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INFOBILA

**Intergovernmental Council
for the General Information Programme**

Twelfth Session

UNESCO House, Paris, 7-8 December 1998

The twelfth session of the Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme was held at UNESCO Headquarters from 7 to 8 December 1998.

The Council is responsible, *inter alia*, for guiding the conception and planning of the General Information Programme of UNESCO, in particular, by putting forward recommendations on the content of future programmes and budgets to be submitted to the General Conference, as well as for reviewing the other information activities of UNESCO and making recommendations to the Director-General for a better co-ordination of the said activities

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme

12th Session

7-8 December 1998

Intergovernmental Committee for the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme

7th Session

10-11 December 1998

Joint session of the PGI Council and the IIP Committee

9 December 1998

UNESCO House, Paris, Room X (Fontenoy Building)

Member States elected to the PGI Council

8	Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme	
	28 th to 30 th General Conference (1995-1999)	29 th to 31 st General Conference (1997-2001)
Group I	Germany Switzerland	Austria Canada France Portugal Sweden
Group II	Bulgaria	Czech Republic Poland Russian Federation
Group III	Argentina Chile Ecuador Uruguay	Brazil Cuba
Group IV	China Islamic Republic of Iran Japan Philippines Viet Nam	Bangladesh Republic of Korea
Group V (a)	Benin Cameroon Madagascar Uganda Togo	Ethiopia Mali United Republic of Tanzania
Group V (b)	Algeria Egypt Morocco	Yemen
	36 Members States participating in the 12 th session of the PGI Council	

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Draft Final Reports

		Pages
Part I	Report of the 12 th session of the PGI Council	1
Part II	Report on the joint session of the PGI Council and the IIP Committee	9
Part III	Report of the 7 th Session of the IIP Committee	11

This document is also available at
http://www.unesco.org/webworld/pgi_iip98/report

Table of contents

Part I	Intergovernmental Council for PGI, 12 th Session, 7-8 December 1998	
Introduction	*	
Item 1	Opening of the meeting	*
Item 2	Election of the Bureau of the Council	*
(a)	Chairperson	*
(b)	Other officers	*
Item 3	Adoption of the Agenda	*
Item 4	Review of current activities of the General Information Programme	*
Debate on Item 4	*	
Item 5	Preparation of the joint session of the Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme and the Intergovernmental Committee of the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme	*
Item 6	Any other business	*
(a)	IFLA School Library Manifesto	*
(b)	Archives of International Organizations	*
(c)	Declaration of the 8th Regional Meeting of CDS/ISIS Distributors, Montevideo	*
Item 7	Adoption of the recommendations	*
Item 8	Closure of the meeting	*
Part II	PGI Council and the IIP Committee, Joint Session, 9 December 1998	
Introduction	*	
Debate	*	

Establishment of a new ad-hoc Working Group	*
Part III Intergovernmental Committee for IIP, 7 th session, 10-11 December 1998	
Introduction	*
Item 1 Opening of the session by the President of the Intergovernmental Committee	*
Item 2 Opening speech by the Representative of the Director General	*
Item 3 Election of the Bureau of the Council	*
Item 4 Adoption of the Agenda	*
Item 5 Report on the activities of the Bureau since the sixth session of the Committee	*
Item 6 Review of IIP and Informatics activities	*
Item 7 Review of the financial situation of IIP	*
Debate on Items 6 and 7	*
Item 8 Conclusions and recommendations	*
Item 9 Date and place of the next session of the Bureau	*
Item 10 Any other business	*
Item 11 Adoption of the recommendations of the session	*
Item 12 Closure of the session	*
Annex I List of participants	*
Annex II Agenda of the 12 th session of the PGI Council	*
Annex III Agenda of 7 th session of the IIP Committee	*
Annex IV Financial report in Informatics and IIP activities	*

Part I Intergovernmental Council for PGI, 12th Session, 7-8 December 1998

Introduction

1. The twelfth session of the Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme (PGI) was held at UNESCO House, Paris, from 7 to 8 December 1998.
2. Of the 36 Member States Members of the Council 33 were represented : Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, and Yemen. Three Member States elected to the Council were not represented : Portugal, Viet Nam and Bangladesh. An observer, the United States of America, a non-member state of UNESCO, was also present.
3. In addition to the representative of the United Nations University (UNU), representatives of the following international non-governmental organizations were present : the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), the International Federation for Information and Documentation (FID), the International Council on Archives (ICA), the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA) and the Fédération internationale des archives du film (FIAF). The complete list of participants is provided in Annex I.

Item 1 Opening of the meeting

4. The Assistant Director-General for Communication, Information and Informatics, Mr Henriko Yushkevichius, welcomed the members of the Intergovernmental Council, the observers and the representatives of the intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations to the twelfth session and transmitted to them wishes of success on behalf of the Director-General.

Item 2 Election of the Bureau of the Council

a. Chairperson

1. On proposal of the Delegate of Germany, Mrs Nathalie DUSOULIER, France, was elected Chairperson of the Council. Mrs Dusolier thanked the Delegates for the confidence they had expressed in electing her. She adjourned the session in order to give Delegates the opportunity to discuss nominations for the election of the other Bureau members.

a. Other officers

1. The following members were elected:

Vice-Chairpersons : Mr. LIANG Zhanping (China)
Mr. Adam WYSOCKI (Poland)

Members :	Mr. Ernesto SPINAK (Uruguay)
	Mrs Marianne SCOTT (Canada)
	Mr. Aly ONGOÏBA (Mali)
	Mr. Ali ZAID (Yemen)
Rapporteur :	Mr. Dietrich SCHÜLLER (Austria)

2. The Chairperson congratulated the newly elected Bureau and thanked the Members of the outgoing Bureau for their commitment over the past years.

