations was given, integration was facilitated, assistance was offered with legal and administrative procedures, and games and sports were organized for children and young people. Solidarity was also reflected in the smiling countenance of JANINE GIBRAT, the life and soul of the Toulouse centres, as patient as she was untiring and as imaginative as compassionate. A new centre for UNESCO Clubs was opened in Toulouse in June 1990 and was, of course, given the name LOUIS FRANÇOIS.

The French Federation invested its energies in a long-term project concerning the Bakel area on the River Senegal and also involving nearby Mali and Mauritania.¹ The pattern was the opposite of that noted above, where international solidarity was grafted on to pre-existing projects. A couple of teachers who were long-standing Club leaders and among the officers of the French Federation, visited Bakel on a number of occasions. COLETTE and RAOUL BACCONNIER felt at home there and were welcomed like members of the family. They opened their eyes and ears to absorb the culture and civilization of the place and grasp the problems of underdevelopment. In 1973, Bakel was hit by the great drought in the Sahelian countries. Emergency aid was immediately sent by the couple and the Federation which they had helped to found. That aid was to have many consequences since there was no question of leaving the area to flounder unassisted in such a precarious situation. And what was the priority? A post-primary centre – a place where children who had left primary school could receive an education or practical training without having to travel the hundreds of miles separating them from a secondary school or technical training centres.

The UNESCO Co-Action Programme and the Organization's Regional Office for Education in Africa (with its headquarters in Dakar) grew enthusiastic about the project, as did natives of *Bakel* living in France. The sum of these energies provided the impetus for the *Living in the Sahel* project. Financial support from the Netherlands, Germany and Japan was added to the amounts collected in

1. The three areas affected by the project were Tambacounda (Senegal), Kayes (Mali) and Sélibaby (Mauritania).

France from Clubs, groups of Bakel emigrants and the general public. Construction began in 1985, and the centre opened the following year. It reached its cruising speed, after various ups and downs, in 1992, the year in which the first three-year plan was drawn up guaranteeing its financial stability with, in particular, a financial contribution from the French Ministry for Cooperation and the self-financing provided by the Centre itself.

It was named the Exchange and Practical Training Centre (CEFP), and specialized in literacy and post-literacy in four local languages, agricultural techniques, training of development coordinators, meetings, and exchanges. An end to emigration and the preservation of cultural identity ceased to be distant and mythical objectives; they were there, almost within reach. COLETTE and RAOUL BACCONNIER were jubilant; their aims had at last been achieved.

In addition to this federal project, which has been going on for more than a quarter of a century, there were any number of micro-projects targeting mainly Africa and to a lesser extent Latin America; they brought French Clubs into contact with communities in developing countries through twinning operations, which led to mutual cultural discovery.

For the Nipponese Federation, as we have seen, solidarity was a commitment over several decades. It was first confined to Asia, since the Federation had opted initially for “Asian solidarity” linked to mutual understanding and observance of human rights. Guidelines for action by members ranged from voluntary service in aid of the disabled and elderly to collection of funds for international co-action.

Thus in January 1979, the Federation embarked on a project designed to provide educational support for Kampuchean¹ refugee children in camps in Thailand. The campaign launched for this purpose was so successful that \$600,000 were collected from the Japanese people in a very short space of time, thus demonstrating how much concern they felt over the problem. The following year, in cooperation with UNESCO and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Federation held a children’s drawing competition – with no specific theme and no guidelines – in the two most crowded Thai centres for exiled Kampucheans. Selected from over five hundred works, 29 drawings, together with extracts from interviews with the young artists, were published in *Kampuchean Chronicles*, which was widely distributed by the Federation; proceeds from the sale were invested in education projects, including the creation of school libraries and reading rooms for children and young people in the refugee centres.

1. The People's Republic of Kampuchea was the name given to Cambodia from the late 1970s to the late 1980s.

As in other industrialized countries, the programmes of the Nipponese Federation did not in any way hamper the proliferation of more limited bilateral projects which individual Associations had chosen to help, mainly in Asian countries. Here again, the projects provided an opportunity for exchanges and visits, which were richly rewarding on both the human and the cultural plane.

Involvement in literacy in the developing world grew considerably as a result of a charming incident. During a tour in Japan, the international rock star MICHAEL JACKSON donated some thirty of his stage props to the Federation and agreed that the proceeds from their sale should be assigned to literacy projects; he also agreed to the striking of gold medals with his effigy and their sale for the same ends.

Given the success of these initiatives, reinforced by UNESCO's proclamation of 1990 as International Literacy Year, the NFUAJ drew up plans for a large-scale programme and obtained the backing of the *Yomiuri Shimbun* daily. It consisted in setting up UNESCO Co-Action Learning Centres in disadvantaged communities of all geographical and cultural backgrounds.

The programme took shape in 1989. In September of that year, the Federation held a literacy forum in Tokyo attended by 400 people (mostly young) and a symposium in the city of Aomori that attracted representatives from non-governmental organizations and learning centres already in operation; on the agenda was the formulation of an action plan as part of International Literacy Year. With participants from 16 countries in four regions, it was the human race in miniature that was hosted by this port in northern Japan, and it was the first step towards a series of symposia which, from year to year, were to encourage people from different backgrounds and walks of life to discuss the most appropriate strategies and methods for providing a sheet anchor – education – to help people struggling in ignorance and poverty.

The literacy programme was supplemented by an “education for all” plank in the light of the international conference held in Jomtien (Thailand) by UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme on the dawn of International Literacy Year.

The Japanese programme made a dazzling start – so much so that in 1991 the learning centres movement earned the Federation the International Reading Association's Literacy Award – one of the most prestigious awards – presented annually by UNESCO as part of the celebration of International Literacy Day on 8 September. The reasons adduced by the jury emphasized the Japanese involvement in implementing 67 literacy projects in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East, together with the purchase of equipment and stationery, the creation of libraries and the publication of textbooks.

The movement then took the name of *World Terakoya*¹ *Movement*; selection criteria for projects were refined, applications poured in, and the programme became a genuine institution with the continuity that this implies but without the bureaucratic connotations sometimes attaching to the term.

At this period, the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan was in its heyday and there were numerous indications that this would continue. Good for the Federation and everyone who benefited from its influence, and good for TAMAKI OBANA, its Secretary-General until June 1993, the year in which she resigned her post while remaining a member of the NFUAJ Board of Directors. For years, this slip of a woman with a big heart held the Federation's fate in her tiny hands, guiding it on paths to fame by sometimes unusual routes. A courageous champion of human rights, a friend to the deprived, and a real worker of the absolute, TAMAKI OBANA was both vigorous and sentimental, uncompromising in her ethical choices and full of indulgence. Refined to the tips of her pretty varnished nails and the depths of her noble soul, she embodied limpid strength for everybody.

The intergovernmental conference which UNESCO held in April 1983 was devoted to education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms. With its long title, it marked a significant step forward for the UNESCO Clubs, which it discussed at length, acknowledging their importance, which was growing daily. It also stressed the complementarity that should govern their relations with the Associated Schools. The conference was chaired by GONZALO ABAD GRIJALVA, Ecuadorian Ambassador to UNESCO and future President of the World Federation, although nobody realized it yet – and he least of all. The Ecuadorian delegate at the meeting was his colleague FERNANDO CHAMORRO, a warm champion of UNESCO Clubs in his own country and one of the World Federation's founders. In his speech to the conference highlighting the role of the Clubs in the overall field of education, one particular passage paying tribute to their moral sense and determination to act stood out. There could be no better summary of this chapter: "We know how splendid an instrument UNESCO has in the clubs for spreading its ideals and principles and for executing its programmes, for the UNESCO Clubs provide a school for lifelong training in understanding the responsibilities all individuals must shoulder in life".

1. The Japanese word *Terakoya* denotes centres of learning attached to religious institutions, which, from the fourteenth to eighteenth centuries, taught children of the common people to read and write.

The World Federation

Genesis and first steps

Emboldened by its past successes and by its incipient expansion, the Asian Federation began to dream on a world scale: already, at its second, session in Seoul from 16 to 22 May 1976, the Executive Board of the Federation reflected on the creation of an international Federation, and concluded that it would indeed be worthwhile.

Floated by UNESCO, the idea was taken up by the group of experienced leaders from the Clubs of the eleven European countries meeting in Sofia in October of the same year, thanks to the collaboration of the Organization, the National Commission, and the UNESCO Club of scientific expeditions of the Bulgarian capital.¹ While supporting the principle of an international federation which would be provided with regional bodies, the participants recommended that a new seminar of experienced leaders examine the question in greater depth, on the basis of the results of a survey.

The issue was taken up a few months later by Austria: fifteen European and North American leaders and one observer from the Asian Federation met in Vienna in April 1977. They in turn asked themselves the question: *do we feel the need for an international Federation of UNESCO Clubs and associations?* Despite personal convictions which might tempt them to move too fast, they decided to prepare a survey of all the Clubs, Federations and National Commissions world-wide, as advocated by the Sofia seminar.

The onus shifted to France: at the annual Congress of the French Federation (Paris, November 1977), the African, Asian and European guests examined the results of the questionnaire and charged the Austrian Federation with adding the recommendations, advice, opinions and suggestions originating from

1. The Sofia seminar is mentioned several times in the previous chapter.

other sources, in order to prepare a master document to be presented at the first World Congress of UNESCO Clubs.

The Congress took place at the Organization's Headquarters, from 17 to 22 April 1978, under the presidency of Mr NOBURO ITO, Director-General of the Japan Federation. It was financed by the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation, whose generous aid enabled the UNESCO Clubs from approximately 60 countries to meet for the very first time. They examined the Austrian Federation's document, pronounced themselves unanimously in favour of the establishment of an international Federation, and set up a preparatory committee to plan the phases leading to its institution. The Committee included – UNESCO could do no less! – Club leaders from five geographical regions: Mr A. GBEULY TAPÉ (Côte d'Ivoire) and Mr H. MWIRIGI (Kenya) for Africa; Mr A. KHALOUFI (Morocco) and Mr R. BEN SLAMA (Tunisia) for the Arab world; Mr R. RAHMAN (Bangladesh), Mr K. YOSHIDA (Japan), and Ms L. SENORA (Philippines) for Asia; Mr H. STANKA (Austria), Mr J. BENKÉTIRA (France), and Ms I. JANISKOWSKA (Poland) for the European countries; and Mr F. CHAMORRO (Ecuador) and Mr D. CHIRÚ (Panama) for Latin America and the Caribbean. Two women, ten men. A small proportion of women, yet the Executive Boards to come would not improve upon this, and would each name only one, or at best two women, until 1995, when a record **three** women were called upon to become part of the Board of WFUCA!

In its study, the Austrian Federation proposed two structures for the Federation-to-be: the first option consisted of making each UNESCO Club a member of the International Federation, with three organs, patterned on UNESCO's: a General Conference, with only one representative from each country in which UNESCO Clubs exist, each representative having only one vote; an Executive Board, "with a limited number of members"; and a secretariat, in charge of implementing those programmes "recommended by the General Conference and supervised by the Executive Board".

The other option, modelled exactly on the organs of the Federation, proposed that its members be the National Federations, where such exist, "on condition that they include all national Clubs" or, failing that, "any coordinating body or individual Club designated by the Clubs of a given country ... or by a national body".

The issues of active member status, headquarters, and structure would be hotly debated during the meetings of the Preparatory Committee, and subsequently at the World Constitutional Congress of June/July 1981.

The Nipponese Federation hosted the first Committee meeting, which took place in October 1979 in the cities of Tokyo, Tottori (where the National Convention of Japanese Associations convened), and Hiroshima. The African

members of the Committee attracted much curiosity from the Tottori children, none of whom seemed to have ever seen a black African before. So AUGUSTE GBEULY TAPÉ and HENRI MWIRIGI were welcomed with soft, crystalline laughter, gentle touches, surprise blended with affection, and were visibly charmed by this unusual welcome. At Hiroshima, the tone was grave, set by visits to landmarks of devastation, the Bomb Museum, and the Garden of Peace. The ethical role of the UNESCO Clubs became all the more apparent.

Although they took place in a spirit of good humour and conciliation, the discussions were marked by a certain austerity. Three proposals were made for the draft statutes: the AFUCA proposal, prepared during a regional meeting convened in Manila in May 1979; the Austrian Federation's proposal, which resulted from the informal Vienna meeting, responses to the survey, and subsequent additions; and a synthesis of both texts, made by the Ecuadorian and Panamanian members of the Committee, after consultation with their respective Clubs. The draft statutes resulting from the Committee meeting would be published in *Inter-Clubs UNESCO* so that everyone could discuss them in their respective associations.

The second meeting of the Preparatory Committee was just as dry and academic! This time, the subject was financing, and once again, the draft statutes, which needed to be perfected. The statutes were just what the doctor ordered for the jurists present, who plunged into the work wholeheartedly.

Everywhere there can be found drafting fanatics, people who love to put in or take out commas and full stops, replace a weak term by one with more impact, people who adore reviving a particular word or phrase!

Although the objectives of the future International Federation had become unanimous, other provisions of the statutes continued to be the object of differences that were finally ironed out; ideas had time to mature, positions to soften. The admirable environment at Innsbruck (Austria) in those August/September days of 1980, the hospitality of the Austrian Federation, the presence of observers from Japan, Italy, the Federal Republic of Germany, Bangladesh, Tunisia, Panama, and, of course, Austria all contributed to a climate of consensus. The preparatory Committee put the finishing touches to the draft statutes on the eve of the Second World Congress.

Meanwhile, both UNESCO and the Clubs were busy.

The 20th session of the General Conference (Paris, 1978) adopted a draft resolution¹ submitted by Ecuador, inviting the "Director-General and Member States to support the establishment of a World Federation of UNESCO Clubs ...

1. The draft resolution number is 20 C/DR.149 ; the adopted resolution is 20 C/Resolution 6/32.

and to give it all necessary assistance, particularly in the form of voluntary contributions from governmental or private sources.” Unfortunately, this part of the resolution was ignored, for financial reasons, as no country or private donor rushed in to make a contribution! The second paragraph of the resolution was infinitely more effective; it “authorizes the Director-General to use all accumulated profits not required for the sound administration of the Public Liaison Fund to promote the operation of the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations that is being established”. The Public Liaison Fund¹ receives the proceeds from the sale of UNESCO Coupons; they serve to remunerate the personnel administering the Fund in the Office of Public Information and to constitute the budgetary reserve provided for by the Organization’s financial regulations. The remainder is allocated to various Office activities, including those that aim to increase the Member States’ participation in the UNESCO Coupons Programme. Approved nearly three years before the birth of the World Federation, the resolution enabled UNESCO to support all kinds of preparatory work, and to finance the constitutional congress of 1981.

