



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



International
Bureau of
Education



Thinking and Building

Peace

Through Innovative Textbook Design

**Report of the inter-regional experts'
meeting on developing guidelines for
promoting peace and intercultural
understanding through curricula,
textbooks and learning materials**

Paris

14-15 June 2007

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PREFACE

At the half-way point toward fulfilling the world commitment to achievement of the Education for All and Millennium Development Goals, there has been significant progress toward the goal of universal access to education. However, with 72 million children still out of school and one in five adults without basic literacy skills, we still have a long way to go toward reaching this goal. At the same time, we cannot and should not ignore the issue of quality. Are the needs of all learners being met? Is the education they receive relevant to their lives? Do they have access to textbooks that are learner friendly, gender-balanced, and free from stereotypes? Do teaching methods and materials promote the skills and values essential to learning to live together in a rapidly globalizing world?

EFA Goal number 6 explicitly calls upon educational systems around the world to ‘improve every aspect of the quality of education’. The Dakar Framework for Action lays out a specific correlation between an adequate supply of learning materials and successful learning outcomes, and calls for curricula and materials that build upon the knowledge and experiences of teachers and learners. As we know, books, equipment and even sophisticated learning technologies cannot by themselves ensure that quality learning is taking place. School environments, curricula, managers, methodologies, communities, and above all teachers have key roles. However, because of the special status ascribed to textbooks as authoritative sources for the transfer of knowledge and social values, the influence they can have on impressionable young minds is a matter of shared concern.

The experts’ meeting ‘Thinking and Building Peace through Innovative Textbook Design’ held in Paris 14-15 June 2007 brought together textbook developers, researchers and practitioners from countries of Europe and the Arab States to deliberate issues of quality at several levels. These discussions focused not only on the content of textbooks and learning materials, but also on their instructional design and use in a variety of learning contexts. The common agenda underlying the discussions was how to reinforce and expand their role as tools for peace as well as for gaining equitable access to knowledge and skills for learners of all backgrounds and abilities.

The development and use of textbooks and other tools for learning are likely to continue to evolve with new advances in technology and innovations for effective, equitable and inclusive learning. However, the goal remains much the same. Within the framework of the Cooperation Programme between UNESCO and ISESCO (Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) it is our mutual hope that the conclusions and recommendations reached by the experts will be the first step in a process that will result in the formulation of Guidelines for the development and use of materials that enhance all aspects of quality learning as well as contribute to the long term development of sustainable cultures of peace.



Ann Therese Ndong-Jatta
Director
Division for the Promotion of Basic Education

INTER-REGIONAL EXPERTS' MEETING ON THINKING AND BUILDING PEACE THROUGH INNOVATIVE TEXTBOOK DESIGN

BACKGROUND

The Inter-Regional Experts' Meeting (UNESCO, Paris, 14-15 June 2007) was envisaged as an important step in the implementation of the UNESCO-ISESCO Cooperation Programme, aimed at developing 'Guidelines for Promoting Peace and Intercultural Understanding through Curricula, Textbooks and Learning Materials' (Activity I.11).

Based on their respective mandates, both organizations are actively involved in the building of peace in the minds of young people, with a view to fostering competencies for learning to live together in the twenty-first century. In the framework of the Euro-Arab dialogue, this activity is closely linked to several other initiatives aimed at promoting constructive dialogue amongst peoples of diverse cultural backgrounds and religious traditions, between and within the multicultural societies of Europe and the Arab States. These principles and practices for learning to live together are at the core of programmatic action of both organizations in the fields of education, science and culture, with the aim of supporting and facilitating international understanding, co-operation and the advancement of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Both UNESCO and ISESCO promote education in line with Article 26 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, stating explicitly that...

Education shall be directed toward the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

Given that in most educational contexts textbooks are the most visible part of the curriculum, they have an important role to perform in shaping learners' knowledge, values, attitudes and behaviours. While they are not the only factor that impacts on personal and social development (teachers, the school environment and the broader social contexts also play important roles), textbooks are extremely influential and continue to be so, even in our increasingly digitized era.

Since the founding of UNESCO in 1946, significant progress has been made in the direction of fostering people's comprehension of, and respect for, different ways of life as a basis for peaceful and constructive management of diversity. The UNESCO General Conference Recommendation 18C/24 of 1974 stated with conviction that 'understanding and respect for all peoples, their cultures, civilizations, values and ways of life, including domestic ethnic cultures and cultures of other nations' should be considered as one of the six guiding principles of education policy the world over (UNESCO, 1974:2). This normative instrument also reiterated the role of textbooks

and learning materials in achieving this aim by specifying that ‘appropriate and constructive use should be made of the entire range of equipment and aids available, from textbooks to television and of the new educational technology’ (ibid.:6). Further to this...

A global approach, comprising the introduction of international components, serving as a framework for presenting local and national aspects of different subjects and illustrating the scientific and cultural history of mankind, should be employed in textbooks and all other aids to learning, with due regard to the value of the visual arts and music as factors conducive to understanding between different cultures (ibid.).

However, despite international efforts to accommodate a global culture of peace, mutual respect and constructive intercultural dialogue, the second part of the twentieth century was rife with ethnic conflicts, wars and increasing levels of violence in daily life. Rapid changes in economy, technology, communication and social life enhanced global interdependencies and mobility, thus contributing to new and promising relations based on exchange and cooperation among individuals, people and nations of the world. However, at the same time, globalization processes have engendered equally new and often unfair forms of competition, clashes of cultures and values, as well as other critical challenges to a common peaceful and sustainable future. On the one hand, globalization processes and increased interdependencies project a constantly evolving awareness of the need to approach humanity as a whole as the survival reference group (Naumann et al., 2006:137). On the other, they provoke new tensions among local, national, regional and international individual and collective identities, between different ways of living and in relation to the dialectic of cooperation and competition.

As stated in the *Delors Report* (Delors et al., 1996), in an increasingly crowded world, with globalization and interdependencies engendering both opportunities and challenges, ‘learning to live together’ becomes the most essential pillar of education for the twenty-first century. Although textbooks and learning materials are not the only school-based factors capable of contributing to peace-building and learning to live together, their role in processes of values and knowledge transmission, as well as cognitive development, cannot be disregarded. In some cases, curricula and textbooks are at the heart of major disagreements and violent conflicts (as in the case of Kosovo or Rwanda). However, they can also act as healing instruments and tools for constructive reconciliation. Their role varies widely across cultures and education systems, depending also on education traditions and the decentralisation of textbook production and selection. In some parts of the world, textbook functions and usage have not changed appreciably. In others, their role has altered dramatically in light of new learning theories and approaches, as well as their diminishing visibility in the vast sea of learning resources available electronically via the Internet. Yet, despite the emergence of new instructional media, traditional textbooks are still considered essential learning tools, especially for learners who do not have access to libraries or computers. Given their sustained importance in teaching and learning for peace-building, UNESCO has maintained its efforts to promote textbooks and learning materials that are ‘accurate, balanced, up-to-date ... and [that] will enhance mutual knowledge and understanding among different people’ (UNESCO, 1974:7).

In light of UNESCO's *Comprehensive Strategy for Textbooks and Other Learning Materials* (2005) and its *Guidelines on Intercultural Education* (2006), countries are called upon to take several quality criteria into consideration. This involves developing curricula and textbooks that:

- build upon the diverse systems of knowledge and experiences of the learners;
- incorporate their histories, knowledge and technologies, value systems as well as further social, economic and cultural aspirations;
- introduce the learners to an understanding and an appreciation of their cultural heritage;
- aim at developing respect for the learners' cultural identity, language and values;
- make use of local resources.

The activity planned in cooperation with ISESCO, 'Guidelines for Promoting Peace and Intercultural Understanding through Curricula, Textbooks and Learning Materials', aims to provide expert support on cooperative processes informed by research and practice linked to these criteria, with the assumption that their specific aspects and applications will be locally defined. Ultimately, the goal of the proposed Guidelines is to contribute towards bridging the gap between, on the one hand, theory and international standards, and on the other, practices in the actual design and production of textbooks and other learning resources.

ORGANIZATION AND OBJECTIVES

The Inter-Regional Experts' Meeting was organized by the UNESCO Education Sector, the Division for Promotion of Basic Education (ED/BAS) and its Section of Inclusion and Quality Learning Enhancement in cooperation with ISESCO and UNESCO's Culture Sector. The two-day event served to create space for common reflection upon links between peace-building and innovative textbook design and implementation. These two themes were brought together with a view to exploring up-to-date theoretical aspects pertaining to international textbook research, which can inform the design and production of Guidelines to promote peace and intercultural understanding based on current research findings. Within this space for reflection and exchange, the objectives of the meeting were to:

- articulate fundamental assumptions on the role of textbooks and learning materials in the teaching-learning processes of the school systems of participating countries;
- clarify desired outcomes for learners that the international Guidelines should foster, such as critical thinking and other cognitive processes for integrating and evaluating new information, communication skills for interpersonal and intercultural dialogue, and skills and behaviours for collaborative problem-solving;
- identify core types of textbook-based learning activities for learning to live together;

- agree on content and methodological aspects to be addressed through the development of international Guidelines;
- recommend a process for the drafting and finalization of inter-regional Guidelines in 2008/2009, as well as their wide dissemination and usage in the context of improving peace education and learning to live together in school and out-of-school settings.

