DISTINCT, BUT NOT DISTANT

THE ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS FROM A YOUTH PERSPECTIVE

United Nations Association of Spain
Barcelona, 2010
INDEX

I.- THE ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS .............................................................................................. 4
THE ROLE OF YOUTH AT THE ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS ................................................. 10

II. - THE UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF SPAIN ............................................................ 14
1.- C’MUN ....................................................................................................................................... 16
   1.1.- YOUTH FOR THE ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS .......................................................... 16
       1.1.1.- ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST STEPS OF THE ALLIANCE ........................................... 16
       1.1.2.- FIRST FORUM ON CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY ............................ 18
       1.1.3.- SECOND FORUM FOR THE CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY ............... 20
       1.1.4.- THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN EDUCATION AND POLITICS .............................. 24
       1.1.5.- THE MIGRATION AND ITS INTEGRATION INTO THE DESTINATION COUNTRY .... 26
   1.2.- YOUTH FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ...................................................................................... 29
       1.2.1.- WOMEN IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS AND THE QUESTION OF PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF HUMAN RIGHTS ........................................ 30
       1.2.2.- SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND HUMAN RIGHT ..................................................... 33
       1.2.3.- REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL RIGHT ................................................................ 37
   1.3.- THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND THE HUNGER REFUGEES ................................................. 41
   1.4.- THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN A DIVERSITY OF PERSPECTIVE .................................. 45
   1.5.- NEW WORLD INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION ORDER .................................. 49

2.- MEDITERRANEAN FORUM OF THE YOUNG ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS ......................... 52

3.- C’MUN YOUNGSTERS IN THE EAST-WEST DIALOGUE OF CASA ASIA ............................ 58
   3.1.- EAST-WEST DIALOGUE 2006 ........................................................................................ 60
   3.2.- EAST-WEST DIALOGUE 2007 ..................................................................................... 63
   3.3.- EAST-WEST DIALOGUE 2008 ..................................................................................... 67
3.4.- EAST-WEST DIALOGUE 2009 ................................................................. 70

3.5.- EAST-WEST DIALOGUE 2010 ............................................................... 74

4. SPECIAL FORUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN EUROPE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF YOUTH..... 76

5.- CONCLUSION: TOWARDS AN ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS ...................... 79

APPENDIX ........................................................................................................... 81

C’MUN 2006. The Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations A/C. Ad Hoc/1

C’MUN 2008. Ad Hoc Committee Alliance of Civilizations
C’MUN 2010. The Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations A/C. Ad Hoc/1/2010
C’MUN 2010. The Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations A/C. Ad Hoc/2/2010
C’MUN 2010. The Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations A/C. Ad Hoc/3/2010
C’MUN 2010. UNESCO. International commission for the study of communications problems


IV C’MUN Special Meeting China & India 2008: Human Rights and Environment
VI C’MUN Special Meeting 2010. Gender Equality.
C’MUN Special Meeting European Conference: The New Limits of Human Rights 2008

3
I.- THE ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

Since 1948, when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted—and although it is a declarative document—, the United Nations has undertaken an increasingly growing commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights, becoming this aspect one of the cornerstones of the whole system.

This essay comprises 30 articles defining fundamental civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. These rights must be enjoyed by everyone without exception and independently of the country where they live. The universality of such rights is already specified in articles 1 and 2 declaring that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights", and everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, “without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”.

In spite of being a non-binding document for the States, it was the foundation that favored the creation of the International Covenants on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. They have their origin in the Universal Declaration: the first one is enshrined in articles 3 to 21, where civil and political rights of all human beings are specified; the second one in the articles 22 to 27, where essential economic, social and cultural rights are specified and should be used as a scale of the States behavior.

Certainly, there is a relation of explicit connection between both the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Universal Declaration. And there is also such a content affinity that the three documents have ended up being the core of the so-called International Bill of Human Rights. Nevertheless, there is a key difference between the two types of documents: the Universal Declaration has non-binding power in spite of having success and having been included in the
fundamental or constitutional laws from numerous countries; whereas the
International Covenants represent the first international treaties globally and
legally compulsory on human rights and they include bodies to control their
enforcement by Member States.

In the International Covenants, a considerable progress has been made to
promote universal respect and observance of human rights, establishing, for
example: the right to life, liberty and security, the right to freedom of religion, the
right to just and favorable conditions of work and to social protection; the right to
education, and to a cultural diversity protection. Thus, it is caused a block of
interdependent and indivisible rights. All of them will be inalienable and inherent
in everybody, due to the simple fact of the human condition.

When in 1998, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the
resolution A/RES/53/22 that proclaimed the year 2001 as the “United Nations
Year of Dialogue among Civilizations”, a new dimension was being added to the
International Covenants on Human Rights and paving the way for the achievement
of an Alliance of Civilizations. Certainly, respect for diversity and mutual
understanding between people facilitates universal promotion and protection of
human rights and constitutes a sound foundation for civil society, social harmony
and peace.

Little did the United Nations imagine in 1998 that the year 2001 would be
marked by the clash of civilizations, rather than the dialogue among them, owing to
the American foreign policy of the one part, and the September 11th attacks of the
other part. The planned efforts for the United Nations Year of Dialogue among
Civilizations were useless given the harsh reality. These efforts had to wait until
2004, when the President of the Government of Spain, José Luis Rodríguez
Zapatero –resuming the former idea, but providing it with more substance and
systematicity– proposed the creation of the Alliance of Civilizations during the
course of the 59th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. His initiative
defended an alliance between Western and Muslim worlds to fight against
international terrorism emphasizing the prejudice and misperceptions both sides have toward the other. This fight must not be carried out using armed conflict, since it only contributed to entrench the positions and disrupt all possibility of dialogue.

When the President Rodríguez Zapatero launched the proposal, he stressed that Human Rights—as interdependent and indivisible as they are—must be the essential foundation of new relationships between Western and Muslim countries. Immediately, the idea was a great success; and two months later, in November 2004, the Alliance of Civilizations Group of Friends was founded and it was composed above all of States, but also of international organizations. Its purpose was to support the creation of an Alliance of Civilizations—under global repercussion and on cross-cultural issues, that is to say, universal—and to promote initiatives aimed at encouraging dialogue and building bridges among societies and communities. Currently, this group of governments and international organizations is composed of more than about a hundred countries and more than about twenty international organizations between which we found, for example: the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the League of Arab States and the United Cities and Local Governments. This Group of Friends meets regularly to discuss shared strategies in support of the aims of the Alliance in order to fight against the peak of extremism and polarization.

In June 2005, a few months later after the creation of the Group of Friends of the Alliance of Civilizations, the Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, joined Rodríguez Zapatero as the co-sponsor of the Alliance of Civilizations initiative. Two days later they invited the then Secretary-General Kofi Annan to announce the reality of the initiative to Member States of the United Nations and to designate the High-Level Group for the Alliance of Civilizations, in order to begin with the implementation.

Therefore, we can state that the Alliance of Civilizations was born as such in 2005 under the auspices of the United Nations. On this year, Kofi Annan nominated twenty prominent leaders in the fields of politics, academia, international finance, civil society, and media from all the regions of the world to make up the High-Level
Group. This team met five times from November 2005 to November 2006, with the objective of studying the reasons of the current polarization between societies and cultures and making a set of practical recommendations in response to these matters. Having enforced this task, they produced a report\(^1\) at the conclusion of the meetings, November 2006. It includes a detailed analysis of the state of the art and a set of practical recommendations to facilitate the implementations of the Alliance of Civilizations initiatives.

The High-Level Group focused on analyzing the roots of extremism and how these forces could be counteracted from a collective action. Its recommendations involve developing a cooperation framework between many stakeholders, including states, civil society, international organizations and media, thereby achieving the goals of the Alliance.

In the part I of the report, it appears a section of guiding principles which must guide the spirit and specific actions of the Alliance of Civilizations. The Alliance is placed in a privileged position, along with the Charter of the United Nations, the Human Rights contained in the Universal Declaration and the International Covenants on Human Rights that we have mentioned before, since the High-Level Group understands that “a full and consistent adherence to human rights standards forms the foundation for stable societies and peaceful international relations”. So, it is not accidental that each of the rights protected by the International Covenants is present in each of the actions and recommendations promoted by the Alliance. Its fundamental objective is to reaffirm the commitment to human rights and to enhance the understanding of obstacles or matters related to culture, work, religion, education that emerge in the context of the international implementation of human rights.

The High-Level Group devotes the second and last part of the report to specify the main fields of activities and to set recommendations with regard to

each of them. These fields are stood at four: education, youth, migration and media; they are followed by a short final section called “implementation of the recommendations”, which has a great interest, because it lists several steps to make the most of the efforts contained in this report. It is worth mentioning the first step, which states that the UN Secretary-General should appoint a High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations to oversee the implementation of the recommendations contained in this report and ensure visibility and continuity of the Alliance.

If Kofi Annan presented the High-Level Group Report to an informal meeting of the General Assembly on the 18th of December 2006, it was four months later on the 26th of April 2007, when it the foresight of appointing Jorge Sampaio was enforced, former President of Portugal, as High Representative by the new Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon. From that moment on, he started to lead the implementation of the Alliance through the Alliance Action Plan for 2007-2009, which was presented at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on the 14th of June 2007. In September of this year, Jorge Sampaio suggested the drawing up of “national strategies” and “partnership charters” in relation with the Alliance to the members of the Group of Friends. Spain replied to it positively with its National Plan for the Alliance of Civilizations.

The High-Level Group report also recommends the creation of a Voluntary Trust Fund for Alliance of Civilizations to foster global cooperation on cross-cultural issues and promote initiatives aimed to encourage dialogue and build bridges among societies and communities. This Fund was established on the 26th of September 2007 and it allowed to continue developing the recommendations of the High-Level Group like the one relating to the regular venue of Forums for the Alliance of Civilizations².

² ORDER PRE/45/2008 of 21st of January of the Spanish Council of Ministers, which publicized the Agreement of 11th of January 2008 and approved the National Plan of the Kingdom of Spain for the Alliance of Civilizations. Available on the webpage on the National Plan: http://www.pnac.es/
Indeed, we cannot finish this outlook of the Alliance of Civilizations without mentioning another interesting aspect of the High-Level Group Report on the implementation of the recommendations and it squares with the establishment of a Forum for the Alliance of civilizations under the United Nations auspices. This Forum should include representatives of governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector and it should be used as a venue to forge partnerships and to express commitments for action.

This aspect of the Report also came out and on the 15th and 16th of January 2008, the first Alliance of Civilizations Forum was held in Madrid. Later, the second and third one have been held: on the 6th and 7th of April of 2009 in Istanbul and between the 27th and 29th of May of 2010 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This continuity reflects the commitment of the Alliance and its High Representative, Jorge Sampaio, and according to him:

“The Alliance Forum is not only about dialogue. It is about dialogue that delivers. It is about concrete, practical projects that make a real difference to the lives of people on the ground”.
THE ROLE OF YOUTH AT THE ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

Youth have been at the forefront of major social and political advancements and non-violent movements throughout history. At the same time, as a vulnerable sector of society, young people have been easily influenced by radical ideas associated with extremism.

Youth are an obvious paradox both for its vulnerability and its potential as a change agent in society. From the start, young people have been taken into account by the Alliance of Civilizations, and therefore it is listed in the High-Level Group Report of 2006, which has placed the youth field among the four main fields of action along with education, migration and media.

The inclusion of youth subject matter by the High-Level Group as a key factor for a real Alliance of Civilizations is due to the decisive role of the involvement with the primary reasons of youth alignment, and of the frustrations that lead to extremism and can be the flame of the conflict. In the same way, it is very important to mobilize youngsters, to involve them and to qualify them for the only and irreplaceable role they play in the construction of strong and integrative societies; in conclusion, societies where stereotypes, discrimination and violence disappear. They are the two sides of the same coin the Alliance of Civilizations emphasize, since they reinforce each other.

Regarding the first specified aspect, the meaning of youth involvement is obvious, because the leading of little but significant parts of youth towards radical groups and ideas is increasing. This is explained in certain contexts due to the fact that the disadvantaged and alienated do not have or find access to channels which enable them to share their ideas and projects for the future of society with others. In these cases, this obstacle to social, political and economic participation of young
people causes widespread feelings of frustration that sometimes are a support for radical ideologies tending towards violence. The Alliance of Civilizations tries to make every possible effort to halt extremism tide with youth participation, specially the one of youth who are on the fringes of society. This participation has to have a say, spans all cultures and starts from an integrative commitment.

It is derived from the High-Level Group recommendations that if it is wanted to establish effectively youth contribution to celebrate the benefit of religious and cultural diversity, it is necessary the support from local, national and international circles. This is an aspect of great importance, because the effort and work of young people, led by multilateral governments and organizations, can cause a true innovation to this sector. Each day there are new examples of the youth ability to establish in the complexity created by globalization and in scenes of constant changes. This amazing ability of adaptation and innovation backs the Alliance belief that young people are the irreplaceable allies in the construction of integrative societies.

The Secretariat of the Alliance has made a lot of effort to involve youth directly in its own work by collaborating with networks of youth organizations. The goal is to have a perspective of interesting subjects for the Alliance (like cross-cultural and interreligious issues) and that this perspective –done by and for young people– is taken into account by appearing in the media, for example.

In order to conduct these projects, the Youth Solidarity Fund was launched during the first Alliance of Civilizations Forum held in Madrid. This fund is an example of acknowledgment of the decisive role youth play in promoting cross-cultural processes. The fund offers the necessary investment to encourage initiatives led by young people that allow to build long term constructive relationships between young people from different religious and cultural origins.
The three subtopics identified as priority ones were youth exchange, youth leaders training and youth voices in media. The Alliance of Civilizations provided the Youth Solidarity Fund with an initial budget of 100,000 dollars.

In addition to support the work of young people, the Alliance adds its voice to the youth one in all initiatives and annual forums. The second Alliance of Civilizations Forum, held in Istanbul in April 2009, mobilized the energy and ideas of a wide range of committed partners, from governments to civil society, from international organizations, media and religious leaders. All of them had the opportunity of striking up a profitable dialogue with young delegates. More than 1,500 participants – among them several Heads of Government, more than 50 Ministers, policy-makers, representatives of foundations, media and citizen’s initiative from around the world – convened in Istanbul to forge new partnerships and generate ideas aimed at building trust and cooperation among diverse communities. The Forum also served as an opportunity to take stock of initiatives developed by the Alliance of Civilizations and to work jointly with corporate and industrial sector.

Being youth a priority topic of the Alliance, the three Forums, including the last one in 2010 in Rio de Janeiro, have put special emphasis on the challenges youngsters face in order to promote cross-cultural dialogue. During these debates, the highlight has been student exchange, laboral occupation of youth, religion and ethics classes, education on the whole and its empowerment, among others. Nevertheless, the thread of all these meetings has been always youth participation on decisions and their significant role on the understanding of other cultures and religions, for the whole of society.

In the Forum of 2009, when there was an estimated participation of about a hundred young participants from more than forty countries, it was even built a
global youth community\textsuperscript{3} called the Global Youth Movement for the Alliance of Civilizations. Its objective was to recognize and incorporate youth perspective in the performances of local, national and international agents.

In conclusion, paraphrasing the High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, Jorge Sampaio, it is required to allow young people to speak up, since we cannot exclude the half of the world population if we want to build a better future.

\textsuperscript{3} It can be consulted on the webpage: http://unaocyouth.org/
II. - THE UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF SPAIN

In the United Nations Association of Spain (ANUE), we have been making a commitment of acknowledged importance in order to promote the principles and goals of the United Nations, and the defence and promotion of Human Rights since 1962. With our educational and sensibility campaigns on human rights, we have known how to be in the vanguard of the current causes for concern of the United Nations field, including the whole process of creation and development of the Alliance of Civilizations.

Before having appointed a High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations and even before the release of the High-Level Group Report, the ANUE followed the first steps of the project launched by Rodríguez Zapatero and supported by the Prime Minister of Turkey very closely. Thus, we thought it necessary to begin with the task of sensitizing and making youth from primary education to university education aware of the significance of the International Human Rights Law instruments applied to the Alliance of Civilizations.

From 2006 to nowadays, the ANUE has been the permanent venue for one or several annual forums of young delegates from all continents with the aim of giving them the voice on topics of diversity, cultural identity, elimination of all forms of religious intolerance, right to education, right to work, among others. Thus, the ANUE has promoted dialogue and analysis of key questions in the Alliance of Civilizations.

In reference to these forums, it is worth to mentioning the Catalonia Model United Nations (C’MUN), a simulation of the main United Nations bodies, including the Human Rights Council and an Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations. This fact places this debate sessions organized by the ANUE in a pioneer world position as for including the Alliance of Civilizations in the models United Nations. More than 1650 young participants from over seventy different countries have already lived this experience under the auspices of the ANUE. The
participants have finished being completely aware of the worries and hopes of people from different parts of the world; in short, being aware that we are all one.

In addition to the C’MUN, the United Nations Association of Spain has offered other platforms for youth in order to discuss matters on human rights from a viewpoint applied to the Alliance of Civilizations. For example: the East-West Dialogue under the auspices of Casa Asia, the Mediterranean Forum of the Young Alliance of Civilizations and the Special Meeting on Human Rights. In all debates, young participants have been the protagonists and they have contributed to the fact of being the ANUE a good ally in the priority scope of the Alliance of Civilizations, in accordance with the High-Level group.
1.-C’MUN

1.1.-YOUTH FOR THE ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

1.1.1.-ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST STEPS OF THE ALLIANCE

In 2006, the first Youth Forum C’MUN –in which an Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations was organized – was held. Its objective was analyzing the first steps of what it was just a project addressed to youth in order to observe the action plan and they could propose ideas on how the Alliance of Civilizations could achieve the high proposed goals.

Just because of being the Alliance of Civilizations a very recent initiative, the subject preparation was specially defiant for young participants to this Ad Hoc Committee. The lack of information published on the matter until that moment was an obstacle, since the High-Level Group had not published the Report yet, which is the basic document for the Alliance performance.

Nevertheless, the fact of counting on few resources forced young delegates to be more creative in their recommendations and proposals, since they only counted on the declarations expressed by the driving force of the Alliance –mainly Rodríguez Zapatero, and also Erdoğan and Kofi Annan. Thus, this forum of young participants devoted three days to express ideas, discuss and formulate overviews for the new Alliance of Civilizations. These perceptions were crystallized in a resolution\(^4\) that young delegates adopted by mutual agreement, although they came from different countries and various cultural traditions. Not having a previous resolution as point of reference meant a big challenge to choose which direction to take. But it was unanimously

\(^4\) See the resolution of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations 2006 in the appendix.
deemed necessary to write a report that goes beyond merely declarative data; so finally, it was adopted a resolution in which recommendations on specific actions predominate.