21 C/Resolution 6/04 was adopted by the General Conference at its 21st session (Paris, 1980) and “authorizes the Director General to continue to implement 20 C/Resolution 6/32 so that the World Federation can operate to the best effect, thus ensuring UNESCO the support of young people, men and women from all sociocultural environments”. From the very beginning, the World Federation would be richly endowed and would be off to a strong start.

Three years later, at its 22nd session (Paris, 1983), the General Conference adopted draft resolution DR.353, which was submitted by 53 countries² with respect to the Federation’s action and to clubs. While thanking Member States and the Director-General for their support, the resolution invites them to continue to grant it and to increase it as far as possible.

Since the 1978 World Congress, UNESCO has also striven to raise the Clubs’ interest in the Federation, and the exchanges of views relevant to it. Thus, in the contracts providing for the organization of meetings at all levels, all include a clause stipulating that the agenda must include issues relating to the Federation’s objectives, structure, and programmes.

This was the case in Malta, where the Mediterranean Clubs closely examined the draft statutes; in Senegal, where the Club leaders endeavoured to address

1. This later became the Public Information and Liaison Fund, and is known today as the Public Information Liaison and Relations Fund.

2. The resolution adopted is number 22 C/Resolution 15/9.

the questions: *Why have a World Federation of UNESCO Clubs? And how?* They recommended that the foundations of the coordination structures be strengthened by encouraging the creation of new African National Federations, crowned by a Regional Federation. The Pan-African Conference of UNESCO Clubs (Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, 26 April-1 May 1981) in which four members of the Preparatory Committee took part (Mr BENKÉTIRA, Mr CHAMORRO, Mr YOSHIDA, and, of course, Mr GBEULY TAPÉ) proposed that the long-awaited Federation provide the movement with a World Charter of UNESCO Clubs and Associations. The idea was dusted off and implemented in ... 1995, after several African subregions had prepared a rough draft of an African Charter, examined in Yaoundé by the second Pan-African Conference of UNESCO Clubs.

The fruit of close collaboration between the French Federation of UNESCO Clubs (FFUC) and the Organization, the Second World Congress of Clubs opened on 19 June 1981 in a festive atmosphere. Three hundred participants and observers from seventy countries flocked to UNESCO Headquarters. FEDERICO MAYOR, then Deputy Director-General, inaugurated and closed the Congress. ANDRÉ ZWEYACKER, President of the FFUC, was elected President. Messages poured in, particularly those of the first Pan-African Conference of UNESCO Clubs and the 18th Conference of NGOs.

Three Commissions examined the statutes, budget, headquarters and personnel of the Federation being created; its objectives, aims, and programmes of action; in sum, the inexhaustible subject of "UNESCO and the Clubs". Commission II added two appendices: the first listed the information and documentation tasks that lay ahead for the Federation, while the second addressed a series of recommendations to its Executive Board.

On 3 July, the last day of the Congress, the participants held the elections; KIYOSHI KAZUNO, President of the Nipponese Federation, was, by acclamation, elected President of the *World Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations (WFUCA)*¹, a title around which everyone rallied. The Executive Board included Club personalities.² The role of Secretary-General fell to Mr PIERRE LESUEUR (France), former Club leader, sometime National Delegate of the French Federation, and, for the past few years, member of the Secretariat of the French National Commission. His candidacy was carefully negotiated with that Commission, and his assignment to WFUCA became effective on 1 October 1981. The French Commission, not content with paying the salary of the new Secretary-

1. The terms 'UNESCO' and 'Clubs' are intentionally placed next to each other.

2. See Appendix III for the makeup of the World Federation's Executive Board since 1981.

General and subsequently, ten years later, that of his successor, housed the Secretariat of the World Federation on its own premises until it was transferred to UNESCO Headquarters, and misses no opportunity of declaring itself in favour of the Federation at international meetings.

Such magnanimity is largely due to YVES BRUNSVICK, at the time Secretary-General of the Commission, former collaborator of LOUIS FRANÇOIS, first Secretary-General of the French Federation, and a lifelong supporter of the Clubs. He agreed to let one of his most accomplished collaborators join the new undertaking; for six years, with enthusiasm tempered by discretion, CHRISTIANE DESPRAIRIES was the linchpin of WFUCA, and made a decisive contribution to the edification of this project, giving it a firm and lasting foundation. The award to Yves BRUNSVICK of the distinction of Member of the Honorary Committee of the World Federation at the 1995 Congress was a well-deserved accolade.

Following the World Congress, the Executive Board held a brief meeting during which it was confirmed that the official languages of the Federation would be English, French and Spanish – come wind or high water!

Very soon, the World Federation imposed itself as UNESCO's expert and intimate ally for all issues relating to the Clubs; their promotion, organization, and activities. At the request of UNESCO and of the National Commissions and Clubs concerned, the Secretary-General travelled to Austria, Belgium and Bahrain, and helped Kuwait in its efforts to launch the movement. Members of the Executive Board, together with long-serving leaders, represented the Federation at international UNESCO events such as the MONDIACULT Conference, and regional events such as MINEDAF V (Conference of African Ministers of Education).

Certain Heads of State granted their support: SIXTO TIRSO JUNCO GOMEZ, member of the World Federation's Executive Board, was invited to Costa Rica to attend a seminar/workshop on children's scientific Clubs, and was granted a special audience by the President of the Republic; the President of the Austrian Republic sent a long message to the European Regional Conference organized by the Austrian Federation on aid to the disabled (Mayrhofen, 26-28 October 1981), with the participation of representatives of the Federations and Clubs of ten countries. WFUCA also sponsored many other meetings, both national and international.

The initial results of the second meeting of the Executive Board, held at Hammamet (Tunisia) in April 1982, and opened by the host country's Minister of Education, inspired optimism. Eighteen applications for membership were accepted; the responses to the general information survey launched early in 1982 were analysed, showing that the Clubs largely agreed on certain major aims that

they wished WFUCA to adopt: peace and disarmament, human rights, development, and North-South relations.

An earlier meeting which was jointly financed and organized by WFUCA, UNESCO, and the Senegalese Federation was discussed at length: the Seminar of West African UNESCO Clubs enabled leaders of the subregion to agree on the conditions for their participation in the fight against illiteracy.

One year later, a similar meeting in Quito (Ecuador), also based on a triple partnership, brought together representatives of UNESCO Clubs and youth movements from fourteen Latin American and Caribbean countries working to promote literacy. This was the very first meeting of Clubs in the region. It examined the reinforcement and diversification of the Clubs, the contribution that young people could make to a new information order with respect to literacy, post-literacy and social advancement.

And then the Europeans made another move! Faithful to their guidelines on promoting the reading habit, the Italian Federation planned a second European meeting under the auspices of the World Federation. On the subject, "Towards a Reading Society", this meeting commemorated the tenth anniversary of the International Book Year, and brought leaders from fourteen countries to Florence in December 1982. In addition to Bulgaria, which had previously been present in Mayrhofen, Poland, Ukraine and Yugoslavia dispatched leaders of UNESCO Clubs. This auspicious enlargement cleared the way for a stronger, though still tentative, participation by the few Clubs in Eastern and Central Europe.

The UNESCO Club of Barcelona and UNESCO's other Catalan friends, discussed the problem of the status of an active member of WFUCA during the 3rd session of the Executive Board, which they had invited to meet in their city in April 1983. They had trouble in agreeing, or rather, they did not agree at all that such status should be restricted to the following organizations: "providing that they are national in scope, the Federations or Confederations of UNESCO Clubs, Centres, and Associations, where they exist, or, in the event that they do not exist in a given country, any coordinating body of UNESCO Clubs, Centres, and Associations, or, failing that, a UNESCO Club, Centre, or Association duly recommended by the UNESCO National Commission for that country, it being understood that only one Federation or coordinating body, Association or Club, or Centre for any country, whichever it may be, may be admitted as an active member".¹ In their view, this item of the statutes ruled out direct access to the Federation on the part of highly experienced Clubs whose members were widely respected personalities

1. Article 3 of the Statutes of the World Federation.

having expressed their support for the UNESCO ethic. In addition, it was paradoxical that Catalonia, whose age-old culture was recognized by its autonomous status within Spain, which it recovered in 1979 after the dark age of Franco, could not be a full-fledged member of a Federation that it had supported and encouraged from the beginning. From their point of view, to be credible, the World Federation must encompass the cultural values of all peoples, otherwise it might fall into the trap of the formality found in intergovernmental organizations, and might endanger its precious non-governmental status.

This episode did not end with the decision by the Executive Board to keep to the statutes approved by the Constitutional Congress of the World Federation.

The wound remained open and the debate boiled up again a dozen years later at the Extraordinary Assembly which immediately preceded the Statutory World Congress of Sinaia (Romania) with the examination of a draft amendment¹ to the statutes introduced by the Spanish Confederation; this draft reflected the aspirations of the Catalans. But, once more, the delegates postponed the proposed reform; to them, the Spanish claim – however legitimate it might be within a Spanish framework – could have incalculable consequences if it were entered into the statutes: exacerbation of confrontations within States torn by domestic, particularly ethnic, tension and conflict; weakening of National Federations; opening the way for rivalries, personal ambitions, separatism, and unwise aberrations on which no one would be in a position to arbitrate.

The courteous but firm skirmishing around the statutes did not tarnish the 3rd session of the Executive Board, which paid tribute to JOAN MIRÓ on his 90th birthday and proclaimed him the first honorary member of the World Federation. Tribute was also paid to SIMÓN BOLÍVAR on the bicentenary of his birth. The Board also determined the distribution of responsibilities between WFUCA and UNESCO as regards requests for financial assistance; and the Board examined the important document² on complementarity between UNESCO Clubs and Associated Schools, the World Federation's first in-depth study in this area.

The Federation then turned to those of its members whose needs seemed most urgent. The Executive Board at its 2nd session had upheld the principle of special intervention for Federations experiencing a particularly difficult situation.

1. The aim of the amendment was to add the following phrase to Article 3 of the Statutes : "This criterion will not be taken into account where its application would discriminate against an internationally recognized nationality or culture with its own specific language".

2. The document is almost entirely due to the French Federation.

This principle had a practical application with the acceptance of a project from the Chad Federation, for the building of a school and accommodation for the schoolmaster in the rural district of Farcha Attère; the building work went smoothly and the school, named “Peace in the World”, opened its doors at the beginning of the 1983-1984 school year. At the same time, the Federation convened an interregional seminar in Bobo Dioulasso (Upper Volta)¹ on the UNESCO Clubs’ work in favour of cooperation for development; it set up a confident dialogue between the Africans and Europeans involved. Realistic and precise conclusions became apparent and were later the subject of a publication useful to the Clubs of the world doing similar work.

The Federation was working towards a grand event indeed, its first statutory World Congress! Three hundred delegates and observers from 75 countries attended. It must be said that President KAZUNO and the Nipponese Federation were exceptionally generous in financing the travel costs of one participant per WFUCA member country. As may easily be imagined, there were many instances of late payment of dues, last-minute applications, and so forth. To be meeting in Japan, birthplace of the movement, and participating in a Congress taking place in three different locations and in three successive phases; to learn that the World Federation had obtained UNESCO “Category B Status”² after only three years of activity and without going through the purgatory of Category C: these were cause for celebration. What was more, the Director-General of UNESCO, AMADOU-MAHTAR M’BOW, would be there.

The 1984 Congress was inaugurated with solemnity in the city of Sendai, where it was held from 16 to 19 July. Did the venue inspire the speakers? Their words have the ring of history! Mr M’BOW said, “The UNESCO Clubs were born out of a generous blending of independent wills ... around them and beyond the specificities unique to each society and the personal aspirations of each individual, ... UNESCO Clubs and Associations foster the birth of a feeling of a common destiny for the entire human species. The many contacts they establish between peoples, by transcending geographical, religious, or ideological borders, have given them a scope thanks to which the World Federation could be created ...”

1. Upper Volta became Burkina Faso in 1984.

2. The “Directives concerning UNESCO relations with non-governmental organizations” were approved by the General Conference at its 11th session, and remained in force until 1995. Those relations were of three types: Mutual Information Relations (category C), Informational and Consultative Relations (category B), and Consultative and Associate Relations (category A).

ANDRÉ ZWEYACKER echoed this as he opened the Congress before he gave way to his successor, KIYOSHI KAZUNO, saying “the UNESCO Clubs and Associations are richly diverse, and their common denominator is the reference to UNESCO. This supremely ethical reference must be accompanied by a reference to methods and programmes. It is on the basis of a precise analysis of the world situation that the Organization has defined its missions, which have culminated in the implementation of programmes. This is how it must be in our own work, where constant association of thought and action is the only guarantee that the Clubs will not sink into institutionalism and dogmatic rigidity.”

The Sendai session took place in the period of preparations for International Youth Year, celebrated in 1985, under the triple slogan, “participation, development, peace”, which the World Federation meant to make the focal point of its work.

On 19 July, in the presence of hundreds of members of Japanese associations convened on the occasion of their 40th National Convention, the 37th anniversary of the UNESCO Movement was commemorated. The Mayor of Sendai’s words were unforgettable: “Thirty-seven years ago, Japan, wounded in its vitality and its soul, exhausted by war, was just beginning to rise up from its ruins. The UNESCO Association of Sendai came from the idealism and cooperation of the city’s eminent minds, animated by a common desire for peace. We would like to express our respect for the Sendai pioneers, who, pursuing lofty ideals, formed the project of founding the first UNESCO Association in the world, and who had the energy to carry it out”. The grandeur of these simple words stirred everyone’s heart.

A statue by the prestigious Japanese sculptor CHURYO SATO, *The young girl in boots*, was unveiled in celebration of the event. Since then, it has graced the Sendai park, casting at passers-by its quizzical glance, whose brilliance is accentuated by the enigmatic and rebellious expression of its delicate face. The gift of a life-sized replica of the *The young girl in boots* was given to UNESCO, and now stands in one of the patios of the Headquarters building in the Rue Miollis, in Paris, and contemplates the rhododendrons that bloom around it with the same mischievous look.

The participants read, in the World Federation’s three languages, the Sendai Appeal, in which they renewed their commitment to serve the Organization: “Inspired by the UNESCO ideal, founded at the end of the Second World War, the representatives of the world movement of UNESCO Associations and Clubs have returned to their source – green Sendai. They solemnly reaffirm their commitment to the cause of peace through cooperation and solidarity, and express their determination to broaden the scope of their action, and to make themselves heard as a non-governmental organization, so that international understanding, the only guarantee of peace, may triumph.”

Those attending the Congress then split into small groups to travel to different destinations where they would effect “field studies”. This was an opportunity for them to delve more deeply into life in the host country, to meet members of Japanese associations on the spot, and to be welcomed into homes to stay with families, giving rise to a store of vivid memories, despite the short time available.