With these underlying principles and objectives in mind, presentations and discussions focused on three major themes:

Theme 1: Intercultural and international perspectives on the impact of textbooks, materials and media on learning

Theme 2: Beyond the text – integrating activities for thinking and building peace

Theme 3: Thinking and learning across cultures and disciplines – skills for a sustainable world?

The meeting provided an opportunity for sharing information and experiences in textbook research and development in Europe and the Arab States. Participants considered issues of instructional design¹, emphasizing those features intended to improve the effectiveness of textbooks and learning media in all subject areas in order to help build cognitive, communicative and social skills for global citizenship. The event also served as a unique forum for information exchange in support of existing multi-year initiatives² focusing on the content analysis and revision of school textbooks in the two regions. Additionally, the recommendations of the meeting were intended to become the foundation for identifying and promoting specific strategies for the enhancement of learning and the promotion of peace through textbook design.

More than 40 experts participated in the meeting, including representatives from Kuwait, Palestine, Egypt, Morocco, Norway, France, Serbia, the United Kingdom, Germany, Estonia and Cyprus. Representatives of different international organizations were also present, including ISESCO, ALECSO (Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization), the European Commission, the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research and the Gulf Arab States Educational Research Centre. Ms Mina El-Mghari, Secretary-General of the National Commission of Morocco to UNESCO and Mr Jean-Pierre Boyer, Secretary-General of the National Commission of France for UNESCO, who led the groundbreaking joint research initiative *Comparative Studies on School Textbooks*, played key roles in the proceedings. Representatives of publishers and international textbook associations were also present (including the Arab Publishers' Association, Lebanon, the International Association for Research on Textbooks and Learning Media, Norway, and the European Publishers' Group, Denmark).

1. Including, but not limited to, type and sequencing of activities, layout, graphics, and instructional 'voice'.

2. Ongoing initiatives include:

- Permanent Conference on the Euro-Arab Dialogue 'Learning How to Live Together' (UNESCO Regional Office for Science in the Arab States, Mediterranean Programme).
- Comparative Studies in School Textbooks (UNESCO National Commissions for France and Morocco).
- The Image of the Other in History Teaching (Council of Europe).

PROCEEDINGS

As stated in the inaugural remarks of Ms Françoise Rivière, Assistant Director-General for Culture, Ms Ann Therese Ndong-Jatta, Director of the Division for the Promotion of Basic Education, and Mr Seydou Cissé, representative of ISESCO, the meeting was the result of an effective inter-agency and UNESCO inter-sectoral cooperation strategy. Such broad cooperation is indispensable, given that ‘thinking and building peace’ through innovative textbook design must be approached by taking into account how different educational, socio-political and cultural factors are interwoven in specific contexts. In order to enhance the added value of their cooperation, UNESCO ED/BAS and ISESCO were pleased to take stock of activities and achievements of the UNESCO Culture Sector in the areas of promoting inter-cultural understanding and fostering a culture of peace.

Participants benefited from two comprehensive key-note speeches by Mr Alan Peacock - ‘Towards international guidelines for innovative text design and use’ and Ms Kawsar Kuochock - ‘Teaching education for peace across the curriculum’, followed by plenary discussions. An enjoyable and stimulating ice-breaking activity, grounded in the power of names and personal histories to facilitate lively intercultural communication, was facilitated by Ms Stavroula Philippou.

In the context of two panel sessions in the afternoon of the first day, different presenters tackled the issues of ‘Intercultural and international perspectives on the impact of textbooks, materials and media on learning’ (Mr Preben Späth, Mr Rainer Jansen, Mr Jaan Mikk and Mr Ali Bubshait) and ‘Beyond the text – integrating activities for thinking and building peace’ (Ms Saïda Charfeddine, Ms Stavroula Philippou, Ms Susanne Knudsen and Ms Bente Aamotsbakken, and Mr Mohammed El-Gomati). At the end of the first day Ms Dakmara Georgescu (International Bureau of Education /IBE, UNESCO and General Rapporteur) presented the publication edited by Ms Cecilia Braslavsky and Ms Katya Halil *Textbooks and Quality Learning for All: Some Lessons Learned from International Experiences* (UNESCO, 2006).

The second day opened with presentations on the third theme, ‘Thinking and learning across cultures and disciplines – skills for a sustainable world?’ (Mr M’hammed Zgor, Mr Maher Hashweh, Mr Nasser Assi and Mr Rachid Aous). The participants then split into three parallel group discussions and focused on different questions related to the development of international Guidelines for textbook development from the perspective of fostering peace education and a culture of peace. These included *whom* the Guidelines should address, *who* should write them, *what* they should contain, and *how* they should promote peace building through innovative textbook development (see Annex 4: List of Recommendations). Proceedings concluded with the presentation of a synthesis of discussions and outcomes by Ms Dakmara Georgescu and reactions by the participants, followed by concluding reflections by Mr Seydou Cissé and Ms Ann Therese Ndong-Jatta.

Summary of Presentations

1. Textbooks and Learning

In his presentation on general issues with regard to textbook development and usage, Mr Alan Peacock defined textbooks as ‘text materials designed to provide definitive and comprehensive support for teaching the curriculum in school’, that is for a specific subject and grade (Peacock, 2007:2). Textbooks are a type of ‘text’, defined as ‘materials in any publishable form (print, digital, multimedia) that support teaching and learning’, but they are comprehensive in scope and thus more authoritative (ibid.).

Mr. Peacock stressed that despite the fact that textbooks are used for long periods, and are still the most accessible medium of instruction in many parts of the world, several false assumptions about texts, and textbooks specifically, are still powerful and widespread. These include the following:

- Readers understand immediately how to use a text.
- Texts are used in the way the author intended.
- Most users are proficient in the language of the text.
- A text is suitable for all readers, regardless of their differences.
- Visual and symbolic elements are context-free and culture-free.
- Visual literacy is acquired without explicit teaching.
- Reading (rather than observation, talk and discussion) is the best way to learn.
- If materials are attractive and sell well, they must be effective for learning.

The presenter emphasized that such false assumptions should be carefully considered by textbook authors, publishers and users, especially by teachers, in order to avoid the pitfalls of taking the usage and effects of texts (even in the case of quality texts and textbooks) for granted. Textbooks make a range of demands on learners, all of which are underpinned by visions and concepts of learning that the textbook authors and publishers share, but that are not necessarily obvious to learners and facilitators of learning. Textbooks advance conceptual aspects (abstract ideas), linguistic demands (vocabulary, terminology, complex sentences), they provide visual stimuli (diagrams, symbols, charts), different formats (layout, verbal-visual links) as well as messages. Therefore, one has to continually ask whose voice is speaking (ibid:6).

Textbooks are usually packed with information and require effort to be understood and handled. As for many other elements of the man-made environment, textbooks can be tackled from the perspective of both their advantages and their disadvantages, and decisions to use them should be based on careful considerations of purpose, context, resources and alternative solutions. For instance, mandated textbooks, while providing support to insecure teachers, can be a long time in production and soon become out of date. In addition, while constituting a source of academic and intellectual authority, they are often misused or underused, are too culture-specific to travel, or are too conservative in design or prohibitively expensive.

Mr Peacock also analysed other ‘mythologies’ surrounding the production and usage of textbooks, such as:

- One may think that textbooks are for students, but many of them actually function as teachers' guides.
- It is often assumed that textbooks are chosen based on informed decisions, but in fact they are often selected by a superficial 'flick-through' process.
- While textbooks are supposed to inspire interaction, problem-solving and activities oriented towards connecting conceptual approaches and real-life situations, in many cases the learners copy a text into their exercise books because teachers lack the competencies to use the textbooks in other ways.

Since there are many commercial constraints on textbook production (such as domination of international publishing houses, the period of at least two years needed to produce a new textbook, major costs involved in design, illustrations and marketing, and the difficulties with adapting textbooks to widely differing classroom contexts), Mr Peacock reflected whether, in some situations, the usage of alternative texts may not be more advantageous. Alternative texts, when compared with mandated textbooks, may provide a wider choice for teachers. They can be produced quickly to respond to local circumstances, can be tailored to local contexts and needs and can potentially be produced by local agents (small publishers, schools, consortia and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)). However, the decision of using such alternative texts should not ignore possible challenges and disadvantages. The quality may be variable, teachers may choose inappropriate texts, and some schools (for instance, in rural or remote areas) would be still disadvantaged in terms of access to quality learning materials.