As a work method for these meetings and taking into account that the Alliance of Civilizations covers a lot of different aspects, the Committee divided up into smaller working groups to deepen the debate from the perspectives of education, migration, youth, media and gender. So, not only did they speak about the role of youth, which is one of the four priority field of the Alliance, but they also worked on each and everyone aspects the project posed.

In addition to the thematic questions, the institutional architecture of the Alliance (not at all established at that moment) was a required topic of discussion for young participants in the formal and informal negotiations. The youth committee suggested turning the High-Level Group into a permanent body, although making the members rotate like the rota system of the Security Council. It also proposed setting up groups of task forces within the Alliance structure and stressed the close cooperation that should exist between the Alliance, governments and non-state actors.

Another relevant aspect within the framework of the negotiations was the one that dealt with the media. It was proposed that a task force should write a draft of multilateral declaration within the sphere of freedom of information. Within this group, there was an intensive discussion with regard to the joint decision of the concepts of freedom of speech, information and provocation, and a full consensus was not reached due to the great variety of cultural and religious traditions represented by youth from different origins.
1.1.2.- FIRST FORUM ON CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

In 2007 the second youth forum of C’MUN was held, which included again an Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations. The great difference, in regard to the previous year is that it counted now on the Report of the High-Level Group. This facilitated research, prior to the debates and favored an opened and an in-depth discussion of cultural and religious diversity, and on its opposites, intolerance and extremism.

At the beginning of the talks, one of the main obstacles for the young participants was related to project funding, since the Youth Solidarity Fund from the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations had not yet been created. So, it is hardly surprising that at C’MUN they wondered about this unresolved gap, which would clarify many aspects, since the quality and quantity of the projects that the Alliance wants to conduct depend to a greater extent upon funding.

The young delegates wondered about how civil society could implement the recommendations directed by the High-Level Group or the High Representative for the Alliance and by which means to governments. This and other questions appeared during the first day of meetings, which achieved such a rigor and intensity that at the end of that day the Alliance Committee had prepared four different resolution drafts to be discussed next morning, when the first signs of controversy appeared. The delegations of young people representing Iran, the Holy See, Italy and the United Kingdom made clear their reservations about certain discussion points, though in the end a joint appeal could be done. This appeal pleaded for the promotion of knowledge of other cultures and religions at school, a greater protection and support for the immigrants and media coverage of the Alliance’s work.
During the last day of the meetings the delegates could dodge the conflictive points which had shown during the negotiations, returning to the resolution proposed agreed on on the first day. In this way, four resolution drafts were taken and merged into one text which recounted all of them and which was put to vote. In the end, the resolution was passed. This document was divided into three specific aspects taken from the model offered by the report of the High-Level Group—education, migration, media and specially emphasizing the freedom of expression and information.

The Chairwoman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the 2007 Alliance of Civilizations in C’MUN, Katharina McLaren of Germany, stated that it had been interesting to see the great amount of recommendations made in the resolutions and their similarity with the ones made by the High-Level Group. The Chairwoman also applauded the importance that the delegates had attached to the role of civil society in matters relative to the Alliance, and the rigor with which they had drawn up the next steps that the Alliance of Civilizations should follow after its recent take-off.

---

5 See the resolution of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations from 2009 in the appendix.
1.1.3.- SECOND FORUM FOR THE CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

In 2008, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations organized by ANUE had the objective of continuing with concrete problems of cultural and religious intolerance, due to the great interest that hundreds of young people from the last edition showed. Now it was about getting more deeply into the roots of this form of hatred in order to work for its prevention. The Chairwoman of the Alliance Committee at that moment, Sonia Andolz, warned that one of the main challenges dealing with such an extensive subject was the passing of a document that would not be empty of meaning and full of grandiloquent words. Nevertheless, the whole time the delegates from the represented countries strived to be original, to propose concrete and feasible actions and to take initiatives in favor of an intercultural and interreligious dialogue of mutual understanding.

Twenty-six countries were represented in the Alliance Committee at this edition of C’MUN and its young delegates tried to reach consensus about measures which will improve cohabitation between peoples from all over the world, giving priority to the respect for diversity. At these negotiations the opinion of the young delegates gathered and the national realities that they embodied were taken into account. The particularities of the most influential countries in the international scene were not stressed. In this way, the countries worked together discussing each other’s doubts and correcting each other with humility. They managed to be an example of a most cooperative and inclusive modus operandi, without confronting aggressively in order to be heard. Nobody was left out of the discussions that bored fruit the resolution.

Five fields of action were based on cultural and religious intolerance—youth, education, immigration and media as well as women issues and rights. The
delegates proceeded that order without evading any responsibility or being afraid to talk about taboo subjects because data from harsh reality were extracted.

Certainly, most of the time was devoted to discuss the great number of amendments made to the different working documents, though finally good proposals, such as providing a professional exchange program for young people that prioritizes those who are in an exclusion situation or in a cultural and economic alienation came out. There was discussion regarding inclusion of a proposal to promote intercultural and interreligious education at school, so that the initial information a young person receives about other cultures or religions would not come from a source that distorts the data due to malice or lack of information. This made people talk a lot about the problem of exclusive prejudices and young delegates tried to look for concrete solutions in order to build awareness against prejudices in the youngest sectors of their society.

The only amendment presented that was not passed was the one related to the teaching of religion at schools due to the manifest lack of consensus. Harmonizing the positions of the young delegates from such different countries was complicated because there were aspects that touched upon their personal dimension. Nevertheless, an agreement in relation to the teaching of religion was reached, stressing the term “awareness” and not much the term “teaching”. This required also hours of discussion.

In this way, the young Alliance Committee reached a final resolution passed by a great majority, with only a vote against and one abstention6. Through six pages, the document spells out proposals and common positions and invites

---

6 See the resolution of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations from 2008 in the appendix
Member States from the Alliance of Civilizations to make an effort to reach them by the implementation of integration policies.

In the field of education, among other proposals, the resolution includes the promotion of tolerance and cultural and religious understanding. It also states that religious education includes the perspective of both majority religion and other beliefs, without a hierarchy.

Regarding the youth, the resolution emphasizes the importance of both the initiatives for cultural interchange and against youth unemployment, increasingly worrying.

In the field of migration, the resolution echoes the importance of proposing a special status for economic migrants and it champions the creation of national programs of integration, as well as international collaboration to control illegal migration. During the meetings the need for promoting collaboration agreements between countries of origin, transit and destination of migrant people was discussed in order to take into account all points of view of this complex situation was emphasized.

In regards to the media, the young delegates proposed in their resolution to respect the freedom of expression as a basic social right and to promote multicultural initiatives by mass media to fight stereotypes and tensions between cultures.
Finally, regarding women’s rights, it was declared the equality between women and men in fields of education, access to economic resources, and political representation. At this point the discussions focused on the Millennium Development Goals and on the International Human Rights Law. They concluded that women needed more presence at the Alliance of Civilizations. For these reasons, a creation of an annual forum on the Alliance of Civilizations focusing on women of all ages was proposed.
1.1.4- THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN EDUCATION AND POLITICS

The discussion topics at this edition of the Committee on the Alliance within the framework of C'MUN from 2009 were related to the role of religion in education and politics. These topics posed a very controversial subject among Muslim and Western countries, and also within each of these groups.

Having this responsibility, the Alliance of Civilizations started its first meeting with a speech by Meghann Aurea Villanueva, Coordinator of the Program “Clamor for Peace” of the International Association of Volunteer Effort, who has been working very closely with the Alliance of Civilizations and who was present at its Second Forum in Turkey. After that introduction, delegates began their committee work, representing thirty-six Member States and organizations such as Spain and Turkey, Ireland or Libya, and organizations such as UNESCO, the Holy See and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. They presented their positions on both debate topics and the discussion turned rapidly to a passionate exchange of ideas and opinions.

As it was expected, it did not take too long for countries to create groups according to their common interests on the subject. Opening speeches allowed the delegates to recognize the countries with similar ideologies, and the caucus breaks were used to bring positions closer. Along the working sessions, the debate between the group of countries that were defending the unity of state and religion - like Afghanistan, Somalia or Azerbaijan - and the group composed of countries such as France, the US or Poland, which argued for the independence of governments, was enriched by other opinions. Whereas China and Cuba were clear about their point of view - that religion is one of the most serious problems in the
Turkey and Ireland preferred every country to keep its sovereignty and defended the need of an agreement among all religions and beliefs.

Despite all the difficulties to come to agreements, the Alliance of Civilizations Committee delegates were able to come up with a resolution on both topics just in time to send it to the General Assembly of C’MUN. The Chairwoman presented to the Chamber a resolution of thirty-two operative clauses. The main points of the resolution centered on the freedom of religion, recognizing also the freedom not to believe in any religion and defining it as a strictly personal matter. The resolution moreover emphasized that states shall not impose a specific religious belief upon its citizens, so, it bets on freedom of belief as a premise. In regards to religion at school, the committee recommends the promotion of an education based on science and basic human rights values such as mutual respect and objectivity, and proposes the implementation of World Religion History Courses (WRHC) on an informative, descriptive, and non-dogmatic basis in the states’ curriculum of education.

The Chairwoman of the Alliance Committee, Sonia Andolz, who repeated in her post, considered that the Committee delegates could be proud of their work because they had debated intensively about a very polemic topic which affects a great part of the world population and they were capable of coming up with a resolution that proposes brave solutions and reflects the compromise of states with the spirit of the Alliance of Civilizations and the outmost respect for human rights.

---

7 See the resolution of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations from 2009.
1.1.5.- THE MIGRATION AND ITS INTEGRATION INTO THE DESTINATION COUNTRY

The Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations centered on the topic of migrant integration into the host societies. The works by the High-Level Group of the Alliance, and political declarations and academic texts on the question were taken as a starting point.

The meeting began with a series of formal and informal negotiations on subjects related to religious rights of migrants and discrimination. Nevertheless, the debate soon evolved into a discussion about concrete measures to guarantee the integration of migrants, which were stated in the first working documents prepared by the young delegates.

Unfortunately, the first resolution was an outcome of separate and small groups who only were looking for a consensus in the circle of young delegates of similar cultural and religious traditions. Many and very different proposals arose but they were not supported by a joint work, which led to a number of unfriendly amendments posed. At first, it was thought that a sufficient majority would not be reached to pass the resolution. However, after certain informal negotiations, the text was passed⁸, though with a very tight majority, which reflected the existing division.

Among other aspects, the document stated that migrants should keep their languages, customs and traditions at home and public places provided that they

⁸ See the first resolution of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations from 2010.
respect the Convention on Human Rights and the laws and public order in the host country. The resolution also urged the implementation of language and cultural history classes to children and adults for their integration, and the facilitation of equal opportunities for migrants. Likewise, the text suggested training teachers, doctors, social workers and other civil servants on conducting their work successfully in environments with cultural diversity, creating a network of specialists which should meet to interchange experiences and good practices.

On the next day, new negotiations began aimed at carrying out a second resolution about other subtopics which have been left from the first resolution due to a lack of consensus. Working documents which included more global perspectives, enshrined in the International Bill on Human Rights, were purportedly drafted with a view to achieving a greater consensus. This change of direction enabled young delegates, who had been previously organized into small groups, to open themselves to the team of the Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations. In this way, a set of clauses which had the approval of a great majority was introduced and allowed the resolution to be passed and applauded⁹.

In contrast to the previous document, this one was about laws and politics against terrorism and international crimes such as human trafficking. Obviously, lots of instruments on human rights were used, including the works that the UN Human Rights Council had conducted on these subjects. The resolution passed by the Committee urges all states to ensure the enforcement of the basic rights that every migrant should have and to implement measures to prevent and punish any illegal form of detention.

⁹ See the second resolution of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations from 2010.
The young delegation from Qatar presented a draft from the third and last resolution of the Committee, since it was not satisfied with the works presented. This draft dealt with the economic question of the Millennium Development Goals and their possible repercussions in migrant communities, because this topic had not been discussed on the previous resolutions. The document, in which young representatives from different Muslim countries worked intensively from the beginning of the second day, was presented to the rest of participants and soon attracted the attention and support of wide sectors of the Committee on the Alliance. Due to lack of time, the young delegates responsible for this text conducted an informal negotiation so that their arguments could be voiced and this negotiation could be voted and passed within the specified period\textsuperscript{10}.

The Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations of C’MUN from 2010, Guillermo Serra, from the University of Essex, qualified the experience as exciting and gratifying, as the progress made by young delegates was amazing, with the notable participation of all Member States at the end of the simulation. He also added that the meetings concluded successfully thanks to the hard work of all delegates and to their eagerness to achieve a positive change, since up to three resolutions were passed from different perspectives. This showed the increasing interest the young delegates had about subjects linked with the Alliance.

\textsuperscript{10} See the third resolution of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations from 2010.
1.2. YOUTH FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

According to the first article from the International Bill of Human Rights, “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.” With this premise the young participants of C’MUN simulated the operation of the UN Human Rights Council, organized by the ANUE.

Keeping in mind that the expression “Human Rights” refers to the basic rights and freedoms owned by all human beings, the history of this kind of rights goes back thousands of years, and it is recognizable if we base on religious, cultural, philosophical and legal development throughout the years. Some old documents, as well as religions and philosophies contained a wide variety of concepts which could be considered human rights. After thousands of years, we still find the necessity of debating and discussing on human rights in order to protect the human rights, due to the number of violations committed daily around the world.

The ANUE decided to establish this youth forum centered on human rights with the purpose of creating a youth platform to discuss their own perspectives on human rights subjects. With this initiative one of the essential points of the program of the Alliance of Civilizations is fulfilled, which also have the same objectives of the Association of United Nations for Spain— reacting to the lack of agora which future adults have about issues affecting the whole humanity and voicing them. That is because it has been always said that it is necessary to change the world, especially in the field of human rights, but in these approaches the youth are seldom taken into account, and they are the ones who have to make and live that change.
1.2.1.- WOMEN IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS AND THE QUESTION OF PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF HUMAN RIGHTS

In 2008 the ANUE had a very diverse group of young participants from all around the world to discuss the promotion and protection of human rights, simulating the UN Human Rights Council from a critical perspective.

Debates focused on two highly urging issues such as the situation of human rights on Palestinian territories and the violations of women’s rights in conflict situations. As was to be expected, and it is positive to be so, the contributions of the young delegates illustrated a wide range of perspectives that, though some of them were encountered, posed the complex part of the dialogue on cultural and religious diversity which transpires in international debates on human rights.

This youth forum centered on human rights counted on the intervention of young participants who were highly motivated and sensitized with the subjects. That is why, without further ado, they started discussing one of the most conflictive subjects— the current situation of human rights on Palestinian territories. Despite the great distance between the positions of the different countries representing young participants, all of them agreed on the fact that the dialogue is the best way to find a solution of global importance on human rights, especially in such a devastating and enclosed situation as the one that affects Palestinian territories.

The most delicate moment of the first negotiations arrived when the young representatives of Cuba and Saudi Arabia presented a controversial first draft resolution, in relation to which the participants deeply involved in a heated debate on the use of the definition of genocide and apartheid in the context of the acts by the State of Israel. Finally the forum, simulating the operation of the Human Rights
Council, passed a risky resolution with just 12 votes in favour and 10 against, though several youngster strongly opposed to include these controversial words. The resolution “recognizes the acts of the State of Israel as acts of genocide against the Palestinian people” and its politics “as policies of apartheid, resulting in the continuing violation of human rights of the Palestinian people, notably the right to food, the right to water, the freedom of movement, the right to self-determination.”

This resolution was reached with much political courage and gaining allies during the negotiations by means of dialogue. Nevertheless, the major part of the young delegates thought that the majority reached was too much tight and not very representative. Some of them even expressed that they were afraid that it could be dangerous, since it could move away Israel from the negotiations on human rights. Other young participants explained that they considered the resolution to be convincing enough without the words genocide and apartheid and that their inclusion would only ruin the document, since with those terms it would not be passed, in all probability, by the Security Council.

The second issue of the program at this youth forum on human rights was the violation of women’s rights in conflict situations. This subject also raised controversies between the youth and it was necessary to give a wide approach about all issues on women to show their specificity of their role in different human societies. Unfortunately, these discussions were jeopardized due to the time limitation at the forum, as young participants needed a great number of meetings for the previous subject—Palestinian territories.

In relation to the discussions on women’s rights in conflict situations, two motions for resolution which were not exempt of dispute were proposed. The first resolution was refused by a great number of young participants, though for different

---

11 See the first resolution from the Human Rights Council of C’MUN from 2008.
reasons— while for some of them it was excessively “general”, for others it was a belligerent document which threatened their culture and sovereignty.

For these reasons a second resolution was necessary\textsuperscript{12}. This resolution was as well object of a heated debate, due to the specificities of the subject and to the fact that a great part of the youth forum devoted to human rights was formed by women, who did not hesitate to give their opinion on the subjects that affected them directly.

The Chairwoman of this youth forum which simulates how the Human Rights Council operates, the British Princy Elamthuruthil, emphasized that a very revealing vision on the gender violence had been given. That is due to the fact that gender violence is sadly a subject which has neither action nor reaction enough from the international community. Other aspects highlighted which appeared in the final resolution were the urgent awareness of a transversal perspective of gender in all military and police activities, and, especially, the necessity of increasing sensitivity and knowledge of the rights and women’s problems on conflict areas.

When the Chairwoman assessed the results of this forum, she pointed out that the dialogue and diplomacy arts not only are representing the position of a certain country on the international scene but also, above all, compromising personally in subjects which affect us all, regardless of age, nationality or other things. The young participants of this forum devoted to human rights applied this quality exactly, which turned out in great richness meetings. They also went out sensitized with the subjects analyzed.

\textsuperscript{12} See the second resolution of the Human Rights Council of C’MUN from 2008.
1.2.2.- SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND HUMAN RIGHT

Due to the great success of the young people’s forum on human rights questions of the year 2008, a year later the ANUE promised to repeat the successful initiative, as it repeated that of the Forum for young people on specific questions of the Alliance of Civilizations. Both forums are closely related, since it’s impossible to separate them, as it is stated in the Report of the High-Level Group of the Alliance, Human rights of the Alliance of Civilizations, so one is necessary for the other to exist.

So, returning to simulate the working of the Human Rights Council, in 2009 the young people met to debate on the current sensitive issue of “The Implications of Human Rights in Sexual Orientation”, knowing full well that it would be a difficult topic to discuss. The conferences were initiated under the subject of "Sexual Orientation and Human Rights". This rather controversial subject was the cause of expression of very different opinions, since, like in the real Human Rights Council, countries with very different cultural backgrounds were represented in it.