Item 3 Adoption of the Agenda

3. The Agenda (see Annex II) was approved with the following amendments : Upon suggestion of the Secretariat, Item 4 "Presentation of Research Papers" was removed from the Provisional Agenda in view of the expected heavy workload of the Delegates during the session and in order to avoid an overcrowded Agenda. The items of the Agenda were renumbered accordingly. The following additions to the Agenda were accommodated under Item 6 "Any other business":
 - a. IFLA School Library Manifesto (upon suggestion of the Delegate of Canada)
 - b. Archives of International Organizations (upon suggestion of the Delegate of Switzerland)
 - c. Declaration of the 8th Regional Meeting of CDS/ISIS Distributors, Montevideo (upon suggestion of the Delegate of Uruguay).
1. The proposal of the Rapporteur to approve the report not at the end of the session but after circulation by correspondence, as in previous PGI meetings, was accepted. The recommendations, however, would be adopted at the end of the session.

Item 4 Review of current activities of the General Information Programme

2. Mr. Philippe Quéau, Director, Information and Informatics Division, presented Document PGI/IIP-98/1, Part I "Report on recent PGI activities".

Debate on Item 4

3. There was unanimous agreement among the Delegates that the Report was well prepared and clearly presented. Many Delegates noted with satisfaction that the report reflected the expanded mandate of PGI and a proper balance between traditional fields of information such as preservation and conservation, on the one hand, and meeting the challenges of the new information technologies, on the other hand. A number of Delegates called for more frequent evaluation of projects on the basis of clearly defined indicators for measuring their success or failure. Almost all participants mentioned the Memory of the World Programme as essential. This programme has considerably enhanced UNESCO's visibility worldwide. In particular, the following observations and comments were made:
 4. The Delegate of the Philippines considered the main functions of PGI to be to provide guidance in key areas of the Information Society, such as preparing citizens for globalization whilst assisting in connecting the marginalized areas to urban centres, to use new information and communication technologies to increase functional literacy and to advocate the right to communicate as one of the basic human rights. She expressed the strong interest of her country in Multipurpose Community Telecentres (MCTs) and called for continuous support to develop archives and libraries as gateways to the Information Society.
 5. The Delegate of Switzerland observed that when supporting traditional institutions, there is an over-emphasis on libraries as compared to archives. There is also a certain risk that the programme is too unilaterally concentrated on "infostructure" development. He considered the programme as overambitious, pursuing too many aims with too limited human and financial resources. In this context, he called for more transparency in the allocation of funds to the various projects. He recommended concentrating the programme and called for enhanced co-operation with NGOs. More specifically, he requested the Secretariat to provide information on the preparation of the World Information and Communication Report which is now the responsibility of the Unit for Special Projects of the Communication, Information and Informatics Sector. He also requested the Secretariat to provide information on future projects related to infoethics and recommended that instead of conferences on a broad variety of issues, small projects and meetings on more precise and specific topics should be organized. Finally, he expressed his concern about the philosophy of the Memory of the World Programme and stated that the ranking of documents is difficult to accommodate within archival principles.

6. The Delegate of Japan reported on the finalization of the three years SISNAP project, a comparative study on the regional information infrastructure in Asia and the Pacific, funded by the Japanese Government. The project produced national case studies, and the experiences of SISNAP were widely disseminated during a regional conference. She also reported that a Japanese funds-in-trust project for the training of information professionals in Asia and the Pacific had been established for PGI.
7. The Delegate of Tanzania underlined the need to use the new information and communication technologies in the development process. Whereas he welcomed the organization of the UNESCO Web Prize, he wished that increased efforts be made by UNESCO to train specialists from developing countries in website design. He strongly supported the further development of CDS/ISIS and IDAMS which can provide a good alternative to commercial software. Whilst welcoming measures to improving infrastructures, he recommended that more emphasis be given to the improvement of south-south networking as successfully exercised in RINAF. He supported the approach of the Secretariat to assist in creating virtual libraries and suggested that they be established in developing countries in support of life-long learning. In this context, he welcomed the project on the creation of Multipurpose Community Telecentres as facilitators of development. In supporting the Memory of the World Programme, he expressed his satisfaction with African documents being included in the Memory of the World Register.
8. The Delegate of Germany, referring to the rapidity of the development of the Information Society, alerted Delegates to the fact that, in order to keep pace, the speed of the renewal of the General Information Programme had to be increased. More specifically, he regretted that the final report of the Infoethics '98 Congress (September 1998) had not yet been published. As to the UNESCO Observatory on the Information Society, he underlined the need for its constant up-dating. The Observatory had also to reflect other UNESCO activities related to the Information Society. For the future, he wished that more advanced pilot projects be included and links to the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education, Moscow, be made. As to the Memory of the World Programme, he stressed the need for more efficiency of the programme and suggested a refinement of the selection criteria for the inclusion of collections in the Memory of the World Register.
9. The Delegate of Canada focused on the importance of the "infrastructure", particularly for narrowing the gap between "info-haves" and "info have-nots". A key role in this context should be given to archives for the dissemination of governmental information and to basic library services as highlighted in the IFLA "School Library Manifesto" which is being co-sponsored by Canada. Particularly emphasis should be placed on the evaluation of the social, political and economical impact of new information and communication technologies. More co-operation with IGOs and NGOs had to be sought. The Memory of the World Programme should be re-evaluated and emphasis be given to its preservation aspects.
10. The Delegate of Chile considered the discussion related to infoethics as important to national policy development and suggested that infoethics meetings be held in different regions. She reported on the successful Chilean project on connecting school and public libraries to the Internet as a contribution to infrastructure development. She regretted, however, that content relevant to Latin America was still under-represented on the Internet. Training of trainers and users through distance training models, are important to create computer literacy and to strengthen the creation of Latin American contents on the Internet. Guidelines for digitization would be a necessary tool.
11. The Delegate of Poland appreciated that the report on recent PGI activities favorably reflects increased contacts with IFLA. He emphasized, however, that contacts should be improved with all relevant NGOs. UNESCO has to pursue the economic interest of information users as opposed to the interest of information suppliers. In this context, he regretted the lack of activities on the important issue of Internet tariffs although the Bureau had dealt with this issue at its last meeting. In taking note of the numerous conferences and meetings organized by the Information and Informatics Division, he urged the Secretariat to disseminate more widely and effectively the results of these events. As to the UNESCO Observatory on the Information Society and the project of creating a virtual focal point for websites disseminating information in the areas of UNESCO's competence, he requested a statement on their financial implication. The Delegate of Poland confirmed that his country strongly supported the Memory of the World Programme and contributed actively to it by its participation in the International Advisory Committee. As to the Trans-European Tele-Education