What does it mean to be innovative? In the case of both alternative and mandated texts, the recommendation was to choose formats familiar to children, such as comic books, magazines and digital technology. Mr Peacock also recommended that innovative approaches be generated based on open partnerships between governments, universities, schools, authors and publishers, following the example of Chile, among others.³ Innovation also stems from using and encouraging links to web-based sources and materials from other countries. Lastly and importantly, to be innovative means to prioritise training of teachers with regard to how to use texts and textbooks in the most beneficial way for learners. As some of the participants stated, to be innovative could also mean inviting students to become authors.

Many comments from participants stressed that providing quality textbooks in poor countries remains an issue of major concern for which different solutions could be envisaged, such as to:

- produce alternative learning materials through networking and partnerships in order to assure professional and community control on quality;
- produce sets of materials (i.e. including textbooks, teachers' guides and activity books for students) that are less expensive than separate books;
- engage users in the process of authorship and use local knowledge and experiences (e.g. involving parents in comic book design as has occurred in South Africa);
- complement textbooks with radio broadcasting (e.g. as in Namibia).

3. In Chile, the decision was taken to replace mandated textbooks with alternative materials based on partnerships between schools, communities, and NGOs.

More effective efforts have to be made in order to transfer new curricular and methodological concepts and practices into textbook development. These include curriculum integration, classroom interaction, interactive pedagogy and competency development, such as developing communication competencies. Textbooks are often used as references for assessment and evaluation. As a result, more efforts need to be invested in joint capacity building programmes, including enhanced international exchanges and cooperation, for textbook authors, headmasters, inspectors, teachers and evaluators. Such joint capacity building programmes, by fostering synergies, would support much needed cohesiveness and pedagogical coherence in education systems in the Arab countries and across the world (Mr Ali Bubshait).

2. Textbooks and Peace

Ms Kawsar Kouchok delivered a key-note speech on the concept of peace education and its effective translation into the school curriculum. She emphasised that the concept and practice of peace should be applied to everyday situations, not just against war. Learners should experience peace in their everyday behaviour, in their relationships with family, neighbours, friends, colleagues and teachers, and in rejecting all forms of violence and handling conflict constructively. In addition, learners should apply the principles of peace in their relationship with the environment, and in the way they position themselves towards diversity and ‘otherness’.

Ms Kouchok referred to Egypt’s experience in teaching peace education as both an integrative concept and an approach in all subjects across the curriculum. In the Egyptian educational context, peace also forms a special topic in ‘carrier-subjects’ such as ‘morality and values education’. Since the initiation of a comprehensive educational reform of basic education (the elementary and preparatory stages) in 1990, peace education represents an important component of cross-curriculum objectives and approaches. Peace education occurs alongside related learning about human rights and democracy, children’s rights, gender issues, tolerance and constructive management of diversity (especially with regard to aspects linked with tourism). In addition, it links to health education, consumer education, environmental awareness, and citizenship and patriotic education.

In Egypt, curriculum developers worked on developing comprehensive conceptual maps for integrating tolerance and education for peace in the overall curriculum. Based on such maps, different concepts and approaches pertaining to peace education could be explicitly associated with learning objectives, content, methods and outcomes in different existing learning areas and subjects, and could therefore be appropriately sequenced. How to integrate such peace education concepts and approaches in textbooks and other learning materials constituted an issue of major concern. The Egyptian solution was to develop sets of materials, including textbooks, activity books focusing on everyday life situations, as well as teacher guides on interactive and participatory methodologies.

The Egyptian education authorities also decided to promote peace education via an elementary carrier-subject called ‘morality and values education’. This decision stemmed from the fact that from Grade 1 to 12 separate religion courses are offered in the curriculum for both Moslem students (Islamic Religious Education) and Christian students (Christian Religious Education). Stakeholders proposed that a new subject

be introduced in addition to religion, in order to promote common morals and values in connection to everyday life situations and with a view to fostering learning to live together.

In the new elementary subject of morality and values education, students deal with a range of concepts, values and attitudes such as love, peace, friendship, cooperation, honesty, sincerity and trustworthiness. They also learn about success, modesty, happiness, responsibility, generosity, non-violence and solidarity. Conceptual approaches are well balanced with activities such as games, story-telling, role play, drama, debates and drawing, based on a child-centred philosophy of teaching and learning. Teachers are being trained to take into account the so-called important six 'E's, namely:

- Examples that are relevant to children;
- Explanations that facilitate the construction of meaning;
- Exhortation - meaning to persuade children to know, appreciate and practice the good;
- Environment - meaning that teachers should provide a student-friendly learning environment;
- Experience - meaning that conceptual or theoretical approaches are not sufficient to foster competencies in students, and they should be complemented by practical, life-oriented activities supporting the development of skills and attitudes;
- Enjoyment - meaning that learning about morals and values has to also be enjoyable and motivating for children.

As explained by Ms Kouchok, the six 'E's, as quality criteria for peace education, apply not only to teachers and pupils, but to the family and community at large. Teaching peace is not just the responsibility of schools and teachers. Along with efforts made in formal education, families, communities and the media are also important factors in promoting peace education in a consistent and sustainable way across different societal networks.

Following Ms Kouchok's presentations, several comments were made with regard to the fact that more research is needed to find out how teachers, children and other stakeholders perceive the different effects of curriculum options meant to foster peace education. Such research should target both the intended and the implemented curriculum. In addition, it is important to know how formal and non-formal education are linked in order to enhance their mutual impact on learners.

Comments were also made with regard to the role that assessment plays in motivating learners and contributing to the ideal of the 'whole development of a person'. It was stressed that while designing and implementing new, peace education-oriented curriculum and textbooks, one should also consider the need to integrate principles of alternative, formative and motivating assessment in the way that learning materials are conceived. Other comments pointed to the challenges of dealing with hierarchical values in traditional societies, which poses the problem of how to tackle 'universal values' in the context of respecting local values and customs. Issues of justice and fairness were also raised, and how to address them in textbooks, since peace and reconciliation can be achieved and maintained only when based on respecting people's legitimate rights and dignity.

‘Thinking and building peace’ can be promoted effectively through textbooks and in classrooms, but it is also an endeavour beyond the text (Ms Stavroula Philippou). Based on two examples of integrating activities for ‘thinking and building peace’ in Cyprus, Ms Philippou illustrated possibilities for cooperation between schools and out-of-school settings, especially via professional associations, such as the Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (AHDR). Student activities and teacher training programmes, involving participants coming from various communities of Cyprus, were tackling sensitive issues such as working co-operatively on the concepts of ‘identity’ in a European and global perspective. Other such concepts and issues addressed included ‘enemy’, ‘other’, ‘divide’, ‘boundaries’, ‘productive collaboration’, ‘perspectives’ and ‘multiple narratives’. An example was given also of how to create a ‘neutral’ space of encounter and dialogue by revitalising a ‘no man’s land’ (UN buffer zone) area into a ‘Home for Cooperation’ (multi-communal educational centre). This neutral space could be used to challenge divisions through linking school and out-of-school activities, and involving different communities across Cyprus.

Another example of joint cooperation in conflict-affected settings was given by Ms Samira Alayan-Beck (Georg Eckert Institute), who described the cooperation between Palestinian and Israeli scholars with regard to the development of a projected common history syllabus for Palestinian and Israeli students studying in mixed classes.

3. Cultural Dimensions and Stereotypes in Textbooks

Given the importance of explicit and implicit messages in textbooks, several presentations were devoted to analysing the presence and impact of cultural dimensions and stereotypes in learning materials. Both positive and negative stereotypes can have negative effects with regard to learning to live together. In some cases, positive stereotypes can put forward a false image with regard to individuals and/or communities, such as in the case of commending exceptional local or national qualities which others may not have. Negative stereotypes trigger stigmas of different kinds based on unfair and uncritical generalizations. Both positive and negative stereotypes are very often used as a basis to legitimize discrimination, unfair treatments and violence. Hence, peace education and education for learning to live together ought to pay special attention to the development of critical thinking skills as a means to effectively fight against bias and manipulation.

What kind of stereotypes do textbooks portray and why are they dangerous? How can stereotypes be avoided, and how can teachers and learners be taught to cope with stereotypes? How can cultural sensitivities be dealt with in a constructive way? The contributions by participants covered a wide range of issues, as follows:

- Stereotypes (preconceptions) are oversimplified views of characteristics attributed to persons, groups, objects and situations, based on fallacious generalizations ignoring individual cases. Quite common in textbooks are ethnic stereotypes, that is, oversimplified and biased generalizations of characteristics attributed to an ethnic group. Stereotypes can become quite powerful through repetition, and can lead to misunderstandings and to people’s feelings being damaged. Textbooks should thus avoid untrue generalizations and truthful but unflattering generalizations. In addition, truthful generalizations about a group, which

may be untrue of any given member of that group, should also be avoided (Mr Preben Späth).