And it was in Tokyo that the great assembly took place, for the last phase of the Congress: the adoption of the final report, and elections. Electoral fever took hold, and almost spoiled the last few days – or rather, the last few nights, which were taken up with secret meetings, conspiracies, alliances and reversals of fortune. “Electoral groups” met until dawn; no one wanted to give in, and if the fate of the world had depended on the outcome of the vote, the candidates could not have worn more serious expressions. President KAZUNO contemplated these goings-on with Olympian calm tinged with that subtle humour, kindness with a ready smile, which made him beloved by all. He did not run for another term; the Congress named him Honorary President of WFUCA, a title with which this man, on whom age and the successes of a long and brilliant career had conferred an unshakeable serenity, was content.

The new candidate for the presidency, GONZALO ABAD GRIJALVA, of Ecuador, held a long list of international titles. In particular, he was a former UNESCO senior official, Ambassador to the Organization, member of its Executive Board, and President of the Group of 77.¹

His experience in international affairs, his three languages, his outgoing personality, his humanity and his quick mind, and the determination in his steel-blue eyes, won him the election. PIERRE LESUEUR, with a perfect track record, and who had given WFUCA its initial impetus, was re-elected Secretary-General. The Congress designated Mr A. ISTATIYA (Kuwait) Treasurer of the World Federation.

A blend of long-standing and more recent leaders, a wise mixture of thoughtful experience and new-broom enthusiasm, the new Board² went to Kyoto for its first encounter. Its members could not resist the charming novelty of a Japanese hotel, in which the rooms looked like dormitories at night and parlours in the daytime. Bathrooms? They, too, were communal, for men and women separately. But while the men could lounge in what amounted to a swimming pool,

1. Set up in 1964 within the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and originally including 77 Member States for the defence of the interests of the South; since then, membership has been extended to include most developing countries.

2. See Annex III.

the women, after the initial scrub, had to content themselves with a tub so small they could not immerse themselves fully. So naturally, the temptation of a bathe in a large pool was great: one woman stood guard while the others took over the men's bath!

On the first morning, both men and women turned up their noses at the traditional breakfast; the next day, the discreet hostesses served a very continental breakfast more in line with the early morning tastes of the assembly. And every last grave member of the Board tucked into breakfast dressed in the hotel *yukatas*.¹ They sat, Japanese-style, on the floor, before low tables, doing their best to tuck in their feet; some had them to one side, others placed their feet carefully in front of them – but none could remain seated for hours at a stretch on their knees, as would any normal Japanese person.

Several members of the Nipponese Federation and two or three “Counsellors” attended the meeting as observers. The Secretary-General gradually surrounded himself with a group of leaders of a range of Clubs, and distinguished friends of those Clubs who were willing to work for them. The objective? To diversify the sources of information, and to take different points of view into account. The Counsellors in no way competed with the members of the Executive Board, since they had no decision-making powers, but they did play an important operational role. This flexible and effective approach became official at the Second Congress of the Federation, which introduced it into the statutes and the rules of procedure.

1. A light summer kimono made of cotton, usually with a dark blue pattern on a white fabric.

The World Federation

Maturity

The major innovation stemming from the Japanese Congress was the implementation of the *Centre for Research, Studies, and Training in International Understanding and Cooperation*, with its unpronounceable acronym, “CERFCI”. The Centre answered a twofold need: the training of Club leaders, an ongoing and almost insurmountable problem, in the light of the extent of the need; and the need to provide that training in a spirit of peace and fraternity, the hallmark of UNESCO Clubs. The Centre had no set home, no structure. It was an idea, a technique to be invented at will, case by case, and its applications were numerous. It could take the form of a training course on one or more aspects of leadership, or a technique to be developed in a workshop; it could also take the form of a study session at UNESCO Headquarters, a field unit, or one of the Organization’s projects; or it could take the shape of a seminar on the occasion of a session of the General Conference, an intergovernmental conference, or some other major congress.

The very first activity organized under the aegis of the Centre illustrated this: it was a training course for youth leaders (16 participated), entitled “New Ways of Presenting and Interpreting Information”, which set out to find a new type of relationship with the media and a new, active training method. It took place at UNESCO and at a community venue where the participants were housed. The moderators were UNESCO specialists, representatives of Inter Press Service (IPS) for the Third World, the International Catholic Centre for UNESCO (CCIC) and the Pan-African News Agency (PANA), created with the Organization’s support.

Information was central to another CERFCI workshop some eighteen months later, during the Second Pan-African Conference of UNESCO Clubs (Yaoundé, Cameroon – December 1986). This time the workshop, on “Youth Leaders and the Media”, was led by the Yaoundé Ecole Supérieure des Sciences et

des Techniques de l'Information (ESSTI) (Higher School of Science and Information Technology).

To return to the origins of the Centre, its second activity, the seminar, "Understanding UNESCO and Life at the International Level" was held in Barcelona, prior to the World Congress on Youth and central to its work. Its broad participation included 83 people from 34 countries, representing all the regions: UNESCO Club leaders, students from Associated Schools, members of NGOs and friends of the World Federation. The participants prepared for the Conference by discussing the themes and their implications; during the meeting, they broke up into working groups, and every night, jointly summarized the day's work. They also prepared exhibitions, and generated a lively atmosphere.

The expression, "Understanding UNESCO and Life at the International Level", was very attractive. The leaders of the Bulgarian Clubs asked the World Federation to prepare a seminar on this theme during the 23rd session of the UNESCO General Conference, which was to take place in Sofia in the autumn of 1985. Twenty-six Bulgarians took part; UNESCO's Director-General, and the President of the World Federation came to engage in dialogue with them.

It takes a great deal of audacity to organize a CERFCI operation in the middle of a General Conference! And the World Federation, which is by no means short of audacity, was a "repeat offender" four years later, in Paris. Thirty-five participants of UNESCO Clubs and Associated Schools from 25 countries met at Headquarters to immerse themselves in the work of the 25th session, and to continue UNESCO's work in two key areas: literacy, and the safeguarding of culture and the environment. The most senior participant was by no means the least diligent; KOICHI UEDA, always on time, always present, was a touching sight, painstakingly filling a school notebook with notes. The Director-General, FEDERICO MAYOR, made a point of meeting the group despite the rigours of his tight schedule. He exchanged views with participants, and, fired by their enthusiasm, exclaimed, "You are paths of light!". He decorated KOICHI UEDA with the medal UNESCO had minted in commemoration of its thirtieth anniversary, a moment of deep emotion for the founder of the movement, who received this honour with his customary humility.

One year earlier, another CERFCI seminar had been an extension of a joint UNESCO/World Federation activity, when it organized an Open Day on Youth and Human Rights on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. More than 400 members of UNESCO Clubs and children from Associated Schools from 30 countries came to Headquarters for this memorable event, in which Professor JOHN HUMPHREY,

one of the last drafters of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights still alive, participated. Young people could choose to attend round tables to discuss heritage, migration, or communication, or to engage in creative activities such as making posters, composing songs or writing poems, which would be presented at the arts evening which crowned the seminar. One minute's silence was observed for the freeing of NELSON MANDELA, who had been incarcerated since 1964. On the following two days, fifty Club representatives participated in the CERFCI Seminar on Youth and Human Rights, in which they were called upon to assess the Open Day, on the basis of a questionnaire provided by the World Federation. Of course, all the discussions at the Seminar had to do with Human Rights and UNESCO and Club action. A document entitled "Three Days for Human Rights" in the WFUCA Confluences series recorded this initiative for posterity.

Since the beginning of its work, the World Federation had associated itself with the Collective Consultation of NGOs on literacy, designed to prepare for the International Literacy Year in 1990. It played an active role in the first three sessions of the Consultation at Headquarters, and proposed that one of these sessions should take place outside Headquarters, in a region where the problems of illiteracy were extremely grave. The proposal was favourably received, and UNESCO mandated the World Federation to organize the fourth Consultation in Bangkok, in close collaboration with the above-mentioned Coordinating Committee for the International Voluntary Service,¹ another particularly active NGO. The session was scheduled for December 1987, and a CERFCI training seminar was to take place concurrently, in collaboration with the Thai member of the Federation, the Centre for International Understanding. The seminar was intended for the Consultation participants, representatives of Thai Clubs and members of Clubs in other Asian countries working to eradicate illiteracy.

Here the zigzag journey through the land of CERFCI ended, with the selection of some of its most outstanding accomplishments. There is no need to accumulate examples to prove that the Centre has been capable of responding to many different demands, dealing with vital Club issues, handling groups of different sizes, origins, and interests, and, every time, opting for the most appropriate solution.

The World Federation once again joined UNESCO in celebrating the Organization's 40th anniversary. The Open Day of 4 November 1986 drew three hundred people, from forty countries. They spread through Headquarters, debating and working on three very attractive general themes: "UNESCO and

1. See page 5.

Us”, “We and UNESCO”, and “UNESCO is ours”. This last theme led them to make the Organization their own! To the tune of “UNESCO is a museum”, they discovered the many works of art gracing the Headquarters building. The theme, “UNESCO is a hotbed of human resources” invited them to talk to the members of the Secretariat, going from one office to another; while thanks to “UNESCO, research centre”, they familiarized themselves with the library, the bookshop, the press room, the archives, the computer services, etc.

In May 1987, the Federation achieved UNESCO Category “A” status (Consultative and Associate Relations).¹ Without a doubt, it was the first NGO to move so quickly up the ladder towards the Organization. Beyond the honour inherent in such rapid progression to Category A, in which there are only a small number of NGOs, all of which are older than it, the new status entitled WFUCA to a regular subvention, starting with the 1990-1991 budgetary period. During the previous two biennia, AMADOU-MAHTAR M’BOW and FEDERICO MAYOR had financed the Federation from extra-budgetary funds; however, those allocations had nothing to do with the amounts previously granted under the Public Liaison Fund. But the resolution of the 20th session of the General Conference proved itself a doubled-edged sword; although, for a few years, it provided the World Federation with enviable resources, it attracted attention to the Fund and excited jealousy. The result was that the gains, which had come to be used to fund all sorts of new projects, inevitably melted away – and so did UNESCO aid to WFUCA. The subvention itself comes from the Organization’s regular programme,² and is not very large.

At the beginning of that month of May 1987, the World Federation organized an international seminar in Varna (Bulgaria) on a theme which had been close to its heart for a long time: complementarity between UNESCO Clubs and Associated Schools. The meeting involved close collaboration between the World Federation, which initiated the project, and the Ministry of Education and the National Commission of the host country, which was not chosen by chance. After all, had not Bulgaria been the source of inspiration for the resolutions on the joint role of Clubs and schools in international education, approved by the General Conference at its 22nd and 23rd sessions? Once again, the institutions are what people make of them! At the root of the will for UNESCO Clubs and Associated Schools to come together were two remarkable women, PANKA BABOUKOVA, Deputy Minister of Education, and ZINOVIA TRIFONOVA, coordinator of her country’s Associated Schools, otherwise known as, “Ms UNESCO”, for her

1. See note 2 on page 117.

2. The regular programme is funded by contributions from Member States.

passionate commitment to the Organization. Both played a decisive role in the organization in Sofia, in 1983, of the first World Congress of Associated Schools in which the Federation closely cooperated.

ZINOVIA TRIFONOVA was the ideal person to preside over the Varna Seminar, in which only fifteen people participated – a small, hand-picked group representing the five geographical regions. The agenda was full, including: an analysis of the recent experiences of Clubs and schools; the role of their leaders, examined in the light of their training and the coordination of their action; the mission for Clubs and schools with respect to information on UNESCO; and, finally, the broad outline of an action plan for both movements in the scope of the World Decade for Cultural Development. A few days, and almost as many nights, of intense work produced pertinent conclusions which are still relevant today.

The World Federation crowned its work on complementarity and its constant injunctions that Clubs and schools work together with the publication of the booklet *Together, we can* the following year. Collaboration with UNESCO on the conception and preparation of the booklet was symbiotic in every way. The Organization took responsibility for publishing the elegant little book, which retraces the many activities, by stressing the identity of the objectives pursued by both movements – which are also those of UNESCO itself – while highlighting the sometimes notable differences in approach, as summarized by the chart *Parallel Roads*, inserted in the text.

And then the Federation found itself facing its second statutory Congress. At the invitation of the Spanish Confederation and National Commission, the Congress took place in Madrid in July 1987. It was preceded by three events: a Latin American seminar – another of CERFCI's activities – cosponsored by the Organization of American States; a meeting of the WFUCA Executive Board; an extraordinary session of the World Congress, at which several amendments to the statutes were approved. Thus, it was decided that the World Congress would in future be held every four years, instead of every three years, as initially provided by the statutes: since the participants were responsible for their travel costs, it was deemed better to space the sessions farther apart, so as to allow the Federations and Clubs the necessary time to obtain the funds needed for their delegates' travel costs. Another important change was the addition of "UNESCO Centres" to the Federation's name, in order to take account of their increasing number and importance. The Federation thus became the "World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations", without changing its acronym, "WFUCA".

The Congress itself opened with a warm message from Queen SOFIA. The World Decade for Cultural Development dominated the discussion, which began

with a round table on the cultural dimension of development. As the days passed, a programme plan took shape, implemented by the World Federation. Then came the irritating moment of elections – irritating, because the participants had not cooled off since Tokyo. There were the same seductive appeals by candidates; the same never-ending, all-night discussions; the same more or less diplomatically worded challenges. Only PIERRE LESUEUR remained impassive; until the last moment, not even those close to him could solve the enigma of whether or not he would run for a third term? The suspense built up until his candidacy appeared with those standing as candidates for the Executive Board! Both President and Secretary-General were re-elected. The sensitive post of Treasurer was assigned to Mr N. SAGARA (Japan); several of those elected to the Executive Board in Japan were re-elected with promotion!¹ Whew! With the elections over with for the next four years, people found themselves glad that now there were four years between sessions of the World Congress, which would give them time to recover from the trauma of elections!

On the proposal of the session of the Executive Board which preceded the Congress, the latter approved the constitution of a WFUCA Honorary Committee, made up of persons of distinction from five regions deserving of Clubs, and approved the names put forward by the Secretariat; it received the list of the fifteen Federation Counsellors, each of whom was a highly experienced leader who had contributed greatly to it.