Network (TEN), he recommended to expand it beyond its present regional scope and to include Eastern European countries.

12. The Delegate of France called for better co-operation between libraries and archives and the establishment of common standards in a rapidly changing professional environment. She underlined the importance of the Memory of the World Programme. She made several proposals for improving the presentation of PGI activities including statistics and graphical information in the geographical distribution of projects and funds.
13. The Delegate of Uganda regretted that despite the importance of the programme, no improvement of its financial situation had been achieved to date. He stressed the importance of the project of Multipurpose Community Telecentres which are being supported in his country by a number of international programmes and organizations and are likewise oriented to combat illiteracy as well as introducing citizens to the use of modern information technology and the Internet.
14. The Delegate of Yemen reminded that the challenges of the Information Society are more demanding for developing countries and that UNESCO, through the transfer of knowledge, must contribute to narrowing the widening gap between developed and developing countries. The budget allocated for this task must, however, be adequate. He expressed his strong support of the Memory of the World Programme and its potential to help countries in transition to maintain their cultural identity in a context of cultural globalization.
15. The Delegate of Austria informed the Council that the Memory of the World Programme was one of his country's main fields of co-operation with UNESCO. The fourth meeting of the International Advisory Committee was to be organized in Vienna, in June 1999. Given the importance of, and the general support to this programme, it had to be reiterated, however, that budgetary and human resources were still inadequate despite previous recommendations made by the Council, its Bureau and the external evaluation. Austria encouraged UNESCO to re-establish its catalyzing role in the stimulation of standards, especially in the field of multilingual terminology, offering the expertise of INFOTERM in this field. Although welcoming Mr Quéau's report, he observed its retrospective character and wondered how Delegates could contribute to the preparation of the Programme and Budget for 2000-2001 (30 C/5) : What budgetary allocations could be foreseen and how the increase of the PGI budget, as previously demanded by the Council and the Bureau, could be effectively supported.
16. The Delegate of Brazil stressed the need to support regional approaches in information in order to counterbalance globalization. His country did not only offer Antares to UNESCO, but proposed co-operation in various other projects such as the creation of a Regional Center for Mercosur, Infolac, the Amazlib project, the establishment of a regional chair for new information and communication technologies and the organization of a congress on regional impacts of the Information Society.
17. The Delegate of Uruguay also advocated a stronger regional approach and presented a number of projects carried out in the region, such as the creation of a pilot scheme for national archives and Latin American digitization projects. He suggested that UNESCO published a list of standards for information processing. He also paid homage to the creator of CDS/ISIS, Mr Giampaolo Del Eigio.
18. The Delegate of Argentina joined the previous speakers from Latin America in highlighting the need for regional approaches.
19. The Delegate of IASA appreciated the good co-operation of his organization with the CII Sector. He stressed the central role of audiovisual documents for modern society pointing out their vulnerability and the specific problems related to their preservation. Hence, he expressed his hope that, in future, UNESCO would give more attention to audiovisual archives projects. In this context, he proposed the creation of a virtual information and training centre for audiovisual archiving. In order to further strengthen the input from audiovisual experts in PGI activities, he requested that representatives of audiovisual archives associations be invited, like other NGOs, to the meetings of the PGI Bureau. This was confirmed by the Chairperson.
20. The Delegate of IFLA noted with satisfaction the increased co-operation with the CII Sector and proposed further co-operation in the IFLA-Young Professional Training Programme (in co-operation with OCLC) and in promoting the Public Library Manifesto and the School Library Manifesto, and the Guidelines for Library Service to Blind Users.
21. The Delegate of ICA recommended assessing the role of archives and their holdings in the Memory of the World Programme and developing free CDS/ISIS applications for archives.

22. The Delegate of FID remarked that in periods of limited resources, co-operation became increasingly important. In order to better exploit FID's partnership with UNESCO, she underlined the risk of having an approach that was too scattered and requested CII/INF to define its objectives more clearly. More specifically, she requested that the findings of the Infoethics '98 Congress be made available soon.
23. Mr. Quéau replied in detail to the interventions of the Delegates. He particularly referred to the observations made concerning Infoethics. He underlined that the venue of the next meeting had not yet been decided upon and welcomed the suggestion to regionalize the debate on ethical and legal issues of the Information Society. As an example, he mentioned the meeting on Cyberlaw which had been held in October 1998 in Seoul, immediately before the Monte Carlo Infoethics Congress. He informed the Council that the summary report of the Monte Carlo meeting was available on the CII website. As to the provisional budget allocations for the Programme and Budget 2000-2001, he informed Delegates that planning was presently based on three scenarios (zero nominal growth of the budget, its zero real growth and a hoped considerable increase up to 9% (at present : 5%) of UNESCO's Regular Budget for programme activities). Mr. Yushkiavitchus suggested that the Delegates request their appropriate national authorities to support a substantial increase of the CII budget.