- Textbooks authors, publishers, teachers and students should be trained to identify, avoid or fight stereotypes in apparently harmful discourses and in visual elements, such as broad descriptions of people and nations in history or geography textbooks, or the way maps are designed and labelled (Mr Preben Späth).⁴
- Textbooks should avoid promoting (intentionally or not) ‘moral and scientific racism’ as it was labelled by Mr Rainer Jansen. Mr Jansen shared with the participants some key findings of a diachronic analysis of German history school books published between 1875 and 1999, focusing on the presentation of the pre- and early history of humanity. According to Mr Jansen, the concepts and narratives of history and social science textbooks in many countries have only superficially been ‘modernized’, with the addition of more pictures, better quality of paper and some ‘question and answer’ working tasks. At the same time they have structurally stagnated or even regressed with regard to the ideal of integrating multiple perspectives that accommodate the concept of humanity as an integral whole.
- People usually acquire stereotypes through cultural mediators because culture ‘filters’ reality and then expresses its beliefs and values in stereotypical images. Not all stereotypes are equally harmful. Nonetheless, learners should be aware that all stereotypes are false, and that as a result their decisions and actions need to be based on a critical and careful inquiry into the truthfulness of the different statements with which they are confronted. For instance, if Nordic people are considered to be tall and blond, it is never to be excluded that Nordic people can also be short and dark-haired (Mr Preben Späth).
- As stated by Giddens (1999), culture can be defined as the comprehensive set of ideas which define what is considered important, worthwhile and desirable. Abstract values turn into norms and provide guidance to people in their cultural environment. Norms and the rules of behaviour therefore reflect a culture’s values.
- Cultural dimensions in textbooks relate to the different layers that Hofstede (2004) identified as pertaining to the so-called ‘onion’ model of culture. A culture is based on values as its very core, with additional layers supplementing and reflecting values, such as rituals, heroes and symbols.
- The most common stereotypes in textbooks concern age (for instance ‘all teenagers love rock and have no respect for their elders’), names (such as names associated typically with ethnicities or nations), physical appearance (e.g. ‘high foreheads are a sign of superior intelligence’), gender (e.g. ‘women are housewives but not skilled drivers’) and race (e.g. ‘all Japanese people look and think alike’). Other common stereotypes found in textbooks relate to religion (e.g. ‘Catholics love the Pope more than their country’), vocation (e.g. ‘all lawyers are greedy weasels’), nations (e.g. ‘all Germans love order and are highly efficient’ or ‘all Italians are erratic’). In addition, there are those pertaining to social structures, such as families (e.g. home tasks should be performed either by men or women, children should live in structured families only), or the idea that specific jobs should be carried out either by men or women.

4. Examples were given of textbooks presenting the Dutch people as ‘a very industrious race’ or Chinese women having ‘very small feet, to procure which, their feet are bandaged while young, by which their growth is prevented’.

- Stereotypes and cultural norms and rules reflect a certain tendency of humans to avoid complicated reflections and deliberations in daily life. It may be more convenient to be guided and to obey, than to take a personal, reflected stand and/or a decision. Peace educators should nonetheless encourage learners to fight against preconceptions that infringe the universal principles of human rights and dignity.
- Textbooks are important tools to learn about oneself and the ‘other’ and to remove fear of what is perceived as foreign, based on promoting the desire to know and understand other cultures. They should highlight not only differences, but also similarities - what we all share as members of humankind. They should depict positive aspects of other people’s lives and the benefits of sharing experiences with them, such as cooperation and advances in economy, science, technology, cultural exchanges and tourism (Mr Jaan Mikk). Since understanding all aspects of ‘other’ cultures may be quite difficult from the start, Mr Späth recommended that educators should define and agree upon which aspects of the cultural dimensions to focus on (such as values, opinions, history and religion). Afterwards, methodologies should be developed to integrate such aspects into an interdisciplinary environment (including textbooks for all individual subjects, educational materials for new technologies and integration of this approach into teacher training programmes).

Ms Saida Charfeddine stressed that the UNESCO-ISESCO Cooperation Programme on ‘thinking and building peace’ through innovative textbook development opens up new directions for reflection for the Arab world. These new directions include how to foster a rational perception of the ‘other’ and to develop competencies in students to live together in an equitable world. Textbooks in all countries should pay more attention to the way history is presented and how horizontal interactions between civilizations are depicted. They should offer students the possibility to learn about Arab countries in a non-prejudicial way, by discovering their cultural heritage. Important elements include the contribution of Arab countries to the advancement of science and culture, and their complex multicultural and multi-religious background (such as the fact that Arabs can also be Christians). In addition, it is essential that the curriculum and associated textbooks encourage open debate with a view to fostering the competencies required to tackle controversial issues and exchange opinions in a civil and productive manner.

Ms Susanne Knudsen and Ms Bente Aamotsbakken discussed the concept of multicultural peace building within national curricula, textbooks and in new educational media. Given the impact of globalization on many countries, including Norway, classes are becoming increasingly multicultural. In addition, the rise in new educational media raises the question of which methods best address children and young people living in multicultural environments, and which motivate them to engage in ‘thinking and building peace’ actively and constructively. Ms Knudsen and Ms Aamotsbakken shared with the participants different alternatives to textbooks such as chatting, using text message functions, blogging and networking via the Internet. These interactive media can be utilised to engage young people in discussing sexism and racism, or making new friends, sharing stories and engaging in joint projects. They highlighted the need to embed such alternatives to textbooks in lifelong learning strategies, while also paying attention to ethical issues, such as how to avoid the usage of new technologies to promote hate messages, harassment or intrusion of others’ privacy.

The potential of specific subjects to promote intercultural understanding and peace education was discussed using the examples of science, technology and music, among others (Mr Mohamed El-Gomati, Mr Rachid Aous). In his presentation, Mr El-Gomati described the ‘1001 Inventions’ project⁵, which offers a wide variety of educational resources for promoting the understanding and contributions of Muslim civilisation during the 1000 years (600-1600 AD) which is often represented in historical timelines taught in many systems as ‘The Dark Ages.’ The research of Mr Aous focuses on the emergence of musical terminology in the classical music of Maghreb and Andalusia as a case for demonstrating cultural interdependencies throughout history, and advocating for the recognition of a plurality of cultures that are at the same time specific and interwoven.

4. Textbooks and Teachers

While the Experts’ Meeting focused primarily on textbook development, the participants also made reference to teachers’ roles and the skills they need to foster the ‘thinking and building of peace’ in a responsible and competent way. The discussion included the following points:

- Teachers should be educated to have an in-depth understanding of the relationships between teaching, learning and texts (T-L-T triangle) and to adapt their teaching strategies to the context and the learner’s characteristics and needs (Mr Peacock).
- Teachers should receive training that enables them to use a range of resource materials in a creative and flexible way, based on minimizing bureaucratic constraints (Mr Peacock).
- Teachers need to develop skills for how to navigate through a page or screen, which will help them assist learners to find their way through a text. Their capacity to navigate through pages or screens should not be taken for granted, as even simple elements could constitute major obstacles in the process of understanding and using a text in an appropriate and effective way (Mr Peacock).
- Teachers should also be encouraged to become authors or to join teams of authors as resource persons, reviewers and field-testers (Mr Peacock).
- Teachers of different subjects should attend training programmes on the principles of peace education, so as to become familiar with the specific concepts, issues and methodological approaches advocated (Ms Kouchok).
- As stated by Mr M’hammed Zgor, textbook authors and teachers need to be aware of the fact that textbooks can be used in different ways. For instance, they can be categorised as either (a) to develop cognitive skills (which he called the ‘proximal’ mode) and/or (b) to develop emotional and attitudinal aspects (which he termed the ‘distal’ mode). Teachers have to be encouraged and adequately trained to seek the development of the whole person by addressing equally the development of learners’ cognitive, emotional and motor capacities.
- Teachers should be trained to select and make reference to everyday life-related situations with educational potential, while also connecting knowledge

5. A full description of the project can be found at www.MuslimHeritage.com

across different areas of the curriculum. Training should also include acting as members of a community of learners (Mr Maher Hashweh). Such communities of learners would encompass both students and teachers, as well as members of the wider community. They should promote a problem-based approach through which complex tasks can be accomplished by mobilizing knowledge and skills in an independent, creative and constructive way. Teachers have to be aware that textbooks do not present solutions - they can only provide resources and environments that are conducive to problem solving.

- Teachers also have an important role in the assessment process, and moreover in fostering student self-assessment (meta-cognitive) competencies (Mr Hashweh).
- Publishers should involve teachers further in textbook design and production to make sure that textbooks fit the different learning contexts and backgrounds of students (Mr Nasser Assi).

Thematic discussions, exchanges and group activities

As a result of the exchanges among participants in different plenary sessions and group activities, several processes and themes emerged that helped pave the way for the final recommendations. These included a general stocktaking of current developments and new initiatives in the realm of promoting peace education and learning to live together in different European and Arab countries, using both formal and non-formal educational approaches. Throughout the discussion, there was also a rich exchange of information on research findings pointing to aspects of textbooks that may support or hinder efforts to promote peace education, intercultural understanding and constructive management of diversity.