Just as the Japan Congress gave birth to CERFCI, the Madrid Congress engendered “Friends of the World Treasures” (FWT), designed to embody the World Federation’s involvement in the World Decade for Cultural Development. The project sought to create a broadly international network that would foster the participation of all types of people in cultural development, awareness and understanding of the rich tapestry of cultural identities. The methods were simple: personalized cards, comparable in appearance to credit cards, would be sold by “distributors”, whether UNESCO Clubs, public or private institutions, or individuals. UNESCO Clubs would be responsible for launching local operations, by selecting a “treasure” to be preserved or restored in their area. Purchasers of cards could support this “treasure”, or another one of their choice, to which would go a high proportion of the amount on the card, with the remainder allocated to the distributor. An FWT magazine, produced by the WFUCA secretariat, would provide information on the progress of safeguarding or restoration work on a regular basis, and would serve as a liaison bulletin for all of the Friends.

1. See Annex III.

The very first pilot operation concerned the creation of a Ceremonial Dance Academy in the city of Abomey, Benin, in ancient times the capital of the Kingdom of Dan-Homé, and site of the Abomey palaces. In fact, in 1989, the 10th session of the Federation's Executive Board convened in Porto Novo (Benin), approved these guidelines and examined three other projects submitted by members of the WFUCA, all refreshingly original: saving the little train in Pelion, Greece; the ritual dances of the Abagos and Yumbos, indigenous communities in Ecuador; and the preservation of the Island of Formentera in Spain. Special prominence was given to the project concerning the ceremonial dances of the Kingdom of Dan-Homé, in the private palace of King GBÉHANZIN, and the members of the Board spent a day in Abomey to visit the site.

In January of the following year, the Formentera UNESCO Club organized study days under the auspices of FWT in order to raise awareness of the irreparable damage that real estate development had wreaked on the ecosystem of the Balearic islands.

But with the exception of a few isolated initiatives, the FWT programme did not really take off. The UNESCO Clubs seemed to lose interest, the expected bulletin was never issued, and disenchantment set in.

On the whole, the World Federation experienced a bleak time, largely due to the dwindling of UNESCO funding, which was not offset by any search for alternative funding, and to a lassitude that stood in contrast to the movement's extraordinary boom in several areas of the world.

At times, encouraging signs seemed to signal a revival; the Federation published under the title, "Pulling Together – To Do Better: a Guide to UNESCO's Medium-term Plan for 1990-1995". It was an immediate success, comparable to that achieved six years earlier with the publication of *UNESCO in the 1980s – Multiplying Action* based on the previous Plan. The two publications, penned with the same inspiration – that of an eminent member of the Secretariat of the French Commission, it was whispered in the corridors – displayed the same clarity of language and clarity of approach, and included the many suggestions for Club action. It became preferred reading for many Secretaries-General of National Commissions on the eve of a session of the General Conference, and piles of the white-covered copies were to be seen on the delegates' tables at various sessions.

Another cause for hope was that WFUCA became the leader of a vast project to be carried out in conjunction with five other youth NGOs to promote the training of youth leader trainers at international level. The decision was taken at the Consultation with youth NGOs in Dagomys (Soviet Union) in September 1989. The project's aim was to establish guidelines for a training module that could

be adapted to different regions and situations. It was the CERFCI's experience that incited the NGOs to unite under the WFUCA's prestigious banner.

Finally, from Madrid, PIERRE LESUEUR acquired a distinguished collaborator in the person of PATRICK GALLAUD (France), bubbling over with ideas, and chafing at the bit. His time to shine would come a little later on.

It was nevertheless without creative exaltation that the World Federation started on the last lap before its third statutory Congress in July 1991, in Dakar. The Senegalese Federation had worked hard to prepare the event, which attracted 150 people from only 40 countries; the distance, and the costly travel expenses were a deterrent to many, and the vast majority of participants came, as might be expected, from other African countries. Certain regions were represented by only one or two people whose votes would not weigh heavily in the balance at the feared time of elections, where the acclaimed Congress "of the decade" and, "of renewal" would find itself on a collision course.

The President of the host Federation, COUMBA NDOFFÈNE BOUNA DIOUF, who was a minister in his country's Government, and his Secretary-General, MAMADOU DICKO, a United Nations expert, spared no effort and drew on their experience of many years in leading a young, dynamic and united team.

The work got off to a good start, with an excellent round table discussion on the subject of development and democracy, with top speakers such as former UNESCO Director-General AMADOU-MAHTAR M'BOW, who attended in the capacity of neighbour and friend of the Clubs, which he had always supported throughout his terms of office. The working groups conscientiously discussed subjects related to the immediate concerns of many Club members: "Education for All", including literacy programmes, youth action, a revival of the "Friends of the World Treasures" programme, environmental protection, and environmental education, the promotion and protection of human rights and children's rights, AIDS prevention and the fight against drugs. A morning devoted to the theme, *Three hundred years ago, the Code Noir – Five hundred years ago, the Encounter between Two Worlds*,¹ gave rise to quality exchanges and communications in the poignant setting of the Island of Gorée, which a few years earlier had housed the international seminar of the Senegalese Federation on the *Code Noir*, and which is included in UNESCO's World Heritage List.

1. In qualifying the discovery of the Americas, the *Encounter between Two Worlds*, UNESCO accords this historic event its universal significance, and draws predominantly cultural and sociological conclusions.

The Congress delegates showed maturity in the run-up to elections where, for once, each regional group agreed in advance on its candidates. The memory of feverish nights and, barely veiled hostility faded. The Japanese and Spanish fray seemed so remote! But dissent soon arose around two posts concerning which the excitement reached fever pitch. Few organizations, it is true, of whatever type, escape similar difficulties, each candidate thinking him or herself better than any other to fill a post of responsibility on which the short-term future of the community depends. At the very least, these throes of electoral passion illustrate the importance that the delegates attach to their movement, and their eagerness to serve it!

PAUL AKOTO YAO, former Ivorian Minister of Education, former member of UNESCO's Executive Board, succeeded GONZALO ABAD GRIJALVA, who was not a candidate. PATRICK GALLAUD became Secretary-General after PIERRE LESUEUR decided to pass the torch after serving ten years. Mr J-P. DEHOUCK (Belgium) became Treasurer of WFUCA. There were few "old-timers" on the Executive Board,¹ but among the newly elected there were experienced leaders whose presence was, for the WFUCA a guarantee of effectiveness.

In the aftermath of the Congress, problems arose: funds had run dry, and the secretariat personnel had scattered. PATRICK GALLAUD needed a strong dose of combativeness to straighten the helm and head the World Federation towards calmer waters. The answer? Reorganize the secretariat, and encourage the concrete action expected by the Clubs, which continued to believe in the Federation and to expect it to provide constructive support for their work.

1. See Annex III.

The World Federation

Objective: the Third Millennium

“Change with continuity” is the phrase often used to describe the UNESCO programme which evolves as the world changes, while remaining faithful to the objectives of its Constitution.

The same slogan could be applied to the World Federation. It succeeded in drawing from the Dakar Congress the lessons that would allow it to move ahead without renouncing the objectives assigned to it by its founders, nor the choices legitimized by ten years of experience.

The need now was to give the Clubs of the five continents a feeling of belonging to a movement which claimed to represent UNESCO, since they all bore its name; yet most of the time they worked in isolation from one another, without a sufficiently strong vision of their common root in a universal ideal, or the convergence of their efforts towards a single goal.

“Mobilize” had become the watchword of WFUCA. Mobilize around UNESCO achievements that the Club members – especially young people- could adopt and adapt. It was necessary to forget the popular warlike connotation of the term, “mobilize”, which might seem out of place when used with reference to organizations devoted to peace, and to remember the linguistic origin of the word – “to move” with united strength and will.

It was in response to this imperative that a trilogy of interregional events was scheduled to mix Club youth, “mobilized” by major programmes of the Organization, which they could continue to implement at their own level, in a national or even local context, while respecting distinctive identities.

Each year from 1992 to 1994 saw a meeting which gave Clubs in various geographical regions the opportunity to give fresh impetus to their respective initiatives by exchanges of experience in a flexible and informal framework.

The 1992 World Fair, “Expo 92”, which took place in Seville, was the occasion of a meeting of 80 Club representatives from four regions (Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe). The visit to the pavilions, including the United Nations and UNESCO pavilions, and the passionate discussions with members of the Secretariat of the Organization, led to a general debate on North-South disparities, and the complexity of the new East-West relations engendered by the decisive changes which had taken place in Europe in the key years of the early 1990s; in sum, the debates were an invitation to action.

A Summer University was the rallying point in 1993 for some 60 Club leaders and members, for a Mediterranean meeting set in Tunis, in preparation for the International Year of the Family. “The family and the culture of youth”, was the discussion topic for the participants, who examined specific issues, such as the culture of youth and the role of the family, youth interaction, family and democracy; their discussions led once more to the formulation of specific projects.

The meeting “UNESCO Clubs in Action” brought approximately one hundred participants to Moscow, who, after joint working meetings, divided into three: the city of Novgorod, which dates back to the ninth century, for cultural heritage; Stupino, where environmental problems predominated; while in Maikop, the capital of the autonomous regions of the Adygel, human rights and the culture of peace were on the agenda.

Perhaps even more than the two other interregional operations mentioned, the one in Russia revitalized the Clubs in existence there, which was an accessory but by no means negligible aim of these seminars: In Novgorod, the project of a restoration site took shape; in Maikop, that of a human rights training workshop was outlined.

The World Federation training programmes were no longer placed under the auspices of CERFCI, of which the National Federations and Clubs had never fully realized the significance and impact, since none had taken advantage of the immense possibilities that it stood for. These programmes continued and sought to renew their content.

Two workshops on “understanding UNESCO and international life” offered training modules to some 30 leaders each, on the eve of the Youth Days held at Headquarters. In December 1992, the Youth Day on Human Rights and the Environment,¹ which involved 300 people from 30 countries, was preceded by a workshop in which the participants were able to update their UNESCO culture by meeting a dozen programme heads from the Organization as a source of club

1. Organized jointly by UNESCO, the World Federation and the French Federation.

inspiration. The same format was adopted four years later, as a prelude to the celebration on 4 November 1996¹ of UNESCO's fiftieth anniversary, as mentioned earlier.

It is true that convening a handful of leaders at a time cannot suffice to solve the immense problem of training. But the scope of these initiatives went beyond their apparent limitations. There were two underlying concerns: first, to give participants the educational tools and documentation necessary for them to organize similar activities in their home countries or subregions, and second, to lay the foundations of a training plan at the regional level that the World Federation hoped to implement as soon as it had the necessary people, equipment and funds at its disposal.

The Brasov (Romania) Seminar, in March 1992, was similar to the training workshops held at Headquarters, but with important subtle differences. Representation was narrower but, more focused, than it had been at the Paris workshops, with Club leaders coming exclusively from Central and Eastern European countries: Romania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Republic of Moldova,² Poland, Czechoslovakia³ and Ukraine. In addition, the seminar concentrated on the methodology of internationally-oriented leadership, using techniques such as simulation games, group dynamics, case studies, group creativity, etc. The idea was to provide the leaders of NGOs in nascent democracies with the working tools necessary to lead their fledgling organizations in a voluntary sector in search of an identity.

This time, lastly, the World Federation was not the only lend contractor in this affair: UNESCO also delegated responsibility to two other NGOs.

Thus, the Federation's pre-eminent role among youth NGOs with ties to the Organization that had begun several years earlier in Dagomys was confirmed. At the Beijing meeting, convened in November 1992, WFUCA was elected to the presidency of the Collective Consultation of Youth NGOs. Even before its place among great NGOs was officially confirmed, UNESCO placed the World Federation in the vanguard of the first African Collective Consultation of Youth NGOs, convened by the Burkina Faso Federation in Ougadougou in the presence of 60 representatives of some fifteen regional organizations. The role of young people and youth NGOs in the development process was at the heart of the Consultation's work, which examined, among other things, inter-youth solidarity in a South African society freed from apartheid.

1. Organized by the World Federation with UNESCO's support.

2. Croatia and the Republic of Moldova became independent in 1992.

3. On 1 January 1993, the country split into two States, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

The ball was rolling, WFUCA was actively preparing for the world meeting of the Collective Consultation of Youth NGOs to take place in Jambville (France, November 1993). In close collaboration with the World Scout Bureau, it also organized the second Collective Consultation of African Youth NGOs in Nairobi, in December 1993 to January 1994. The subject of discussion, which was a hot topic for the region, was street children, and it resulted in the elaboration of specific projects to be implemented by African NGOs separately or together. The Third African Collective Consultation took place in Lomé, in December 1996. Forty-five delegates from UNESCO Clubs and NGOs from 17 countries discussed “African youth meets the challenges of the third Millennium”. They approved a regional action plan including items for further debate and a programme of activities.

WFUCA’s record was graced by two successive elections (1992 and 1994) to the Standing Committee of NGOs cooperating with UNESCO, proving how much it was appreciated by its peers.

In 1995, the General Conference at its 28th session adopted new directives to harmonize UNESCO-NGO relations with the changes, often fundamental, that had taken place in the lives of these NGOs, and to foster the emergence of new partnerships with other NGOs developing in Southern-hemisphere countries and Eastern and Central European Countries. The new type of Directives envisaged two types of relations, *formal* relations, which themselves include “consultative” and “associate” relations, and *operational* relations, which allow for “flexible and dynamic” collaboration with an unlimited number of NGOs, and may lead to the establishment of formal arrangements. Recognized as an umbrella organization, the World Federation was admitted by the Executive Board of UNESCO at its 149th session (April 1996) into the category of “associate” relations, an inner circle housing only a dozen NGOs. Is there any more convincing proof of the importance that UNESCO attaches to collaboration with WFUCA? And even the subvention, which previously had been paid annually, was now replaced by ad hoc contracts.

But what had happened to “Friends of the World Treasures” (FWT)? Although the Dakar Congress recommended that it continue, its foundations remained weak. In May 1993, the Italian Club of Padua hosted an international seminar which was itself entitled “Friends of the World Treasures”. An exhibition convening 1,200m≈ on the premises of the former city slaughterhouse showed FWT operations under way. The participants were subsequently able to visit the mine site of the Imperina Valley, classified as a “World Treasure” one year previously, the better to become imbued with the spirit of the network, which above all aimed to increase awareness among the local people, while alerting the world community.

At the end of the seminar, the new Federation team decentralized the secretariat of the FWT programme to the Paduan Club, which made its reputation by ensuring the meeting's success and by working, together with a group of collective organizations and militant ecologists, to save the former slaughterhouse, outbuildings and two-hectare park as an outstanding example of industrial architecture.

Thus revived, the FWT was part of a much larger Federation programme aimed at preserving our cultural and natural heritage. Its implementation relied on the UNESCO Secretariat units involved – the Culture Sector, the World Heritage Centre, the Division of Youth and Sports Activities – and led to the restoration of sites on the World Heritage List.

