

CONTACT

unesco.ca

BULLETIN OF THE CANADIAN
COMMISSION FOR UNESCO



VOLUME 2, NUMBER 3
JANUARY 2007



CANADIAN COMMISSION FOR UNESCO
COMMISSION CANADIENNE POUR L'UNESCO

www.unesco.ca



In this Issue

| | |
|--|----|
| Message from the President | 3 |
| Message from the Secretary-General | 4 |
| Gilbert Laurin Appointed Canada's Ambassador to UNESCO | 5 |
| Change at the Helm of the Canada Council for the Arts | 5 |
| Montréal Plays Host to the Director-General | 6 |
| World Urban Forum | 6 |
| AIDS 2006 | 7 |
| Canadian Launch of the <i>Education for All Global Monitoring Report</i> | 7 |
| Coalition of Municipalities against Racism | 8 |
| ASPnet Coordinators' Meeting | 8 |
| The Thousand Worlds of Photojournalism | 9 |
| Flash! Two New Conventions; AGM 2007 | 9 |
| L'Oréal Canada "For Women in Science" | 9 |
| Calendar of Major International Events | 10 |

Cover photo captions:

1000 Words of Photojournalism, Ottawa, November 20, 2006.

Left to right: David Gollob, Vice President, Public Affairs, Canadian Newspaper Association; Michèle S. Jean, President, Canadian Commission for UNESCO; Anna Kothawala, President and CEO, Canadian Newspaper Association

David A. Walden, Secretary-General, Canadian Commission, with Sigrid Niedermayer, International Coordinator, UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet)

La littérature migrante en question, roundtable on immigrant literature organized by l'Espace culturel Malaïka, at La Nouvelle Scène, Ottawa, November 4, 2006

CONTACT

January 2007
Volume 2, Number 3

350 Albert Street, Box 1047, Ottawa, ON K1P 5V8
Tel. (613) 566-4414
Fax (613) 566-4405
E-mail info@unesco.ca
Web site www.unesco.ca

Editors Katherine Berg / Alysouk Lynhiavu
Design Lise Giguère Design
Photos Canadian Commission for UNESCO
unless otherwise indicated
ISSN 1705 7981



Printed in Canada on recycled and recyclable paper

unesco.ca

Message from the President



Message from the president

While this is my inaugural message as President of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, I have been working closely with the Commission for several years, including having served as Vice-President from 2002 to 2006. In fact, my career has taken me through many areas that have been, and remain, priorities of UNESCO: adult education, higher education, health and social affairs, ethics, and freedom of expression through my work as a journalist. I am therefore profoundly committed to advancing the work of UNESCO and the Canadian Commission in all of its mandated areas to further the goals of peace, solidarity and development in our world.

Most recently, I had the honour of being the President of the International Bioethics Committee (IBC), a body of 36 independent experts from around the world appointed by the Director-General of UNESCO to follow progress in the life sciences and their applications in order to ensure respect for human dignity and freedom. During my tenure as President (2002-2005), the IBC's work contributed to the adoption by UNESCO of two standard-setting instruments, the *International Declaration on Human Genetic Data* (2003) and the *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights* (2005). These instruments are logical successors to the ground-breaking *Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights*, which was adopted by UNESCO in 1997. At this time I continue to work with UNESCO to develop ways of raising awareness in Member States of the three related instruments and promoting their implementation.

UNESCO is one of the few international fora where complex issues can be debated with the ultimate aim of achieving consensus on universal principles in the area concerned. While the process can be slow at times, the long-term benefits of this work to citizens of all countries - and especially those who for political, cultural or social reasons cannot engage in open debates - cannot be underestimated. This is true not only of bioethics, but applies equally to questions involving education, natural and social sciences, culture and heritage, and communication and information.

In a global context, where countries are looking for new ways to reconcile ethics and politics while respecting cultural diversity and the necessity to live together with a set of common values, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO offers a similar forum for discussion. It benefits from a diverse and engaged membership across the country. I look forward to continue working with you in the coming years to implement and promote UNESCO's programme in Canada and to further our common goals.

Michèle S. Jean

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO operates under the aegis of the Canada Council for the Arts. Its role is to act as a forum for governments and civil society, and to catalyze the participation of Canadian organizations and committed individuals in UNESCO's mandated areas: education, natural and social sciences, culture, and communication and information. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is the only member of the United Nations System to have National Commissions performing this role in each of its Member States.

CONTACT is a semi-annual newsletter published by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO. Information may be reproduced without permission, providing credit is given to CONTACT.

Please direct letters and comments to the editors of CONTACT using the information on this page.