The existing division on an international level, with regard to the topic of sexual orientation transferred to the microcosm of this young people forum. This provoked discussions during the meetings that were sometimes very intense due to the very delicate nature of some of the subjects that were put on the table. Those subjects varied from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity to same sex marriages and gay adoption rights. In each one of these questions, the positions of the young representatives came from a positive action of the State, for example, regulating his rights and obligations, up to a negative action that prohibited certain behaviors in the homosexual community, going
through a neutral position that removed the burden of state actions, restoring the importance of personal choice with respect to sexual orientation.

Agreements started being reached in the meetings and they started working towards the construction of a resolution. It was becoming apparent that two main lobbies were formed in the heart of this forum dedicated to the human rights. The first group consisted of mainly young people representing Muslim Nations that represented a more conservative approach to the issue in question. The second group was fundamentally the alliance of Western Nations -although without unanimity-. Likewise there were also a small number of young people that refused to take position on the matter because they could not identify with either of the lobbies, the self-called representatives of “neutral countries”. Finally, and despite the aforementioned neutrality, those were the ones whose vote in the end had the most determining effect on the outcome of the voting procedure.

Before the mentioned division of the Council, the Chairwoman of the forum, the Athenian young woman Markella Papadouli, was afraid that the Council would inevitably be left polarized. That feeling was reinforced when the debate officially started on the resolutions. The first one of these documents, introduced by the group of the representatives of the Arab countries was indeed a brief resolution notwithstanding the fact that it included many compromises and fairly progressive ideas; however, it demonstrated their suspicion of the raising of sexual orientation issue to the category of human rights. Immediately afterwards, the European lobby presented the second resolution. It contained many daring and innovative ideas, echoes of the ideals and principles of European Union, as well as some major objectives of international human rights organizations. In spite of the fact that these debates brought the documents that constitute the International Bill of Human Rights up, the polarization continued, but it became even more apparent during the voting on the second resolution, with the result being that the number for and against were exactly the same.
This result caused frustration amongst the representatives’ members of the two major groups. The debates spent too much time with the purpose of building bridges between them and of trying to win the “neutral countries” support to approve a resolution on sexual orientation issue, based on the respect of human rights. After a third failed attempt to vote on the resolution and to acquire a final result, the Council decided to break up the question and to vote on each of operative clauses separately, to try to save at least, one part of the document. During this motion, the members of the Muslim bloc were given the opportunity to stand up for their beliefs, to win the Council’s respect and to manage to get rid of some of the most controversial clauses of the document. This way, after a lot of work and many formal and informal meetings, it was made possible for this simulated Human Rights Council to reach a consensus on eight operatives clauses that formed a final resolution\textsuperscript{13}.

Amongst other important points, it is necessary to mention that the final agreement energetically spurs on the Member States to stop all the violations of human rights based on sexual orientation, and on to protect sexual minorities from any form of discrimination.

In this respect, an appeal was made for the international community to cooperate to assure that all these violations do not carry on going unpunished, and furthermore the guarantor’s paper of Human rights was exercised in view of this minority. The resolution also recommends the implementation of a program that analyses and monitors any violation of human rights based on sexual identity. Another relevant point of the document is its insistence on controlling the treatment of sexual minorities through the mechanism of the Universal Periodic Exam. It also recommends that the defenders of human rights should be protected adequately due to the risk of promoting these ideas, and asks to put a brake on any

\textsuperscript{13} See the resolution of the Committee of Development of the C'MUN of 2009
way of promoting the hatred towards lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transsexuals in the mass media, political groups and other forums of social relevancy.

In conclusion, the young delegates of this year’s Human Rights Council turned Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon’s message to C’MUN into reality. They made a model session of the Human Rights Council, not only in the sense of them representing their countries as if they were real diplomats, but also in the sense of recreating with sensitivity and responsibility the real tensions and scenarios within the body, avoiding utopian traps and showing that compromise on such a heated issue is very hard to achieve - yet not impossible.
1.2.3.- REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL RIGHT

Following the footsteps of the first and second Council centered on human rights and Alliance of Civilizations Forums, within this 5th edition of C’MUN, the Association for the United Nations in Spain returned to repeat the experience of simulating the model of the Human rights Council and it had to face, in these summons of 2010, a challenging and a controversial topic: reproductive and sexual rights.

Throughout the years, the approach to human rights in the area of reproductive health has evolved from the basic right to health, up to the right of the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to have children,, and to have a satisfying and safe sex life. As an example, the right to family planning was raised in 1968 in the Conference of Human rights of Teheran, and this concept has been gaining major acceptance on a global scale. Today, 60 % of couples decide when to have children through the means of contraception, and the families’ size is decreasing in most of the world.

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), which took place in Cairo in 1994, and the fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 increased the right of family planning to include the right to sexual and reproductive health. According to Program of Action adopted at Cairo, “Reproductive health” is defined as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being in all matters relating to the reproductive system and its functions and processes. It therefore implies the right of men and women to be informed and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice, as well as other methods of their choice for regulation of fertility which are not against the law, and the right of access to appropriate health-care
services that will enable women to go safely through pregnancy and childbirth. Reproductive health includes sexual health, with the aim of developing life and personal relations.

The delegates of the Human Right Council 2010 understood that the previous definition that we have just read assumes that reproductive rights are fundamental human rights, recognized on behalf of both sexes and with a special focus on the women. There was an ambiguity in the treatment of reproductive rights, because the topic has been avoided traditionally by most of the international community. However, the Council tried to find a consensus on the issue, for example an identification of what really is a reproductive right. So it might be said that the delegates of this C’MUN edition had to deal with a kind of “taboo topic” within the United Nations.

As a matter of fact, this uncleanness of the topic definition under discussion deeply affected the conference during the first day of session; so, the entire Council experienced a variety of formal debates focused on different subtopics, such as: sexual education, gender-equality at work, forced sterilizations, family planning, genital mutilation, abortion, forced marriages and the importance of the religious controversies as for sexuality and reproduction.

A wide range of topics characterized the first day. Nevertheless, during the second day of meetings, it was crystal clear that the main controversial issue was abortion. The points of discussion were extremely diverse, so the Council started to work in three separate ways with the aim of obtaining a draft resolution: on one side, there were some Muslim countries, such as Pakistan and Bahrain, which would never accept a formal recognition of abortion as a final resolution; on the opposite side, there was a more “liberal” coalition of Member States lead by the
delegates of the Netherlands and Cuba, who were working for a formal recognition of the right of abortion. Finally, there was another block of countries, actively supported by the delegates of Argentina and Nigeria, who focused on the aim of striking a balance and finding an acceptable compromise among the radical opinion. This second day of debate was marked by a huge effort of all Member States to seek a consensus to address, in the best possible way, all the aspects of the human right topics under discussion.

According to the Italian President of this model of Human Rights Council of 2010, Marta Garbarino, the entire Council won the merit for the creation of such a tough and rewarding debate; furthermore, she also emphasized the crucial role that those delegates without the vote had played as observers, representing the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the European Union, the Holy See and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Even if they were not able to propose amendments or draft resolutions, they put an essential contribution forward to the debate in terms of concrete suggestions and critical analysis of other members states opinions and proposals.

During the last day of the meetings, three draft resolutions were introduced and the entire Council had shown great commitment and dedication in proposing amendments. At the same time, they had tried to overcome the remaining obstacles for mutual agreement on the document. The first of them that was put forward for the voting procedure failed, since it was clearly condemning all form of abortion. Then, the two remaining draft resolutions on the table were merged together, thanks to the outstanding will of both their sponsors and the rest of the Council to come up with a proper resolution. In order to find the necessary consensus upon the document, the Council came up with a final resolution composed by 20 operative clauses\textsuperscript{14}, in tune with the affirmation of Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of FNUAP and member of The

\textsuperscript{14} See the resolution of the Committee of Development of the C'MUN of 2010.
High-Level Group of the Alliance, who said that reproduction is used, consciously or not, as a means to control women, to limit their options and to make them subordinate to men. In many societies a serious approach to reproductive health has to have this perspective in mind.

In the opinion of the President Marta Garbarino, the positive aspects of this resolution were those that reinforce all the instruments and previous UN documents, seeking for an implementation of the already existing bodies and programs of action. Likewise the president also stressed the importance of education, and encouraged putting into action definitive measures concerning the respect of human dignity in all its forms. Another relevant aspect that appears in the resolution is the call of universal access to family planning. Furthermore it includes sexual education, contraception and access to safe childbirth, establishing a dialogue with the work that the Council did in the year 2007 on the status of women, simulating the homonymous committee of the United Nations, also in the frame of the C’MUN of the Association for the United Nations in Spain.
1.3.- THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND THE HUNGER REFUGEES

In the year 2008, in view of the increasing interest of hundreds of young people on the topic of human rights, the ANUE established a new Council of youths that functioning and questions were inspired by the Development Committee of the United Nations. Likewise it was decided that the issue to be discussed would be, the problem of nutrition, a key aspect for the Alliance of Civilizations, as well as the Millennium Development Goals; owing to the fact that it is a problem linked with human rights and at the heart of many global tensions. The Council decided to deal with it with in a new chapter under the title “The Right to Food and the Hunger Refugees” that has been on the agenda of the international community for a long time.

Members of the world community have recognized the importance of nutrition on numerous occasions. One primary example is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; in which article three of the declaration states “everyone has the right to life, freedom and security.” To ensure these things, the important of access to food can hardly be overstated. This fact is reflected in article 25.1, which states “everyone has the right to a standard of living quality for the health and well being of himself and his family, including food.” Where the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stated the rights, the Millennium Declaration contained goals the International Community committed itself to; the Millennium Development Goals. MGD 1 contains the commitment to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, more specifically, to reduce the number of people suffering from hunger in 2015.

The Alliance of Civilizations has been and is still concerned on poverty, hunger and, in general, economic inequalities. The High-Level Group of the Alliance affirms in his report that these problems which lead to "hopelessness, the
sensation of injustice and alienation, combined with political recoveries, can intensify extremism. The eradication of poverty might reduce the factors linked with marginalization and economic alienations; for this reason, it is necessary to demand actively, like the Millennium Development Goals proclaims”. On another occasion it stated, “An Alliance of Civilizations can only be carried out inside an international framework that includes the compromises of all the countries for working in favor of the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. We cannot stop underlining the urgency of this issue. Social inequality is growing at an alarming pace. Half of the population of Africa lives with less than one dollar a day (…)”.

Currently in spite of records of availability of food per capita in most countries and globally, more than 840 million people throughout the world are chronically undernourished and nearly 40,000 children die due to malnutrition and related diseases.

Jean Ziegler, special reporter for the United Nations on the right to food between the years 2000 and 2008, was the person responsible for thinking that this being a human right implied the need to establish a legal framework capable of finding solutions in the situations in which the authorities could not guarantee the access to food. The constitutional texts of the majority of the democratic States include that the state must guarantee some safe living conditions, but as for the legal guarantee of access to food for those who do not have it, it is much less clear.

Continuing his argument, Ziegler concluded that if hunger forces people to relocate in search of food and better conditions, this action should be recognized, as a named group of “hunger refugees”, since, in the cases of war or natural disasters, they cannot cover their minimal needs for survival and they must move
to a better place to survive. In fact, in the international agreements, which regulate the protection of refugees and displaced people internally, contain definitions that might spread to this situation of food shortage. In the same way, we would apply this category on any person who is outside of the country of his nationality due to a well grounded fear of lack of nutrition will have tremendous impacts.

This was this definition that was handed to the committee to deliberate upon. During the first day of the meetings, the delegates went straight into lobbying on the topics that were deemed important enough to be considered. As the day progressed the delegates created a list with the three main topics that constituted the priorities of the Model United Nations: Special Emergency Funds, Food Security and Long Term Aid.

On the second day, these topics were further discussed and specified by the delegates to meditate on the developing policies for them for the presentation of the resolution. Delegates of the OECD states lobbied hard with the delegates of developing states, in order to reach a middle ground on many different policies concerning, for example, funding of emergency funds and agricultural subsidies; always bearing in mind, as there urges the report of the High-Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations, that the policies of migration have to be coordinated between the States of origin, traffic and destination, and that must be coherent with the defense of human rights. By the end of the second day a resolution had been drafted under the leadership of the Republic of France, Mauritania and Italy, and the debate on the resolution would start during the third day session.
The final debate was rich in interventions and a great part of the time was consumed by the most formal questions, but finally, a few minutes before that the last session was finished, they could analyze all the amendments discussed by the participants and finally, the resolution was adopted by an overwhelming majority: with 18 votes in favor, 2 against and 5 abstains. The final document urged the recognition of the right to food to Member’s States, and also the introduction of this topic into their respective legal systems.

The president of this Council, Anoop Singh, interpreted the resolution as a call to the international organizations to being clearer in its approach to the nutritional problems of the world. With the effort to clarify such global problems, the third clause of the final resolution is the urgency for the Human rights Council to avoid the ambiguous term of “Hunger refugees” and to define these people as “displaced people affected by a severe shortage of food”, with the legal consequences that being derived to monitor the situation.

This Council, dedicated to Development, also expressed the deep worry that it faced with the high number and scale of natural disasters and diseases and its increasing impact in recent years, particularly in developing countries. For this reason, they proposed the creation of an Emergency Funds of Food Assistance on the part of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Another point worth mentioning is that the request was also made to the International Monetary Fund and to the World Bank for them to consider turning to the debt of the developing countries, in funds for the own development of these countries, into areas as the agriculture with all the infrastructures that affect directly to the access to food.

---

15 See the resolution of the Committee of Development of the C'MUN of 2008
1.4.- THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN A DIVERSITY OF PERSPECTIVE

According to the General Ex-Secretary of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, “Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation” and certainly it is a transverse problem, since the information demonstrates that the violence against women does not know geographical, cultural or limits of wealth. It is a drama as global as daily and that, while it exists, it will prevent any further movements towards equality, development and peace, as the High-Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations affirms.

Violence against women includes domestic violence - it is calculated that more than 20% of women have been victims of mistreatment; that is rapes, trafficking of women and girls (that generates 8,000 million dollars every year), forced prostitution, violence in situations of armed conflict, murders for reasons of honor, dowry-related violence, feminine infanticide and prenatal selection of the sex of the fetus, genital feminine mutilation and other practices in addition to harmful traditions that attempt seriously against the situation of the woman. For example, according to the United Nations Population Fund, between 85 and 114 million women and girls have been victims of genital mutilation.

Although important measures have been adopted on an international level to eliminate violence against women since the celebration of the Conference of Beijing in 1995, the problem is far from eradicated. For that, and coinciding with the celebration of 51st session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (February 26 - March 9, 2007), based on these moments in the elimination of all kinds of discrimination of violence against women, the Association of the United Nations in Spain decided to create another forum, this time adopting the model of the Commission on the Status of Women, the aim being that young people became aware of, worked on and contributed to such a relevant topic so directly
related to human rights. The High-Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations has showed its concern for being a source of division between Western and Muslim countries, despite of being, as we said, a global problem.

The president of this Council on the Status of Women, the Mexican Gerardo Joaquín González who comes from Ciudad Juárez, valued the importance of the meetings with respect to cultural diversity, given that they relied on the participation of young people who came from very different parts of the world, and as a result the represented nations turned out to be a well-balanced collection of ideologies, cultures and human beliefs, which meant a wide variety of points of view were contributed.

This great diversity in the Council on the status of women also gave the manifest the difficult and complicated task of coming to a consensus, though it is based on a realistic level and with respect to international character, like the United Nations. The participants were aware of the importance of making decisions that not only include all other nations, but also coincide and respect different cultures, religious beliefs and sovereignty in each of them.

There was a general consensus in which the crimes against women are crimes against humanity and are atrocious. This atrocity must be dealt with, in order for the culprits to not go unpunished.

Also, during the meeting, they agreed on the idea of prevention as one of the most effective measures, and with the eradication of ancient traditions that are obstacles that damage the status of women.
A middle ground between cultural and religious traditions was called for, including the status of women, trying to promote non-extremist readings of certain practices. In reference to what the High-Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations had previously mentioned, these measures were to be solved by promoting laws conducive to full gender-equality, in accordance to international standards on human rights and which should be supported, where necessary, by a religious education based on the broadest understanding.

Even if some of them did not prosper, new proposals were suggested by youngsters, for example, the creation of a specific convention about girls’ rights, given that girls are the most vulnerable group to all kinds of discrimination. This was an aspect they had into account during all the preparation process of the resolution.

Once they had the draft of the resolution, all the amendments that the young participants presented were debated. There was an agreement that women need to have access to information. However, while the amendment concerning the information of sexually transmitted diseases was approved, there was no consensus on sexual education in birthrate control methods, such as abortion, one of the most controversial topics. Therefore, some aspects were rejected with arguments that appealed to ethics and religion.

Nevertheless, the point of the agenda that generated more discussions was the female genital mutilation. Finally, the amendment of the resolution that condemned firmly this practice was approved. Thus, going beyond the political declaration, the States were requested to create the required infrastructures to prevent the practice of genital mutilation by means of education, health and law.
Four proposals of resolution were presented— one of them was rejected, two were not accepted because of formal and phrasing questions and the lack of agreement amongst the countries that supported them, while the last one was finally approved\textsuperscript{16}. This resolution was a lesson for the youngsters, who had to put themselves in the position of people coming from other cultures and religions, to build bridges in order to reconcile their positions and avoid any kind of clash between peoples, especially amongst Westerns and Muslims.

\textsuperscript{16}See C'MUN 2007 resolution of the Commission on the Status of Women.
1.5.- NEW WORLD INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION ORDER

In 1980, the controversial report "Many voices, One World", known as Mc Bride Report, name of the man who headed the research, was presented. This document defended a change in the media by means of democratization. It analyzed the orientation of the information in the mass media, its space and its propriety access. Thirty years later, on the one hand, the media control and the production of information contents have been concentrated in few hands and its power has multiplied; on the other hand, we witness the eclosion of the digital era in which Internet has facilitated the production of contents and the access to information through the new technologies. This dicotomic reality makes necessary the debate and the analysis of one of the most relevant areas in order to understand our modern societies, an important aspect for being a priority in the agenda of the Alliance of Civilizations. For this reason, the United Nations Association of Spain got inspired by the way UNESCO operates, and decided to create a platform of young delegates in C’MUN 2010, in order to debate about challenges and opportunities that the media offer at the beginning of the second decade of our century.

Thirty four participants, most of them without experience in other models of United Nations, but with a huge ability in diplomacy and debate, made a big effort while supervising the Mc Bride Report. The result of that was, in words of the Romanian Mariuca Badea, Co-President of the forum, “a rigorous resolution, strong alliances, positions defended with ferocity and subtle plays of diplomacy”.

These youngsters, gathered by its concern about the media, started the meetings by wholly analyzing the object of debate, and then delimiting the numerous aspects that necessarily that had to be put to the vote. With this objective, and under the Presidents’ orientation, they divided the question in parts
and they started to reflect on how some politicians, and other radical groups, use and abuse the media in order to project the picture of a world composed by cultures and religions that exclude each other and that culminates in confrontation.