Item 5 Preparation of the joint session of the Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme and the Intergovernmental Committee of the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme

24. During the morning session of 8 December, the Council discussed Item 5 of the agenda. The Delegates of the following Member States took the floor: Argentina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, Czech Republic, Egypt, France, Germany, Japan, Madagascar, Philippines, Poland, Switzerland, Tanzania, Togo, Uruguay and Yemen. The representatives of ICA and IASA also took the floor.
25. The Chairperson introduced this Item by summarizing the *Report of the ad-hoc Working Group on the future of the General Information Programme and the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme* (Document PGI/IIP-98/1, Part III).
26. In the ensuing debate, the Delegates recommended by consensus to endorse Option III as proposed by the Working Group. This option suggested the establishment of a new programme reflecting the challenges of new information and communication technologies thereby integrating the objectives of PGI and IIP, and to replace the existing intergovernmental bodies by a new intergovernmental structure to guide and supervise this programme. This new programme should be established within the context of UNESCO's general strategy for promoting a culture of peace through multicultural dialogue and enhancement of cultural identities.
27. This new programme should build on achievements reached by both PGI and IIP and should be a logical consequence of the increased convergence of activities related to content and carriage of information. It will avoid overlapping of the two existing programmes and trigger desired synergies. It should be given a strengthened, co-ordinating role both within and outside the Organization and had to be provided with sufficient budgetary means. The new programme had to contribute to capacity building and the free flow of information, preserving the core values of both PGI and IIP. It had to be policy-oriented, user-centric, concentrated on strengthening the public good, ensure access and quality of information, including the multicultural information, and assist in the creation of sustainable infrastructures. From the outset, the programme should include mechanisms of evaluation.
28. Many Delegates underlined that the main objective of the new programme should be to contribute to narrowing the gap between the "info haves" and the "info have-nots". In particular, the new programme must respond to the needs of developing countries in the Information Society. In this context, the training of trainers and users was of particular importance.
29. Many Delegates also underlined that the new programme should maintain a balanced approach including both traditional areas of PGI and IIP and the emerging fields of the Information Age. Since the physical availability of information was a pre-requisite for a just and efficient Information Society, preservation and conservation of all kinds of documents and supports had to remain a central issue. In this context, measures had to be taken to enable Member States to preserve documentation which was critical to strengthen cultural identities.

30. After some discussion, there was agreement that the new programme should co-operate more closely with UNESCO's Intergovernmental Council for the Development of Communication (IPDC).
31. It was decided to propose to the IIP Committee to ask the ad-hoc working group on the future of the General Information Programme and the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme established during the joint session of the Bureau of the PGI Council and the IIP Committee on 23 June 1998 to pursue its work by preparing a document for consideration by the 156th session of the Executive Board of UNESCO and the thirtieth session of the General Conference of UNESCO. Member States were invited to contribute to this debate. It was anticipated that there would be a full functioning new programme by the thirty-first session of the General Conference.

Item 6 Any other business

a. IFLA School Library Manifesto

1. The Delegate of Canada presented the School Library Manifesto which had been developed by Canadian librarians in co-operation with IFLA in analogy to UNESCO's Public Library Manifesto. She requested Council to support this Manifesto by submitting it to the General Conference for endorsement and, if approved, for promotion by the Secretariat. The Council supported this request.

a. Archives of International Organizations

1. The Delegate of Switzerland presented an initiative for the safeguarding of and the access to the archives of organizations belonging to the UN system. These holdings represent an important part of the collective memory of mankind. Joint efforts, hopefully under the aegis of UNESCO, should be undertaken to establish common policies and standards for their safeguard. This initiative received unanimous support and the Secretariat was asked to put forward a concrete proposal for action.

a. Declaration of the 8th Regional Meeting of CDS/ISIS Distributors, Montevideo

1. The Delegate of Uruguay, supported by a number of other Delegates, requested that the Secretariat pursue its support to CDS/ISIS development, as recently declared in Montevideo by the participants of the 8th Regional Meeting of CDS/ISIS Distributors. Mr. Yushkiavitskius informed the Delegates that UNESCO would search for new partnerships for CDS/ISIS development outside the Organization and that a detailed report on the recent situation related to this software would be prepared by the Secretariat.

Item 7

Adoption of the recommendations

2. The Chairperson introduced the draft recommendations which had been prepared by a drafting group composed of the Delegates of Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Japan and Yemen as well as the Rapporteur. The following recommendations were adopted :

The Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme at its Twelfth Session,

1. *Recalling Resolution 28 adopted by the General Conference at its 29th session;*
2. *Having examined document PGI/IIP-98/1, Part I "Report on recent PGI activities";*
3. *Notes with satisfaction the significant activities undertaken by the Information and Informatics Division in expanding and developing the mandate of the General Information Programme;*
4. *Notes with satisfaction the substantial input made by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to the programme and recommends to further strengthen co-operation with all relevant NGOs;*
5. *Recommends that co-operation with other international organizations and the private sector should be developed;*
6. *Recommends the Secretariat to continue to develop its future activities along the main lines of action as put forward in the preface of document PGI/IIP-98/1: the activities shall concentrate on the "content" aspects of the information society, including preservation of, and access to, information, training and societal and ethical issues; "infrastructure" aspects must equally be taken into account, including information policies and networking, thereby maintaining a balance between traditional and new fields of communication and information activities, building on previous activities to accumulate the experience of the programme;*
7. *Recommends a more frequent evaluation of projects on the basis of clearly defined indicators for measuring their success or failure, beginning with a base-line review of a sample of completed projects including frequent reporting on, and controlling of projects to increase their transparency;*
8. *Recommends Member States, the General Conference and the Executive Board to give priority to narrowing the gap between information "haves" and "have-nots" to contributing to reduce the existing economical and technical barriers;*