Following lively discussions in the context of different group activities, a set of consistent recommendations for the development of international Guidelines was formulated. The recommendations focused both on the Guidelines' content and approach, and on the process of drafting and finalizing them based on cooperative international efforts involving relevant stakeholders. A list of open questions was also established referring to aspects that need further consideration. This list included, first of all, how to gather the best expertise possible for drafting the Guidelines. Secondly, it dealt with how to address different target groups and aspects pertaining to innovative textbook development, while preserving the unity of the document and a good balance between policies, principles and concrete suggestions of practices. Thirdly, it included the consideration of how to integrate peace education aspects and activities in textbooks for different learning areas, subjects and education stages/grades.

Finally, several follow-up steps were identified, including (a) the establishment of a core drafting group to further elaborate on the concept and structure of the Guidelines; (b) the organization of face-to-face preparatory meetings in support of launching the actual writing process of the international Guidelines; and (c) continuous exchanges among the Expert Group members informed by the circulation of the recommendations made by the participants and the comprehensive meeting report.

FUNDAMENTAL ASSUMPTIONS ON THE ROLE OF TEXTBOOKS IN QUALITY LEARNING

1. The positive potential of textbooks as tools for peace

Based on several cases discussed during the meeting,⁶ participants identified several important aspects of textbooks and associated learning materials that can enhance the impact of textbooks on peace building. This included their positive potential to:

- *Stress commonalities and not only differences* amongst individuals, nations and cultures. Social Studies textbooks should emphasise the shared vision of humanity as it has been conceptualized in international standard-setting documents such as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) and the UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child (1989). Further to this, textbooks in all subjects should help learners envisage positive and constructive aspects of human relationships, rather than to focus exclusively on disagreements and (armed) conflicts.
- *Link concepts of peace and learning to live together* to social justice and cooperation issues. Learners need to understand that lasting peace has to be based on fair solutions for all parties in conflict, and full access to equal opportunities. They need to learn that productive solutions are always possible based on dialogue involving negotiations and fair compromises, and that reconciliation, as a basis for durable peace, can indeed be achieved.
- *Help project the concept of the humanity as a whole as the relevant surviving group*, and not promote, as is still the case in many parts of the world, a parochial and partisan image of local and national individual and collective identities.
- *Reflect and promote interactive methodologies* with inspiring and adequate content as well as problem-based learning that requires the active mobilization of learners' knowledge, skills, values and attitudes towards finding solutions in a creative and cooperative way.
- *Incorporate content and approaches to learning* that reflect learners' life experiences, cultural values and physical environments. The incorporation of these elements has the potential to reinforce the self-confidence and trust of learners, as well as their pride in belonging concomitantly to a local cultural context and being valued members of humanity as a whole.
- *Help teachers and students prioritize learning aspects* in compliance with their contexts and needs, while addressing at the same time aspects and issues pertaining to a broader international arena.

6. These cases and themes include 'Reflection on textbooks, teaching aids and the media in the Arab World'; 'Examples from Cyprus on Curricula and Educational Materials for Peace'; 'Multicultural Peace Building in National Curricula in Norway' and 'Examples in the Teaching of Science and Democracy in Palestine'. Other cases discussed were 'Terminology concerning the cultivation of a common musical heritage in the North-African Region and Andalusia as a means to foster intercultural understanding based on exploring a common cultural heritage'; 'Dealing with differences in Lebanon and involving children in textbook design'; 'Promoting gender equality through textbooks' and 'The image of Arabo-Islamic Culture in European history textbooks'.

2. The negative potential of textbooks as obstacles to peace-building

Conversely, the education specialists and textbook researchers participating in the meeting acknowledged that certain aspects of the learning content and approaches in textbooks and in other learning materials have had (and continue to have) extremely negative consequences for building cultures of peace. These obstacles to peace-building in textbooks include:

- *all forms of positive and negative prejudices and stereotypes*, since they prompt one-sided views, judgmental attitudes of individuals and groups, as well as different forms of discrimination and marginalization;
- *misconceptions deemed to be ‘moral and scientific racism’*, which have the potential to feed into discriminatory approaches and segregation;
- *inappropriate language usage and approaches* promoted by textbooks, such as expressions offending sensitivities of individuals and groups, or unbalanced teaching and learning approaches hindering the whole development of a person, and thus the development of intellectual, social and emotional skills essential for learning to live together;
- *usage of textbooks for an inappropriate level of user ability*, that is, where the user’s tools and abilities, including reading level and cognitive overload are not at the current time adequate to understand and use the textbook appropriately, and to respond to its demands;
- *false assumptions about the role of textbooks and other learning materials* in learning processes, such as an exaggerated focus on scholastic training to the detriment of a more balanced approach facilitating links between theory and practice, and between schools, textbooks and real life;
- *the absence of reliable quality control mechanisms* within national education systems and at school level, as well as blockages triggered by inappropriate assessment policies and methods, which can also negatively affect the learners’ development despite curricula and textbooks demonstrating both quality and innovation in design.

Participants agreed that the teaching-learning processes supported by textbooks and other tools do not occur in isolation from the surrounding socio-cultural environment. For example, exposure to violence either in real life or through the media can easily undermine the intentions of teachers and textbooks. The potentially positive effects of curricula and textbooks can be annihilated by environments that obstruct the promotion of a culture of peace, mutual understanding, respect and cooperation.

3. Alternative approaches to textbook development and provision

Successful efforts to improve access to quality education in areas of the world where it is most needed often point to the benefits of establishing strong links between formal and non-formal approaches, in order to reach learners of all levels, backgrounds and abilities. The need to link formal and non-formal approaches to education applies equally in the realm of textbook development and implementation. According to members of the Expert Group, efforts to contribute to cultures of peace through innovative textbook development could be enhanced by infusing textbook development

and implementation with best practices drawn from both formal and non-formal settings. In this regard, the activities and impact of professional associations, such as the AHDR and the European Standing Conference of History Teachers Associations (EUROCLIO) were mentioned as good models. Participants also noted the need to take full advantage of new channels of communication and learning (such as information and communication technologies/ICTs, the Internet and e-learning), to enrich collective thinking on textbook development, and to base processes of textbook production and implementation on participatory and transparent approaches.

4. Flexible and meaningful solutions in compliance with contexts and needs

While textbooks are considerable tools for learning, even in our digitized, e-learning era, their role should not be overestimated relative to that of teachers, the curriculum, and other elements of the teaching and learning process. If not used wisely in compliance with contexts and needs, there is a risk of neglecting other factors and inputs influencing learning. Given the need to tackle the issue of the usage of textbooks cautiously, and more particularly in order to build a culture of peace based on innovative learning materials, the participants in the Experts' Meeting considered the following points:

- *the need in many countries to minimize bureaucracy* linked to processes of textbook development, distribution and implementation so as to allow for quality and affordable textbooks to reach all learners in a timely, effective and equitable manner;
- *increased focus on textbook implementation*, especially classroom-based research on how well the materials being used enhance teaching and learning processes. In many situations, textbook development receives the bulk of attention and resources, while the preparation of teachers and schools to use the new textbooks adequately is often disregarded;
- *capacity building processes for all stages of textbook development and implementation*, based on sharing of good practices, capitalizing on strengths and achievements and addressing shortcomings and other obstacles constructively;
- *better coordination among those involved with textbook development, implementation and all other relevant educational stakeholders*, including communities, parents and children. There is a need in many countries in both regions for more participatory strategies to be considered in compliance with the particular requirements of different processes and stages;
- *international cooperation to facilitate international exchanges on, and access to, research findings*, as well as inspiring textbook policies and practices impacting on the development of a culture of peace and learning to live together.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED ‘NEXT STEPS’

Overall recommendations made by the experts during the course of the deliberations call for consideration of the following ten points of reflection when carrying out processes aimed at promoting peace and intercultural understanding through curricula, textbooks and learning materials:

1. *the need to promote and disseminate relevant materials of intercultural education, such as regional and bilateral history and culture textbooks;*
2. *the importance of developing materials (i.e. textbooks, teacher guides, and student activity books) based on cooperation between formal and non-formal educational stakeholders, as well as meaningful inter-disciplinary approaches and sequencing of learning content and strategies;*
3. *the usefulness of adopting flexible strategies to link curricula and textbooks meaningfully, given that in many situations gaps persist between curriculum and textbook innovation - with either curricula (i.e. curriculum frameworks, syllabuses) or textbooks being more advanced in terms of innovative aspects and approaches;*
4. *the need to address the whole person in the context of peace building processes, while fostering the acquisition and development of values, knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours in a balanced way;*
5. *the challenge of addressing sensitive and controversial issues in textbooks and other learning materials with a view to equipping learners with the knowledge and skills to cope with controversies in a constructive way;*
6. *opportunities offered by ICTs, Internet and e-learning to inform and reshape quality textbook development and implementation in line with new visions of learning, and living and working together;*
7. *the necessity of starting peace education early, and to use time wisely, by exhausting all possibilities that schools and out-of-school settings are offering for the development of competencies related to learning to live together;*
8. *the imperative to focus on capacity building for the effective development and implementation of quality textbooks and other learning materials, by targeting all relevant actors and aiming at establishing sustainable communities of policy makers and practitioners;*
9. *the imperative to expand the current project through international cooperation in the realm of peace-building through innovative textbook development involving all countries and regions of the world;*
10. *the need to also address the ‘beyond’ school and textbook context to ensure consistent education messages and coherent approaches to peace building and learning to live together.*

