



## UNESCO and Culture of Peace: An Overview

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**Abstract:** *The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is a specialised agency of the United Nations. Its purposes is to contribute to peace and security by promoting international collaboration through education, science, and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, the rule of law, and human rights along with fundamental freedom. UNESCO has 195 member countries and it pursues its objectives through five major programs: Education, Natural Science, Social and Human Sciences, Cultural and Communications and Information. Projects sponsored by UNESCO include literacy, technical, and teacher-training program; International science program; the Promotion of independent media and freedom of the Press; Regional and cultural history projects; The Promotion of cultural diversity; transmission of world literature; International cooperation agreements to secure the world cultural and natural heritage (World Heritage Sites) and to preserve human rights, and attempts to bridge the worldwide digital divide. It is moreover a member of United Nations Development Group. The aim of the UNESCO's is to contribute to building of peace, the eradications of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the science, culture, communication and information. Other priorities of the Organization include attains quality education for all and lifelong learning addressing emerging social and ethical challenges, fostering cultural diversity, a culture of peace and building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communications. The present paper attempts to discuss the role of UNESCO for the Peace and promotion of international Cooperation.*

**Key Words:** UNESCO, Culture, Peace, Human Rights.

### 1. INTRODUCTION :

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) came into existence on November 14, 1946. The forerunner of the UNESCO was the International Institute of Intellectual Corporation created in 1925 and put at the disposal of the League of Nations by France. In 1931, the League created an organization for Intellectual Cooperation in 1942. In 1942, the educational ministers of Allied powers met to study the establishment of an international organization in charge of education. In November 1945, 44 states met at the London Conference and created the UNESCO, in order to defend peace. The organization has its headquarters in Paris. On December 14, 1946, the UNESCO entered into special accords with the UNO by virtue of which the UNESCO obtained the status of a specialized institution.

### 2. UNESCO: Purpose

The purpose of the UNESCO has been eloquently stated in the preamble to its constitution thus : “ The governments of the states parties to this constitution on behalf of their peoples declare that since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defense of peace must be constructed; that ignorance of each other’s ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war “ Cultural integration helps to avoid wars. The purpose of the UNESCO is to contribute to peace and security by promoting cultural understanding.



### 3. Objective of UNESCO :

- UNESCO sponsor projects that improve literacy, provide technical training and education, advance science, protect independent media and press freedom
- Preserve regional and cultural history and promote cultural diversity.
- Take Initiative education to all.

### 4. Membership :

All the members of UNO are members of the UNESCO. Non-members of the UN can also be admitted as members on the recommendations of the Executive Board and by a two-third majority of the General Conference of the UNESCO.

### 5. Organization :

The Organization of UNESCO consists of three organs:

- (1) **General Conference:** The Governing Body, which is composed of representatives from each member state. It determines the main lines of the work of the organization and considers reports from member states. It elects members of the Executive Board and the director-General (with the consent of the Executive Board). It meets annually. However, its extraordinary session can be called by the executive Board. It also approves the financial budget of the organization.
- (2) **The Executive Board:** It consists of 24 members elected for a term of three years. It is responsible for the execution of the programmes adopted by the General Conference. The Board also examines the reports of the Director – General before transmitting them to the General Conference.
- (3) **The Secretariat:** It consists of the Secretary – General and such other officers as may be necessary. The Director- General holds office for 6 years. He is authorized to participate in the proceedings of the General conference as well as the Executive Board, but does not possess any vote. The Secretariat puts the programmes into action.

### 6. UNESCO: Peace and Promotion of International Cooperation

The UNESCO promotes peace through collaboration in the field of education. There are five sectors of the programme on education, on natural science, on social sciences and their application, on culture and communication, cooperation for the development of external relations.

The UNESCO attaches great importance to imparting of education to the illiterate people – both children and adults. It helps the member states in this regard by furnishing advice and expert assistance on matters like teacher training, school construction, preparation of curricula and text books and so on. Its projects range from literacy campaigns and training of teachers, scientists, technicians and engineers to fostering mutual appreciation of different cultures and providing technical assistance in developing mass communications.