Message from the Secretary-General

The 60th anniversary of UNESCO has given rise to both reflection on its history and accomplishments and to what is often referred to as “the future role of UNESCO.” In 2005, the General Conference, the supreme decision-making body of UNESCO, adopted a resolution on this subject asking the Director-General to undertake extensive consultations on the “long-term future role of UNESCO” and requested that this be reflected in future strategic planning documents and programmes and budgets.

The Executive Board of UNESCO - of which Canada is a member - has met twice since the 2005 General Conference and this question has figured prominently in its debates. Out of these discussions have come key questions about UNESCO’s contribution to the overall United Nations development agenda, and its role in the newly proposed “one UN at country level” model as part of the reform of the entire UN system.

In recent months, the Commission has participated actively in these debates at the Executive Board, in meetings with other National Commissions, and in preparing responses to UNESCO questionnaires. In all of these fora, there is consensus that UNESCO must adapt its working methods and must actively involve non-governmental organizations and National Commissions in its programme activities at country level. To do this will be a complex undertaking as the capacity of National Commissions and the extent of development of civil society varies greatly from country to country and from region to region. Not to do this, however, will call into question the very relevance of UNESCO’s activities.

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO is pleased to play an active role in these important discussions. We hope that our next Annual General Meeting in March 2007 will allow us to again explore the many complex issues that fall within UNESCO’s mandate, and to draw upon the diverse experience, knowledge and expertise of our membership to help define the future role of UNESCO.

David A. Walden



Gilbert Laurin Appointed Canada’s Ambassador to UNESCO

On October 2, 2006, the Honourable Peter MacKay, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, announced the appointment of Gilbert Laurin as Canada’s Ambassador and Permanent Delegate to UNESCO, in Paris.

Mr. Laurin joined the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission in 1980 and served abroad in Marseille, Paris and Damascus. From 1992 to 1994, he worked with the Senior Appointments Secretariat at the Privy Council Office, then moved to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, where he initially served in the Legal Operations Division. He served in Rome from 1997 to 2001, then was assigned to Canada’s Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, first as Minister-Counsellor, then as Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations. Mr. Laurin succeeds Yvon Charbonneau as Ambassador and Permanent Delegate to UNESCO.

(source: Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada)



Change at the Helm of the Canada Council for the Arts

Robert Sirman was appointed Director of the Canada Council for the Arts for a four-year term effective June 26, 2006.

A graduate of the University of Toronto, Mr. Sirman joined the Ontario Government as speechwriter and policy advisory, helping to establish Ontario’s first ministry of culture in 1975. In 1980, he moved to the Ontario Arts Council where he served for 10 years as Director of Operations and Director of Research and Policy Planning. In 1991, he was appointed Administrative Director of the National Ballet School, and during his 15 years in that position, he stabilized the School’s finances and oversaw a major capital expansion program.

Mr. Sirman brings to the Canada Council a wealth of experience in arts management and cultural policies and is deeply committed to the development of the arts in all their diversity. He is also a passionate advocate for the arts and their value to communities and to society at large. One of his first tasks at the Council will be to oversee the celebrations related to the fiftieth anniversary of the organization. In 2007, the Council is celebrating fifty years of support and encouragement of professional artists and arts organizations from across Canada.

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO operates under the aegis of the Canada Council for the Arts.



The Director-General with representatives of UNESCO Chairs. Left to right: Jean-Paul Lafrance, Chairholder, UNESCO-Bell Chair in Communications and International Development, l'Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM); Magda Fusaro, Chairholder as of December 5, 2006, UNESCO-Bell Chair, UQAM; Philippe Poullaouec-Gonidec, Chairholder, UNESCO Chair in landscape and environment, l'Université de Montréal; Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General, UNESCO; Marc Lucotte, Chairholder, UNESCO Chair in Environment and Sustainable Development, UQAM; Josiane Boulad-Ayoub, Chairholder, UNESCO Chair for the Study of the Philosophical Bases of Justice and Democratic Society, UQAM; Claude-Yves Charron, Secretary-General, Network of UNESCO Chairs in Communications (Orbicom), UQAM. (Photo : UQAM)

At a ceremony at Montréal's City Hall on June 6, the Director-General presented Mayor Gérald Tremblay with a certificate designating Montréal a "UNESCO City of Design". With this distinction, Montréal joins the other Cities of Design, Buenos Aires and Berlin, and becomes a member of UNESCO's international Creative Cities Network.

The following day, the Director-General received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Québec at Montréal (UQAM). In his acceptance speech, he praised UQAM's commitment to interdisciplinarity, a key theme for UNESCO. He also recognized the contribution of the International Network of UNESCO Chairs in Communications (ORBICOM), which is housed at the university, to the free circulation of information in national and international contexts.