In 1992 and 1993, the Island of Gorée was home to two restoration projects; one involved the restoration of a bandstand situated on the former Government Plaza, and the other was the restoration of the *Relais de l'Espadon*. In Fez, an entire area of the Medina was opened up to youth action. The three projects shared obvious similarities: they were conducted with the support of the country's Federation of UNESCO Clubs, and in conjunction with interested national services; although they were intended first and foremost for young people in Africa and the Arab States, they also involved members of European Clubs; manual rehabilitation work was backed by a training seminar and educational activities.

The restoration sites themselves also represented a means for the World Federation to mobilize its members, this time by helping the participants get to know the site, and, more generally, to gain a better understanding of the idea of a common heritage for all of humankind.

Another example of the Federation's commitment in the field of culture was provided by the seminar "UNESCO Clubs and Associated Libraries for World Heritage", which took place in November 1994 in Florence. The gathering brought together 40 representatives of African and European Clubs and associated libraries. They discussed their cooperation, and agreed on channels of communication between their networks in order to help to arouse public interest in heritage issues.

The generic term *Confluences* was the title chosen to encompass all the World Federation's written work.

First, there was *Confluences – the WFUCA Courier*, a newsletter in which the editorial suggested lines of thought and discussed areas of importance for the movement. News of the region's Clubs, and of UNESCO shared the pages of this alertly-styled journal. It targeted the members of the Federation who were to share its contents with their Clubs, National Commissions, the UNESCO Member States' Permanent Delegations, members of the Secretariat, sympathetic NGOs and the press.

Young people between the ages of 15 and 25 were targeted in particular by *Confluences – The World in Your Pocket*, each issue of which contained a summary of international reports published by the United Nations, UNESCO and other Specialized Agencies of the United Nations system. Thus, the UNESCO world reports on education (1991 and 1993), the International Labour Office's (ILO) report on labour around the world, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report on human development, were brought within the grasp of young readers, whom they introduced to international life by inspiring them with the desire (often fulfilled) to refer to the unabridged original document and give thought to what it had to say.

Confluences – Statutory Documents placed the official Federation texts at everyone's fingertips: statutes, internal regulations, reports of world congresses, etc.

The youngest of the series, *Confluences – Events*, echoed meetings of all kinds organized by WFUCA itself, in collaboration with it, or under its auspices. It was an intelligent way of disseminating the debates and conclusions of meetings, workshops, and hands-on training, which concerned all the Clubs; they could, thus incorporate into their programmes themes debated in a context other than their own, but one which was wholly valid for all.

These three magazines had a blue cover and a similar layout, which made them easily identifiable to the reader.

The World Federation made a point of producing and distributing its own products, as an additional means of circulating information. An initial, highly successful attempt – the sale of a luxury notebook together with multicoloured felt-tipped pens – was followed by a seductive, sometimes humorous, range of products: the production of a line of T-shirts illustrating some of the Organization's greatest programmes (literacy, safeguarding of the heritage, peace, and human rights programmes), jackets, briefcases, baseball caps, watches, pens, keyrings, etc. became a significant source of funding while improving recognition of the World Federation and acting as a vector for the ideals it shared with UNESCO. The delegates at the General Conference were not slow to purchase these quality products as souvenirs and gifts for parents and friends at home.

With the focus on publications, and the incipient project of creating a database on the movement and Club activities around the world, the Federation was increasingly becoming a resource centre for its members, a crossroads of communication and information to which all could contribute, and from which all could derive information on the work at UNESCO and the other Clubs.

At the time of the opening of its fourth statutory Congress – the sixth Club encounter if one includes their very first Congress in 1978 and the Federation's

Constitutional meeting of 1981, the Federation had undergone a significant rejuvenation; those attending the seminars and workshops over the last few years were not about to deny the fact, since most of them were young!

The event in Sinaia in June 1995 was festive: the also-young Romanian Federation of UNESCO Clubs, and Government authorities at all levels, were committed to having their country host this Congress. The Clubs of a good 50 States of all regions came to this charming small Transylvanian town, a former watering-place which retained eloquent vestiges of its past: a huge park, shaded by exotic species of trees, a baroque casino housing the Congress and its two hundred participants, and nostalgically old-fashioned hotels. The year brought threefold inspiration: it marked the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of UNESCO's Constitution and the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year; and it was the United Nations Year for Tolerance. All this influenced the work at hand.

The backdrop of the debates was the culture of peace, so dear to the heart of FEDERICO MAYOR, who reordered UNESCO around this concept, central to both his terms of office as Director-General.

During the round table discussion of this subject, personal testimonies abounded, some tinged with emotion shared by all who attended the Congress – for example, when the delegate from the Rwandan Clubs described the challenges faced by his wounded country, the seminar on tolerance organized the previous month in Kigali to instil empathy and solidarity in order to try to control the “ethnic excess”, as he called it, that Rwanda so painfully suffered. His counterpart from Burundi used the same terms in other Congress discussions to describe the “code of conduct in a sector of conflict”, being drafted by the Clubs of his country together with NGOs also committed to promoting human rights and highlighting the wisdom of African tradition which might stem the conflicts.

The culture of peace inspired the “World Charter of UNESCO Clubs”, which was the Congress's central theme. Since the distant claim by the first, previously mentioned, Pan-African Conference of UNESCO Clubs, the Charter project had slowly faded away. The Sinaia Congress dusted it off, and drew attention to its main objectives: the Charter would include the reasons for the existence and action of the world's UNESCO Clubs, centres, and associations. Its final text would be neither a list of obligations and constraints, nor an internal set of regulations for the Clubs; rather, it would be a code of ethics, listing the motivations of a movement that was moving forward and seeking to speak with one voice. One Congress working group examined the responses to a WFUCA survey on the Charter, and produced a rough draft to be subsequently examined, reworded, and finalized at regional Club meetings .

Sinaia was also the implementation of a method of the World Federation, tested on other occasions for seminars, particularly the Russian seminar. In other words, it entailed discussing items on the agenda in different locations, where everyone participated. One would have to go back to the Japan Congress of 1984 to find, in “field studies”, a similar strategy that had since then not been applied to a world Club meeting. The first environmental workshop had a group of participants travel to Tulcea, on the Danube delta; the workshop on cultural heritage took place in Suceava, Moldavia, a region famous for its monasteries on the World Heritage List; the third workshop, dedicated to education for all in tolerance and a culture of peace, was held at the University of Brasov, not far from Sinaia. The approach to the issue at hand was the same: the leaders introduced the workshop, then there were reports on experience by delegates, a general debate, and adoption of recommendations addressed to Clubs, the World Federation and UNESCO. The Congress in plenary session would then approve the contents.

This Congress, as hard-working as it was friendly, attended by whole busloads of young people from several countries, held the last day’s elections in a serene atmosphere. The Japanese university rector YUJI SUZUKI, member of the Administrative Council of the Nipponese Federation and President of the Asia-Pacific Federation, became the fourth President of WFUCA; PATRICK GALLAUD, who had breathed new life into the Federation, was re-elected Secretary-General. The Executive Board greeted personalities from emerging movements and from firmly established Clubs.¹ Mr JEAN-PIERRE DEHOUCK (Belgium) remained the Federation’s Treasurer, and Ms CHAFICA HADDAD (Lebanon) its Comptroller. No weeping, not much gnashing of teeth. The Sinaia Congress was exemplary in every way.

The last evening held an unforgettable surprise: the trilingual show, “like a tree, beautiful and free”, based on a script by JEAN DEBRUYNNE, Federation Consultant, performed by the Bucharest theatre and dance academy, and by the children of the Sinaia school. Composed specially for the Congress as a tribute to UNESCO on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary, this show was the embodiment of UNESCO’s ideal. The story was published and distributed afterwards, since the World Federation was seeking by this means to encourage its adaptation in various languages and to various contexts. “Like a tree, beautiful and free” played at UNESCO on 4 November 1996, in the presence of FEDERICO MAYOR, who greatly appreciated the message, the symbolism and the talent of the original actors in the show in Romania, who had come specially from Bucharest for this festive Club event.

1. See Annex III.

The idea was taken up again in 1997, with the sketch of a poetic show on poverty in India, which thirty Indian Club members set up; it followed the same rules of adaptability to different countries and settings as the model created in Sinaia.

UNESCO and WFUCA, WFUCA and UNESCO! The team has proved its worth in its sixteen years of collaboration.

In the beginning, there were those at UNESCO who believed that the advent of the Federation would render superfluous the Secretariat office in charge of cooperation with UNESCO Clubs; however, the Secretariat remained closely involved in the preparations and in the subsequent birth of the Federation, and never had the feeling it was rushing towards the brink! Five years after the constitution of WFUCA, there were still officials in the Secretariat who felt that the presence of the Federation justified the elimination of a unit, to their eyes useless because redundant. This was to make light of UNESCO's responsibility towards organizations that depend on it, and to underestimate an alliance with the World Federation which daily proved itself fruitful.

For indeed, the advantages of a dual system very quickly became apparent, on condition that those involved played a straight game and worked in perfect synergy.

Rapidly, too, the respective areas of competence stood out: at UNESCO, the development of Clubs linked with National Commissions; encouragement to set up coordinating bodies; publication of a periodical and documents of general interest; communication with all Clubs, down to the newest, farthest and weakest, with suggestions for operation and reinforcement; support for the movement within the Secretariat and with the Organization's governing bodies.

At WFUCA, the constant link with its members; the development of essential activities, particularly training activities, and the preparation of diversified documentation to fill gaps in UNESCO's documentation, initiatives to promote the movement, mediation with Organization bodies whose programmes could or should be open to Club activities.

UNESCO immediately placed great hopes in the Federation and the manifesto. By 1978, three years before its founding, the General Conference, as we have seen, adopted a forceful resolution regarding the Federation. Since then, any resolution referring to the Clubs has mentioned the Federation in laudatory terms and has recommended it to the care and generosity of Member States and the Director-General. The magazine *Inter-Clubs UNESCO* granted the Federation and its Secretary-General to a section in its pages to take precedence over all others; this continued from 1981 to 1994, when publication was suspended – let us hope, only temporarily. All new coordinating bodies in a country were invited to join the

World Federation. All National Commissions were reminded that, as “advisers” of the Federation, they owed it their support. Field units were alerted, and their support elicited for WFUCA and its members’ field activities. Space in the Headquarters building was allocated to the Federation even before it joined the Category A NGO elite, which previously had been the only NGOs to receive such a privilege.

The World Federation has been no slouch. It has wholeheartedly adopted UNESCO’s values in its publications and activities, and aligns its programmes on those of UNESCO. It has also echoed the great events and dates punctuating the Organization’s life – after all, did it not start preparing to celebrate UNESCO’s fortieth anniversary well before UNESCO itself even thought of it? Repeatedly, the Federation stressed the Clubs’ ethical vocation, and their obligation to conform to that ethic in all their activities. It involved UNESCO in sessions of its World Congress and its Executive Board, by inviting it to attend as an observer. In a word, it was upright in all circumstances, since, together with the Asia-Pacific Federation, it is the only NGO to have UNESCO’s name as part of its own.

The programme sectors of the Secretariat readily turn to the Federation to charge it with carrying out the activities listed in their work plans; they know it is well able to carry out this task at low cost, with skill and promptitude. It is not subject to bureaucratic imperatives, it has freedom of movement, which enables it to respond swiftly when needed, or to take the initiative, which it has done with increasing frequency.

Nevertheless, the sharing of competence is not always as clear-cut in practice, and changes may be caused by the general turn of events. For example, WFUCA has cooperated mainly with its affiliates, the Club coordinating bodies; since they are eager to act as sole intermediaries, they have sometimes tended to thwart action by the Clubs at the grass roots, taking an unfavourable view of direct approaches to the World Federation. But, aware of this reality, the Federation has encouraged the Clubs, which are the movement’s greatest asset; it sends them into orbit and has progressively created networks which enable them to show their paces on the ground: networks on the environment, AIDS, drug abuse, illiteracy, and so forth. These initiatives felicitously complement those of UNESCO vis-à-vis the Clubs, and it is in the Organization’s interest to support them.

At times, misunderstandings threaten to disturb the UNESCO/WFUCA equilibrium. They are caused chiefly by the financial problems facing each. For example, when UNESCO was forced drastically to reduce its financial support, the World Federation felt that the Organization kept too tight a hold on the purse-strings of its meagre resources: should it not have been less stingy with the funds

Member States allocated to it for the Clubs, and give more to the Federation? To which it was retorted that those funds were already far too meagre to help the Clubs set themselves up, build their national coordinating bodies and carry out new and original ideas. In any case, if UNESCO did not commit itself to constantly developing the movement, WFUCA would not have any new members. Nevertheless, it is the Organization's duty to make sure that this great NGO, to whose creation it so powerfully contributed, possesses the resources necessary to play the important role expected of it.

On the other hand, although the financial support to WFUCA fell short of expectations, UNESCO strove to make up for this shortcoming by supplying abundant documentation, opening its doors to Federation seminars, events and gatherings. In cooperation with the Federation, the Organization's Special Fund for Youth provided the Clubs with often considerable material advantages: thus, certain Clubs received "demilitarized" jeeps from the Swiss army, a gift of fax machines from a Japanese industrialist, and so forth ... in the hope of a return of favours! The Florence centre organized a concert which generated a contribution to the Fund to finance a traditional handicrafts project, led by UNESCO Clubs in Benin!

Faced with a worrying financial situation, the World Federation secretariat, of course, did not remain passive. It took initiatives to raise funds under its own steam, from various sources.

But it soon became clear that, in this difficult situation, the members of the Federation were failing to rush to the rescue! For example, they never dreamed of passing on to it the financial aid contracts that UNESCO had given them. After all, wasn't it hard enough for them to make ends meet themselves? This remark should be qualified, however, since the WFUCA-affiliated Federations supported it every time they invited it to organize an activity with them; they then showed great ingenuity in obtaining the material, financial and human resources – which were often very substantial – to ensure the project's success, and thus did their more than their share – a very small share, to be sure, and which had not been reassessed since 1981; but several Federations voluntarily increased the amount of their contribution to the World Federation.

The World Congress of Sinaia took note of the desirability of redefining the responsibilities falling to UNESCO and the World Federation, in order to prevent overlap, wasted resources, or, indeed, deadlock, when each partner digs in its heels, feeling that it is up to the other to take action. Whatever the outcome of this necessary consultation and coordination, it must be stressed that it has become clear that, especially after the many years of fruitful collaboration, WFUCA cannot continue

to thrive without a strong and resolute UNESCO; and that UNESCO cannot wholly fulfil its mandate with the Clubs without a determined and enterprising WFUCA. If one of the two lags behind, the other will inevitably suffer the consequences.

Thus, hand in hand, recognizing and respecting their differences and their distinctive features, UNESCO and the World Federation will advance towards the third millennium, in a spirit of complementarity which is based on reality and clear-sightedly accepted.