9. *Requests that the comments and recommendations made at the Twelfth Session of the PGI Council be duly reflected in the preparation of the Programme and Budget for 2000-2001 (30 C/5);*
10. *Recommends that*
 - a. *attempts be made that future conferences on information issues be organized at regional levels and/or on specific issues providing a balance to international conferences on general issues;*
 - b. *the School Library Manifesto be submitted to the 30th General Conference for endorsement and that the Secretariat promotes its dissemination;*
 - c. *the Secretariat prepare, in co-operation with concerned organizations within the UN system and with the International Council on Archives, a proposal for undertaking actions for the safeguarding of, and access to, the archives of the intergovernmental organizations for consideration by the next Bureau meeting and Council session;*
 - d. *the Secretariat take note of the Declaration of the 8th Regional Meeting of CDS/ISIS Distributors, Montevideo, calling for further support to CDS/ISIS development and that it prepare detailed information on the recent situation related to this software;*
11. *Requests that possibilities be studied to reallocate funds to increase the CII budget in view to the key role of communication and information in all areas of UNESCO's activities.*

Item 8 Closure of the meeting

1. The Chairperson thanked the Delegates and the Secretariat for their contribution to the success of the meeting and declared the meeting closed on 8 December 1998 at 5.40 p.m.

Part II PGI Council and the IIP Committee, Joint Session, 9 December 1998

Introduction

1. A joint meeting of the Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme (PGI) and of the Intergovernmental Committee of the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme (IIP) took place on 9 December 1998. It discussed ways of implementing Resolution 29 C/28 (Paragraph 2.C. (f)) which invites the Director-General "to convene the statutory meetings of the PGI Intergovernmental Council and the IIP Intergovernmental Committee, as well as those of their Bureaux, as joint meetings, in order to release funds for concrete activities in Member States and to establish the synergies necessary to adapt UNESCO's activities to the challenges of the information highways, thus enabling the 30th session of the General Conference to take a well-informed decision about a possible merger of these two intergovernmental programmes or any other appropriate solution."
2. The discussion paper of this meeting was prepared by an ad-hoc working group which had been set up by the joint meeting of the Bureau of the PGI Council and of the Bureau of the IIP Committee on 23 June 1998.
3. The meeting was co-chaired by Mrs Nathalie Dusoulier, France, Chairperson of PGI, and Mr Momar Ali Ndiaye, Senegal, Chairperson of IIP. The present report was prepared by the Rapporteurs of the two intergovernmental bodies, Mr Dietrich Schüller, Austria, PGI Rapporteur, and Mr V.K. Samaranayake, Sri Lanka, IIP Rapporteur.
4. The meeting was opened by the Director-General of UNESCO who addressed the Delegates, outlining the general issues raised by the information revolution from the perspective of UNESCO's core mission to its Member States and to the people it serves. He reminded Delegates that, as a result of the twenty-ninth session of the General Conference, their mandate was to re-think the role of PGI and IIP to assist UNESCO in shaping a vision leading the Organization through the transition from the "industrial" to the "information age" and to reassess the intergovernmental mechanisms for planning and orienting the Organization's activities related to information and informatics.

Debate

5. Mrs Dusoulier, in summarizing the *Report of the ad-hoc Working Group on the future of the General Information Programme and the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme* (Document PGI/IIP-98/1, Part III), introduced the agenda for the day. She reminded Delegates that the objectives of the joint session was to brainstorm on the future of the two programmes and to retain one of the options proposed, or to propose any other adequate option for the future of PGI and IIP. She informed the Delegates that the PGI Council, at its 12th session held on 7 and 8 December 1998, had taken an unanimous decision to suggest the establishment of a new programme reflecting the challenges of new information and communication technologies thereby integrating the objectives of PGI and IIP

and, therefore, to replace the existing intergovernmental bodies by a new intergovernmental structure to guide and supervise this programme (Option III).

6. The Rapporteur of the PGI Council read out the report of the PGI Council debate on this item. This report was also distributed to the participants of the joint session.
7. The Delegates of the following Member States elected to the PGI Council and the IIP Committee took the floor : Austria, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Mozambique, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Uganda, Ukraine, Uruguay and Zimbabwe. The Delegates of following Member States neither elected to the PGI Council nor to the IIP Committee also took the floor : Belgium, Denmark and Tunisia.
8. The majority of Delegates were in favour of Option III which would provide the best reply to the radical changes of the world. They stressed that only integrated operations concerning information and informatics issues at the same time will have optimal results. The Information Society needed synergy through real co-operation and a fully integrated approach of all professions involved. They underlined that a new programme needed to be designed based on the achievements of yesterday and paving the way for tomorrow. It should be aimed at balancing inequalities in access to information and the use of new technologies. The capacity of information to contribute to problem solving is a prime issue and a key to successful development. In this context, regional and multilingual approaches are of particular importance. The Delegates were confident that, with the expertise of both outgoing programmes and their findings, the access to the information society for all, especially for the youth, would be facilitated. They underlined that the new programme needed to be concentrated on education, science and culture as the main areas of competence of UNESCO. In this context, it is essential to use information technology to preserve cultural identities.
9. Although in favour of rethinking PGI and IIP, some Delegates expressed that caution should be taken in giving-up well-established, though not ideal structures without knowing exactly towards what we should go. In particular, some Delegates were of the opinion that
 - information and informatics have clearly distinguished identities, particularly in developing countries;
 - in the period of transition from the existing to new programme structures, the continuity of operations must be maintained in order to secure future support by external sponsors;
 - in the process of integration of the programmes, the visibility of informatics must be maintained, regardless of intergovernmental structures;
 - the diversity of national and regional approaches to informatics policies and projects must be taken into account.
1. The proposal of saving financial means and human resources by outsourcing several tasks of IIP and PGI raised controversial comments.
2. The Assistant Director-General for Communication, Information and Informatics alerted Delegates that IIP was set-up in order to raise extra-budgetary funds for informatics project. With decreasing funds raised, it is at risk of disappearing. Seen from this perspective, the mandate given by the General Conference to create synergies which are necessary to adapt UNESCO's activities to the challenges of the Information Society, is appropriate and timely.
3. The Delegates thereafter agreed to recommend the acceptance of Option III and proceeded to establish a new ad-hoc working group.
Establishment of a new ad-hoc Working Group
4. The Delegates agreed, after a lively discussion, to entrust the two Bureaux to set-up a new ad-hoc Working Group and to invite external experts as appropriate. The mandate of the group would be to design an outline of a possible new programme, taking into account the discussions of this joint session and the report of the previous ad-hoc working group. In particular, it was proposed that the mandate of the group would be to:
 - define main lines of the new programme;
 - suggest priority issues for future actions;
 - define general principles for future projects (catalytic role, pilot character, adaptation of findings, etc.);
 - reflect on the intergovernmental management structures;
 - reflect on co-operation mechanisms with other UNESCO programmes and with outside partners;