7. See Annex 4 for a detailed list of recommendations made by each of the working groups.

Recommendations with regard to the follow-up process⁷ for developing ‘Guidelines for Promoting Peace and Intercultural Understanding through curricula, Textbooks and Learning Materials’. These recommendations specify that several concrete tasks should be addressed as the process moves toward completion, including:

1. clear definition of the scope of the Guidelines, their target group(s), and a plan for development, validation, dissemination and implementation;
2. decision on whether the Guidelines will be broad or specific in approach, such as developing Guidelines for specific levels or learning areas/subjects;
3. specificity on the involvement of different stakeholders, which countries to cover, and at what stage;
4. involvement of the expertise available and fair representation of education stakeholders in the process;
5. meaningful and effective partnerships with other organizations and stakeholders to enhance the quality and impact of the programme outcomes;
6. inclusion (in the Guidelines and possibly in additional toolkits) of concrete examples and clear orientations for educational policy makers and practitioners;
7. integration of the results of textbook research and relevant educational and learning theories, so as to permit an evidence-based process of improving the quality of textbooks and learning materials.

Proposed ‘next steps’:

1. Establish a coordinating team to set up an effective process to prepare for and engage in the development of the inter-regional Guidelines.
2. Establish a drafting group and organize a meeting to prepare a first draft.
3. Set up an electronic network for sharing of inter-regional research activities and good practices in textbook development and use.
4. Organize the review, finalization and validation processes, including a final conference.
5. Develop dissemination and implementation strategies in participating countries, including tools for monitoring and evaluation.

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ANNEX 1

INTER-REGIONAL EXPERTS' MEETING: THINKING AND BUILDING PEACE THROUGH INNOVATIVE TEXTBOOK DESIGN

14-15 JUNE, 2007

UNESCO HEADQUARTERS ANNEX, BONVIN ROOM XIV

UNESCO-ISESCO Cooperation Programme 2006-2007

Activity 1.11: Guidelines for Promoting Peace and Intercultural Understanding through Curricula, Textbooks and Learning Materials

BACKGROUND PAPER

I. Introduction

In the 62 years since the founding of UNESCO, the need for young people to learn to comprehend different ways of life and communicate with people unlike themselves has increased urgently and exponentially, partly because of the rapid evolution of communications technology, and partly because of the migration and resettlement patterns precipitated by catastrophic events or dire economic circumstances. While the former creates possibilities for increased understanding through electronic communication and learning media, it also multiplies the possible sources of misrepresentation and negative stereotyping. The latter, through the formation of increasingly multicultural societies, creates immediate opportunities for intercultural communication in the classroom or learning space. However, when education systems fail to take advantage of these opportunities through responses appropriate to learning and learning communities, they are at risk of deteriorating into inhospitable environments characterized by high dropout rates, social stratification, racism, exclusion, substance abuse and school-based violence.

Article 26 of *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, states explicitly that

Education shall be directed toward the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. 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.

Early initiatives and programmes to fulfil this mandate were very much linked to the improvement of the content of textbooks. At its first General Conference in 1946, the Member States of UNESCO adopted a resolution (1C/res.6) concerning

the improvement of textbooks and teaching materials in order to ‘foster international understanding and remove certain sources of misunderstanding’. This first resolution was formulated with the intention of building on the work of the League of Nations by creating a set of criteria for textbooks and learning materials that would have a significant role in shaping the way young people perceive themselves, as well as the world and their role in it. Since then, there have been many similar initiatives. These varied and sustained efforts to influence textbook production include the development of international criteria and guidelines, technical assistance on development of curricula and textbooks, and support for comparative and reciprocal textbook research. Such activities have expanded from a narrow project focus on the revision of content in the post-war European context, to more comprehensive initiatives designed to enhance learning and therefore to improve the quality of education worldwide.

In 1974, the General Conference adopted a Recommendation (18C/24) which established ‘understanding and respect for all peoples, their cultures, civilizations, values and ways of life, including domestic ethnic cultures and cultures of other nations’ as one of six guiding principles of educational policy (UNESCO, 1974:2). This normative instrument also reiterated the role of textbooks and learning materials in achieving this aim by specifying that ‘appropriate and constructive use should be made of the entire range of equipment and aids available, from textbooks to television and of the new educational technology’ (ibid.:6). Further to this,

a global approach, comprising the introduction of international components, serving as a framework for presenting local and national aspects of different subjects and illustrating the scientific and cultural history of mankind, should be employed in textbooks and all other aids to learning, with due regard to the value of the visual arts and music as factors conducive to understanding between different cultures (ibid.).

Guidelines for Education from Recommendation concerning education for international understanding, co-operation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms (18C/24) (UNESCO 1974):

1. an international dimension and a global perspective in education at all levels and in all its forms;
2. understanding and respect for all peoples, their cultures, civilizations, values and ways of life, including domestic ethnic cultures and cultures of other nations;
3. awareness of the increasing global interdependence between peoples and nations;
4. abilities to communicate with others;
5. awareness not only of the rights of but also of the duties incumbent upon individuals, social groups and nations towards each other;
6. understanding of the necessity for international solidarity and cooperation;
7. readiness on the part of the individual to participate in solving the problems of his or her community, his or her country and the world at large.

Subsequently, the three major ‘outlooks’ described in the Delors Report (Delors et al., 1996) identify challenges and areas of action for designing education for a common future. The first of these identifies such factors as an increasingly crowded planet, globalization and interdependence as critical issues that must be taken into account in order to reach the goal of learning to live together, which the report names as the third pillar of education for the twenty-first century.

The role of textbooks and learning materials in support of learning processes oriented towards this goal is widely acknowledged as significant, yet this role varies widely across cultures and educational systems. In many parts of the world, the function and character of traditional textbooks have changed appreciably in light of new learning theories and approaches, as well as the decentralization of textbook production and selection processes. In order to keep pace with this changing role, UNESCO has maintained its efforts to promote textbooks that are ‘accurate, balanced, up-to-date, unprejudiced... and [that] will enhance mutual knowledge and understanding among different peoples’ (UNESCO, 1974:7).⁸

With the world’s attention now re-focused on the need for dialogue among cultures and civilizations as a means of stemming the tide of ever more catastrophic conflicts, and of building the skills needed for sustainable development, both the definition and the role of textbooks and learning materials in virtually every subject area and at all levels have taken on a new and critical dimension. The Director-General of UNESCO’s opening address to the Experts’ Meeting on ‘Textbooks and Learning Materials Revision’ convened at UNESCO Headquarters in December 2002, noted that, ‘As key instruments for transmitting not only knowledge but also values and ideas about the world, textbooks and learning materials are now widely recognized as significant dimensions of social and cultural change.’ Materials in whatever format they are produced and used must not only transfer knowledge, values and attitudes through their content but also assist the teacher in facilitating activities that, through a process of accumulation, become a pedagogically sound blueprint for constructing and nurturing the necessary skills for learning to live together in a sustainable world.

Excerpts from the Delors Report (1996)

Those who believed that the end of the Cold War held out the prospect of a better and more peaceful world have another reason for disenchantment and disillusionment. ... Although the death toll in the last world war was 50 million, we must also remember that since 1945 some 20 million people have died in around 150 wars, both before and after the fall of the Berlin Wall. It hardly matters whether these are new risks or old risks. Tensions smoulder and then flare up between nations and ethnic groups, or as a result of a build-up of social and economic injustices. ... But how can we learn to live together in the ‘global village’ if we cannot manage to live together in the communities to which we naturally belong – the nation, the region, the city, the village, the neighbourhood? (Delors et al.:15-16)

8. See also documents from the 18th session, ‘Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms’.

The Commission has put greater emphasis on one of the four pillars that it proposes and describes as the foundations of education: **learning to live together**, but developing an understanding of their history, traditions and spiritual values and, on this basis, creating a new spirit which, guided by recognition of our growing interdependence and a common analysis of the risks and challenges of the future, would induce people to implement common projects or to manage the inevitable conflicts in an intelligent and peaceful way (ibid.:22).

It is true that many other problems have to be solved...but this report has been prepared at a time when, faced with so many misfortunes caused by war, crime and underdevelopment, humankind is apparently hesitating between continuing along the same path and resignation. Let us offer people another way.