After an exhausting first day of meetings in which most of the questions that were planned to be discussed were posed. The second day was much more fluent and fruitful. Alliances were made by participants of different countries which presented numerous work documents. The first group of participants, headed by the representatives of the United States, France and Italy, asked for the respect of human rights, international security and the free flow of information as a condition for sharing technology and infrastructures. The group headed by the representatives of China, Cuba, Iran and Singapore added that the information and new technologies control is necessary to combat international terrorism. And finally, the third group, headed by the representatives of Russia and Venezuela, emphasized the importance of the informative sovereignty and the fact that the responsibility of controlling information would fall on the State.

The last day of meetings stood up by the participants’ energy and enthusiasm that occasionally ended up in confrontations. One example of that was when they talked about the stereotypes usually spread by the media. “Reporters Without Borders”, the organization of young participants, that participated in the forum as observer, denounced the double standards of most of the States. The proposals about freedom of speech were automatically rejected by the representatives of Cuba, China, Iran and Singapore, but when it was about defending the pluralism in the media the representatives of Western countries were the ones to express their disagreement.
Without many time, they began to draft a proposal of resolution in order to find common points, but the fact that there was not a consensus led to the decision of voting each of the clauses proposed in the rough copy separately. Finally, a recommendation was included. The recommendation urged the national legislators to promote the creation of a legal framework permitting a bigger development of the sector within the States and in a coordinate way. Nevertheless, one of the most controversial points of the agenda was the one asking for the respect and the protection of information access rights as a way of citizenship education. This proposal was finally approved thanks to the vote of the representative of China, result of a last minute change of mind.

Generally speaking, the young delegates of the forum agreed in the fact that it was necessary to update the McBride Report and adapt it to the changes of the new world information order. They knew that “knowledge is power. Information is liberating”, as Kofi Annan said when he received the Nobel Peace Prize.

Likewise, they agreed in asking the international community to support and promote knowledge, technology, education and training programs within the Member States. So they suggest that these programs of action with civil purposes should be provided by the States and supervised by UNESCO and under the Alliance of Civilizations mandate, given that the biased, superficial and simplistic projections that sometimes the media spread about foreign cultures may aggravate the negative feelings and make positions became firmer.

---

17 See UNESCO resolution in the framework of C’MUN 2010.
2.- MEDITERRANEAN FORUM OF THE YOUNG ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

As a result of the successful forum of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Alliance of Civilizations C’MUN 2006 and with the intention of fostering the involvement of young participants in the Alliance of Civilizations, ANUE (United Nations Association of Spain), IEMed (European Institute of the Mediterranean) and Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation organized, in October 2006, in Barcelona, the Mediterranean Forum of the Young Alliance of Civilizations.

More than a hundred of young delegates participated in this activity, and so they represented the youth and the university association world of the different Mediterranean peoples. During three days of intense debate, the young participants could express and share their hopes and proposals with the aim of contributing to the Alliance of Civilizations initiative through the Declaration of Principles. This Declaration was then submitted to the High-Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations to be included in the report that such Group would present to the Secretary General of the United Nations.

The forum opening session took place on the 19th October and was held at NH Pòdium Hotel, in Barcelona, and there were President of ANUE Marina Bru, General Manager of IEMed Senén Florensa, Youth Secretary General of the Catalonian Government Olivié Bayón, the member of GERM (Groupement d’Études et de Recherches sur la Méditerranée) and also President of the Euro-Mediterranean University Institute Jamila Houfaidi Settar and the Spanish Ambassador Juan Prat in Special Mission for Mediterranean Affairs.
Then, the Director of the Secretariat of the High-Level Group of Alliance of Civilizations Shamil Idriss gave his lecture on the main conference. Idriss emphasized the importance of the dialogue that Alliance of Civilizations promotes amongst different cultures in the Mediterranean and the international framework in order to reduce the differences amongst civilizations and to avoid conflicts that may be the result of cultural, linguistic or religious misunderstandings. Idriss also stressed the importance of the participation and the involvement of young people in the task of consolidating the basis of this intercultural dialogue. That would be decisive in the future coexistence of cultures, as “young people of today are the generation of immediate communication, new technologies, they are the ones who have a perfect control of new ways of communication, so this potential has to be used to start positive relations amongst cultures, and so strengthening the Alliance of Civilizations”.

The Director of the Secretariat of the High-Level Group of Alliance of Civilizations answered all the questions and accepted all the comments and constructive criticisms that the young participants expressed regarding the way Alliance operates. Finally, before the first session closure, Frances Claret, Political Affairs Official of United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and Contents Director of the Mediterranean Forum, introduced the objectives and the methodology that they would follow.

Different workshops were implemented during the different meetings. The first workshops were focused on topics like immigration and youth, urgent tasks within Alliance of Civilizations. Workshops on Education, Institutional Gender Policies and Media were held on the next days as these topics are also important points of Alliance of Civilizations agenda. Despite the fact that the topics of the Forum were already prepared by the organizing team, the young participants were the ones to shape the discussion process and so the results of the debate.
Each group was composed by forty or fifty youngsters from different nationalities and leaded by moderators that, by their own experience, both in this kind of activities and in the way the Alliance of Civilizations operates, contributed to the implementation of such workshops.

Despite the fact that the young participants came from many different cultural traditions, dialogue and mutual respect were always present. Actually, the fact that in some of the workshops were such different opinions about controversial issues just enriched the debates within a framework of understanding and responsibility.

Conclusions arose in each one of these workshops. Those conclusions helped to create the final declaration during the last day. This declaration would be sent to the High-Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations. This fact contributed to the direct participation of youngsters in the works of the Alliance. Grosso modo, conclusions were:

\[ A) \textbf{Immigration} \]

It is considered that immigration should have a positive connotation in the host countries and the chance of emigrating should be a universal right. The political, economical and social conditions that cause this population flows should be modified, as immigration must not be a necessity but a choice.

The document explains that language must not act as an excluding barrier, but as a tool for inclusion amongst people. Thus, Governments are especially
responsible for the correct development of immigration and for the perceptions the rest of population have thereof.

B) Youth

Youngsters must participate actively in the development of our societies. To foster their participation, efficient communication channels must be strengthened.

ANUE’s initiative is exemplary in promoting this kind of forums for young delegates that allow youngsters to discuss and to be aware of the different topics in the international agenda the Alliance of Civilizations is working on.

C) Education

For the young participants in the Mediterranean Forum, education is the key to break the cultural barriers that separate societies and to build bridges of mutual understanding.

Education is the basic element for the creation of cohesion, the development of democratic principles and the respect of the world diversity.

D) Gender
In the final document, the youngsters undoubtedly consider that, in order to move forward socially, we must fight firmly for gender equality by including women in the social and economical field through support policies.

E) Institutional policies

The term "Alliance of Civilizations" neither implies the fusion of civilizations, nor is it limited to cooperation at a political level.

Collaboration amongst institutions must be fostered, but it is imperative that neither religion nor culture may be utilized by governments as means to achieve their personal goals, careless of the dialogue with the rest of peoples in the world.

F) Media

The young participants think that the media are a powerful weapon which can be used to flare up cultural conflicts and foment intolerance.

In the Mediterranean forum journalists were proposed to implement exchange programs for them to foster the mutual understanding and to avoid the creation of negative terms addressed to other cultures, given that they may have a damaging impact on the media consumers. In this respect, youngsters recommend to foster self-criticism abilities and ethics derived from the professional deontology.
Finally, after the adoption of this final declaration issued by the youngsters\(^{18}\), a closing ceremony took place in the IEMed headquarters. During this ceremony, several speeches were made by important figures, such as Mr. Traugott Schoefhaler, director of Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the dialogue amongst cultures, and Mr. Manuel Manonelles, on behalf of Mr. Federico Mayor Zaragoza, Co-Chairman of the High-Level Group for Alliance of Civilizations.

Mr. Manonelles, on behalf of Mr Mayor Zaragoza, sent a message of congratulation on and recognition of the hard work that had been carried on by all the young participants during the Mediterranean Forum sessions. He also expressed that the Declaration of Principles would be presented to the High-Level Group so it could be included in the report to be submitted to the UN Secretary General. Moreover, he explained that, given the interest of the contents and the quality of the document, it would be also submitted to the Spanish Government so it could be taken into account during the formulation of the Alliance of Civilizations National Plan.

The final assessment of the Young Alliance of Civilizations Mediterranean Forum was very positive from both the participants’ and the organizers’ perspectives. Participants were able to learn how to overcome barriers and cultural prejudices that are so often understood as insurmountable differences in terms of exclusion and opposition.

\(^{18}\) See the final declaration attached.
3. - C’MUN YOUNGSTERS IN THE EAST-WEST DIALOGUE OF CASA ASIA

Thanks to the successful work regarding the Alliance of Civilizations that ANUE (United Nations Association of Spain) has been doing with youngsters, through its C’MUN and the Mediterranean Forum of the Young Alliance of Civilizations, it has been invited to take part in the prestigious East-West Dialogue of Casa Asia, which focused on the Alliance in its third round.

The East-West Dialogue is an annual meeting which has been organized since 2004 by Casa Asia. A distinguished mixed group of Eastern and Western politicians, ex-heads of State and Government, academicians and representatives from non-governmental organizations and from the civil society meet in order to analyze and discuss the present challenges.

These symposiums included fruitful exchanges between both societies and strongly notable for its commitment with the Millennium Development Goals, the UN Alliance of Civilizations and the National Plan for the Alliance of Civilizations. Against these three items, the East-West Dialogue intends to foster the dialogue as a tool for understanding amongst cultures, peaceful coexistence and sustainable development.

ANUE’s participation in the East-West Dialogue means counting on the perspective of young representatives (around 40 annually) who come from all over the world, most of whom were participants in some C’MUN rounds before. However, this time their goal is to discuss certain topics which are also posed to important political figures who had been invited to the Dialogue.
At the end, the youngsters’ conclusions are presented in a final conference within the same Dialogue. In this way, they are able to have their say in the High-Level Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations.

ANUE understood this activity as a complement to C'MUN, as a tool to involve youngsters in the Alliance of Civilizations. The first round was a success, and the youngsters’ conclusions were included within the contribution of the civil society in the High-Level Group for Alliance of Civilizations Report. Thus, the relations between the East-West Dialogue and the Association of United Nations for Spain became official. From then, ANUE has been a part of the East-West Dialogue in every later round and, therefore, has consolidated the experience and diversified the discussion fields which are presented to the young participants.
In October 2006, the ANUE held an extraordinary meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations of C’MUN, in the framework of the prestigious East-West Dialogue of Casa Asia. It was attended by forty students and most of them had already participated at the C’MUN edition held in May of the same year.

The aim of the initiative was the young delegates drafted a joint plan with specific proposals in the areas of education, gender, immigration and media. This plan was intended to be passed on subsequently to the High-Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations.

Due to the dynamics and content of the meeting, the young participants were divided into different working groups in order to discuss each subject separately. Work was intense as each group had to reach very specific conclusions which were to be submitted to other participants. All of them asked questions and provided ideas, enriching the initial findings and allowing the drafting of a plan of action.

On media, youngsters stressed the need of a critical thinking education related to media, for preteenagers and teenagers in schools. They also considered that the creation of a network of exchanges among mass media professionals would enhance the cultural and professional exchanges among them. Besides, they emphasized the importance of civil society participation and the need to promote discussions on the media to show how they really work.
Regarding education, the Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations considered it a basic factor to achieve a tolerant and multicultural society. In this sense, it was raised the need for governmental and educational institutions to work together so as to create educational programs which have the aim of bringing closer to students the knowledge of different cultures. Moreover, they deemed important to promote exchanges among students as well as teacher training according to the UNESCO guidelines. Besides, they thought it was appropriate to add that educational institutions should know how to raise awareness among families about the importance of education and, more specifically, of multicultural education.

As for gender equality, members of the young Committee on the Alliance concluded that the pursuit of equality between men and women in all the fields is essential for the development of civil societies. Therefore they suggested the creation of a permanent working group within the Alliance of Civilizations dedicated to the promotion of gender equality. In their opinion, this group should comprise experts from different areas in which intercultural knowledge would be used to strengthen gender equality at a regional level. They also emphasized that in this search for gender equality, it is important to take into consideration existing UN programs and update them regularly so as to bring them closer and create links among societies, from this field.

Regarding immigration, the first thing to highlight was the importance of respecting human rights and constitutions of host countries. Secondly, it was pointed out the need to support exchange projects proposed in the area of education, to promote free language courses and also to create a permanent working group specialized in challenges and opportunities the migration involves, within the framework of Alliance of Civilizations.
Once these conclusions were reached, the plan of action was presented to the table entitled "The voice of youth in the Alliance of Civilizations" of East-West Dialogue of Casa Asia. This presentation was given by the C’MUN Director, Raúl Jiménez, and by the President of the young Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations, Katharina McLauren. They evaluated the working days and called upon leaders to listen to the voice of youth because they are highly trained to participate in the decision making process in the international arena.

Finally, a representation of this young Committee on the Alliance had the opportunity to hand in personally the document\textsuperscript{19} to Federico Mayor Zaragoza, Copresident of the High-Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations who expressed his admiration for the work done by this group of young people, a work which has been included as contribution of civil society in the final report that the High-Level Group presented to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

\textsuperscript{19} See the final document in the appendix.
3.2.- EAST-WEST DIALOGUE 2007

In November 2007, the forth edition of East-West Dialogue took place and it was organized by Casa Asia with the collaboration of UNESCO, the Club of Madrid, the CIDOB Foundation, the Three Cultures Foundation and the ANUE. The issue raised on this occasion was human security in a globalized world.

The contribution of the ANUE was, once again, the organization of a special meeting of the C’MUN. More than forty young people participated in an event that took place in Casa Asia during the days before the Dialogue.

The issue of human security was divided into four topics: gender, media, environment and disarmament. The participants of this special meeting were divided into four groups and each of them worked on one of the issues so as to accelerate the debate. All the process counted on the coordination of a young chair with a very specific knowledge on the subject. Besides, he guided the participants in the process of preparing the final document. The members of the four groups were very communicative and motivated.

When meetings were over, the four groups presented and shared the results of their work. In the joint debate, points of view complemented each other and problems which questioned alternatives in the short and long term were discussed. In the end, final conclusions were written with the collaboration of participants and chairs. Consequently, four documents were created. They expressed the main points of the debates and conclusions reached during the conference.
The group addressed the gender equality issues\textsuperscript{20} from the perspective of the Alliance and developed its proposals linking this topic with the peacekeeping forces, the representation of women and tokenism, economic empowerment of women, the Millennium Development Goals, the exchange of knowledge between East and West and, finally, with conflict situations. Moreover, specific actions were proposed, such as creating more free schools for girls in developing countries and especially in those countries affected by war. Participants also considered necessary to implement leadership training programs for women, develop more campaigns through mass media in order to raise awareness about gender inequality or provide more microcredits to women.

The group that discussed the role of mass media\textsuperscript{21} stressed that freedom of expression, regardless of ethnicity, gender and religion, is essential to true democracy. It also emphasized that due to the unique ability of media to influence public opinion, they have the responsibility to respect cultural differences, life and human dignity and other basic rights. This is why an ethical threshold and monitoring of professional ethics is essential. Thus, if we take into account that our societies are more pluralistic than ever, media have to show this plurality and diversity of point of views in order to encourage this productive dialogue that defends the Alliance of Civilizations.

Besides, it was deemed that media have a clear responsibility and duty to empower people through neutral, objective information, which must be free from manipulation. Moreover, the group emphasized the importance of ensuring security for journalists so as to protect them from aggressions by both governments and non-state actors and from direct attacks and obstacles caused by corporations due to commercial interests. So as to achieve these objectives, it was

\textsuperscript{20} See the document in the appendix.

\textsuperscript{21} See the document in the appendix.
recommended that journalists, politicians, media companies and civil society representatives meet in an annual meeting on the subject in order to design common strategies in accordance with the objectives of the Alliance of Civilizations.

In the group dedicated to environment\(^{22}\), the debate reflected the relevance of the topic and emphasized the importance of treaties and legal framework which, in its opinion, is not enough. Actually, its strengthening in the international arena is necessary. It was found that while the environment is a global problem and although any measure must be implemented worldwide, probably the solutions will be applied at a local level. After this reservation, it was noted that the biggest dilemma is that while countries and companies may lose competitiveness for adopting ecological measures in comparison with those who do not adopt them, there will be no solution. That's why coercive options and sanctions should be considered.

The group for disarmament \(^{23}\) besides defending the treaty on landmines and nuclear nonproliferation, focused mainly on small arms and light weapons, which cause most deaths worldwide. They reached the conclusion that in order to end the illegal trafficking of small arms and light weapons we need to act on legal trade first. Therefore the creation of an international commission was proposed so as to regulate and monitor this type of trade under United Nations auspices. To decrease the weapon production considerably, the group suggested that, on the one hand, the governments should agree on a treaty to cut the military budget and instead, invest in development, education, health and technology. On the other hand, it was recommended to hinder obtaining weapons through price increases,

\(^{22}\) See the document in the appendix.

\(^{23}\) See the document in the appendix.
difficult access and block of this option for countries that don’t respect human rights. But as this is only possible if we integrate in the process apart from the United Nations, governments, NGOs and technology companies and arms industry too, delegates raised the need for awareness of the great potential of these agents in achieving world peace. Moreover, the group highlighted the benefit of the dimension of corporate social responsibility and of the inversion in alternative activities, as it happened with the Internet in the 60’s.

Finally, the young participants of this special meeting were able to attend the ordinary meetings of the East-West Dialogue. Conferences and opinions of distinguished speakers were very useful to contrast and complement the proposals outlined by delegates. During the second day of these official meetings, young participants, represented by moderators, had the opportunity to present their findings at a conference of the East-West Dialogue.
In October 2008, the third edition of the special meeting of young participants of C'MUN took place in the framework of the East-West Dialogue and it was organized by Casa Asia in collaboration with several prestigious institutions such as: UNESCO, the Club of Madrid, the CIDOB Foundation, the Three Cultures Foundation and the ANUE, which played a very important role for the third time.

On this occasion, the debate focused on the role and consequences of the global emergence of Asia, and particularly of the two countries that became the driving force of the continent and a global reference: China and India. Forty young delegates of eighteen different nationalities from Europe and Asia met to discuss the two new superpowers in two very specific and controversial areas: Human Rights and Environment, from the point of view of the Alliance of Civilizations.

The young participants, gathered in two working groups, Human Rights and Environment, discussed thoroughly on the issues. Each group was led by two chairs which guided and encouraged joint participation. They tried different dynamics on youngsters such as work in small groups, comparison exercises between the two countries, role-playing, etc. It’s noteworthy the presence of young participants from the countries subject of the discussion, which provided a different perspective to the debate, often controversial.

