



## TRIENNIAL REPORT OF IFUW REPRESENTATIVES TO UNESCO IN PARIS

**IFUW Representatives:** Marianne Bernheim, Coordinator  
Cynthia Ghorra-Gobin; Denise Macé, Françoise Sauvage, President of the UNESCO/NGO Conference and Liaison Committee  
*Ad hoc representatives:* from 2005: Lucile Rivière; from 2006: Eliane Didier; from 2007: Murielle Joye-Patry, Member, Committee for the Follow-up to the Higher Education Conference

Françoise Sauvage, first elected President of the NGO-UNESCO International Conference and President of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee for 2003-2005, was unanimously elected for 2005-2007. For the splendid work she has been doing with UNESCO, she received one of France's highest honours, the title of "Officer in the Legion of Honour" in the name of the President of the French Republic. Few women have received this highest distinction.

Françoise's name does not appear often in this report because she is presently acting on behalf of all the NGOs accredited to UNESCO.

### EMERGING ISSUES

As the necessity of significant reform among the United Nations family appears given for more and more governments, the growing importance of the NGO Committee of the Executive Board is an opportunity for the Liaison Committee and all NGOs accredited to UNESCO to have input into this process.

There is a real challenge to be more involved with the preparation of UNESCO's medium-term strategy and the budget for each biennium, as well as the internal reflections on the future of UNESCO within the experience of "One U.N. House" which will be presented to the Executive Board in April and to the General Conference for adoption in October 2007.

The NGOs' International Day, held in December 2006, brought together more than 100 participants to discuss issues related to *Human Dignity, and its scientific, ethic, cultural and social dimensions*.

### IFUW'S REPRESENTATIVES AT WORK:

IFUW's Programme for Action, "*Women: Agents for Change*", focuses on three key areas where action is needed: 1) Education - 2) Information Society - 3) Human Security and Peace. IFUW Representatives participate in the following UNESCO/NGO Joint Programme Commissions, NGO groups and NGO Collective Consultations, whose work is closely related to these themes.

#### 1) Education

**Eradication of extreme poverty** (Denise): This Commission deals with the **Education for Women** needed to fight poverty, and particularly extreme poverty, which still concerns many more women than men.

**Dialogue for the culture of peace:** This Commission deals mainly with **Education for Cultural Diversity**, the subgroup of which Denise was a member until the adoption of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. IFUW was invited to the main session for the preparation of the vote of the Convention (Marianne). As President of the Liaison

Committee, Françoise was very much involved and invited to join the Drafting Committee. The Convention was adopted on 20 October 2005 . It entered into force on 18 March 2007 when 30 States had ratified it.

**Education for Urban Sustainable Development** (Marianne/President, Cynthia/Vice-President and Lucile): This Commission deals with the **UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014)**. After a very instructive questionnaire, the Commission has dealt mainly with the preparation of a workshop for the International NGO Conference (December 2005), *Education in Urban Areas, Promoting Values*. The debate which followed, and was chaired by Cynthia, was very rich. In January 2007, Marianne and Cynthia organized a round table at the request of the Commission. Françoise opened the meeting stressing the fact that this would be an exchange between specialists and non-specialists: Architects and NGOs. Marianne introduced the Commission and Cynthia moderated the debate that followed presentations by four panelists. She highlighted the main points of the four presentations on sustainable development: 1) the need to reconsider "urban sprawl" and to find alternatives, 2) the role of research, 3) the distinction to be made between "green agendas" and "brown agendas" and 4) the interest of hybridizing modern techniques and traditional knowledge in the construction of houses.

**Literacy and Education for All** (Marianne): This group issued invitations to a meeting where the yearly report made by an independent reporter was presented (2006). A joint meeting of the Education for All and the Education for Urban Sustainable Development groups was held. While the two commissions have different objectives, they are complementary. ( April 2007).

**Higher Education** (Françoise, Marianne, Cynthia): The UNESCO/NGO Collective Consultation held its 9th session at UNESCO House in Paris (6-8 April 2005). Françoise chaired a meeting and Cynthia a quite successful workshop: *Higher education for sustainable development*.

We are very pleased that Murielle Joye has accepted to join the team for Higher Education. In this context, she participated in the Colloquium on Research and Higher Education Policy, which gathered more than 800 researchers, experts and policy-makers at UNESCO in December 2006. IFUW has been asked by UNESCO to prepare a background paper identifying emerging trends in the role of civil society partnerships in development. Murielle is coordinating the work, which will involve contributions from several IFUW members with experience in the field.

## **2) Information Society**

**Communication and new technologies** (Marianne): This Commission has not been as interesting as expected, but IFUW managed to introduce a debate about the importance for women and for society as a whole that they receive the same training as men. Thus, *Education for Women* has been considered as an important factor in this Commission.

## **3) Human Security and Peace :**

**Science and ethics** (Eliane) In this commission, Eliane has started to work with the group that deals with bioethics, and especially with a new deontology sub-group, which is preparing a code of ethics for scientists.

**Declaration on bioethics** (Marianne, Elaine since 2006): This commission has been concerned with the adoption of a convention that will be the equivalent for science of the convention recently adopted for culture. The normative aspect of UNESCO's work has always been important, but with globalization it has increased.

**Human Rights** (Marianne); This is a new Commission started to address women's rights. Our representatives shared with them the special issue of the French Association's journal *Diplômée* published in June 2001 on a seminar on CEDAW held in the French National Assembly.

**Youth** (Lucile) This Commission was created during the last International NGO Conference (December 2005) to ensure a permanent dialogue between UNESCO and NGOs on issues related to youth.

Marianne Bernheim, Coordinator  
Françoise Sauvage, President of the UNESCO-NGO Conference  
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