There is, therefore, every reason to place renewed emphasis on the moral and cultural dimensions of education, enabling each person to grasp the individuality of other people and to understand the world's erratic progression towards a certain unity: but this process must begin with self-understanding through an inner voyage whose milestones are knowledge, meditation and the practice of self-criticism (ibid.:19)..

The declaration adopted during the 'Conference on Fostering Dialogue among Cultures and Civilizations through Concrete and Sustained Initiatives' (the Rabat Commitment, 2005) echoed the views of the Delors Report and the Guidelines for Education stated in the *Recommendation Concerning Education for International Understanding* (UNESCO, 1974). This declaration recommended, among other proposals, to 'develop capacities of learners to acquire life skills and competences, with emphasis on problem-solving and critical thinking as a prerequisite for intercultural learning' (13.f). In addition, it advocated for the intensification of the use of audiovisual materials and ICTs in support of interactive and participatory learning approaches to intercultural dialogue' (13.4).

Teaching and learning materials are also addressed in the *Plan of Action of the World Programme for Human Rights Education* (First Phase), which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in July 2005. This programme highlights key actions to be undertaken by ministries of education and other school and civil society actors to effectively integrate human rights education into primary and secondary school systems. It recommends, among other actions, that school systems 'review and revise textbooks and other educational materials of the whole curriculum to conform with human rights principles.'⁹

Further to the recommendations embedded in these declarations and commitments, the Education Sector of UNESCO produced *A Comprehensive Strategy for Textbooks and Other Learning Materials*¹⁰ (2005). This document seeks to build upon the organization's previous work in textbook research and revision, while responding to the needs of

9. UNESCO and UNHCHR. Plan of Action : World Programme for Human Rights Education. New York and Geneva, 2005. p. 1.

10. UNESCO: A Comprehensive Strategy for Textbooks and Learning Materials . UNESCO, Paris, 2005

a changing world through a rights-based approach to guide programmatic work in the areas of policy development, quality enhancement and availability. In today's increasingly multilingual and multicultural learning communities, improving the quality of textbooks and learning materials (including traditional media, multimedia and ICTs) is required to support teachers in their efforts to respond to the backgrounds, abilities and needs of diverse learners. The issues of curricula, teaching and learning materials, and teaching methods are addressed in Principle I of the UNESCO *Guidelines on Intercultural Education*, which characterizes intercultural education as that which 'respects the cultural identity of the learner through the provision of culturally appropriate and responsive quality education for all' (UNESCO, 2006:30).

Similar recommendations are made from the perspective of inclusive education and what may simply be considered good practices for enhancing learning. Inclusive educational policies, curricula, teaching practices and materials are fundamental to achieving the goal of quality education for all, particularly in terms of diversifying methodologies and content to respond to students' diversity. If this goal is to be reached, there must be (among other things) a recognition of 'evidence from all over the world that many children do not achieve according to their potential because they find learning to be "boring".' It is indeed a daily challenge for teachers to ensure that the work that is being done in the classroom is 'relevant to the children and their contexts, that it respects their world and responds to their particular needs.'¹¹ Both the content and the design of textbooks are key factors in supporting learning processes that are relevant, engaging and responsive to multiple intelligences and learning styles. Further to the messages embedded in words, images and (in the case of multimedia), sound and moving images, the structure of the learning activities integrated into the materials provide opportunities and guidance for building skills. These varied factors contribute to preparing learners to become self-aware, responsible, active, and communicative members of their communities and of the world.

II. Building Peace through Innovative Textbook Design: Key Themes

The inter-regional (European and Arab States) Experts' Meeting 'Thinking and Building Peace for through Innovative Textbook Design' (14-15 June 2007) is intended to provide an opportunity for sharing information and experiences in textbook development and use in the two regions, with particular reference to the teaching of Science and Social Studies. Participants will also consider issues of instructional design¹², emphasizing features intended to improve the effectiveness of textbooks and learning media in all subject areas to help build cognitive, communicative and social skills for global citizenship. The meeting seeks to serve as a means of supporting and complementing existing multi-year initiatives¹³ focusing on the content analysis and

11. UNESCO. 2004. Changing Teaching Practices: Using Curriculum Differentiation to Respond to Students' Diversity. Paris, UNESCO, p.5.

12. Including, but not limited to, type and sequencing of activities, layout, graphics, and instructional 'voice'.

13. The three ongoing major initiatives are:

- Permanent Conference on the Euro-Arab Dialogue 'Learning How to Live Together' (UNESCO Regional Office for Science in the Arab States, Mediterranean Programme)
- Comparative Studies in School Textbooks (UNESCO National Commissions for France and Morocco)
- The Image of the Other in History Teaching (Council of Europe)

revision of school textbooks in the two regions, and will provide a forum for launching the new UNESCO/IBE publication *Textbooks and Quality Learning for All: Some Lessons Learned from International Experiences* (Braslavsky and Halil, 2006). Additionally, the recommendations of the meeting will be used as the foundation for generating a set of common Guidelines for authors, publishers and policy makers in the two regions on specific strategies for the enhancement of learning and the promotion of peace through textbook design.

Theme 1: Intercultural and international perspectives on the impact of textbooks, materials and media on learning

This theme addresses the role of textbooks and learning materials in learning processes and educational systems, focusing on their use from upper elementary through to lower secondary level. At one extreme of textbook usage, it is more likely that there will be a compendium of texts, images and sound drawn from various sources and delivered through an array of media both in and out of the classroom, rather than a single core textbook (supplemented by various types of support materials). At the other extreme, the traditional textbook is the primary source of information, and structuring of learning activities is strictly linked to the curriculum. In this case, the traditional textbook is expected to be closely adhered to as the basis for student assessment and progress.

What are the criteria for producing high quality textbooks and materials to enhance learning in different countries? What level of authority is assigned to the textbook relative to teachers and other bearers of knowledge? What are the positive outcomes and challenges associated with the two extremes? Is one approach ‘better’ than the other? Which research paradigms are most reliable as a measure of the quality and impact of textbooks and learning materials? How can innovations in textbook design and development promote progress toward a certain unity of peoples while respecting cultural differences? Will traditional textbooks become a relic of the past in the fast-evolving knowledge society?

Theme 2: Beyond the text – integrating activities for thinking and building peace

Among the many factors that influence learning in the formal school systems of both regions, the most important role is undoubtedly that of the teacher. If teachers are not motivated, prepared and equipped, no amount of well-designed, high quality textbooks with relevant content and engaging activities are likely to stimulate effective learning. Alternatively, the role of learning media in distance learning and informal or non-formal learning contexts has a much more central organizing function. Overall, most learner-centred approaches designate a key role to materials and context based activities, with the teacher functioning more as a guide to constructivist paths to understanding, rather than a dispenser of knowledge, attitudes and values. In this scenario, the learning activities integrated into the materials provide teachers or facilitators with a range of options to orchestrate active learning, and are of prime importance in bringing about and assessing desired learning outcomes.

What types of learning outcomes can be considered essential to learning to live together? How well do learning activities in current publications match these outcomes? How are they assessed? Where (such as in student texts, teaching guides, workbooks, websites and/or supplementary guides) do such activities exist as resources for teachers? How extensively are they used? What are the obstacles and challenges to implementing such activities as a regular feature of learning?

Theme 3: Thinking and learning across cultures and disciplines – skills for a sustainable world?

Building skills for learning to live together within families, communities, nations, regions or the world also implies the knowledge and skills for sharing the earth's dwindling resources and for solving universal problems such as the prevention of both natural and human-engendered disasters. The development of certain core skills such as interpersonal communication and collaborative problem-solving can and should take place across disciplines, within schools, as well as across cultures and national boundaries as often as possible.¹⁴

How can the educators, authors and publishers of today prepare young people for 'learning to live together' in a sustainable world? How can UNESCO, with its partners, best direct its efforts to ensure that the necessary skills are integrated into national curricula, textbooks and learning materials?

III. Project Process

The inter-regional Experts' Meeting 'Thinking and Building Peace Through Innovative Textbook Design' scheduled to take place on 14-15 June 2007 is the first step of a process within the framework of the UNESCO-ISESCO Cooperation Programme 2006-2007, 'Guidelines for Promoting Peace and Intercultural Understanding through Curricula, Textbooks and Learning Materials.'

The main output of this activity will be a set of practical Guidelines, including concrete examples, for policy makers, curriculum developers, and for producers and users of textbooks to bear in mind during the revision and updating of existing materials or the production of new ones.

Implementation Strategy

1. International Experts' Meeting: 'Thinking and Building Peace Through Innovative Textbook Design' (exploration of themes, exchange of approaches and presentation of concrete examples), Paris, June 14-15 2007.
2. Drafting, approval and publication of Guidelines (June-November, 2008).

14. As in, for example the Associated Schools Network's Mondialogo School Contest, in which participants aged 15 to 18 years engage in an intercultural dialogue by developing a creative project with students from a partner school on another continent.