UNESCO and the Canadian Commission share a booth at WUF3

World Urban Forum 3

The Third Session of the World Urban Forum (WUF3) was held in Vancouver from June 19 to 23, 2006, on the theme "Sustainable Cities – Turning Ideas into Action". The Forum is held every two years to enable civil society, national governments, municipal leaders and interested groups to share experiences on how to make cities and communities better places to live. WUF3, hosted by the Government of Canada in cooperation with UN-HABITAT, marked the 30th anniversary of the first United Nations Habitat Conference, also held in Vancouver in 1976.

A total of 11,418 people registered for the Forum. At numerous sessions and roundtables, participants addressed the challenges of urbanization in an age of high population density from perspectives of housing, cultural diversity and the environment.

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO collaborated closely with UNESCO at WUF3, sharing a stand and working together on the organization of three networking events. The first concerned the International Coalition of Cities against Racism. The second workshop, on managing diversity in cities, benefited from a presentation by Pierre Sané, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, on the Organization's strategies to combat racism around the world. This session was hosted by the Cities and Communities Branch of Infrastructure Canada. The Commission also supported and participated in a meeting of the partners of the Growing Up in Cities project.

Two other international meetings were held in conjunction with the World Urban Forum. The World Youth Forum, coordinated by the Environmental Youth Alliance took place from June 16-18, bringing together more than 400 youth from 40 countries. The first World Peace Forum, which brought together over 300 participants, took place from June 23-28 on the theme "Cities and Communities: Working together to end war and build a peaceful, just and sustainable world." The Commission was actively involved in both parallel events.

AIDS 2006

The XVIth International Aids Conference was held in Toronto August 13-18, 2006, on the theme "Time to Deliver". Organized in partnership between the International AIDS Society (IAS) and the AIDS 2006 Toronto Local Host, it brought together about 25,000 scientists, activists, youth and political leaders and people living with HIV/AIDS from around the world to assess the promises and progress made in relation to treatment, care and prevention of the disease.

One of the co-organisers was the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), which brings together the efforts and resources of ten UN system organizations, including UNESCO, to the global AIDS response. UNESCO, working within the UNAIDS framework, gives priority to education to help prevent the spread of AIDS. It organized five sessions at AIDS 2006 on the subjects of education and prevention.

Youth played an important part at the conference. The Canadian Commission, through its Programme Officer for Youth, worked with non-governmental organizations to ensure that the points of view of young people were included in the mainstream conference agenda.

Canadian Launch of the Education for All Global Monitoring Report

At the World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000, 164 countries committed themselves to achieving six Education for All (EFA) goals by 2015 that would vastly improve learning opportunities for children, youth and adults. The first goal is the expansion and improvement of early childhood care and education.

The *Education for All Global Monitoring Report* is the means for assessing where the world stands on its commitment to provide education for all, and to influence education and aid policies. The 2007 Report, entitled "Strong Foundations" examines essential issues regarding early childhood care and pre-primary education. The Canadian Commission, in partnership with the Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), organized the Canadian launch of the 2007 Report at Ryerson University in Toronto on November 3, 2006.



Nicholas Burnett, Director of the Global Monitoring Report Team (Photo: Ryerson University)

Nicholas Burnett, Director of the Global Monitoring Report Team based at UNESCO, presented the Report, underlining the importance of working holistically on all six of the Education for All goals. While progress is being made on EFA, much needs to be done. His presentation highlighted the 77 million children still not in school and the work needed to achieve higher rates of adult literacy. He also reminded participants of the critical need for teachers and teacher training, and for radical rethinking in the area of teacher education. The Report can be accessed at www.efareport.unesco.org

Municipalities against Racism: the Coalition Grows

Ten municipalities across Canada have decided to join the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination: The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (AB), Calgary (AB), Saskatoon (SK), Thunder Bay (ON), Toronto (ON), Windsor (ON), Montréal (QC), Gatineau (QC), Edmonton (AB) and Drayton Valley (AB). The coalition provides an opportunity for these municipalities to strengthen the work that is already occurring in their jurisdictions with the work of others across the country.

In 2004, UNESCO launched a call for an International Coalition of Cities against Racism with the objective of establishing a network of cities around the world interested in sharing experiences to improve their policies to fight racism, discrimination and xenophobia. From January to June 2005, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO built partnerships and adapted the call to Canadian realities. The “Call for a Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination” was launched at the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA) in Saskatoon. Besides municipalities, partners in the coalition include non-governmental organizations, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, human rights commissions (in particular Alberta and Ontario), associations of municipalities – including the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), l’Union des municipalités du Québec (UMQ) and the Association of Urban Municipalities of Alberta (AUMA) – and researchers and individual experts.