Towards the third generation of UNESCO Clubs: 1990 ...

The 1990s saw the start-up or renewal of the movement in countries of all regions, an idea of which can be gained from a brief worldwide review.

In **Africa**, the countries having Portuguese as an official language followed the example set by others. National Commissions took firm action to set up Clubs in *Guinea-Bissau*, *Sao Tome and Principe* and *Angola*, where 90 participants attended a workshop held in August 1992 to inculcate a spirit of tolerance and peace among young people and to propose the creation of Clubs.¹ The workshop's activities were organized by DANIEL DA HIEN, President of the Burkina Faso Federation and Vice-President for Africa of the World Federation.

Several English-speaking African countries followed suit; for example, *Gambia*, *Lesotho*, *Tanzania* and *Zimbabwe*, the last of which by 1995 already had more than 50 Clubs to its credit.

In *Seychelles*, a bilingual country, two Clubs paved the way for more flourishing developments.

Three movements reorganized themselves in other subregions: after a period of uncertainty, the *Mauritanian* Clubs, some 12 of them, surmounted their difficulties and looked forward to a constructive future. The Clubs in *Gabon*, which had lain almost dormant for years, reconstituted themselves to focus on projects specially linked to culture and the protection of the environment. In *Niger*, the National Commission convened a seminar in 1997 to revive the Clubs, directed by Daniel Da Hien, whose experience was particularly sought after.

In **Latin America and the Caribbean**, it was mainly in the Caribbean that Clubs were set up and developed, in *Grenada*, *Saint Lucia* and *Suriname*. The National Commission of *Trinidad and Tobago* supported the take-off of the

1. The first Angolan club, the Kuntwala Club, was actually set up in July 1991.

movement by holding a seminar in September 1992 for the leaders of pupils' associations and UNESCO Club coordinators, under the expert guidance of JAIRO HERNÁNDEZ MILIÁN, of Costa Rica, regional Vice-President of the World Federation. In 1997, a training workshop held in *Haiti* discussed consolidating the Clubs' foundations. The main speaker was PATRICK GALLAUD, Secretary-General of the World Federation.

During the same period, the *Cuban* Clubs, which could be counted on the fingers of one hand, made an extraordinary forward leap thanks to action of MARÍA JOSEFA VILABOY MORALES, who was Permanent Secretary of the Commission for several years after her return from the Permanent Delegation of Cuba to UNESCO. The country's crowning achievement, reached in record time, was the creation of a federation to coordinate the 52 existing Clubs and the election of their representative to the Executive Board of the World Federation.

In *Venezuela*, the Clubs made a fresh start and increased their number. A federation is currently being set up.

The *Arab* world gave us a pleasant surprise. In *Lebanon*, 15 Clubs were set up, ten of them functioning within an institution or specialized association, the rest in schools. These follow a firmly rooted tradition, and there is every reason to think that the movement will expand still further. An even bigger surprise has been *Algeria*, where for years on end a handful of "pirate clubs" – i.e. not officially recognized – have been engaged in spreading the word with admirable tenacity and perseverance. The Algerian Clubs now have official status; they are developing, despite a generally difficult context, and are planning to set up their national federation.

The *Palestinians* were also in the headlines with the creation of three Clubs, in Hebron, Beirzeit and Anabata; their concerns range from action on behalf of children to environmental education.

The *Moroccan* National Federation gave way to the *Advisory Committee of UNESCO Clubs and Associated Schools*, which, as its name indicates, combines the two movements.

Asia was also caught up in a dynamic trend. After the successful trial of the Beijing Clubs, the movement is now gaining ground in *China*. In the mid-1990s, approximately 100 Clubs augured well for future expansion.

Two new countries came to the fore in this vast continent, *Mongolia* and *Viet Nam*. In 1988, Viet Nam set up its first Club, concerned with science popularization and literacy activities; it also opened a foreign languages school in Hanoi and held training courses in the construction of public buildings threatened by cyclones. Another type of movement was a joyful surge of some 50 Clubs which combined in November 1993 to form a national coordinating body.

In *Tajikistan*, in Central Asia, the first Club was set up in May 1992, nearly a year before Tajikistan's admission to UNESCO;¹ The Douchanbe Club specializes in heightening children's awareness of the environment and the need to protect it. *Uzbekistan* followed suit in 1997.

Another sensational piece of news, or "scoop", was the creation of a Club in *Tuvalu*,² in the Micronesian archipelago. We are wary of crying this from the housetops, so as not to upset this pioneer country of the movement in Oceania, a marvellous newborn child which will at last enable the Federation of Asia and the Pacific to give real substance to its name.

In the midst of this proliferation, **Europe and North America** were also introducing innovations in at least two respects. The first was the continuing expansion of the movement, which owed a great deal to the political changes in the early 1990s in Central and Eastern Europe.

It was mainly in the countries of this subregion that new Clubs were set up: *Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic* and *Romania*, the last two countries having 30 and 45 Clubs respectively, and both having a national federation.

The coordinating bodies in *Belarus* and *Ukraine* were consolidated. The reactivation of Clubs and their Association was confirmed in *Poland*. The Soviet Association of UNESCO Clubs was dissolved at the end of 1991. In April 1992, about 100 Clubs met in Ekaterinbourg³ and founded the *Russian Federation of UNESCO Clubs (CURUS)*. In 1997, this had 150 Clubs as members, many of them in the Sakha Republic⁴ and Ural, where in December 1995 the Clubs convened 100 delegates from 30 bodies in 20 countries for a conference on the cultural heritage of Ural and Siberia.

The Clubs in Western Europe are carrying on as usual while increasing their numbers and strengthening their operational bases.

In *Spain*, where the number of Clubs is nearing 30 and continues to increase, the Catalan Federation has withdrawn from the National Confederation but maintains relations through a liaison committee.

In the New World, the *Canadian* National Commission decided at its 33rd General Assembly to authorize the UNESCO Club Movement. In 1991, it set up the *Canadian Association of UNESCO Clubs* which, five years later, had some 40 member Clubs. Originally concentrated in Quebec, the movement is now

1. Tajikistan became a Member State in April 1993.

2. Tuvalu became a Member State in October 1991.

3. Ekaterinbourg was known as Sverdlovsk from 1924 to 1991.

4. A republic of the Russian Federation in Eastern Siberia.

gradually expanding to other provinces. In 1995, the Association published an artistic and spirited brochure, *A Window on World Peace*.

The second salient feature in the region, which is specific to it, has been the development of UNESCO centres previously confined only to Western Europe. For a long time, groups of friends of the Organization throughout the world had adopted the title of “UNESCO Centres”, but with rare exceptions they differed little in nature from Clubs or associations.

During the 1980s, the term “centre” began to take on quite a different meaning. This was noted by the World Federation in a study-survey which highlighted the distinctive features of a UNESCO centre, on the whole very akin to those which characterized the Amsterdam UNESCO Centre from the outset. A UNESCO centre functions permanently in premises open to the public; it has a professional staff, usually salaried; it is relatively well funded by governmental, semi-private and private sources; its activities, also permanent and frequently specialized, are mostly on a wide scale; and it is a meeting place for the UNESCO Clubs and Associated Schools in the neighbourhood.

Centres appeared in countries where there was a firm tradition of Clubs. In *Belgium*, the *UNESCO Vormingscentrum* in Koksijde goes back to 1985; it is concerned with the popularization of oceanography and marine sciences, and has held several international meetings on these subjects since 1990.

The San Sebastian *UNESCO Centre (Spain)*, set up in 1993, provides training courses by correspondence and in study sessions; it covers an increasing number of countries, especially in Latin America.

The two *French UNESCO Centres* to date are those of Toulouse and Troyes. Set up by the Regional Council of the Midi-Pyrénées UNESCO Clubs, the former has a threefold function: acting as a reception centre, organizing international exchanges and providing documentation. The latter, which took over from the RENÉ MAHEU UNESCO Club, is now known as the *Louis François UNESCO Centre*. Most of its activities are devoted to promoting children’s creativity, such as an international children’s drawing competition aptly called “Le geste en liberté” (“Free gesture”) which casts its net wider every year, and a project for a forthcoming museum of children’s art.

The *Portuguese Centre* in the Azores deals with environmental problems; that of Evora, inaugurated in 1993 by the Director-General, is concerned with the cultural and natural heritage, as is only fitting for a town whose old districts figure in the World Heritage List.

In May 1994, FEDERICO MAYOR inaugurated in Thessalonika (*Greece*) the *UNESCO Centre for Women and Peace in the Balkans*, whose very name is a

programme in itself. Originating from the *Interbalkan Women's Cooperation Association*, the Centre comprises women members from all the countries of the subregion.

UNESCO centres are beginning to flourish in other parts of Europe. Having now reverted to the name of Saint Petersburg after having been Petrograd and then Leningrad, the *Russian* capital of PETER THE GREAT houses a prestigious centre in a magnificent townhouse with historic panelling which bears witness to its cultural functions. In September 1994, the Centre invited other European UNESCO Centres to a joint consultation for exchanges of experience which brought out similarities in organizational and operational methods.

In June 1996, the UNESCO Centre in *Slovakia*, with its headquarters in the University of Bratislava, convened the UNESCO Clubs of ten countries from Central and Eastern Europe for a seminar on the culture of peace, the environment and the cultural heritage.

While a national seminar was being held in *Georgia* to launch the Clubs, the *Educational, Scientific and Cultural Youth Organization* was recognized as a UNESCO Centre in October 1996.

The development of these centres raised problems for National Commissions, which were besieged with requests to set up or recognize these bodies of a new type whose identity it was sometimes difficult to define. Some commissions, accustomed to traditional Clubs, felt overtaken by events, and hesitated to give their agreement. Others tried to understand, not always successfully, the differences between the various groups of friends of UNESCO, and applied to more experienced commissions to guide them. The picture became still more complicated with centres which sought recognition of their legitimacy directly from UNESCO, in which case UNESCO referred them to their National Commissions. Confusion grew, particularly since the public at large tends to assimilate a centre to a UNESCO field unit, and centres do not necessarily wish to set them right, since they consider that the ambiguity enhances their prestige.

The Saint Petersburg meeting instructed the World Federation to update and supplement its study on UNESCO centres. The result of this wide-ranging and essential study will throw light on a complex situation, which in the present situation of uncertainty might otherwise hold up a process from which all centres would benefit.

Throughout the world, third-generation clubs have made no break with their predecessors as regards either their lines of action or the activities stemming from their choices. However, as soon as they have decided on their main lines of

action in conformity with their UNESCO mandate, their work becomes increasingly innovative, creative and imaginative.

More than ever, ethics guides the movement as a whole, drawing on the same sources as UNESCO. The culture of peace and democracy, now being established or restored in many countries, and the demand for responsible citizenship, are the foundation of all the ventures undertaken by Clubs, whatever the visible form they adopt.

Thus, in this last decade of the century, the Clubs are not embarking on a new history; they pursue the historical line they have always followed, though with still more determination than before, a more acute awareness of the challenges to be taken up and, if possible, a more rigorous emphasis on national and international morality.

On all sides they are measured by the criterion of this demanding morality. In Peru, the Arequipa Club, which consists of jurists and conducts research into legal science, was invited to participate in the vast consultation *A national dialogue for peace and development* convened by the Peruvian Government. An honorary award by the Office of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers recognized the quality of the contribution it made.

Similarly, several African federations have been spontaneously invited to attend national conferences marking the beginning of the transition to democracy in many countries of the continent. Clubs are seen as well-informed interlocutors who live in a democracy and can thus speak convincingly about it and on behalf of it.

As ANDRÉ ZWEYACKER, President of the French Federation until March 1997, frequently says, “a UNESCO Club is a school of democracy”. This formula refers to the way in which Clubs operate, which, far from complying with the decrees of a small nucleus of leaders, take their decisions tranquilly, bearing in mind all the views expressed and with respect for individual opinions. In this way, Clubs confirm the bold statement by UNESCO in 1947 that we have already quoted, which it is worthwhile recalling: “Who runs the Clubs? The members themselves”!¹ It is also worthwhile recalling that in 1967 the Organization defined one of the missions of the Clubs as being to “promote the full development of a form of national and supranational civism”.²

The Pan-European Conference held in Strasbourg in December 1990 had as its central discussion theme the contribution of UNESCO Clubs to a Europe of cooperation and peace. A working group dealt with the sub-themes of human

1. See page 4 above.

2. See page 30 above.

rights, democracy and citizenship. This subject again appeared on the agenda of the next meeting of European Clubs (Kiev, May 1993), which devoted two working sessions to examining it. The concept of democracy is vital for all Clubs; for experienced Clubs in Western countries, where democracy is never taken for granted and where eternal vigilance must be exerted as regards all that might endanger it; and for the newly created Clubs of Central and Eastern Europe, where this very young movement needs benchmarks and signposts and where UNESCO Clubs can and should be the most important context for training in democracy, in the values of citizenship and in living by those values.

It is a fact that this formula has had great success. The Canadian Association of UNESCO Clubs held a round table on *UNESCO Clubs, a school of democracy* during the International Congress on Education for Human Rights and Democracy convened by UNESCO in Montreal in March 1993, in close cooperation with the Canadian National Commission. Young members of Canadian Clubs under 18 years of age (the youngest was 13) showed pronounced wisdom in their statements. The most noted speaker was REGINALD NOSEBE, President-Founder of the N'Zérékoré Club in the Forest Region of Guinea. The Club comprises refugees from Liberia and Sierra Leone, some of whom were leaders of groups of friends of UNESCO in their countries of origin. These had the idea of using the forced idleness of refugees by organizing vocational education and training programmes – in particular for women – and in teaching French to this population, most of whom are Englishspeaking. Activities are open to local Guineans with a view to encouraging friendly contacts, bilingualism and the reading habit in a library which contains books in English and French. In what way can the Club become a “school of democracy”? By combating intolerance while adopting an apolitical stance, by seeking constructive solutions to the problems afflicting society and by promoting social democracy, chiefly through education at all levels and intercultural exchanges. REGINALD knows that all this is to be found in the daily life of his Club.

At a time when UNESCO is, as it were, going back to basics by reinterpreting its Constitution so as to gear it to the new state of the world, it is not surprising that the Clubs are again taking up positions which, in fact, they have never abandoned.

The dawn of a history

In Japan and dozens of other countries in all parts of the world, the UNESCO Clubs celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the movement in 1997.

The movement has made remarkable progress and gained strength in the last 50 years, which have witnessed upheavals that even the most long-sighted of us could never have foreseen in our wildest imaginings.