It encourages basic research in natural sciences. It helps member states to improve the teaching of basic sciences in all levels. It encourages basic research in the various fields of science. It also endeavors to apply science and technology to development. In the Indian Ocean expedition arranged by the UNESCO, twenty countries have participated.

The UNESCO has laid stress on the preservation of human rights and stands against racial discrimination. It encouraged original artistic creations. It helped in the promotion of theatre by establishing International Theatre Institute.

An International fund for culture has been established. For better mutual understanding of countries the UNESCO has undertaken projects to write the history of Africa, Latin America, The Balkan and the Slavic Countries and so on. It has played a crucial role in the preservation of historical monuments such as Angkor, carvings in ancient temples from being submerged by the Aswan Dam in Egypt, Borobudur temple in Java, and more recently the Parthenon in Athens.

The UNESCO encourages translations of literature of every country in other languages. It helps the nationals of poor countries to overcome the problem of foreign exchange and helps them to procure books through coupon system. It also makes efforts to determine knowledge about Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The UNESCO chalked out programmes which covers a wide range of problems such as human rights, man and environmental problems,



population, communication among peoples of the different parts of the world and so on. Among the problems that the UNESCO encounters are political and financial problems. The problem of grouping states into regions became serious. The financial crisis in the UNESCO has very serious consequences for the organization. The USA has refused to pay its contributions while some other countries came forward to lend without interest.

## 7. UNESCO and Peace Education :

Education shall be directed toward the full development of the Human personality and to the strengthening of respect for Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom. It 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  
(Article 26, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.)

The main goal of the UNESCO are to ensure lasting stability and peace within realms of humanity, culture and Education through unification of many Nations.

- **Actions to Promote respect for Human Rights:** The elaboration and international acceptance of universal human rights, especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been one of the most vital steps towards the transition from a culture of war and violence to a culture of peace and non-violence.
- **Actions to develop education, training and research for non-violence and peace:** Education is the principal means of promoting a culture of peace. This includes not only formal education in schools, but also informal and non-formal in the full range of social institutions, including the family and the media.
- **Actions to implement sustainable human development for all:** It is increasingly recognized that in the long term, everyone gains from the implementation of sustainable human development for all. The poverty and exclusion of some increase the vulnerability of all.
- **Promoting gender and empowerment of women:** The eradication of poverty requires actions promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. According the poor, women and children contribute significantly to food production and household in course yet are offers the main victims of poverty. In order to succeed, poverty eradications strategies most address gender issues by examining the differential impact of policies and programmes on men and women as wee as on adults and children.
- **Environmental sustainability as well as social sustainability of development:** Environment sustainability as wee as social sustainability of development is essential for prevention of violent conflict. Action must be taken to preserve and regenerate the natural resources base.
- **Education for democratic citizenship:** Education for democratic citizenship should be a major correspondent of curricula at all levels of education systems as well as in the family, the media, and all others engaged in informal and non-formal education. In the action Plan adopted by the Heads of States and Government of the Council of Europe (October, 1997) a priority in given to education for democratic citizenship which promotes citizen awareness of their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society.
- **Co-ordination with actions for International peace and Security:** Actions to promote international peace and security as conceived in the charter and developed in the practice of the United Nations are synergistic and mutually reinforcing to actions for a culture of peace. International peace, in the sense of the absence of war and the presence of security between nations, is a indispensable condition for the establishment of a culture peace.

## 8. CONCLUSION :

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization promote international cooperation in the areas of science, education and culture. In this way it works towards international peace. It also protects human rights and promotes cultural development and helps to protect the world's natural and cultural heritage. Through its work in the spheres of education, culture and science, UNESCO plays a role in promoting and protecting human rights. However, as is evident from the spheres of its competence, the role of UNESCO remains primarily one of pursuing and promoting intellectual activity. In that sense, its manner of working must be assessed slightly differently from organizations that deal more directly with human rights law and practices. UNESCO endeavors to contribute to security and peace in the world by promoting collaboration among nations through education, culture science and communication.



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