- suggest reallocation of funds with a view to increasing the resources available;
 - elaborate the proposed form of presentation to UNESCO's governing bodies.
1. The draft outline of the new programme to be prepared by the ad-hoc working group would be discussed by the Bureaux and submitted to the PGI Council and IIP Committee members for their comments and proposals. It would then be put forward for discussion at the thirtieth session of the General Conference. The details of the programme would be formulated after the approval of the outline by the thirtieth session of the General Conference in 1999. Both PGI and IIP remain fully operational until the new programme had been endorsed, possibly during the thirty-first session of the General Conference in 2001. The Executive Board would be continuously informed of the work of the ad-hoc working group and of the decisions of the Bureaux.

Part III Intergovernmental Committee for IIP, 7th session, 10-11 December 1998

Introduction

1. The seventh session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme was held at UNESCO's Headquarters from 10 to 11 December 1998.
2. Of the 35 Member States Members of the Council 32 were represented : Benin, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, China, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Greece, India, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mali, Mozambique, Peru, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand, Ukraine, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe. Two Member States elected to the Council were not represented : Guinea and Nicaragua (list of participants is given in Annex I).

Item 1 Opening of the session by the President of the Intergovernmental Committee

3. The seventh session of the Intergovernmental Committee was opened officially by the President, Mr. Momar Ali Ndiaye, on Thursday 10 December 1998 at 10 a.m. He welcomed all participants and expressed his thanks to the Director-General of UNESCO for his welcome.

Item 2 Opening speech by the Representative of the Director General

4. The Assistant Director-General for Communication, Information and Informatics, Mr. Henrikas Yushkevicius, welcomed the members of the Intergovernmental Council, the observers and the representatives of the intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations to the seventh session.

Item 3 Election of the Bureau of the Council

5. In harmony with its statutes, the Committee proceeded to the election of the members of its Bureau. The results of the election were as follows:

President:	Mr. Ludovit Molnar	(Slovakia)
Vicepresidents:		
Africa:	Mr. Venancio Massingao	(Mozambique)
Asia:	Ms. J.R.D. Kailay	(India)
Arab States:	Mr. Mohamed Ahmad Afaswad	(Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)
Europe I:	Mr. Erik Norberg	(Sweden)
Europe II:	Mr. Alexander Vladimirovich Volokitin	(Russia)
Latin America:	Mr. Felix Murillo Alfaro	(Peru)
Rapporteur:	Mr. Nicolas Malagardis	(Greece)

6. The Chairperson congratulated the newly elected Bureau and thanked the Members of the outgoing Bureau for their commitment over the past years.

Item 4 Adoption of the Agenda

7. The Agenda (see Annex III) was approved with the following amendments : Upon suggestion of the President, made in harmony with the Secretariat, Item 8 "Strategies for training in informatics, for supporting software development in Africa and for promoting the participation of women in distance education and teleworking" and Item 9 "Assessment of the progress made in developing regional informatics networks and future prospects" were integrated in Item 6 "Report on the activities of the Secretariat", in view of the expected heavy workload of the Delegates during the session and in order to avoid an overcrowded Agenda. Only the recommendations were to be adopted at the end of the

session, the report would be approved after circulation by correspondence, as in previous IIP meetings. The items of the Agenda were renumbered accordingly.

Item 5 Report on the activities of the Bureau since the sixth session of the Committee

8. Mr Momar Ali Ndiaye presented an oral report summarising the activities of the Bureau during his presidency in the period 1997-1998. He stressed the importance of the training activities and highlighted actions related to informatics policy, access to free software and infrastructure development. He pointed out the efforts made to reflect the synergy of information, informatics and telecommunication, in particular the participation of the IIP president in PGI and IPDC meetings and in ITU and ECA events. Also, new modalities and strategies for evaluation were elaborated and applied by Bureau members within the framework of IIP projects in Africa and Asia.

Item 6 Review of IIP and Informatics activities

9. Mr Philippe Quéau, Director, Information and Informatics Division, presented Document PGI/IIP-98/1, Part II "Report on IIP and Informatics activities".

Item 7 Review of the financial situation of IIP

10. Mr. Philippe Quéau presented an oral review of the financial situation of IIP and the evolution of the voluntary contributions of the Member States and Funds-in-Trust. Following the request of the meeting, the Financial Report is presented in Annex 4.

