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1, VILLA DE SÉGUR - PARIS VII
TÉL. 734.00.66 - 734.02.36

EXECUTIVE BOARD - 105th SESSION

Item 5.1.2 - Topic (i) - Education to encourage respect for human rights and the ideals of peace.

Mrs. M.L. PINTASILGO

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

Paris, 18th September 1978





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I wished the Executive Board had enough time to make substantial contribution to this discussion. This being impossible, I wouldn't like to fail congratulating Professor Kutakov and Professor Torney for the studies they have given us this morning. To my mind they complement each other even if they come from different points of view and almost opposite angles of tackling the same question. I must say that I consider this kind of work and the possibility for such a discussion one of the most fundamental acts of the Executive Board and to which we should give in the future much more consideration and time.

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Thus said, I would like just to highlight one or two facts which for me are very important in the context of the topic given to these two rapporteurs.

WHAT IS PEACE ?

The first question is the link between human rights and peace. When we are talking about human rights and peace, I have always the impression that we are talking as if peace would be threatened at this moment. I remember that in June we had a round table here at Headquarters on the future for the children of the year 2.000. One of the experts present made a most striking remark :



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he mentioned that since the end of the II World War, there have been one hundred and nineteen wars going on in the planet involving directly sixty-one countries and indirectly eighty-two countries. This figures have remained in my mind in a very clear way. This is why I have to ask myself - when we discuss human rights and peace : are we from another planet? Are we aliens to those wars that have been going on?

Such is for me the real question. Somehow it points out to a need for a more realistic approach from the Organization and maybe of the entire United Nations System to the whole question of human-rights-and-peace. I think the two contributions we have had this morning are certainly on the lines we should pursue and go even further.

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MASSIVE VIOLATIONS

We may not be aware of all these wars. On the other hand it is a fact that, daily, mass media are telling us of massive violation of human rights. How can peace exist in such a context? And yet this seems to belong to another sphere of concerns to which we are not directly associated. This is why I ask myself two basic questions in this regard. When we speak of massive violation of human rights (and Professor Kutakov in his report deals at length with this question) I have always this question : who declares that there are massive violations of human rights?





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Honestly, I have the impression that we have already and again divided the world in two categories : the "first class citizens" which deserve treatment in international bodies because there is violation of human rights and threat to peace, and "second class citizens" where there are some troubles going on, but (of course!) we don't muddle - "it is their time" - I have even heard some people say "it is their Middle Age period"... (My friends of the Southern Hemisphere know very well what I mean). Without interfering in the legitimate right (very much stressed in both documents) of non interference in the internal affairs of each State, if international organizations have reached a mature stage of their work in this field they have to abolish the absurd silence covering up more than half of mankind.

EDUCATION FOR ALL HUMAN RIGHTS Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

A second question I would like to raise concerns the different aspects of education for human rights and peace. Professor Torney has developed in a very clear way the different steps; the psychology involved, the different levels, and how important it is to start at an early stage of human life dealing with formation of the human rights.

I wonder if education on human rights per se is the only way to approach the training and the capacity of human beings to be aware and open to this whole question. I am just back from the European Conference on Science and Technological Policies and I am very glad to stress here what seems to be the concern of most of our colleagues in that field. In fact, when we tackle the





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question of the societal relevance of Science and Technology the main stress is put on the fact that Science and Technology should aim at the development of all human rights, not only the civic and political, but the economic, social and cultural rights as well. It is clear from the exchange we had that the question of the neutrality of science and technology that for a long time has been propagated by many technocrats around the world is a fallacy. Science and technology have a lot to do with education for human rights in their broadest sense. I think that this ought to be an element of our thinking.

CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS

As to the practical points there are many interesting suggestions in both studies.

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- 1) I certainly consider as a structural difficulty the presence of different units in the Secretariat dealing with the same subject. I know to some extent the problems involved, but the multisectoral approach that was stressed seems to me a very urgent one. I would like to urge the Secretariat to implement that approach.
- 2) I would like also to support the idea of the Committee of Specialists, because it doesn't seem to me that we really profit enough from the tremendous wealth of thought that exists in all the Member States for the development of our thinking and mainly in terms of trying to see the widest approach to the question of human rights and peace.



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3) I was also very struck by the question of justification for new meetings which I guess could be a general recommendation for all meetings of UNESCO and not just for the meetings concerned with human rights. I think there is in the Organization a tremendous waste : you just throw away a lot of energy without taking into account the work which has already been done and the many ideas that have already been put on the table and on which a common body of thought could certainly be built.

4) And the last point I would like to stress (which is present in the two reports and in a clear way as a recommendation in the report of Professor Turney) is the need for research not only on attitudinal change towards peace and human rights but also on the different values implied in the different cultures and religions so as to understand what is the grasp of the different peoples around the world in what concerns peace and human rights. I just end remembering that in the Christian tradition, peace does mean richness, fullness, prosperity, abundance. It is far away from the mere idea of a comfortable coexistence. It has much more to do with the happiness of people as individuals and together.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