3. Initiation of a thematic virtual discussion forum on the UNESCO Education portal (October 2007).
4. Regional and/or sub-regional technical seminars based on the Guidelines (2009).

Expected outcomes of the Experts' Meeting 'Thinking and Building Peace through Innovative Textbook Design', Paris, 14-15 June 2007

1. Articulation of fundamental assumptions on the role of textbooks and learning materials in the learning process in participating countries.
2. Identification of core types of instructional design features for learning to live together in a sustainable world.
3. Broad agreement on areas to be addressed through the development of international Guidelines.
4. Identification of a process for identifying a drafting group.

ANNEX 2

INTER-REGIONAL EXPERTS' MEETING THINKING AND BUILDING PEACE THROUGH INNOVATIVE TEXTBOOK DESIGN

14-15 JUNE 2007

UNESCO, PARIS, ROOM XII FONTENOY

AGENDA

DAY 1: THURSDAY 14 JUNE

09h30 – 10h00 Registration

10h00 – 10h30 Opening of the Meeting

Ms Ann Therese Ndong-Jatta, Director of the Division for the Promotion of Basic Education

- ➔ Welcome address by Ms Françoise Rivière, Assistant Director-General for Culture.
- ➔ Welcome address by Mr Seydou Cissé, representative of ISESCO.
- ➔ Brief introduction of participants.
- ➔ Orientation of the meeting and adoption of the agenda, chairpersons, rapporteurs.
- ➔ General Rapporteur: Ms Dakmara Georgescu.

1. Keynote Presentations Chairperson: Ms Mina El-Mghari		
10h30 -11h10	Mr Alan Peacock	Towards international guidelines for innovative text design and use
11h15 - 11h30	<i>Coffee/Tea Break</i>	
11h30 -12h10	Ms Kawsar Kuochok	Teaching education for peace across the curriculum
12h10 - 12h30	Ice-Breaking Activity Facilitator: Ms Stavroula Philippou	
12h30 - 14h00	<i>Lunch</i>	
2. Thematic Exchange Moderators: Ms Linda King (Theme 1) and Mr Kenneth Eklindh (Theme 2)		
14h00 – 15h40	Theme 1: Intercultural and international perspectives on the impact of textbooks, materials and media on learning (presentations by Mr Späth, Mr Jansen, Mr Mikk, Mr Bubshait)	
15h40 – 16h00	<i>Coffee/Tea Break</i>	
16h00 – 18h00	Theme 2: Beyond the text – integrating activities for thinking and building peace (presentations by Ms Charfeddine, Ms Philippou, Ms Knudsen and Ms Aamotsbakken, Ms Al-Riyami, and Mr El-Gomati)	
3. Book Launch Presenter: Ms Dakmara Georgescu		
18h00	<i>Textbooks and Quality Learning for All: Some Lessons Learned from International Experiences</i> Reception	

Day 1 Rapporteur: Ms Samira Alayan-Beck

DAY 2: Friday 15 June

10h00 – 10h15	Summary of Day 1 presentations and discussions by Ms Samira Alayan-Beck, Day 1 Rapporteur
Thematic Exchange (continued) Moderator: Ms Amina Hamshari	
10h15 – 11h30	Theme 3: Thinking and learning across cultures and disciplines – skills for a sustainable world? (Presentations by Mr Zgor, Mr Hashweh, Mr Aous and Mr Assi)
11h30 – 11h45	<i>Coffee/Tea Break</i>
4. Recommendations for International Guidelines Chairperson: Ms Noro Andriamizeza	
11h45 – 12h30	Parallel Group Discussions: Who, What, and How?
12h30 – 14h00	<i>Lunch</i>
14h00 – 15h00	<i>Group Discussions (continued)</i>
15h00 – 15h45	Group Presentations
15h45 – 16h00	<i>Coffee/Tea Break</i>
5. Practical Exchange: Tools for research, resources and good practices Chairperson: Mr Jean-Pierre Boyer	
16h00 – 17h00	Information sharing and announcements (Ms Malevri, Ms Migeon, Ms Radojic, Mr Choppin, Ms Hamshari, Mr Puymege)
6. Conclusions and Next Steps Chairperson: Mr Falk Pingel	
17h00 – 17h45	<i>Synthesis and discussion</i> Presentation by Ms Dakmara Georgescu, General Rapporteur
17h45 – 18h00	Reflection and wrap-up Mr Seydou Cissé Ms Ann Therese Ndong-Jatta

Day 2 Rapporteur and General Rapporteur: Ms Dakmara Georgescu

ANNEX 3

INTER-REGIONAL EXPERTS' MEETING THINKING AND BUILDING PEACE THROUGH INNOVATIVE TEXTBOOK DESIGN

**14-15 JUNE, 2007
ROOM XII, UNESCO HEADQUARTERS,
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ANNEX 4

INTER-REGIONAL EXPERTS' MEETING THINKING AND BUILDING PEACE THROUGH INNOVATIVE TEXTBOOK DESIGN

**14-15 JUNE 2007
UNESCO, PARIS**

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Members of the drafting committee

Policy makers

- At international level:
 - UNESCO and ISESCO representatives (as main organizers), and the Council of Europe
- At national level:
 - Representatives from Eastern Europe, East Asia (Korea and Japan), as well as Norway (experience in peacemaking initiatives and education for democracy)
 - Representatives from post conflict countries in Africa

Curriculum developers

- Representatives from Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and one of the post USSR countries

Producers and publishers of textbooks

- The European Educational Publishers Group
- The Arab Publishers Association
- Authors from both regions

Experts

- At least one international non-governmental organization dealing with children
- Stakeholders and non-governmental organizations that deal specifically with peace education and development
- Children
- Institutes and networks such as the Georg Eckert Institute (GEI) and the International Association for Research en Textbooks and Educational Media (IARTEM)

Users

- Teachers, teachers taking part in EUROCLIO, teacher training institutions represented by Teachers' International Organization (TIO)
- International student organizations, students

II. Development of the Guidelines

Process

- The Guidelines should be ready by the end of June 2008.
- The draft should have an interdisciplinary approach.
- As a preliminary work, studies of existing UNESCO recommendations and other official documents on textbooks should be done.
- Consider both non-formal and formal education settings.

Content

- The draft should contain some ideas of what the Guidelines should be about as well as potential concrete examples and case studies from existing materials. Particularly important points for inclusion:
 - promotion of peace as a universal value
 - promote and encourage the development of local actions and experiences relating to peace
 - articulation between strategies, teaching methods and local situations
 - integrate the values of peace into educational action of countries in a sensible way
 - develop transversal skills which are involving diverse subject matters, they should not be limited to history only, it is not enough
 - diversify the type of training material: hard copy version and electronic format such as video ICT,etc
 - give particular attention to the choice of and use of iconography (pictures and graphics) as regards context and captions
 - get acquainted with one's identity particularly regarding history to enable each and everyone to understand objectively the identity of the Other
 - several modules on the history of humanity should be included in a more pedagogical and ethical way.
- Controversial issues should not be left out.
- The drafting group should formulate specific **evaluation** strategies to "assess" whether the Guidelines are implemented and the goals of peace are accomplished/ achieved. To this end, an **ad hoc committee** should be set up.
- A toolbox/ peace manual for teachers on how to implement the Guidelines should be prepared; Guidelines should not only be formulated in a political language but also in a concrete way to enable teachers use them.
- A toolkit for publishers on how to promote peace through layout should also be developed.

Approval

A conference will be convened to present the draft; it should include people with experience in education, such as authors, academics, decisions makers, publishers, and experts.

III. Channels of distribution and dissemination

- Guidelines should be published in a nice brochure format.
- A conference with wider participation should be organized in order to receive feedback, inspiration and ideas from outside the expert group. In the end a press conference should be organized to launch the publication
- The Guidelines should have at least two groups of end users:
 - The ‘top- down’ approach
 - In a state approval mechanism, the Guidelines will be delivered to politicians and decision makers but also to publishing houses who are going to produce the textbooks.
 - Ministries of education for further distribution
 - The “bottom-up” approach
 - In countries where there is a free textbook market, Guidelines should be distributed to:
 - Publishing houses and teacher training institutions (pre service training with emphasis on in service training)
- International organizations and NGOs should also participate in the process of distribution; UNESCO, for example has a huge responsibility for distributing these Guidelines to its regional offices.
- Internet platform usage is recommended to ensure the widest possible dissemination of the Guidelines.

IV. Main users

Users of the Guidelines will include, but not be limited to:

- International organizations, such as UNICEF, UNESCO, the EU and ILO
- Policy makers
- National ministers of education, and especially departments involved in the textbook development process
- National educational councils
- Regional school boards
- Publishers
- Teacher and schoolmasters
- Teacher trainers
- Researchers

Thinking and Building

Peace

Through Innovative Textbook Design



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Division for the Promotion of Basic Education