The figures speak for themselves: 700 Clubs in 1966 and 1,300 in 1970, when the Japanese and French friends of UNESCO came to the fore, their combined membership representing more than two thirds of the Clubs as a whole. The figures have shot up in the last 20 years: 1,980 Clubs in 1976; 3,200 in 1985; and 5,350 in 1995, in 115 countries, with coordinating bodies in 45 of them.

And these are only the Clubs known to exist because they or their National Commissions have notified their existence. Apart from those which have stood up to be counted, how many shrinking violets are there hidden away in the undergrowth? How many Clubs are still in the throes of obtaining legal recognition? How many are as yet informal groups? And how many Clubs have disappeared over time, whose former members keep alive in their hearts the attitudes and behaviour patterns acquired in their Clubs, which have indelibly marked their lives at home and at work?

Throughout the past 50 years, few Clubs have gone astray, or used UNESCO's prestigious name for selfish aims or gain, let alone pursued questionable objectives by taking advantage of an organization respected by all. On the contrary, tens of thousands of people have found, in the UNESCO Clubs which have made them what they are, high standards, form and substance which lend themselves to their quest for excellence and their determination to forge new relations between individuals and peoples that will enshrine the ideals of mutual acceptance, justice, empathy and the rejection of shady compromise and the easy way out.

They are quite prepared to say so.

Here is the profession of faith of PATRICK NGUEMA EDOU, a Gabonese student actively engaged in reviving the Clubs in his country, and prize-winner of the UNESCO project *Youth in Action*. Patrick says: "To cherish hope with the UNESCO Clubs is for me to open up a future and a meaning where these seem to have been lost. To hope is to dare to believe that, despite the visible daily signs of despair around us, human beings are still capable of better things. So it is up to us, the young people of today and the adult decision-makers of tomorrow, to act throughout the world as messengers of real hope and to join those who opt for intercultural exchanges and for a better way of living together".

Here is the testimony of JEAN-GUY ROY, until recently President of the Canadian Association: "The UNESCO Club is a way of life, a sphere of free expression, a place of hope where we can fulfil ourselves while also being useful to others".

Let us listen once again to a moving voice which is now hushed, that of the late Koichi UEDA, a Japanese pioneer of the movement: "Much has been done since the time when I was meditating in my Shanghai garret in 1945. And much remains to be done. I am happy to have played a part in the growth and development of non-governmental movements in support of UNESCO, and I continue in my firm determination to work for the ideals they represent ...".

Speaking in December 1991 to the General Assembly of the Troyes RENÉ MAHEU UNESCO Centre in answer to the question "Why be a member of a UNESCO Club?", ANDRÉ ZWEYACKER said that it was so as to be a responsible citizen; to find a way of expressing one's feeling of sharing and solidarity, one's ethical sense; to satisfy one's curiosity about the world and realize its intelligibility; to acquire worldwide awareness; and to find clues in the search for a new international order. UNESCO is a reference "because it embodies all these values and provides us with this touchstone that we all bear within us".

What do the Clubs represent for UNESCO? They represent its staunchest allies, the most wholeheartedly devoted to its cause; active militants for the ideal which is the be-all and end-all of UNESCO's work; the best of interlocutors, individual human beings worthy of acting on its behalf. Are they simply the **transmitters** of its humanist message? In one of his speeches on the Day of 4 November 1996,¹ ARTHUR GILLETTE, UNESCO's Director of the Division of Youth and Sports Activities, saw their role as a different one. In his view, each Club reinterprets UNESCO's message in its own way to make it meaningful and accessible to

1. See page X of the Introduction.

those around it; it is therefore more accurate to talk of **synergy**. Synergy lays emphasis on the dynamic role of UNESCO Clubs, which is to translate, not merely transmit; to convince, and to call for a commitment by encouraging the exercise of individual responsibility.

The Director-General FEDERICO MAYOR was well aware of this when, on laying the foundation stone on 4 November 1992 of what was to be the *Toulouse Centre for UNESCO*, he spoke from the heart to say that he was profoundly convinced of the value of UNESCO Clubs and their ability to breathe life into the message of UNESCO and the universal ethic underlying it.

For a human being, 50 years is the culmination of adulthood and a time for taking stock. For a movement whose roots go deep in a great variety of soils and countries, 50 years is a spark in infinity, a sign in space and time, a dawn which heralds the steady light of day.

ANNEX I

Bibliography

I. UNESCO publications

In the minds of men – UNESCO 1946-1971, UNESCO 1972.

For a world worthy of man, UNESCO 1980.

The Story of a Grand Design – UNESCO 1946-1993, by Michel Conil-Lacoste, UNESCO Publications 1993.

Practical Guide for National Commissions, UNESCO 1995.

II. UNESCO documents

1. General Conference documents

◆ Report of the Director-General on the activities of the Organization – annual from 1947 to 1973, and subsequently biennial. This document bears the number of the session of the General Conference to which it was presented, followed by the reference ... C/3.

◆ Reports by Member States published between 1947 and 1962 as General Conference documents. The Conference approved at its 12th session, held in Paris in 1962, resolution 39, which requests the Director-General to cease the translation, production and dissemination of reports by Member States.

◆ Approved Programme and Budget: the document bears the number of the session of the General Conference which approved it, followed by the reference ... C/5.

◆ Resolutions of the General Conference: starting with the 14th session of the General Conference, the resolutions have been contained in Volume 1 of the Proceedings of the General Conference.

◆ Manual of the General Conference and the Executive Board, updated after each session of the General Conference; from the 25th to the 27th session it was entitled “Basic Texts, Manual of the General Conference and the Executive Board”; after the 28th session it became the “Manual of the General Conference”.

2. Documents concerning UNESCO Clubs

◆ Directory of UNESCO Clubs: 1966, 1967, 1969, 1971, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1979, 1983, 1988 and 1993 editions.

◆ UNESCO Clubs Manual: 1969 edition, followed by all the editions from 1972 to 1990.

◆ *Inter-Clubs UNESCO*: all the issues between 1972 and 1994, totalling 37, including five double issues.

◆ Information memorandum on UNESCO Clubs “What are UNESCO Clubs?”: all the editions from 1972 to 1996.

III. WFUCA documents

All the documents produced since 1981, including:

- ◆ *Confluences*, information newsletter; entitled *Confluences: WFUCA Correspondence*, published every two months since 1992
- ◆ *Confluence Notebooks*
- ◆ *Confluences: a World Pocket Guide (since 1992)*
- ◆ *Confluences: Statutes*
- ◆ *Confluences: Events*

ANNEX II

Acronyms used

AFUCA	Asian Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations
ALECSO	Arab League Educational Cultural and Scientific Organization
CCIC	International Catholic Centre for UNESCO (CCIC)
CCIVS	Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service
CEFP	Centre d'échanges et de formation pratique (Bakel, Senegal)
CERFCI	Centre for Research, Studies and Training in International Understanding and Cooperation (World Federation)
CEWC	Council for Education in World Citizenship (United Kingdom)
CUCAI	Confederation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations in India
CURUS	Russian Federation of UNESCO Clubs
DPI	Division for the Promotion and Dissemination of Information (UNESCO)
ESSTI	Ecole supérieure des sciences et des techniques de l'information (Yaoundé, Cameroon)
FEDUC	Federation of UNESCO Centres (Belgium)
FESCUAO	Festival des clubs universitaires d'Afrique de l'Ouest
FFUC	French Federation of UNESCO Clubs
FIOCES	International Federation of Organizations for School Correspondence and Exchanges
FWT	Friends of the World's Treasures (World Federation)
ILO	International Labour Office
INFUCA	Indian National Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations
IPS	Inter Press Service
ISESCO	Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
ISIO	Italian Society for International Organizations
ISMUN	International Students Movement for the United Nations

KUSA	Korean UNESCO Students Association (Republic of Korea)
MCUF	Madrid Club of Friends of UNESCO
NFUAJ	National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NUCI	National Union to Combat Illiteracy (Italy)
OIEC	Catholic International Education Office
PANA	Pan-African News Agency
PLD	Public Liaison Division (UNESCO)
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNUM	UNESCO Unit of Money
USI	United Schools International
USO	United Schools Organization (India)
WFUCA	World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations
WFUNA	World Federation of United Nations Associations

ANNEX III

Membership of the Executive Board of the World Federation since 1981

1981-1984

Vice-Presidents: Mr J. BENKÉTIRA (France), Mr C.N. BOUNA DIOUF (Senegal), Mr S.T. JUNCO GÓMEZ (Colombia) and Mr A. KHALOUFI (Morocco)

Members: Mr R. BEN SLAMA (Tunisia), Mr E. GUECHEV (Bulgaria), Mr V. MELIGA (Cameroon), Mr G. OBANDO UTRERAS (Ecuador) and Ms L. SEÑORA (Philippines)

1984-1987

Vice-Presidents: Mr F. BEN MAHMOUD (Tunisia), Mr E. GUECHEV (Bulgaria), Mr V. MELIGA (Cameroon) and Mr K. UEDA (Japan)

Members: Mr J.-P. DEHOUCK (Belgium), Mr A. GBEULY TAPÉ (Côte d'Ivoire), Mr R. GUNASINGHAM (Malaysia), Ms C. HADDAD (Lebanon) and Mr J. HERNÁNDEZ MILIÁN (Costa Rica)

1987-1991

Vice-Presidents: Mr J.-P. DEHOUCK (Belgium), Mr A. GBANKOTO (Benin), Mr S.T. JUNCO GÓMEZ (Colombia), Ms C. HADDAD (Lebanon) and Mr R. GUNASINGAM (Malaysia)

Members: Mr S. CHAMPATONG (Thailand), Mr A. KHALOUFI (Morocco), Ms E. LUKONGA (Zambia), Mr W. NAWROCKI (Poland) and Mr G. OBANDO UTRERAS (Ecuador)

1991-1995

Vice-Presidents: Mr R. BEN SLAMA (Tunisia), Mr D. DA HIEN (Burkina Faso), Mr J. HERNÁNDEZ MILIÁN (Costa Rica), Mr Y. SUZUKI (Japan) and Mr A. ZWEYACKER (France)

Members: Mr J.L. JAIN (India), Mr A. NAÏMI (Morocco), Mr L. ORTIZ (Colombia), Mr C. ROBERTS (Sierra Leone) and Ms M. STRINGA (Italy)

1995-1999

Vice-Presidents: Mr E.M. AMÉNOUNVÉ (Togo), Mr CHO CHEOL WHA (Republic of Korea), Ms M.N. DIAZ-ARGUELLES (Cuba), Ms A. LAHMAR (Tunisia) and Ms M. STRINGA (Italy)

Members: Mr C. ROBERTS (Sierra Leone), Mr TAO XI PING (China), Mr A. NAÏMI (Morocco) and Mr E. BALASHOV (Russia)

Acknowledgements

From July 1970 to June 1994, when I was in charge of UNESCO cooperation with the Clubs throughout the world, I had the marvellous opportunity of making friends with the movements' pioneers, the organizers and members of countless Clubs, the leaders of their coordinating bodies and many secretaries-general of National Commissions. PHILIPPE ROUX, head of the Public Liaison Division from 1969 to 1973, appointed me to do this work, and I can never be sufficiently grateful to him for the confidence he thus placed in me and the helping hand he gave me in the early days.

During and since that period, the late KOICHI UEDA, GENEVIÈVE FIORE, GEORGES SKAFF and LOUIS FRANÇOIS have kindly entrusted me with their recollections, either orally or by making documents available to me. May I record here my heartfelt gratitude for their valuable assistance.

I am also grateful to all those who for nearly a quarter of century illuminated and gave full meaning to my day-to-day work: correspondents, phone-callers, visitors and participants in many meetings at UNESCO Headquarters and in the field. All of them added to my knowledge and encouraged me in the performance of frequently complex tasks. All these faces and voices backed me up as I wrote these pages, which I hope will help to express clearly their generosity, their human feeling and their faith in the ideals embodied by UNESCO.

Turning to the World Federation of UNESCO Associations, Centres and Clubs, I was overjoyed to help bring it into existence, and felt unalloyed pride at being appointed as a member of its Honorary Committee at the Sinaia Congress in 1995. May I say that the Federation can always count on my affectionate loyalty.

Among the members of the Secretariat who helped me in what I regard as an obligation to put past history on record, I should particularly like to thank the head of Archives, JENS BOEL, who made available very valuable documents for my work; "JACK" PINTO, analyst-programmer, who retrieved a large part of a typescript from a computer disaster; MARIE-CHRISTINE BERCOT, of the Executive Office of the Director-General, for her unfailingly shrewd and penetrating comments on one of the final drafts of this work; and ARTHUR GILLETTE, Director of the Division of Youth and Sports Activities, whose wise counsels and lively memories supplied necessary details or additional information on many of its pages.

May 1997

... And I am greatly indebted to the very recent UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations Unit, to its chief, MADELEINE BRIGAUD ROBERT, whose tenacity and enthusiasm has made it possible for this book to see the light of day, two years later!

May 1999

Section I

UNESCO and the Clubs



Julian Huxley (Director-General from 1946 to 1948). At the very first session of the General Conference, he advocated "...the formation of groups of future citizens of the world...". *UNESCO photo.*



Jaimes Torres Bodet (Director-General from 1948 to 1952) was the first to mention the Friends of UNESCO Clubs. *UNESCO photo.*

René Maheu
(Director-General from 1962 to 1974)
wished to “draw attention
to the work accomplished
among the general public
by the UNESCO Clubs”.
UNESCO photo/Dominique Roger.



René Maheu
visiting the Netherlands UNESCO
Centre, 4 March 1971.
To his right, Dr Tunnissen,
Director of the Centre
until the end of 1983.
*Photo: Netherlands UNESCO
Centre*



Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow (Director-General from 1974 to 1987) attached "great importance to these clubs, which have furnished proof of their dedication to the Organization". On his right, André Zwegacker (France), Vice-President for Europe of the World Federation from 1991 to 1995. *UNESCO photo/Michel Claude.*



Federico Mayor Zaragoza (Director-General since 1987) is convinced of “the ability [of the clubs] to bring alive the message of our Organization and the universal ethic which is the foundation of its action”. In 1991, he was greeted with enthusiasm by the UNESCO Clubs of Kinshasa (Zaire, now Democratic Republic of the Congo).



The three successive chiefs of the Public Liaison Division in 1975: surrounding Jacob Zuckerman, Philippe Roux (left) and Jean-Baptiste de Weck. *UNESCO photo.*



The Unit for Relations with UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations team in April 1999: from left to right, surrounding Ahmed Sayyad, Assistant Director-General for External Relations: Kuniaki Yamashita, Madeleine Brigaud Robert, Leïla Zas Friz, Lydie Mdoboko Mackongo and Drissia Chouit. *UNESCO photo.*

Section II

The pioneers of the movement



Georges N. Skaff (Lebanon), front row left, closely following the proceedings of the conference on human rights organized in 1952 by the Association that he was instrumental in founding. On the right of the picture, the Director of Education of Lebanon.