Debate on Items 6 and 7

11. A number of Delegates called for more frequent evaluation of projects on the basis of clearly defined indicators for measuring their success or failure. Almost all participants mentioned the training of trainers as essential. In particular, the following observations and comments were made:
12. Regarding the future new programme :
 - The results of past projects needed in-depth analysis, and future plans should be based on solid evidence of what had been successful and what had to be abandoned.
 - Before designing the programme, it should be assessed up-stream, paying special attention to the lasting nature and validity of future action.
 - New elements should be introduced with fresh thinking, in particular those of a creative character, such as information analysis, specific engineering studies.
9. Regarding the main lines of action of the future new programme
 - Youth and youth related matters should have a high visibility, giving youth priority as users and having youth in mind when designing projects and activities.
 - Training of trainers was a top priority and UNESCO should act as a facilitator in this area, promoting mutual learning from each-other's experience; it should support training activities at regional level, making the widest possible use of regional focal points and local expertise, based on the establishment of a roster of trainers. Distance education means should be made use of. Resource centers could be useful for providing skills, even if they do not provide a qualification.
 - Changes in priorities needed to be reflected, e.g. networking should remain a key issue, whereas physical connection is now more readily available. Content and the development of access for users in less privileged areas, such as rural zones, should have high priority, multilingualism should be supported, and the development of national content both for national and external users should constitute priority tasks, possibly with two-way access to web-sites.
 - Governments should be encouraged to increase their efforts aimed at devising a national informatics policy.
 - The concept of the "Information Society" was a topic of intensive common interest and should be a focus for the exchange of information and joint work.
 - The dissemination of freeware would contribute to the development of informatics applications.
 - Major attention should be paid to the legal implications, taking into account both existing elements of legislation and those lacking; UNESCO's role could be to assess the general situation and provide minimum standards for accessing information.
 - Centers of excellence should be developed.
 - The "virtual laboratory" approach could be extended to applications at secondary school level, e.g. for teaching physics and chemistry where laboratories are lacking.
 - The issue of developing low-price computers operating with springs merits further exploration.
 - The re-use of hardware merited consideration, because computer equipment replaced in public administration as well as in companies may still play a considerable role in education, etc.

9. Regarding the "Year 2000 Bug" many Delegates expressed concern about the expected 2000 calendar date malfunctioning :
 - More information and concrete action would be needed in order to alert interested parties.
 - Least developed countries needed assistance through pilot projects, the publication of brochures, circular letters, etc.
9. Regarding the visibility of IIP projects and activities:
 - The dissemination of information on the programme as a whole and about individual projects needed to be enhanced. In particular a better use of UNESCO's server could have immediate effects.
 - Information on past projects, their results and the experience gained through them should be made widely available through the UNESCO web-site.
 - The same information system could be used to underline the cultural and society aspects in the information society, which need a better and more precise definition.
 - The improved information would have a beneficial effect on co-ordination with other international programmes, such as the World Bank and Infodev.
9. Regarding the improvement of the financial situation :
 - IIP could provide a quality label for projects in order to facilitate the mobilization of funds from all kinds of sources.
 - The projects should be presented to potential donors clearly specifying the results to be achieved, stressing the added value provided by the co-operation among the beneficiary, UNESCO and the donor, the quality of UNESCO expertise which could be made available through the project, as well as the fact that the cost of UNESCO-operated projects are less expensive than execution by other agencies.
 - Overlapping with other international organizations should be avoided; co-operation with them - in particular with CAIBI, the World Bank, Infodev, etc. - strengthened.
 - A better selection of proposals, attribution of priorities and developing projects with the largest possible impact in the field of education could contribute to mobilization of funding.
 - Involvement of the private sector should be strengthened. Projects should be replicable, and it should be made clear to both donors and beneficiaries that the results and experience gained would be transferred to the widest possible range of other countries and institutions.
 - Countries should be encouraged to submit IIP labeled projects directly to bilateral donors, for whom this label would facilitate the favourable consideration of the project.
 - Efforts should be made to reverse the earlier decision to limit IIP to the use of extra-budgetary resources.
9. Mr. Quéau replied in detail to the interventions of the Delegates.

Item 8 Conclusions and recommendations

10. The Chairperson introduced the draft recommendations which had been prepared by a drafting group. After discussion the recommendations were presented for approval by the meeting as follows:

The Intergovernmental Committee recommends that

1. *The main principles of elaborating the new program should be the following :*

- *In depth analysis and evaluation of last achievements drawing lessons of both successes and failures;*
- *Identifying fields and types of activities which are innovative and of common use to greatest number of countries;*
- *Increase visibility and information of projects to be implemented.*

2. *The main lines of action should be the following:*

- *Youth and youth related matters;*
- *Training the trainers;*
- *Networking and facility of access in a multicultural and multilingual context, focusing on developing national content;*
- *Dissemination of freeware;*
- *Centres of excellence;*
- *Distance education;*
- *Facilitating the acquisition of low-price hardware and negotiating low tariffs;*

3. *Efforts should be made to reverse decision to limit IIP to the use of extra-budgetary resources only, and*

- *The use of funds made available to UNESCO by the donors, be specified;*
- *More attractive procedures to mobilise public and private resources be found;*
- *Co-operation with international and regional organizations in order to avoid overlapping; be strengthened*

4. *Focus should be on the concept of Information Society, encouraging Governments to devise national informatics policy*

Item 9 Date and place of the next session of the Bureau

9. The next session of the Bureau of the IIP Committee will take place jointly and simultaneously with that of the Bureau of the PGI Council (24 - 25 June 1999).