In the group on Human Rights such controversial issues as the universality of these rights were addressed. This is why members divided into two blocks that failed to reach a common position on this subject. They also discussed, inspired by
what the Report of the High-Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations states, both positive and negative influences these countries have on the international community. Besides, they tackled problems and possible solutions or contradictions between the development of capitalism and the respect for human rights, among others. Participants worked with different examples, such as human rights issues in relation to education, children and women.

In the group on Environment, the possible dichotomy between sustainability and development was discussed. It was stressed that measures to protect the environment should be considered long-term investments to ensure sustainable development. Besides, initiatives to boost research and development of renewable energy provide opportunities to create new jobs. On the other hand, in the case of the two powers, the issue acquires a great significance, because it raises questions such as whether China and India are developing countries, given its high potential for pollution, or whether the growth of these two giants is acceptable, from an environmental point of view, for the rest of the world. After a guided dialogue in which all participants could talk, at the end, everyone agreed that it was necessary to raise awareness on this concern, in particular to make aware the future leaders, entrepreneurs, and in general, future generations of adults. Therefore, it was necessary to address to children and youth, training teachers previously.

After days of debates and after preparing the final documents of the groups, delegates attended the different meetings of the fifth edition of East-West Dialogue. They participated actively both in the opening meeting, held at the Saló de Cent of Barcelona City Council and during the committees that took place in the headquarters of Casa Asia.

24 See both documents in the appendix.
Finally, at the meeting on “The voice of youth in the East-West Dialogue”, chairs of the two groups, together with the representation of the ANUE, presented to attendees to the Dialogue the most important findings and ideas to which the groups had arrived at its previous meeting. The proposals encouraged the public and led to an interesting debate, highlighting the importance of young people to have a chance to comment on these issues.
3.4.- EAST-WEST DIALOGUE 2009

In November 2009, the 6th edition of the East-West Dialogue of Casa Asia took place and it was called "Migration and Diversity: New Challenges and Opportunities", a key issue in the action program of the Alliance of Civilizations. The group of young people of C'MUN of the United Nations Association of Spain had long been working on it.

Invited once again to participate in the debate, the ANUE gathered about forty young delegates to express their points of view on the immigration issue from two perspectives: basic rights and cultural rights in relation to immigration. The provenance of the participants was very diverse: Spanish, Chinese, Pakistanis, Germans, Romanians, Muslims, Christians, atheists, people with dual nationality, people who have lived in several countries, etc.

Thus, they were divided into two working groups, one on basic rights and another on cultural rights, although each group tackled these issues from different approaches. Inevitably, both groups included fundamental ways of understanding life, which led to heated debates. After exposing their personal thoughts, views on identity, experiences in new environments and religious attitudes, the group focused on the basic rights put emphasis on three specific issues: the expectations of the individual when he or she arrives in a foreign culture against the expectations that the recipient culture / State has about the behavior of immigrants; advantages and disadvantages of communities of immigrants; and finally, the role of civil society, NGOs and the media in the participatory process of immigrants and natives so as to encourage joint life, which would be beneficial to both.
As for the group focused on cultural rights, the main challenge it faced was to agree how far the boundaries or “codes of conduct” should be set in relation to freedom of expression or choice. Can a state require immigrants to learn the local language, even if, objectively, it is necessary for the immigrant? Or should it be entirely left to the individual to decide whether to try or not to learn the language? After hearing all the speeches, they talked about the respect of the immigrants for the local lifestyles, how they could take part in them, concluding that no one can be compelled to integrate, but they can be encouraged to do so.

The image of immigrants that media project was also discussed, because it’s an important issue for the Alliance of Civilizations. Participants condemned the criteria of the majority of media: the economic benefit which they get by selling a morbid story, regardless of the prejudice to the communities affected by the simplistic and sometimes distorted image that media create. In the course of different interventions, there were delegates that proposed a code of conduct and there were others that advocated for a total freedom of expression. So, the debate on the responsibility of the media was complex and necessary, because nowadays the media are the main shapers of public opinion in many societies.

An interesting issue that emerged within the group dedicated to cultural rights was the defense of a paradigm shift in the definition of the unique identity of persons. More and more people in this globalized world define themselves from many points of view, that is, beyond the traditional ethnic origin, nationality or religion. Nowadays, it’s not unusual to meet a black person of Arab origin, which is lay, has French nationality, is residing in Spain, is feeling Catalan and that is pro-European, if we want to give an example of these multiple identities.
As for the group focused on basic rights, it tackled the conflict between the universality of human rights and national policies. On the one hand, immigrants have the protection of international law through important treaties such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights or the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ratified by over 140 states. On the other hand, too many political, social and economic obstacles stand in the enforcement of these immigrants rights. Therefore, the focus was put on four areas in which there are differences between international law and national policies: right of asylum, family reunification, right to housing, and labor rights, including the right to free movement of persons.

The group defended that the protection of immigrants’ labor rights must be regulated with more determination at an international level, under the leadership of the International Labour Organization. It was also agreed that when immigrants reach a new country, they should be treated in the same way as local citizens. They should receive a work permit immediately, or a permit with more flexible requirements. This regulation at the international level was also discussed with respect to policies on housing for immigrants and family reunification. One of the most pervasive conclusions of the group was the lack of such regulations at an international or regional level, when they should be priority issues.

The young participants said that while the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Covenant on Civil, Political and Social Rights are intended to apply to all human beings, it often happens that when it comes to basic rights of immigrants, there is still a wide gap between international agreements and national constitutions or derived rules.
After reaching the above conclusions, delegates attended the meetings of the East-West Dialogue, which was very active and diverse in terms of youngsters and adult interaction. As it happened in previous editions, chairs of the groups had the opportunity to present the conclusions of participants on basic rights and cultural rights of immigrants\textsuperscript{25} at a conference in the course of the East-West Dialogue.

\textsuperscript{25} See both documents in the appendix.
Continuing what has become a tradition for the young participants of the C’MUN organized by the United Nations Association of Spain, they were invited to the East-West Dialogue 2010 to address the issue of women from various aspects, such as maternal health or gender violence. These are subjects that had already been discussed for years by the participants of the C’MUN from the perspective of Human Rights and the Alliance of Civilizations.

In the course of previous discussions, one of the main obstacles was the lack of a transparent definition of what is gender-based violence, though everyone agreed on the benefits of having a broad and flexible definition. In this analysis, it was clear that gender-based violence is a phenomenon that goes beyond economic inequalities, received education, awareness of people, and cultural or religious differences. All over the world there are women victims of these attacks and they share similar fears.

Given these assumptions, participants decided to make a list of all actors that, in their view, must necessarily engage in a serious discussion about gender violence, in order to implement international rigorous legislation and prove political determination. Thus, a legal framework must be established so as to eradicate certain practices related to gender-based violence. It was agreed that these list should include governments, religious and local authorities, civil society organizations (including youth and women), international organizations (specially the United Nations), health professionals, financial institutions, media and representatives of the pharmaceutical industry.

Once this list was made, it was agreed to set a series of targets on which the international community should work in the short term. Among these goals stood
out the need to promote an active dialogue in the civil society on the issue of gender-based violence in all its forms. Another goal was the protection of women in the labor market, including equal salaries, special conditions to protect pregnant workers, among others. It was stressed that both men and women are essential in society to contribute to the welfare of the international community.

In the last part of the debate, delegates drew conclusions that were translated into specific areas of action\textsuperscript{26} to empower women and end all forms of violence against them. For example, it was suggested to organize campaigns to raise awareness, especially in rural areas, with emphasis on basic human rights. Besides, they wanted to stress that the fact of giving birth to a girl is no disadvantage for the family. They also talked about promoting sex education and related information, both in schools and hospitals, where both teachers and doctors should separate their profession from personal beliefs.

Finally, the forty participants from different countries such as Peru, China, Italy, Armenia and Mexico, were satisfied with the quality achieved in the discussions and with the results. Moreover, they deemed as a good decision an organizational innovation that personnel in charge of the Dialogue East-West had added. For the first time, instead of dedicating one of the tables of the Dialogue to young delegates, there was a representative of young people in each of the thematic working groups, together with important figures who attended the meeting, invited by Casa Asia. So, participants could expose their results more fluently and at the same level as the rest of the papers that were presented at the East-West Dialogue.

\textsuperscript{26} See the document with conclusions in the appendix.
4. SPECIAL FORUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN EUROPE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF YOUTH

To mark the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 2008, the ANUE organized a forum on human rights in Europe. Young participants presented the conclusions of the forum in the Office of the European Parliament and the European Commission. The Alliance of Civilizations was once again one of the main attractions because it addressed cultural and religious rights.

On this occasion, about fifty young delegates from different European States, including the Balkans and Eastern Europe, discussed focusing mainly on minorities and refugees, on the so-called emerging rights and cultural and religious rights. During these meetings, they were able to reflect on the articles of the declaration and on the human rights situation in Europe, in light of new initiatives, as the Alliance of Civilizations.

The inaugural conference of the forum was chaired by Fernando Fernández-Arias, the Director of the Office for Human Rights of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, who welcomed the participation and the growing interest of youth in this subject. He also outlined some of the progress needed on human rights so as to curb human rights violations, both in our country and in developing countries, with special attention to women and children.

Delegates were divided into three thematic groups to discuss the above issues, in order to finally produce three resolutions presented at the European Parliament and the European Commission. The group on emerging rights discussed on the right to sexual orientation, to sustainable development and to the
prevention of the environment problems or the right to water. They were divided into subgroups and each of them reflected on the functions to be carried out by the various actors in the international system, especially countries, civil society and the European Union, in order to respect these rights.

The debate about minorities emphasized the action on gypsies in Europe and the consequences of the new European state, Kosovo. The discussion on cultural and religious rights focused on those aspects linked to human rights violations and to steps taken by the Alliance of Civilizations.

Although the debate had been smooth and enriching for all participants, problems arose when the groups had to close their positions in order to draw up a final document, which had to be presented at the Barcelona Office of the European Parliament and of the European Commission. Some groups had more difficulties in reaching an agreement, but finally they managed to establish common principles which could be shared by the entire group.

In the closing ceremony of the conference, Raül Romeva, Member of the European Parliament, described, first-hand, the situation of the EU on human rights, and afterwards a representative from each group read the resolution they had passed.

The group of minorities and refugees of Europe spoke, inter alia, about the need to reach a definition of the various minorities, about the importance of protecting minority languages and their use, as well as freedom of religion. On the other hand, this group emphasized the importance of national and international
collaboration to achieve integration of minorities, both in the case of gypsies and minorities in Kosovo.

The representative of the group focused on cultural and religious rights said his group had defended the knowledge of cultures as a vital element for survival. They also defended the protection of minority rights by international and national law and demanded media to be responsible in the use of language to avoid stereotyping, according to the guidelines of the High-Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations.

Finally, the representative of the group on emerging rights made reference to the respect of the right to sustainable development and environmental prevention, the right to sexual orientation and the right to water. So as to achieve this, the group sought the assistance of the European Union, the Council of Europe, OSCE and the Human Rights Council of the United Nations in the promotion and implementation of more traditional human rights as well as of emerging ones.

The three groups presented their particular proposals\(^{27}\), but they all agreed on the importance of education as a key element to respect human rights. This statement is particularly significant given that it’s the European youngsters, immersed in the education system, who launch it, especially because they see the shortcomings of education in transverse and transnational issues.

\(^{27}\) See the three documents in the appendix.
5.- CONCLUSION: TOWARDS AN ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

Following the inaugural conference in Geneva in 2009, the second edition of the Global Model United Nations, organized by the very Department of Public Information of United Nations, was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 14 to 18 August 2010 under the subject "Towards an Alliance of Civilizations: building bridges among cultures for peace and development."

In recognition of the forum for young people, called C'MUN, which ANUE organizes annually, and for being the world pioneers in making a model based on the Alliance of Civilizations, we were invited to participate in this High-Level event in Malaysia. The United Nations Association of Spain sent a delegation composed of three Spanish young people, including the director of C'MUN. They were chosen for their outstanding work and for their responsibility in the youth forums dedicated to the Alliance and to human rights that ANUE has been organizing for the last five years in Barcelona.

The presence of the delegation sent by the ANUE was important not only because they were the only representatives of Spain in the event, but also because they were assigned positions of responsibility. For example, they coordinated statements in the forum on the General Assembly, and were chosen as heads of delegation. We must stress the extensive preparation of the Spanish group on issues of the Alliance of Civilizations, which led to a very active participation in all committees and working committees. This showed to the institutional representatives of the Alliance, of the United Nations, and of various government agencies, which met in Malaysia, how building bridges between cultures is a concern in which young Spanish people also have much to contribute.
The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, told the participants of the forum in Malaysia that they are leaders of tomorrow, as well as parents, employees and employers and active members of their communities. However, he pointed out that their leadership had already begun taking on a role as the one they were representing at the forum in Malaysia, offering ideas and actions towards a better world, respect for human rights and an effective Alliance of Civilizations. Ban Ki-moon also expressed his satisfaction with the awareness of many young people from many countries because, he said, their contribution in their societies and in international forums is crucial. Because we all are the world, and societies have only one of two options: either we swim together, or we will be shipwrecked.
APPENDIX
General Assembly

First Session
Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations

Alliance of civilizations regarding education, integration of cultures, freedom of speech, and reform of the high-level group

The Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations,

Recalling the proposal by the governments of Spain and Turkey regarding the creation of an Alliance of Civilizations,


Commending the efforts of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on promoting education including respect for cultural and linguistic diversity,

Emphasizing that the basis of this Ad Hoc Group was to promote an open and culturally diverse dialogue between different peoples,

Underlining that this proposal has been put forward with the aim of eradicating hatred and international terrorism,

Replacing ignorance, intolerance, and misunderstanding of the other which causes fear of the unknown with knowledge, acceptance, and tolerance of the other,
Promoting constructive and positive dialogue within the different sectors of the civil society, specifically aimed at fighting social exclusion against women, immigrants and the young populations,

Provoking a culture of dialogue between media groups from all around the world with a view of maintaining the objectives of the Alliance of Civilizations,

Expressing its appreciation of the Spanish initiative “Forum de las Culturas” which spreads the ideas of universality and tolerance,

Taking into consideration the initial ideas presented by the High-Level Group,

Believing that the reform of the High-Level Group would substantially improve its possibilities to encourage worldwide understanding and peace,

Concerning the possibility for a country to have several representatives,

Noting with deep concern the lack of specific criteria concerning the current election procedures,

Desiring a correct and well-functioning High-Level Group,

Realizing the proposal through which educational systems can foster knowledge and understanding of other cultures,

1. Develops an independent working group to aid Member-States to implement this resolution;
2. Ensures access to education by increasing current efforts to fight poverty,
3. Establishes exchange programs and links in order to foster diversity and understanding of the world’s people, involving
   a. Students of all ages,
   b. Teachers/Professors;
4. Strongly suggests the creation of a fund in which voluntary donors will contribute by providing financial, logistical and legal support to the above mentioned initiative;
5. Constructs a House of Cultures in different countries which is an institution formed by different groups from various countries and regions of the world to inform the immigrants and the natives for developing mutual understanding within the countries;
6. Introduces Cultural Fairs in which various minorities of a country will be encouraged to display their culture to the public;
7. Puts forward the creation of an annual conference of international media organizations:
   a. To facilitate the exchange of ideas;
   b. To explain the purpose and aims of the Alliance of Civilizations;
8. **Expresses** the firm determination to make the High-Level Group permanent;
9. **Invites** the General Assembly to evaluate the High-Level Group after 6 years of functioning regarding necessary changes;
10. **Requests** the extension of the High-Level Group to thirty members voted into power for three years;
11. **Suggests** a geographically based annual rotation system for one third of the members of the High-level Group with the exclusion of permanent members;
12. **Recommends** a rotation system for the chairs as well as the co-chairs and a limit of one delegate per country;
13. **Calls** for the creation of specific criteria for the election of the delegates;
14. **Proposes** to give the High-Level Group the following powers;
   a. The right to submit reports or opinions directly to the General Assembly;
   b. The right to invite other countries to be heard in front of the High-Level Group;
   c. The right to freely allocate the funds;
   d. Set up conferences and programs encouraging the dialog between civilizations;
15. **Implements** a conference to address the aforementioned proposals regarding the reform of the High-level group;
16. **Strongly supports** biannual conferences and seminars in all Member-States aiming at the active participation of the civil society for the promotion of the goals of the Alliance of Civilizations,
17. **Invites** States, international and regional organizations and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to develop appropriate ways and means at the local, national, regional and international levels to further promote dialogue and mutual understanding among civilizations and to report on their activities to the Secretary-General,
18. **Welcomes** the United Nations system to continue to encourage and facilitate dialogue among civilizations and formulate ways and means to promote dialogue among civilizations in at the activities of the United Nations in various fields,
19. **Requests** the Secretary-General to explore enhancing implementation mechanisms for the Global Agenda and for the present resolution and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its next session;
20. **Strongly suggests** the creation and adoption of a further resolution to define freedom of speech and to work out a larger structure under which the above mentioned “culture houses” can function.
Second Session  
Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations,

recalling the Report of the High-Level Group and its conclusions,

reaffirming the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

reconfirming the right to freedom of conscience, expression, media and information as a longtime gained value,

recognizing that different cultures have a different perception of these freedoms and concepts,

taking into account the important role of media and civil society in spreading values and a message of tolerance and brotherhood,

deeply concerned about the continued prejudiced information spread by certain media agencies against certain ethnic and religious groups,

fully believing that as a result of regulation of information, citizens are not provided with sufficient information to be well educated and open-minded, which is the core aim of the Alliance of Civilizations,

noting with deep concern that it is extremely important to maintain respect and tolerance for all identities in view of the fact that in today’s interconnected society there is a grave threat that the dominant cultures could harm minority cultures,

declaring that the major aim of the AoC is to reduce the current risk of misunderstanding which may arise between the West and the Arab Islamic world,

acknowledging that Migration is a reality we have to face urgently,

bearing in mind that migration enhances cultural diversity as well as cultural richness of living in a multicultural world,
deeply concerned about the current situation of discrimination in the receiving countries of immigrants,

acknowledging that education and media are core focuses of the Alliance of Civilizations and need urgent attention,

affirming that all these aspects are connected, as education and media affect the immigration process,

alarmed by the fact that cultural and the religious tolerance is one of the most challenging and controversial issues, for cultural identities are an integral part of the richness of human experience and such must be respected and promoted,

aware of the fact that as the High Level Group recommended, education has a critical role in order to develop a sense of respect to other religions and understanding different cultures,

observing the important impact of exchange programs on students who have an opportunity to interlink with different cultures and therefore have a better understanding of other societies other perceptions,

further emphasizing the need to create a generation of well-qualified individuals who carry out the aforementioned tasks,

1) Encourages that all states will improve their legal environment in order not to have boundaries for NGOs to be created and to be operative and thereby ensuring that NGOs who are contributing to the establishment of the goals of the High Level Group, work in accordance with the guidelines stated in the High Level Group Report;

Education

2) Calls upon all governments and civil societies to ensure that their primary and secondary educational systems provide for a balance and integration of national history and identity formation with knowledge of other cultures and religions with respect of religious freedom and human rights;

3) Urges all nations to recognize the universal right to education and to take measures to implement this right without the slightest form of discrimination

4) Encourages the foundation of cross cultural centres in accordance with the UN to improve international tolerance by:
   a. integrating people with different cultural backgrounds to the society
   b. organizing teacher training programs
   c. organizing festivals, conferences, seminars, workshops allowing the access to free cultural information
5) **Requests** the creation of self-organized Alliance Committees at national, regional and/or local levels to promote the widespread participation, involvement and integration of civil society;

6) **Suggests** the promotion and development of exchange student programs in order to create a more tolerant and integrated future;

7) **Further suggests** the creation of associations, workshops, within the network of churches, mosques and other religious communities, since not everyone has the same chances to access appropriate education,

8) **Underlines** that this need is to be fulfilled by knowledgeable people;

9) **Urges** further development of a joint public-private sector fund to support cross-cultural projects, as established in the Report of the High Level Group.