Koichi UEDA (Japan) at the Open Day organized at Headquarters by the World Federation on the occasion of UNESCO's fortieth anniversary. *UNESCO photo.*

December 1989:
Genevieve d'Amato Fiore
photographed with
Joseph A. Mehan (UNESCO).
UNESCO photo.



Louis François (France)
in 1995.

Section III

Leading figures of the world of UNESCO Clubs



Kiyoshi Kazuno (Japan), Founding President of the World Federation is accompanied by Christiane Desprairies (WFUCA) on the left, and Anne Willings-Grinda (UNESCO) on the occasion of the Federation's First World Congress.



On the right, Gonzalo Abad Grijalva (Ecuador), President of the World Federation from 1984 to 1991, with John E. Fobes, former Deputy Director-General of UNESCO and founder of the "Americans for the Universality of UNESCO" Association. *UNESCO photo.*



Coumba Ndooffène Bouna Diouf (Senegal), Vice-President for Africa of the World Federation from 1981 to 1984, with Anne Willings-Grinda (UNESCO).

Photo Senegalese Federation of UNESCO Clubs.



Fethi Ben Mahmoud (Tunisia), Vice-President for the Arab States of the World Federation from 1984 to 1987. *UNESCO photo.*

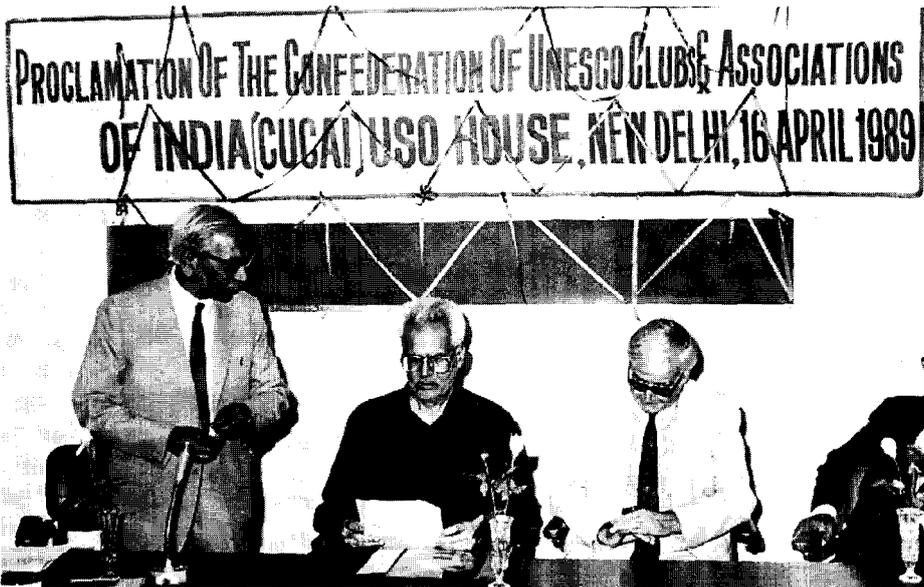
Chafica Haddad (Lebanon),
Vice-President for the Arab States
of the World Federation
from 1987 to 1991.
UNESCO photo.



Jairo Hernández Milián,
Vice-President for Latin America
and the Caribbean
of the World Federation
from 1991 to 1995.
UNESCO photo.



From left to right, Yuji Suzuki (Japan), President of the World Federation since 1995, Patrick Gallaud, Secretary-General since 1991, and Marialuisa Stringa (Italy), Vice-President for Europe since 1995.



Standing on the left, Jiya Lai Jain (India), member of the Executive Board of the World Federation from 1991 to 1995; second from the right, Pierre Lesueur, Secretary-General of the Federation from 1981 to 1990. *USO photo.*



Daniel Da Hien (Burkina Faso), Vice-President for Africa of the World Federation from 1991 to 1995, with Patrick Gallaud.



Dorothy Hackbarth
(United States of America)
and Hugo Stanka (Austria)
at the First World Congress
of UNESCO Clubs in 1978.
UNESCO photo.

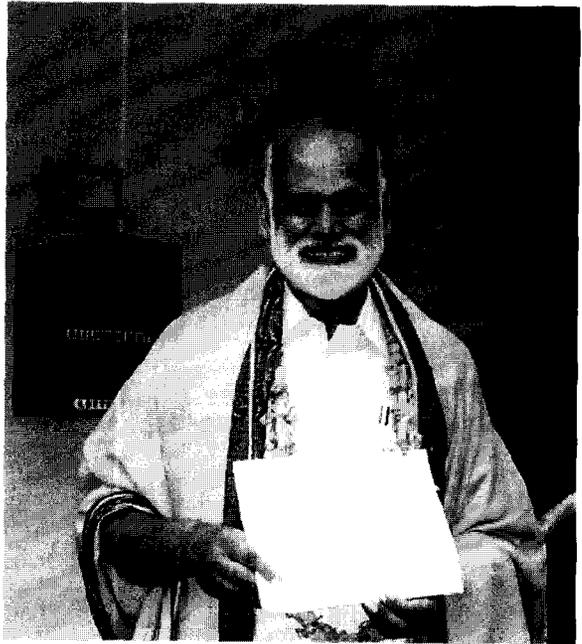


Albert V. Rutter (Malta)
at the Inaugural Congress
of the World Federation in 1981.
UNESCO photo.



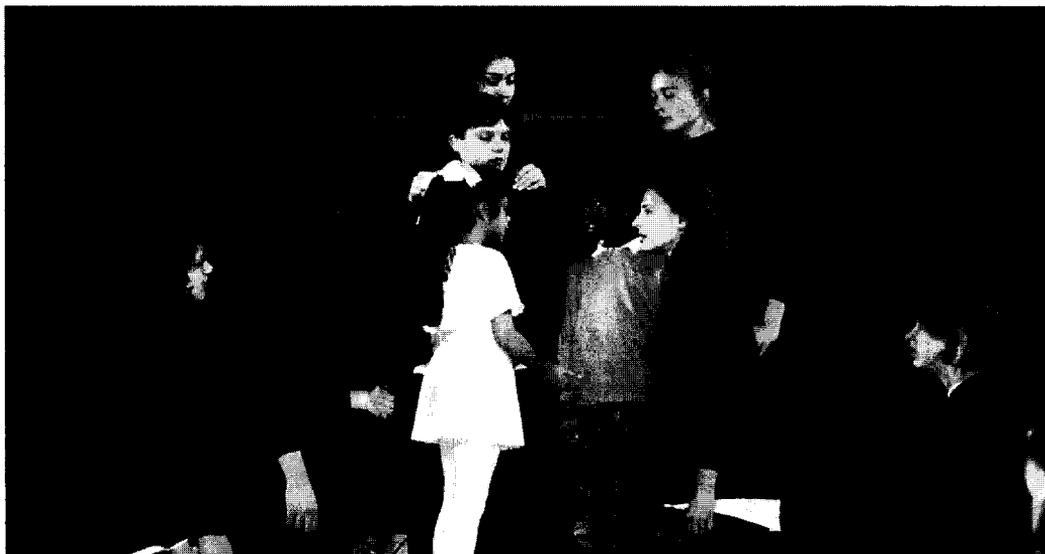
Rosa Otounbayeva
(USSR, now Russian Federation)
addressing participants at the
First Convention of Soviet Clubs, 1991.
*Photo Soviet Association
of UNESCO Clubs.*

Tamaki Obana (Japan) in 1996.
Photo NFUAJ.



Father Lawrence D'Souza
(India) in 1996.
Photo INFUCA.

Section IV
The Clubs in action



A scene from "Like a beautiful free tree", a play written for the Fourth Congress of the World Federation, held in Sinaia (Romania).



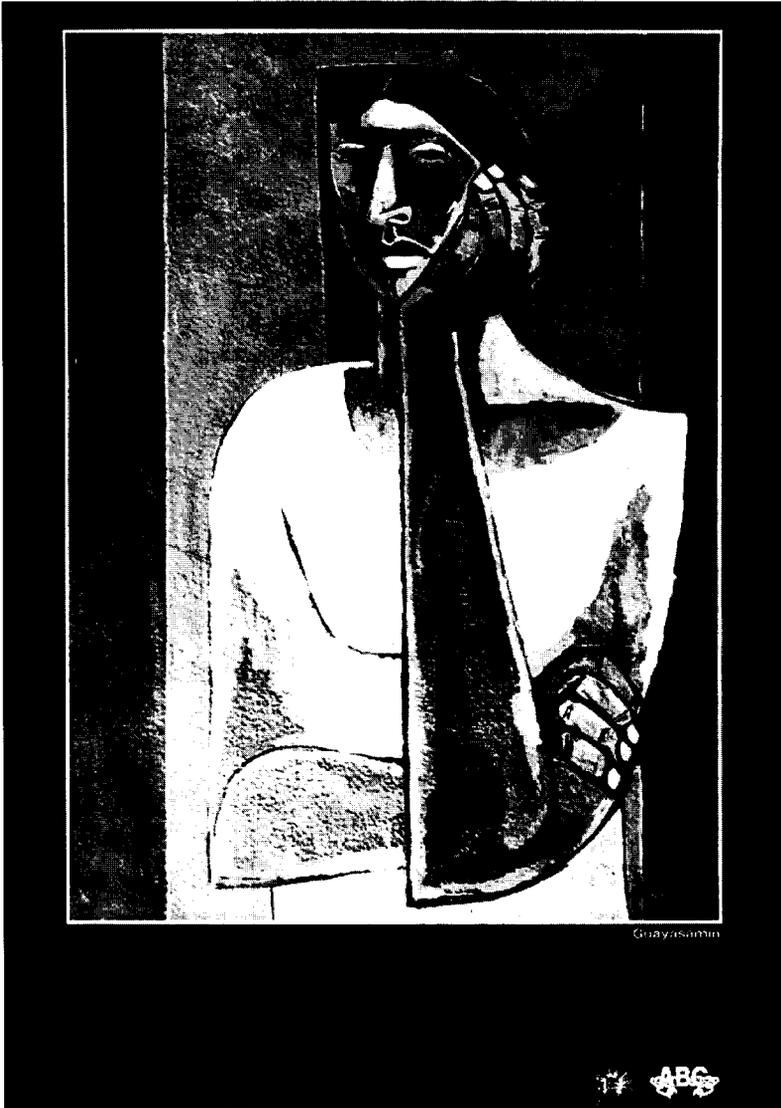
Restoration work in the Medina of Fez (Morocco), organized by the World Federation.
Photo WFUCA and UNESCO Centre of Khémisset.



Market gardening at the Bakel Centre (Senegal). *Photo FFCU/Raoul Bacconnier.*



Reafforestation is one of the favourite activities of the African clubs.



Poster by Oswaldo Guayasamín for the Ecuadorian Federation.



Grassroots education through puppet theatre is the aim of the Cuban puppet club.



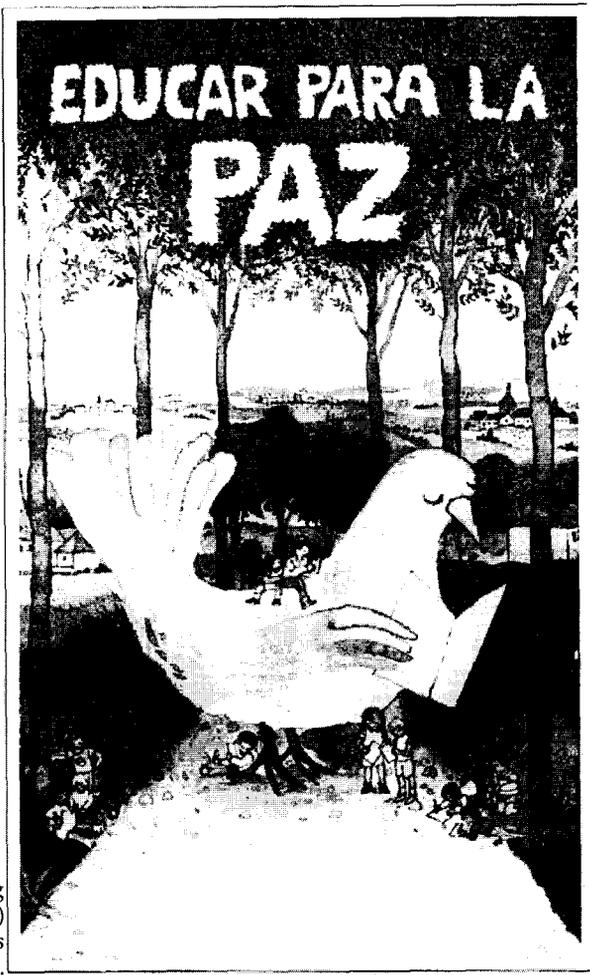
Literacy work in Bangladesh. Photo Harumi Imaizumi.



Inauguration
of the UNESCO Training
Centre in Bangalore
(India).



Poster showing the olive-tree, tree of civilization and symbol of peace.



Cover of the booklet published during the International Year of Peace (1986) at the instigation of the Club of Friends of UNESCO, Madrid (Spain).



Engraving done by Duchemin in 1790 and reproduced on the "Fraternity" postage stamp commemorating the bicentenary of the French Revolution, the adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen and the greetings of the inhabitants of the French town of Champagne.

Fifty years after the founding of the UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations movement, A. WILLINGS-GRINDA gives a vivid historical account of progress along the "paths of light", as they have been so aptly described by the Director-General. Recounting both great achievements and small, hesitant steps along the way, she leads us on a journey through the world of UNESCO Clubs, describing the tenacity and determination of those who, inspired by UNESCO's ideals, ought to forge bonds of friendship and commitment to the values they shared with the Organization. Fifty years, for a movement whose roots reach deep down into the earth of many different countries, is a tiny part of infinity, a sign in space and time, the first glimmering of dawn before the steady light of day.

AHMED SAYYAD

Assistant Director-General for External Relations

History is a way of looking at things. ANNE WILLINGS-GRINDA's view of the growth of the UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations movement is perceptive and penetrating, as well as being affectionate and sparkling with humour. The wealth of information that this book contains makes it a major source on the subject. The highly pertinent anecdotes with which it is peppered not only make it agreeable to read but illustrate the determination and energy which have sustained the movement.

Yet, over and above its value as a historical record, this book is a tribute to those nameless but determined people who have put UNESCO's ideals into everyday practice. We need not recall that those very same people are the living strength of UNESCO at the heart of society.

MADELEINE BRIGAUD ROBERT

Chief, Unit for Relations with UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations
Bureau for External Relations