Item 10 Any other business

10. Under this Item the President informed the meeting that the Vice-Presidents in charge of Asia, Africa, Europe I and Europe II had been entrusted with the preparation of the first IIP contributions to the joint PGI-IIP ad-hoc Working Group established by the joint session, for discussion by all Committee members. One specialist from the Arab States and Latin America/Caribbean each would be invited on an ad-hoc basis to contribute to, and participate in a possible meeting to be held on the matter in 1999.

Item 11 Adoption of the recommendations of the session

11. The recommendations were adopted as presented after the discussion under Item 8.

Item 12 Closure of the session

12. The Chairperson thanked the Delegates and the Secretariat for their contribution to the success of the meeting and declared the meeting closed on 11 December 1998 at 5.30 p.m.

Annex 1 List of participants

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Annex II Agenda of the 12th session of the PGI Council
Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme (PGI)
12th Session
7-8 December 1998
Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting by the Director-General or his representative
2. Elections of the Bureau of the Council (Chairperson, other officers)
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Review of current activities of the General Information Programme
5. Preparation of the joint session of the Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme and the Intergovernmental Committee of the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme (UNESCO House, Paris, Room X, Fontenoy building, 9 December 1998, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.)
6. Any other business
 - a. IFLA School Library Manifesto
 - b. Archives of International Organizations
 - c. Declaration of Member States of Latin America and the Caribbean on PGI activities
1. Adoption of the recommendations
2. Closure of the meeting

Annex III Agenda of 7th session of the IIP Committee
Intergovernmental Committee for the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme (IIP)
7th Session
10-11 December 1998
Agenda

1. Opening of the session by the Chairperson of the Intergovernmental Committee for the IIP
2. Address by the Director-General or his representative
3. Election of the Chairperson and other members of the Bureau of the IIP Committee
4. Adoption of the Agenda
5. Report on the activities of the Bureau since the sixth session of the Committee
6. Report on the activities of the Secretariat. Assessment and progress of projects launched since the sixth session of the Committee. Strategies for training in informatics, for supporting software development in Africa and for promoting the participation of women in distance education and teleworking. Assessment of the progress made in developing regional informatics networks and future prospects
7. Review of the financial situation of the IIP. Evolution of the voluntary contributions of the Member States and Funds-in-Trust. Review of measures to be taken, paying special attention to the synergy of information, informatics and telematics activities
8. Conclusions and recommendations
9. Date and place of the next session of the Bureau
10. Any other business
11. Adoption of the recommendations of the session
12. Closure of the session

Annex IV Financial report in Informatics and IIP activities

Financial report on informatics and IIP activities
(figures in US\$)
(This report will be available in the final version)
UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION
UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme
(Twelfth Session)

UNESCO House, Paris, Room X (Fontenoy Building)
7-8 December 1998

Recommendations

The Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme at its Twelfth Session.

1. Recalling Resolution 28 adopted by the General Conference at its 29th session;
2. Having examined document PGI/IIP-98/1, Part I "Report on recent PGI activities";
3. Notes with satisfaction the significant activities undertaken by the Information and Informatics Division in expanding and developing the mandate of the General Information Programme;
4. Notes with satisfaction the substantial input made by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to the programme and recommends to further strengthen co-operation with all relevant NGOs;
5. Recommends that co-operation with other international organizations and the private sector should be developed;
6. Recommends the Secretariat to continue to develop its future activities along the main lines of action as put forward in the preface of document PGI/IIP-98/1; the activities shall concentrate on the

"content" aspects of the information society, including preservation of, and access to, information, training and societal and ethical issues; "infrastructure" aspects must equally be taken into account, including information policies and networking, thereby maintaining a balance between traditional and new fields of communication and information activities, building on previous activities to accumulate the experience of the programme;

7. Recommends a more frequent evaluation of projects on the basis of clearly defined indicators for measuring their success or failure, beginning with a base-line review of a sample of completed projects including frequent reporting on, and controlling of projects to increase their transparency;
8. Recommends Member States, the General Conference and the Executive Board to give priority to narrowing the gap between information "haves" and "have-nots" to contributing to reduce the existing economical and technical barriers;
9. Requests that the comments and recommendations made at the Twelfth Session of the PGI Council be duly reflected in the preparation of the Programme and Budget for 2000-2001 (30 C/5);
10. Recommends that
 - a. attempts be made that future conferences on information issues be organized at regional levels and/or on specific issues providing a balance to international conferences on general issues;
 - b. the School Library Manifesto be submitted to the 30th General Conference for endorsement and that the Secretariat promotes its dissemination;
 - c. the Secretariat prepare, in co-operation with concerned organizations within the UN system and with the International Council on Archives, a proposal for undertaking actions for the safeguarding of, and access to, the archives of the intergovernmental organizations for consideration by the next Bureau meeting and Council session;
 - d. the Secretariat take note of the Declaration of the 8th Regional Meeting of CDS/ISIS Distributors, Montevideo, calling for further support to CDS/ISIS development and that it prepare detailed information on the recent situation related to this software;
11. Requests that possibilities be studied to reallocate funds to increase the CII budget in view to the key role of communication and information in all areas of UNESCO's activities.

The Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme at its Twelfth Session,

**Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme
(Twelfth Session)**

UNESCO House, Paris, Room X (Fontenoy Building)
7-8 December 1998

Recommendations

The Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme at its Twelfth Session,

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 - a. attempts be made that future conferences on information issues be organized at regional levels and/or on specific issues providing a balance to international conferences on general issues;
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 - d. the Secretariat take note of the Declaration of the 8th Regional Meeting of CDS/ISIS Distributors, Montevideo, calling for further support to CDS/ISIS development and that it prepare detailed information on the recent situation related to this software;
11. Requests that possibilities be studied to reallocate funds to increase the CII budget in view to the key role of communication and information in all areas of UNESCO's activities.

The Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme at its Twelfth Session,