10) **Emphasizes** the importance of education in and awareness of a country’s ethnic, cultural and religious roots.

**Migration**

11) **Encourages** governments, specially those with significant immigrant populations, to expand incentives and mechanisms to support the integration of the migrant community;

12) **Calls for** a greater cooperation between the national governments and the civil society in charge of migration processes;

13) **Strongly suggests** that the countries of high emigration flows should also have the responsibility to inform the potential emigrants;

14) **Strongly urges** UN member states to combat illegal groups trafficking persons by enforcing border controls;

15) **Requests** public and private donors to promote support in the process of integration of migrants.

16) **Encourages** the implementation of an Action Plan concerning specifically migration issues by:

   a. creating a special fund for these issues,
   b. promoting initiatives through arts and culture with the aim of mutual understanding (cinema, theater, expositions, literature, music, food).
   c. Simplifying the immigration process system by stimulating national immigration organizations so that they provide more fair opportunities to promote incorporation of immigrants.
17) **Urges** governments to integrate people by not suppressing the original cultural and religious backgrounds of the immigrants.

18) **Encourages** all the UN Member States to protect above all human, civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights of any kind of migrant population;

**Media and freedom of information and expression**

19) **Calls upon** the High-Level Group to develop the White Book on the role, rights and responsibilities of the media, the framework of which we hereby introduce; the White Book will assess the role of media in the international sphere, education, arts and culture and religions;

20) **Requests** that in the international sphere the following is promoted

   a. full access to all national and international press and media, including internet,
   b. the growing independence of media agencies, free from coercion of states and lobbies
   c. the recognition of the freedom of speech

21) **Agrees** in the matter of education to

   a. create programs such as documentaries, prepared by professionals of the UN to reach out to the public;
   b. promote the consciousness among their citizens on the impact and subjectivity of media and other information transmitters;
   c. introduce a course which teaches the journalists the foundations of and differences between cultures and religions;

22) **Further recommends** in the matter of arts and culture,

   a. transnational media creations promoting mutual understanding and which counter prejudice among cultures and religions and avoid productions that promote negative stereotypes,
   b. the promotion of policies that stimulate the very values of multiculturalism, religious tolerance and human dignity that the AoC seeks to pursue, and this through cross-cultural exhibitions and art manifestations;

23) **Finally asks** that all the states will submit an annual media evaluation report on the current situation of, a committee of experts will also issue a report concerning these subjects;

24) **Encourages** all member states to spread the spirit of Alliance of Civilizations among public and private media, publishing firms and all other kinds of arts involved in communication, as they should both be aware and also provide awareness of it;
25) **Recommends** the creation of a new instrument, within the framework of the Alliance of Civilizations, that will offer an institutional environment where these conflicts can be resolved pacifically and where objective criteria can advise and try to repair the damages caused by un-respectful use of freedom of expression. The body will:
   a. Consist of members of different nations selected by the High Level Group, representing a broad range of religions and cultural identities,
   b. Evaluate the educational value of the document in question,
   c. Attend the complaints of the citizens based on infringement freedom of expression and religion and potential harm to cultural identity,
   d. Elaborate an annual report about the value of information in each case.
**Ad Hoc Committee Alliance of Civilization**

**Submitters:** Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, Egypt, the Holy See, Jordan, Nicaragua, Peru, Poland and the United Kingdom.

**Co-Sponsors:** Burkina Faso, Bosnia Herzegovina, China, Croatia, India, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Morocco, Spain and the Netherlands.

*Deeply convinced* of the importance of cultural liberty and religious freedom in achieving the goals of the Alliance of Civilizations (AoC);

*Acknowledging* fundamental human rights and freedoms of all;

*In understanding* that freedom of expression is upheld and not restricted to individual rights, religious expression and freedom of speech;

*Requesting* the member states involved to commit themselves to respect each culture and religion in order to promote a more unified world;

*Underlining* the fact that at this moment in time the international community is facing numerous conflicts of a cultural and religious nature, the AoC urges member states to take the steps necessary in finding a global solution;

*Stressing* the importance of the youth and its potential in creating a peaceful and harmonious international community;

*Recognizing* that education, youth, migration and media are the main areas of action for the AoC;

*Deeply convinced* that the United Nations has to stress the humanist scope in the process of bridging the divides between peoples;

*Highlighting* the role of local governments and non governmental organizations in fostering intercultural dialogue;

*Calls* for the implementation of the subsequent clauses:

1. **Education**

   *Proposing* education as the key solution for challenges the world is facing with cross-cultural tensions;
Calling for two main paths to be followed:

- Exchange programs between high-schools, universities and professions;
- Promote intercultural and multi-religious education at a primary school level;

Decides, concerning the exchange programs that:

- Exchange programs should be supported by member states through broadening the scope of these initiatives, not only at the geographical level but also on the thematic level. The representatives of concerned parties have to be brought together to exchange ideas and common goals, not only culturally, but also professionally, which could help in increasing the knowledge of each profession;
- Special efforts have to be made to enhance the popularity and recognition of existing programs which are less known within the international community;
- Initiate a joint effort by leaders of existing, smaller programs to bring these programs to a global scale;
- Funds have to be made available by the AoC Youth Solidarity Fund. A petition to increase funding by member states in cooperation with the Group of Friends (GoF) has to be made;
- Member states, civil society and other stakeholders shall be called upon to increase their active support of these schemes;

Decides, concerning cultural and religious education that:

- Member states have to be encouraged to introduce education programs on the major cultures and religions focusing on both their respective and other religions;
- The member states focus at a primary school level on fostering cultural and religious tolerance and understanding starting at the initial stage of the educational path;

Proposes the creation of a Documentation Centre of the AoC inside the Bibliotheca Alexandrina co-funded by the Alliance’s Solidarity Fund and the government of the Arab Republic of Egypt;
Furthermore encourages all universities and libraries to cooperate with the Bibliotheca Alexandrina to create an internet-based network to promote knowledge of cultural and religious subjects;

Encourages the realization of field trips at all levels of education with an emphasis on visiting sites of different cultures and religions in all member states;

2. Youth

Emphasizing the significance of establishing an intercultural youth project to enhance understanding between cultures and religions, the AoC encourages different nations and communities to take active part on the following proposals:

- The creation of an intercultural sports event with an appropriate fund-raising action for endorsing sport facilities and the travelling of the youth, emphasising the use of the already existing knowledge of organisations;
• To find global ambassadors to make the program familiar to the greater public;
• The creation of an interregional youth convention of different youth associations;
• The creation of local community projects to emphasize the aspect of cultural respect for others;

Deciding to promote a treaty to fight against youth unemployment as a global problem;

Proposing a financial global project and all member states agreeing upon a compromise to make social policies in order to finish with youth unemployment;

3. Migration

3.1. Immigration and emigration

Acknowledging the unsolved problems relating to the increasing streams of immigrants around the world;

Strongly emphasizing the crucial role of the country of origin as the source of the stream of disillusioned and desperate migrants; therefore recommending to strengthen the development aid in these countries;

Realizing globalization as a catalyst for the increasing amount of migration;

Facing increasing challenges posed by worldwide immigration, the international community proposes to establish the following measures:
- A special status for economical immigrants.
- A national-controlled integration programs.
- Fostering the international collaboration to control illegal migration and to check the appliance with Human Rights (Interpol, ICC)

Having the economical impact of the migration streams in mind, the international community stresses the need for a consistent strategy in handling and integrating successfully incoming labor forces;

Bearing in mind every individual has the right to choose their country of residence;

Emphasizing the necessity of ensuring social and cultural integration of migrants by the destination countries, in order to relax cross cultural tensions, exclusion and discrimination while promoting multiculturalism;

Recommends to the Regional International Organizations to make an effort in creating a unified space for migration and labour rights;

To improve relations between governments involved on migration processes;

To develop a migration policy that would encourage legal migration and will combat illegal migration and other problems that derive from illegal migration;
To include every bilateral, multilateral or regional accord on migration or mass media cooperation within the seal of the AoC initiative in order to popularize it around the world;

To promote approaches of understanding between local city councils, Non-Governmental Organizations and other local organizations;

To provide further protection to political immigrants;

To foster the proper integration of the social immigrants;

3.2. Refugees

Recalling the Hague Convention on Refugees of 429 (v) 14 December 1950

Also recalling Art. 14, Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

- Recognizing the pressing need to address the influx of refugees on burden states;
- Defining the difference between refugees and immigrants, responding to their needs;
- Realizing the need of educational programs for cultural awareness to promote understanding and the elimination violence;
- Facilitating procedures and reuniting refugee families;
- Proposing that as an international obligation for member states to divide the responsibility of accepting refugees from conflict countries;
- Strongly invites Member States within the AoC to further inspect the implementation of the Hague Convention on Refugees of 14 December 1950

3.3. Immigrant Workers

Taking into consideration the specific needs and types of migration that each country demands and offers, the AoC proposes the observing of these issues and thus operating according to those circumstances;

Acknowledging fundamental human rights and freedoms of each human being;

Emphasizing that immigrant workers contribute to the economy of the recipient country as well as their home countries;

Recognizing that each country has its own national background and policies;

Calling upon each member state to establish an integration program for immigrant workers in order to:

1. Protect the rights of immigrant workers

2. Obtain and improve the working conditions of these individuals including equal and minimum salary, pensions and social security in general;
Decides that this program should include for example the following measure:

- To draft temporary contracts with immigrants for specific work and time;
- To launch training programs for immigrant workers to improve their professional and social skills;

4. Media

Cognizant of the social impact media presents in society and bearing in mind the globalization of mass media corporations;

To respect the freedom of expression as a basic social right;

To promote multicultural initiatives on mass media in order to combat stereotypes and cross cultural tensions;

To encourage the work of the UN Media Monitor, conceived on the 2007-2009 Implementation Plan by creating a prize for publications, TV programs, series or channels, radio stations or web sites which promote social understanding;

To popularize the Clearinghouse web site of the UN;

5. Women’s Issues and Rights

Decides that

- Women ambassadors have to be appointed;
- Each woman has the right to receive an equal education as men;
- Maternity deaths in the Third World countries needs to be reduced;
- A national fund should be established (microcredits, cooperatives);
- Women have the right to receive loans in member states;
- An “AoC women’s forum” as an annual women’s forum needs to be created;

Emphasizing the crucial importance of the family for social and cultural harmony;

Convinced that this can only be realized if all member states of the AoC endorse the following project;

Urging communities to “think global and act local”;

Emphasizing the crucial role of money for the ideas and goals proposed in this Resolution and stressing the need to control money flows to the intended goals, the international community represented by the Alliance of Civilizations proposes the following measures:
• Cooperate with the existing development funds in the UN and align their initiatives with our proposed actions. Especially promoting the Voluntary Trust Fund.
• Imposing a review board to oversee the spending on behalf of the proposed measures.
• The only financial institution proposed to be created by this resolution is a Microcredit Fund in purpose of establishing cooperatives and small businesses.

_Stressing_ the international aspect of this resolution and taking into consideration the implementation of an active participation at a local level.
Education: Religion or Laicism at schools?
Politics: the separation of the Church and the State

Acknowledging Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that “Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”,

Bearing in mind Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

According to the General Assembly A/HRC/L.15/Rev.1 in 2007,

Fully believing in tolerance towards all religions,

Deeply convinced that human rights should be universally respected,

Strongly believing in the capacity of secularist states to foster community regarding General Assembly Resolution 53/153, the recommendations of the Toledo Guideline, the Human Rights Chart,

Alarmed by representatives of the media stereotyping specific religious groups,

Bearing in mind the importance of religion in the lives of individuals,

Keeping in mind the influence of religion on moral values,

Believing the essentiality of respect and tolerance towards other beliefs,

Keeping in mind the desire of families for religious education,

Fully aware that one belief should not be considered of greater value than another,

Having acknowledged the diverse approaches that one can take towards religion,
Alarmed by the lack of religious freedom in many parts of the world, 

Deeply concerned of the rise of religious fundamentalism threatening to divide the international community of nations,

Calls for the implementation of the following clauses:

1. **Freedom of religion.**

   1. Recognizes that each person’s religion, including the option of having no religion, is a strictly personal matter;

   2. Affirms that it is necessary to reach into the faith traditions to achieve tolerance and universal values by encouraging dialogue among scholars and lay persons;

   3. Confirms the fundamental rights of liberty, equality and freedom of belief;

   4. Acknowledges the right of states to maintain a close relationship to religious groups, that have been present throughout their historical past without discriminating religious minorities;

   5. Accepts the right of religious minorities to establish places of worship;

   6. Affirms the right of interfaith marriages to take place without fear of persecution;

   7. Proclaims that human rights shall be fully protected regardless of one’s religion;

   8. Observes that the fact that a state with a state religion may have a government which promotes a specific religion does not imply that the religion of the state is imposed on the citizens and that tolerance towards other religions to co-exist within such a states is not guaranteed;

   9. Recognizes that religious minorities have the right to exist within state borders but that they may exercise their religion within the limits of the laws of that state;

   10. Trusts that all citizens, no matter their religious views, are equally represented in all the different legal systems;

   11. Encourages an inter-religious dialogue to prevent the emergence of fundamentalist groups of any kind;

   12. Calls upon the creation of a Forum which addresses these issues without misinterpretation and misunderstanding of religious minorities, creating thereby a common place where people with different faith can meet, exchange experiences and gain an enhanced understanding for each other;
13. Proposes that this Forum, which gives minorities the possibility to build their own social and cultural centres for dialogue and debates, shall implemented through United Nations funding;

14. Recommends that governments help the national media to take a greater responsibility to provide a free and unbiased space for religious minorities to express their views;

15. Encourages the independence of the media from any particular religious views, for no religion shall be given preference over another in the media and no religion shall be able to restrict access to information concerning other religious beliefs, including religious minorities;

16. Recommends the development of media technology as a means to increase awareness and tolerance towards all religious beliefs and, given the difficulties in gaining internet access in less developed countries, the provision of UN development funding for the purpose of the proliferation of media technology;

17. Calls upon states to support forums of open discussion and debate on the issue of religious beliefs;

18. Encourages the establishment of voluntary inter-faith programs and festivals.

2. Education

1. Notes that education is a vital tool to further the understanding and tolerance;

2. Stresses the importance of an education based on reason, science and culture;

3. Recognizes the importance of tradition and values in religious and non-religious communities;

4. Keeps in mind that freedom of religion includes the freedom not to believe in any religion;

5. Considers that religion is an important part of each nation’s history and culture, and that a greater understanding of the different religious beliefs enhances peaceful co-existence between nations;

6. Strongly supports an education grounded on human rights, respect, science, objectivity and understanding which must be made available to all citizens;

7. Urges to designate a system where states do not force religion onto anyone;

8. Calls upon member states not to discriminate against any religion;
9. *Strongly affirms* that educational institutions shall not force any kind of religion upon people, however;

10. *Recommends* that member states implement World Religion History Courses (WRHC) on an informative, descriptive, and non-dogmatic basis in the states curriculum of education;

11. *Recommends* that additional classes on religious subjects, if made available by member states, should be optional for pupils to attend;

12. *Designates* the establishment of a subcommittee within AoC to prepare a model program of WRHC in terms of:
   a. the training of teachers,
   b. the content of such classes,
   c. the resources that teachers and children should benefit from,
   d. any other requirements for such classes,

13. *Recommends* UN funding to promote WRHC in those countries which lack funds to undertake these initiatives;

14. *Decides* to remain seized on the matter.
The Integration of Migrants

Resolution 1.1

The General Assembly,

Acknowledging Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which entitles that rights and freedoms should be applied without distinction,

Having examined Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, education should be directed to strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Convinced that efforts in education are crucial in preparing immigrants and their families to achieve success, and participate actively in the society,

Deeply conscious on the importance of integrating immigrant children with local children in schools at a young age, hereby preventing isolated schools and communities,

Acknowledging the efforts of immigration centres in receiving and guiding new immigrants,

1. Approves maintenance of the immigrant’s native language, customs and traditions at home and public places, as long as they are in accordance with the Convention of Human Rights, and the host country laws or public order;

2. Urges the implementation of extra language and cultural history classes for the immigrant children in school in order to integrate them in their host country and to facilitate equal job opportunities and obtaining citizenship;

3. Proposes informative campaign programs are set up to stimulate the importance of education in facilitating integration, in which the following methods are used, but not limited to:
   - social workers to collaborate in highly dense immigrant areas;
   - posters and flyers distributed on the streets, in doctor’s offices and other public institutions;
   - television commercials;

4. Calls for schools to offer tutors to immigrant children who are behind in the study program of regular subjects;

5. Suggests the creation of a networking platform in schools that allows parents to interact and socialize with each other;

6. Further recommends offering language and cultural history classes in the evening to all immigrant adults;

7. Calls upon teachers to receive training in successfully practicing their jobs in a culturally diverse environment;

8. Proposes to establish a system of multilateral cooperation to ensure the return of students and workers to their home country through stricter immigration controls;

9. Suggests the creation of special cultural centres within the host country, responsible for the communication and cooperation between the host culture and immigrants’ culture, in order to help the integration of immigrants and prepare the population of the host country for the social acceptance of the immigrants.
The Integration of Migrants

Resolution 1.2

The General Assembly,

Recalling all its previous resolutions on the protection of migrants, including resolution A RES 64 166 of 19 of March 2010, and recalling also the Human Rights Council resolution 126 of 1 October 2009,

Acknowledging the principles of Universal Declaration of Human Rights which proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, without distinction of any kind such as race, color or national origin,

Bearing in mind that everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state, according to the internal law of the states, and to leave any State including his or her own and return to his or her country,

Reaffirming the commitment of all members of the United Nations and this alliance to promote and protect fundamental freedoms for all migrants and their families regardless of their migratory condition,