A Pan-Canadian Working Group developed a brochure describing the process by which municipalities could become involved. It includes the commitments, a model declaration of principles which municipalities can sign and the human rights framework of the Canadian Coalition. Interested parties can obtain the brochure from the Canadian Commission. It is also accessible at www.unesco.ca/en/activity/sciences



Presentation of plaques conferring ASPnet status on Alberta schools

ASPnet Coordinators Meet

On September 21-22, 2006, coordinators of the Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) met in Ottawa to update each other on progress made across the country and to discuss future orientations of the network. Representatives of 8 provinces and territories were in attendance. Special guest Sigrid Niedermayer, International Coordinator for ASPnet at UNESCO (Paris) informed participants of recent developments, the priorities and objectives established for the international network and ways in which UNESCO can support networks at the national level. Participants were able to share experiences, discuss ways of working together to build a stronger network.

The Thousand Words of Photojournalism

In partnership with the Canadian Newspaper Association, the Canadian Commission organized an exhibition of works by Canadian photojournalists at Constitution Square in Ottawa from November 20 to December 1, 2006. The purpose of the exhibition was to honour the work of photojournalists, the risks they take and the sacrifices they make in documenting reality. Eleven newspapers and the Canadian Press submitted photographs covering a time-span of forty years.

At the opening of the exhibition, speakers Michèle S. Jean, President of the Canadian Commission, Anne P. Kothawala, President and C.E.O. of the Canadian Newspaper Association and Wendy Wagner of Gowling, Lafleur Henderson LLP, stressed that freedom of the press depends upon the existence of independent media and on the ability of journalists, photojournalists and medial professionals to carry out their work without restrictions. The will and determination to ensure the “free flow of ideas by word and image” is a pillar of UNESCO’s Constitution, and is essential for realizing the objectives of the international Organization.

FLASH!!!

Two UNESCO Conventions, adopted by the General Conference in 2005, are due to come into force in 2007, three months after the deposit of the 30th instrument of ratification of each instrument. Canada has accepted both Conventions. The complete texts of the Conventions can be accessed at www.unesco.org

The International Convention against Doping in Sport will come into force on February 1, 2007.

The UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions will come into force on March 18, 2007--Canada was the first country in the world to accept this Convention.

47th Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO

Theme: “Linking Networks, Sharing Ideas”
Where: Ottawa, Ontario
When: March 16-17, 2007

Watch for information on our web site
www.unesco.ca

L’ORÉAL Canada “For Women in Science”

The L’Oréal-UNESCO “For Women in Science” programme was launched in Paris in 1998 by the L’Oréal Group with the aim of improving the position of women in science by recognizing outstanding women researchers and women scientists at the doctoral and post-doctoral level engaged in promising projects.



Left to right, Michèle S. Jean, President of the Canadian Commission; Linda Furlini and Mariela Segura, recipients of the L’Oréal For Women in Science Research Excellence Fellowships, and Javier San Juan, Director-General of l’Oréal Canada

In Canada, with the support of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, the L’Oréal UNESCO For Women in Science Mentor Fellowships were launched in 2003 to reward young female scientists at the doctoral level and to encourage them to continue their studies. The fellows also share their experiences by participating in the Girls Mentorship Program. Two new fellowships, aiming to support major research projects by women scientists at the post-doctoral level, the L’Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Research Excellence Fellowships-- were created in 2006. Michèle S. Jean, President of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, was a member of the L’Oréal-UNESCO “For Women in Science” Selection Committee.

This year’s L’Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Mentor Fellowships were awarded to Tiffany Edgcombe of the University of Calgary (biomechanics and sports engineering) and Sylvia Drabycz of the University of Calgary (biomedical engineering). The first recipients of the L’Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Research Excellence Fellowships were awarded to Linda Furlini, McGill University (health sciences – aging), and Mariela Segura, McGill University (infectious disease immunology).

Calendar of Major International Events

February 14-16, 2007
35th Session of the International Geoscience Programme
(IGCP) Scientific Board
UNESCO Headquarters
Paris, France

April 10-26, 2007
176th Session of the Executive Board of UNESCO
UNESCO Headquarters
Paris, France

May 3-6, 2007
13th International Book Fair – Bookworld 2007
Prague, Czech Republic

May 28-31, 2007
Building the Scientific Mind (BtSM2007)
Learning Development Institute and Emily Carr Institute
Vancouver, B.C.

June 19-28, 2007
24th Session of the International Oceanographic
Commission (IOC) Assembly
Paris, France

September 25 – October 11, 2007
177th Session of the Executive Board of UNESCO
UNESCO Headquarters
Paris, France

October 16 – November 3, 2007
34th General Conference of UNESCO
Paris, France

November 26-28, 2007
Fourth International Conference on Environmental
Education
Ahmedabad, India

February 4-8, 2008
3rd World Conference on Biosphere Reserves
Madrid, Spain

And remember:

International Polar Year 2007-2008

International Year of Planet Earth 2007-2009