Recalling the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic and Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention of the Rights of the Child and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,

Recognizing that international migration is a global issue which needs local and coherent approach based on mutual responsibility,

Stressing that the global dimension of migration calls for dialogue and cooperation in order to improve the understandings of the migration phenomenon and ways and means to maximize its benefits and minimize its negative impacts,

Acknowledging that migration has brought great benefits to migrants and their families in the receiving countries and the countries of origin,

Recognizing the cultural contribution made by the migrants to receiving countries and countries of origin;

Noting that mutual commitment for respect, tolerance and recognition facilitates the effective integration of migrants, fighting against discrimination, violence and xenophobia and also noting that it promotes respect, solidarity and tolerance in the host countries,

Welcoming the initiative of member states to create regional and multilateral frameworks of cooperation and collaboration in the field of migration,

1. Calls upon states to ensure that laws and policies in the area of counter-terrorism, transnational organized crimes, such as smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, fully respect the basic human rights of migrants;

2. Encourages states to protect and promote the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants and their families, regardless of their migration status;

3. Urges all states to implement measures for preventing and punishing any form of illegal deprivation of liberty of migrants by individuals or groups;

4. Further invites all relevant bodies, funds, and programs of the United Nations system, and all other inter-governmental regional organizations to continue providing funds for researching different aspects of migration and the future trends of these issues;

5. Expresses its concern over the impact of the current economic crisis towards migration and migrants, and therefore encourages governments to tackle unfair and discriminatory treatment of migrant workers.
THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

The Integration of Migrants

Resolution 1.3

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the solemn commitment of all states to fulfill their obligations to promote universal respect for, and observance and protection of, all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other instruments relating to international law and human rights, and reaffirming also the universal nature of these rights and freedoms,

Acknowledging the diversity of the world and that all cultures and civilizations contribute to the enrichment of humankind, as well as recognizing the importance of respect and understanding for religious and cultural diversity throughout the world, and encouraging tolerance, respect, dialogue and cooperation among different cultures, civilizations and peoples,

Noting with deep concern the problems emerged from the international financial crisis and the devastating consequences for the international economy and the whole world population,

Taking into consideration that the global financial crisis has put at risk the jobs and livelihoods of people across the globe with more than fifty million working people expected to lose their jobs,

Pointing out that the global financial crisis will push 200 million more workers into extreme poverty, forcing a total of 1.4 billion of the world’s citizens to live on less than 2 US$ a day and jeopardising the poverty reduction targets of the Millennium Development Goals,

Taking note that the impact of the financial crisis affects immigrants earlier and harder than the local population,

Seeking for cooperation and collaboration between nations in order to tackle this global issue,

Acknowledging the important role of the policies regarding migration of countries of destination as well as countries of origin,

1. Encourages immigrants to attend workshops or training facilities, provided by the host state, to equip them with the relevant skills in order for them to work in specific professions and sectors based on the economic needs of the host country;

2. Further reminds countries of origin to formulate education and training policies in order to strengthen the returning immigrants’ skills to increase employment opportunities;

3. Further invites to guarantee the social rights of immigrant workers acquired at host countries to persist when they are forced to leave due to the loss of their job;

4. Proposes economic stimulus packages to be put in place by countries of destination that equally and without discrimination benefit regular migrant workers;

5. Urges countries of destination to pay particular attention to the integration of immigrant workers and their families;

6. Calls for strict observation of international human rights laws, such as religious, cultural and social rights and to continue the efforts to curb irregular migration;

7. Requests countries of origin to implement effective policies for the reinsertion of returning migrant workers in their labour markets;

8. Asks to improve labour migration policy in order to elaborate special measures to be adopted in times of crisis with the help of countries of destination;

9. Approves financial resources to be transferred to countries whose economies have been hit by the drop in worker’s remittances;

10. Further invites countries to cooperate in case of financial crisis by publishing an annual report on the real needs of the country regarding job opportunities in order to channel the migratory flow efficiently.
The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declarations of principles of international law concerning friendly relations and cooperation amongst states in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the International Covenants on Human Rights,

Reminding all states of their obligation to protect all fundamental rights,


Deeply regretting the lack of political will showed by Israel in the compliance with these resolutions,

Reaffirming the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the relevant United Nations resolutions and Declarations, and the provisions of the international covenants and instruments relating to the right to self-determination as an international principle and as a right to all peoples in the world, keeping in mind that this is *ius cogens* in international law and a basic condition for achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the region of the Middle East,

Remembering the internationally agreed upon definitions of genocide, as expressed in article 3 of the Statute of the International Criminal Court of 1998 and the Convention on the prevention and suppression of the crime of genocide of 1948,

Also remembering the definition of the crime of *apartheid* as stated in the International Convention on the suppression and punishment of the crime of *apartheid* of 1976,

Keeping in mind the right to a fair trial and the prohibition of extra-judicial executions recognized in the International Covenants and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights,

Requests the state of Israel to cease all actions violating international human rights and humanitarian law;
Suggests that all parties involved in the conflict work together to avoid negative consequences in the conflict zone;

Emphasizes that this resolution is the last call from the Human Rights Council to the State of Israel to recognise past resolutions and apply them;

Recognises the need for new and stabilized borders between the two future sovereign nations;

Further recognises the acts of the State of Israel as acts of genocide against the Palestinian people and requests the international community to take up its responsibility on the matter, and comply with the consequences thereof;

Acknowledges the politics of the State of Israel as policies of apartheid, resulting in the continuing violation of human rights of the Palestinian people, notably the right to food, the right to water, the freedom of movement, the right to self-determination;

Emphasises that the State of Israel should stop attacks on Palestinian refugees across the border;

Requests the State of Israel and states collaborating with it to admit these violations and comply with the previous resolutions;

Asks the State of Israel to put an end to extra-judicial executions of Palestinians suspected of crimes;

Wishes for the international community to consider this problem a matter of global concern and not just a dispute between two parties;

Strongly encourages the State of Israel to lift its blockade on the Gaza Strip and destroy the Wall, condemned by the Internacional Court of Justice in an advisory opinion, so that the increasingly worsening human rights conditions within the area can be improved;

Stresses the need to recognise a state of Palestine and the need for respect for and preservation of territorial unity and integrity of all the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;

Disapproves of the Israeli military’s attacks on the Palestinian population and violations of human rights in the Palestinian territories and especially in the Gaza Strip;

Suggests the creation of an ad hoc tribunal to judge the perpetrators of continuing crimes against humanity and human rights violations against the Palestinian people, in the event that the State of Israel does not comply with the previous clauses;

Requests the Security Council to adopt the appropriate measures to guarantee the Palestinian people their sovereign state, in the event that the State of Israel does not respect the clauses of previous resolutions.
Human Rights Council

Third Session

The Human Rights Council,


Recalling also the statement of its President to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women’s Rights and International Peace (International Women’s Day) of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816),

Recalling as well the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century” (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and recognizing the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace building, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts,

Recognizing the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

Further recognizing that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,
effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,

*Noting* the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,

1. *Urges* for the incorporation of gender mainstreaming into all UN operations;

2. *Strongly disapproves* of the usage of violence against women as a systematic weapon of war to achieve wider military goals such as ethnic cleansing and intimidation;

3. *Urges* the international community to concentrate efforts on providing adequate assistance for women affected by violence, especially of sexual nature in conflict and post-conflict situations;

4. *Calls* for increased awareness and support for women stigmatised by sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations;

5. *Stresses* the importance of the presence of female military and police personnel in conflict-stricken regions, so as to increase sensitivity for specific issues of women and facilitate rehabilitation and prosecution of crimes of violence against women;

6. *Stimulates* human rights education by United Nations and local experts for all military, armed and police forces;

7. *Calls* for national judiciaries to mainstream gender in their strategies, so as to ensure the full support for women who have been affected by violence, especially of sexual nature in conflict and post-conflict situations, as well as improve the access to a fair trial, and enhancement of their legal status;

8. *Strongly urges* the countries that have abstained from the CEDAW Convention and the Optional Protocol to sign and ratify these and strictly comply with them;

9. *Increase* support for gender equality, so as to enhance women’s representation at the highest levels of national and international decision-making, with the purpose of ending the discrimination that hinders full gender integration and that constitutes a breeding ground for violence against women.
THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL,

Sexual Orientation and Human Rights

Acknowledging the formal definition of the term sexual orientation established and used by the Human Rights Education Council that states “sexual orientation is an enduring, emotional, romantic, sexual or affective attraction to another person. It exists along a continuum that ranges from exclusive homosexuality (sexual interest towards members of the same sex) to exclusive heterosexuality (sexual interest towards members of the opposite sex) and includes various forms of bisexuality (sexual interests towards members of both sexes)

Understanding that this definition includes lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgendered and intersexed individuals as well as heterosexuals,

Deeply concerned by the magnitude of discrimination and criminal acts towards individuals of sexual orientations other than heterosexuality including lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgendered and intersexed individuals,

Keeping in mind the basic rights and freedoms stated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights including the Right to Life, the Freedom of Speech, the Freedom of Conscience, as well as other principals of equality and physical integrity outlined,

Recalling the statement made by Argentina in December 2008 on the basis of sexual orientation and the principle of non-discrimination which requires that human rights apply equally to every human being,

Reaffirming the statement made by Norway in 2006 calling for action against human rights violations on the basis of sexual orientation,

Calling on the Resolution A/60/L.48 in the formation of the Human Rights Council stating that the Council shall be responsible for promoting universal respect for
the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind and in a fair and equal manner,

*Welcoming* the work that had been done by human rights experts in Yogyakarta in 2007,

*Emphasizing* Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that states “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”,

*Reminding* Member States of Article 26 of the International Agreement of Civil and Political Rights that states, “All human beings are equal in law and have the same rights of non-discrimination and protection in the law”,

1. *Recommends* the implementation of a program that analyzes and monitors any violations of human rights on the basis of sexual identity;

2. *Further recommends* the control of proper treatment of sexual minorities in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR);

3. *Discourages* the promotion of hatred towards lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transsexuals (LGBT) in all forms of media, political forum, etc;

4. *Urges* the international community to cooperate in order to ensure that all human rights violations based on sexual orientation receive the international security and condemnation they require;

5. *Further recommends* the adequate protection of human rights defenders at risk because of their work and the promotion of their ideas and positions;

6. *Allows* the members states supporting the oral statement made at the UN General Assembly on the 19th of December 2008 to grant the right to asylum to individuals whose fundamental human rights may have been violated on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity;

7. *Stresses* that human rights and fundamental freedoms are the birthrights of all human beings, that the universal nature of these rights and freedoms is beyond question and that the enjoyment of such rights and freedoms shall not be hindered in any way on the grounds of sexual orientation;

8. *Strongly urges* member states to stop all violations of human rights based on sexual orientation and to protect sexual minorities from any kind of discrimination;

9. *Decides* to remain seized on the matter.
Reproductive and Sexual Rights

The Human Rights Council,

Bearing in mind the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Council and contemplating also its general appliance to humanity in article 22 which states the person “is entitled to realization”,

Being aware of the fact that gender equality can be achieved also through education,

Affirming that education is essential to improve the respect to sexual and reproductive rights,

Recalling the article 4 of the Programme of Action of Cairo which considers the natural right of choice for women,

Welcoming the efforts made by the Africans countries within the framework of the African Declaration on Human Rights to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS,

Taking into consideration that educational systems, beliefs and traditions should be respected while promoting and protecting the human rights, specifically concerning sexual and reproductive rights,

Acknowledging the article 17 of Beijing Declaration which reaffirms “the right of all women to control aspects of their health, in particular their own fertility because of its basic to their empowerment”,

Bearing in mind that the implementation of family planning policies can help the economy of developing countries as well as general life conditions,

1. Urges all member states to promote sexual education by implementing lessons on this subject in all the educational systems of the countries aiming to reach teenagers and young adults to better understand their sexual and reproductive rights and by creating centers focused on sexual and reproductive rights as the first step to guarantee the sexual and reproductive rights and prevent the spread of STI and HIV/AIDS under the patronage of UNFPA with the goal of having accessible information for anyone who is interested;

2. Calls upon all nations to bear in mind Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights when establishing national policies on the issue of abortion;

3. Strongly recommends all nations to raise awareness on the issues of female genital mutilation, discrimination and any form of violence through media outlets and public awareness campaigns;

4. Further calls upon all nations to leave open the possibility to voluntary sterilization within the legal framework of each country after an extensive consultation with a trained professional and in case of developing countries and undeveloped countries being financed by funds of developed countries economically and technically;

5. Calls for the establishment of a commission of experts, 1/3 of them from ECOSOC, which will study the differences between states legislations related to sexual and reproductive rights and the impact of these policies on the states’ economy and which will publish a yearly report;

6. Invites the World Health Organization to analyze the physical and mental health, through statistical means, of the population and to publish a biannual report which shall be presented to the Council of Human Rights;

7. Accepts the right of every country to decide whether they want to implement a family planning policy in accordance with the outcome of Cairo’s conference (1994);

8. Calls for the universal access to family planning including sexual education, the universal access to contraception and safe childbirth;

9. Calls for universal access to education for boys and girls;

10. Urges to end wage disparity between women and men;
11. **Calls for** developed countries to financially support the developing countries in order to empower those governments to face the existing problems by providing improved water sources, universal access to family care and access to education;

12. **Calls for** the universal recognition of Genital Mutilation as a violation of Human Rights;

13. **Hopes** that the developed countries will bear in mind that despite the political mood after the recent financial crisis, the need for financial aid in developing countries is now more important than ever;

14. **Seeks** financial support by the ECOSOC to spread family planning throughout the world as it has proven to be the key element to leaving the vicious circle of the interconnected problems we are facing concerning sexual and reproductive rights;

15. **Strongly urges** member states to fully implement the guidelines of the International Labour Organization, particularly concerning sexual rights in the workplace;

16. **Recommends** governments to provide shelters and counseling services for victims of domestic and sexual violence;

17. **Urges** national governments to draft legislations combating human trafficking;

18. **Calls upon** all nations to ensure the freedom of individuals to get married or not, without being forced to submit marriage by familiar or cultural traditions;

19. **Promotes** the right to marriage and choice of spouse as stated in the International Convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination adopted by the General Assembly in 1965;

20. **Hopes** that all the above mentioned measures will be considered and turned into action.
The Commission on the Status of Women,

1. **Fully alarmed** by the level of various forms of discrimination and violence against young women in our societies; but also convinced that the Member States will take all necessary measures on their behalf to overcome the existing injustice and cooperate within and among local, national, international levels accordingly,

2. **Reaffirming** the obligation of all States to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, as it was stated in the Charter of the United Nations and guided by the purposes and principles of humanitarian international law,

3. **Acting** under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action,

4. **Recalling** the preamble of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and in particular the statement that every girl child should be brought up in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity,

5. **Having adopted** the Millennium Development Goals which inherently aim to promote gender equality, empower women and improve maternal health,

6. **Having considered further** the requirement of adopting necessary protocols which turns explicit the rights of the adolescent girls analogous to the Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women; keeping in mind women’s specific characteristics which lead to specific needs but also unique insights,
7. **Recognizing** that female genital mutilation is an irreparable abomination of human rights with fatal consequences, which should be dealt with immediately in the following resolution,

Resolves:

1. **Invites** the international community to cooperate within a multilateral framework in order to achieve more effective agreements and to guarantee adolescent girls’ protection worldwide and expresses its hope that;
   
   a. Member States will ratify all the existing Conventions which guarantee rights to adolescent girls, which are the Convention on the Right of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women,
   
   b. Member States will form a Committee to evaluate the need to prepare additional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women which addresses this particular group of women deriving from the fact that they are both young and women,

2. **Calls upon** Governments to take necessary measures and strengthen initiatives to create an enabling environment for the empowerment of women, to strengthen their economic independence and to protect and promote their full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, if necessary providing positive rights to women,

3. **Further recommends** Governments to strengthen legal, political, administrative and other measures in order to prevent all forms of violence against the adolescent girl,

4. **Recommends** Governments to encourage problem solving on the local level by working together with local religious institutions, local NGOs and other active local civil society groups for the following aims:
   
   a. To address specific problems that adolescent women face in specific places where the problems take place since local level has more intelligence on the challenges faced by adolescent girls and stands in personal contact with them,
   
   b. To use local level’s capacity for reaching local people easier and having a bigger amount of influence over people; by which they can prevent abuse of adolescent girls’ rights; and by which the national and international levels can channel funds through the local level more effectively providing effective shelter for the adolescent girl who is in need,
c. To educate local people, especially the adolescent girls about the existing national and international rights that they possess and explain them their options in case of a human rights violation such as domestic violence, genital mutilation, sexual exploitation,

5. **Strongly condemns** genital mutilation and considers it as a violation of human rights that has to be prosecuted and punished by the necessary legal and judicial action; and requests States to create the required infrastructures to prevent the practice of genital mutilation by means of education, health and law:

   a. Prosecute legislation to prevent genital mutilation,
   b. Provide education about the obvious dangers of genital mutilation by working with the local level to focus on the particular places that genital mutilation takes place,
   c. Create special units in health care services which deal with young women who went through genital mutilation to help ease their suffering; and to provide medical assistance in order to help the adolescent girl who already went through genital mutilation have a healthy family life in the future if she wishes,

6. **Urges** Governments to implement a single and uniform registration protocol for cases of domestic violence in order to facilitate data management, which is essential to draft effective policies on violence against women,

7. **Recommends** States to provide sufficient education and specific training in order to raise awareness regarding genital mutilation and other problems that adolescents may face and calls upon the whole international community to take strong measures on this topic; raise awareness and educate about sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), HIV/AIDS in particular, as well as the risks and possibilities of all different birth control methods; referring to Millennium Development Goal no. 6 and providing extra funding for UNICEF to continue their much appreciated work in this field,

8. **Recognizes** the adolescent girls’ right to seek proper protection in her own country or asylum in another country in case her life being under any threat of domestic violence, genital mutilation, sexual exploitation or any other grave human rights violation,

9. **Calls upon** all Member States to provide effective protection for adolescent girls during armed conflicts and taking particular measures like creating shelters in order to prevent sale, sexual exploitation and forced prostitution of adolescent girls, furthermore, adolescent girls in situation of refugees and/or internal displacement should be protected and their basic human rights guaranteed by the hosting State, acting in accordance with the protection established by the Geneva Convention (IV) relating to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and its two Additional Protocols; as well as the Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its Protocol,

10. **Condemns** all types of discrimination against women, but in particular the adolescent girl,
11. **Strongly advises** Governments to implement an effective and substantial birth registration system, falling back on the existing data and help from local entities, like religious institutions, community services, and others already active in this area,

12. **Encourages** all Member States to respect the freedom of expression and the freedom of thought, consciousness and religion; and recognizes:
   
   a. Every adolescent girl has the freedom of expression within the family as well as towards society. She has the inherent right to express her own views in all kind of matters and to be listen to and respected for her opinions,
   b. The freedom of expression of adolescent girls should be guaranteed without discrimination regarding their sex,

13. **Recognizes** that when using the term adolescent girl, it must be understood as any girl under the age of 18, allowing for exceptions whenever the personal situation of the girl and the specific characteristics of the case demand flexibility, and the term parents must be understood as biological or adoptive parents, tutors or keepers, according to each case,

14. **Emphasizes** the importance of family protection, in particular:
   
   a. Every adolescent girl has the right to receive care and protection by her parents in equal conditions as her male siblings, as well as to be raised within the family, understood as the natural unit and basis of society,
   b. Parents, as their main source of education, should teach their daughters to be conscious of human rights and their special condition of adolescent girls, as well as parents should themselves respect and guarantee these rights,

15. Calls upon Member States to take all the measures in order to implement an effective birth registration system with the aim of guaranteeing the full enjoyment of every child’s human rights,

16. **Requests** Governments, in order to introduce future women to the labor market, to promote equal access for women in the labor market, to strengthen women’s economic power and implement the necessary measures to do so, but also:
   
   a. To provide possibilities to combine a career with a family life; e.g. part time working, working from home,
   b. To establish decent and sufficient child care in order to equalize women’s chances to get access to the labor market, which will encourage young women to invest in a career while having a family, the cornerstone of society,
   c. To respect the right of every woman to freely stay at home and dedicate herself entirely to her family,

17. **Calls for** a wider presence of women in politics, to establish a greater equality and to take advantage of and reflect their particular insights, acknowledging that the power
endorsed by the incumbents would allow them to implement solutions to problems that affect women, through affirmative action policies, with specific attention to the problems of adolescent girls and educating them about their political rights and participating possibilities,

18. **Strongly urges** all Member States to prohibit the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and also referring to adolescent girls, furthermore urges to typify and penalize them under their criminal or penal law,

19. **Calls upon** every state to take its responsability and establish international cooperation in order to fight against women trafficking and tackle international women trafficking networks,

20. **Encourages** the media to be sensitive on the issue of women's rights, adolescent girl's rights in particular and use their potential of positively influencing the society,

The Right to Food and the Hunger Refugees

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

Recalling its resolution 59/202 of 20 December 2004, as well as all Commission on Human Rights resolutions in this regard, in particular resolution 2005/18 of 14 April 2005,

Recalling also the Universal Declaration of Human Rights article 25 which states that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for her or his health and well-being, including food, the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition,

Further recalling the first Millennium Development Goal which aims at eradicating extreme poverty and hunger and more specifically to cut by half the number of people suffering from hunger by 2015,

Recalling further the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in which the fundamental right of every person to be free from hunger is recognized,

Bearing in mind the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action and the Declaration of the World Food Summit adopted in Rome on 13 June 2002,

Welcoming the concrete recommendations contained in the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security, adopted by the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,

Reaffirming that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

Reaffirming also that a peaceful, stable and enabling political, social and economic environment, at both the national and the international levels, is the essential foundation that will enable states to give adequate priority to food security and poverty eradication,

Reminding all United Nations (UN) member states of the commitments made at the World Food Summits in 1996 and 2000 to ensure that everyone has access to a sufficient amount of food of adequate quality and to cut by half the number of people suffering from hunger by 2015,
Convinced that each state must adopt a strategy consistent with its resources and capacities to achieve its individual goals in implementing the recommendations contained in the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action and, at the same time, cooperate regionally and internationally in order to organize collective solutions to global issues of food security in a world of increasingly interlinked institutions, societies and economies where coordinated efforts and shared responsibilities are essential,

Noting with regret the increasing number of people estimated chronically food insecure in the developing world which is currently estimated at 852 million people,

Expressing its deep concern at the number and scale of natural disasters, diseases and pests and their increasing impact in recent years, which have resulted in a massive loss of life and livelihood and threatened agricultural production and food security, in particular in developing countries,

Recognizing the long-lasting and persisting problem of hunger in different geopolitical contexts,

Recognizing that malnutrition can be caused by, amongst others, conflicts, natural disasters, global climate changes, environmental degradation, desertification, unfair distribution of land, unclear property rights, foreign debt or neglect of rural development,

Realising the difficulty of defining the people affected by hunger as refugees, since the problem of hunger persists over a long time and might lead to situations, where the states would have to accept the people suffering from hunger for unforeseeable periods,

Recognizing the problems of the emergency situations and the consequences of the severe food delivery problems,

Welcomes the work already done by the UN Agencies in emergency hunger relief funds and especially the work of the existing Emergency Funds;

Also recognizing that the role of women has been neglected in relation to the right to food,

Further recognizing the existence of long lasting hunger situations and the need to not only relieve these situations but also to prevent them and therefore,

1) Urges all member states to recognize the right to food and to introduce this right within their national legal system;

2) Calls upon all member states to secure:
   a) the availability of food in a quantity and quality sufficient to satisfy the dietary needs of individuals, free from adverse substances and acceptable within a given culture
   b) the accessibility of such food in ways that are sustainable and that do not interfere with the enjoyment of other human rights;

3) Urges the UN Human Rights Council to avoid the ambiguous term of hunger refugees and rather define these individuals as “displaced people affected by severe food shortage”;

4) Requests UN Bodies and agencies related to hunger, relief and its member that deploy such an action to implement the adequate mechanisms to convert food aid into development aid;
5) **Requests** the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB) and the other institutions responsible to consider the conversion of the foreign debt of developing countries into funds for the fostering of agriculture, production in the framework of strengthening small local producers, support in infrastructures and agrarian technologies, in particular in poor rural areas;

6) **Calls for** a more efficient system, through conferring competence for coordination of all United Nations emergency food relief to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA);

7) **Urge** OCHA to create an Emergency Food Relief Fund, which will:
   a) provide food and financial assistance on a grant basis,
   b) to support relief operations using existing UN Agencies,
   c) co-ordinate multi-level networks,
   d) function using a budget that is set and financed in the preceding year;

8) **Also Suggests** to create a Committee of international food relief experts which will be appropriately represented by all areas of the world in order to:
   a) analyse the working of the existing funds within the UN,
   b) suggest the appropriate structural and financial systems for the working of the Emergency Food Relief Fund and report back annually;
   c) supervise, monitor and report back to this committee on the activities and results of the Emergency Relief Fund,
   d) suggest the appropriate size of the fund;

9) Urges national governments to undertake the necessary steps to:
   a) promote small local food producers and when deemed necessary promote fair redistribution of land,
   b) enhance the capacity of local food production,
   c) support micro-credit initiatives,
   d) empower women’s roles in the agricultural production
   e) enhance environmental protection and biodiversity;

10) **Urge** all states to undertake efforts to minimise food price speculation, including removing export embargos in place in food surplus states;

11) **Calls upon** member states to reconsider the effects of the bio-fuels production and its effects with a special emphasis on the threat of food security;

12) **Calls upon** the OECD states to fully ratify the Doha Round regarding the states compromise on gradually reducing agricultural subsidies,

13) **Encourages** the reinforcement of existing local institutions dealing with the right to food as well as the UN Agencies role by establishing an efficient working link between governments, the UN and Non Governmental Organizations (NGO);
14) *Calls upon* a new way of aid which should be a first step on consulting of specific problems of states and in a second step grant appropriate financial support in forms such as but not limited to micro-credits and foreign investments to each state in need;

15) *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE STUDY OF COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

The General Conference,

Reaffirming the right to freedom of expression and information as stated in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

Bearing in mind the significance that the flow of information and communication has as it concerns education and culture,

Having studied the issues and problems indicated in the McBride Report published in 1980,

Concerned with the numerous threats of information on national security and social order,

Realizing the massive technological changes which took place since the publication of the McBride Report in 1980,

Fully aware of the unequal spread of information and communication in the world,

Emphasizing the monitoring of information as a responsibility and authority of the member states in order to achieving a balance in the communication and information flows,

Seeking to address and solve the issues emerging from the New World Information and Communication Order Report,

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization,

Technology, Human Capital, and Infrastructure

1. Calls for the support of educational programs and projects for the effective access and use of information such as:
   a. Books, newspaper, magazines, and related printing information;
   b. Internet, computer, and other computer related items;
   c. Television, radio, and other forms of telecommunications;

2. Strongly encourages government investment in the employment of training programs in the media such as:
   a. Human resources on information management and journalist reporting;
   b. Telecommunication devices for advance television and radio broadcasting;
   c. Internet and cyberspace technology for more fluid information flow;

3. Recommends the further development in technological infrastructures for an easier and wider flow and access of communication and information such as:
   a. Press facilities for the circulation of print information;
   b. Satellite services for the improvement of television and radio broadcasting;
   c. Computer installation for advanced Internet communication;

4. Requests the international community to contribute and support the knowledge technology through education and training programs among member states;

5. Suggests these programs of actions be facilitated by member states for civil purposes and be supervised under the mandate of UNESCO;
Law and Rights

6. Instructs national governments to create national legislations that should encourage the further development of the media sector;

7. Recognizes the importance of media legislation specifying the rights and obligations to ensure the protection or rights and security of journalists and media;

8. Supports the establishment and application of law in information and communication on the protection of minority, cultural identity and plurality, gender equality, national security, social order, and individual privacy and security;

9. Underlines the necessity to respect and protect the right to access information as a means to achieving education for the citizens of all member states;

The Public and Private Sector

10. Emphasizes the importance of enhancing internet and cyber space security through the cooperation of the public and private sector to tackle spam and hackers threatening and disrupting the flow of information and communication order;

11. Recommends the application of a code of conduct in media corporations to guarantee accountability and proper practices in the field of information gathering and reporting;

12. Further recommends the establishment of government policies and bodies with the purpose of overseeing the authenticity and fairness of information to prevent the abuse and centralization of news information by the media corporation;

13. Stresses the importance of media ownership by both the government and national corporations as a guarantee of cultural pluralism, balanced and impartial information flow, and sovereignty of all member states;

Cooperation and Integrity of the International Community

14. Strongly supports annual meetings of member states to address new issues and recommendations in the communication and information order;

15. Invites the civil society, such as the UNESCO-affiliated non-governmental organizations and non-profit organizations, to play an active role as a mediator on the fairness of information and communication between the media sector and the government;

16. Urges the commitment, active dialogue and interactions among the United Nations bodies, member states, and the civil society to assist one another on matters regarding information and communication, such as technology, education, and labour training;

17. Greatly considers the further elaboration and updates to the McBride Report through the re-establishing of the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems;

18. Further considers the future creation of a United Nations Committee under the mandate of UNESCO, for the purpose of sharing information and communication-related technology;

19. Decides to remain actively seized on the matter.
DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

We, young people of the Euro-Mediterranean region, gathered in Barcelona on occasion of the Mediterranean Forum of the Young Alliance of Civilisations and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, stress our deep concern with the lack of understanding, the political tensions, the deterioration of international relations and the increased episodes of violence worldwide.

We belong to a unique crossroads of civilisations, cultures and exchanges. Young people are indispensable in constructing the present and in the pursuit of a better future. We bear the consequences of all decisions of our current leaders, concerning the coexistence and the respect among the peoples. Our voice must be heard.

Regardless of our origins or beliefs, we consider that the dialogue amongst cultures is essential for a better future. The Alliance of Civilisations must be a tool to strengthen dialogue and a means for cooperation among countries. The bridge we are building should be based on solid pillars of mutual understanding and respect.

We can contribute to the process of this Alliance from our experience and knowledge of a reality, that of civil society, that tends on some occasions to be left aside. Young people are key in moving from talk to action. We have the right and the obligation to participate in political decision-making.

Therefore, building on the experiences of the Barcelona Process, which also participates in the dialogue among cultures, we hereby declare:

Immigration
Immigration can and in the future should have a positive connotation as well as influence on host countries and is a right of any citizen. However, the incentives to migrate must be changed from it being a necessity to becoming a choice. For this to be ensured, the economic as well as political situation in the countries of origin together with stronger cooperation mechanisms must improve. In today’s world, immigrant communities as well as host country civilisations are far from benefiting in the way they could from the unique chances immigration bears. Immigrant communities, like no other, offer a forum of intercultural exchange.

Exchange can not take place where there is no means of communication. Amongst the main challenges of integration of immigrants is the language barrier. We deem it absolutely necessary that every immigrant, especially children, have access to and be strongly encouraged to attend free language courses. We call on all countries to assist all receiving states in order to financially support these classes. To further promote intercultural learning, we suggest the creation of a common program for elementary schools on cultural diversity in the Mediterranean area which teaches shared history and puts special emphasis on universal values. Dialogue and exchange of cultural knowledge should further be promoted through urban planning and efforts should be taken to avoid segregation.

Furthermore, we call on all responsible governments to devote the funds otherwise allocated to the certain military or intelligence operations, to support cultural programs. We call on all communities to change their perceptions about immigrants and to pursue rights-based policies to allow legalization of undocumented immigrants under fair conditions, in order to promote the cessation of their economic exploitation.

The future should be shaped by social and financial investments aimed at the promotion of dialogue rather than of the building of fences.

Youth

Youth is a clear target group for the Alliance of Civilisations. This is because we influence and are influenced by all topics under its debate. An active involvement of young people should be foreseen for the successful future implementation of this initiative.

Youth empowerment through active participation is a basic pillar for the advancement of our societies. Motivation and equal opportunities are key elements to achieve full participation and active responsible citizenship.

Young people need effective channels for communication with decision-makers from the local to the international levels. Resources, opportunities as well as structures of networking as National Youth Councils and other youth structures should be enhanced and properly funded. Good practices to promote active citizenship in the participation decision-making processes and in the co-management of policies, need to be structured and encouraged.
Education

Education is the key for development and for breaking barriers to get to know each other. It is a mechanism of conflict prevention and creation of values such as democracy, respect and plurality, and it is a basic element to reinforce social cohesion. Key proposals to advance a common educational framework must include:

The attention to diversity, such as the promotion of spaces for intercultural learning and dialogue in schools, based on a neutral, critical and objective approach and the freedom to choose religious or non-religious education, to build up understanding and fight stereotypes, intolerance and extremism.

The importance of free and equal access to public education as a pillar for sustainable development to fight illiteracy, a barrier for dialogue and freedom. We urge states to fulfill the Second Millennium Development Goal to build a cultural dialogue and understanding based on a holistic approach, and to update educational systems.

The complementing nature of formal and non formal education so that there is a global perspective of the role of education considering transmission of knowledge, skills and attitudes. It is necessary to understand education as a life long learning process, and promote specific actions like students and teachers exchanges.

A minimum common global curricula, such as the promotion of learning of foreign languages as well as one’s own language, the use of new technologies, the creation of international texts books commissions based on good practices, the recognition of degrees or educational background and professional training, networking and exchange (among schools, universities, youth organizations and career-oriented), work on human right values, critical thinking and democratic participation or teaching a media-critical approach.

Gender

The equal contribution of women and men to the advancement of society cannot be stressed enough. However, women are, in most places, still not treated, or regarded, as equal partners in society. The problem does not lie only in politics, but in society’s treatment of women and in the implementation, or the lack thereof, of existing laws.

Concrete steps are necessary to overcome this reality. The full integration and participation of women in economic life must be supported by policies leading to specific measures to ensure equality in the workplace, which must include; the availability of child-care facilities, equal maternity-paternity leave provisions, encouraging part-time or shared job schemes, balancing the responsibility of partners at home, equal pay for equal work, or the regulation of complaints and gender-based discrimination in the workplace through the establishment of ombudsman.
Human rights, gender-based violence, the global issue of homophobia and the disparate views of the social role of men and women are a constant in the debate about equality. The lack of understanding and the biased view of the role of women in society prevent most of them from fully enjoying their human rights. To overcome this stigma, we encourage strengthening civil society networking and capacity building as a means to share cultural-religious practices and adapt them to the needs and expectations of today's realities while respecting one's traditions and wishes.

**Institutional Politics**

The term "Alliance of Civilisations" neither implies the fusion of civilisations, nor is it limited to cooperation at a political level. The initiative must be as inclusive as possible. It must stress the progress and the successes which have already been achieved, especially in the Euro-Mediterranean context which should be a model. As the draft working paper of the Alliance mentions, it is imperative that neither religion nor culture may be utilized by governments as a means to impose their views on international policies or actions.

The "Alliance of Civilisations" will not have to limit itself to promoting cooperation between political actors, it has the chance to underline the importance of civil society. As other international initiatives such as the Barcelona Process improve cooperation, the increased participation of civil society in the decision-making process, the exchange of expertise, technology or education can have a similar effect on civil society.

In order to achieve more success on both levels a stronger focus needs to be put on active municipalities, since at this level civil society and political institutions work together closest. At an international level there should be a greater collaboration between the political institutions and civil society. Social forces within a state should not be underestimated, as positive social forces can complement and strengthen political institutions.

As the youth component of civil society as well as politically active citizens, we recognize the challenge of defining "civilisation". Despite the challenges the Alliance faces, we must acknowledge that it is the Alliance which will contribute to strengthening the close cooperation between civil societies.

**Media**

Today’s media is more ubiquitous than ever before. While media institutions have the potential to exacerbate conflicts and perpetuate cultural misunderstanding, they can also be used as tools for change. Certain culturally insensitive terms are often used haphazardly, effectively carrying on the vicious cycle of intolerance. Drawing on the principles of the Alliance and its promotion of dialogue, we support professional training and exchange programs for students and journalists which seek to foster cultural respect. Experience shows
that people on the ground with local understanding of a conflict will often portray events closer to the truth. It is vital that their voices be heard. The subsequent increase in the credibility of media outlets whose journalists are culturally educated will lead to more reliable information spreading through various regions of the world. Dependable news stories will provide better analyses of often sensitive topics.

We must encourage media plurality so as to increase the likelihood of a more objective conclusion being drawn from a multitude of sources. The “New Media” of the new century brought with it the chance for a myriad of opinions, voices, and perspectives to be posted and reached by anyone with access to the Internet. We promote sustainable initiatives to increase and globalize web access to all.

In order to mediate baseless prejudices spawned by fear of the unknown, articles and documentaries from around the world can be included in domestic media to show the perspectives of different countries. We support a culture of self-critique as a fundamental component of objective and ethical journalism. We wish to maintain our freedom of speech and media without restriction of socially taboo subjects; instead, our intrinsic respect for the diversity of cultures will prevent calls for governmental censorship.
We, as youth from different nations between the ages of 18 and 30, gathered in Barcelona to discuss the voice of Youth in the Alliance of Civilizations. Our generation is in a unique position. Never before has a generation had either the opportunities, or the technology which we benefit from today. Those older than we are did not enjoy the advantage of exchange programs in the same way that we do today. They did not have the internet to communicate with people literally all over the globe. More people are learning foreign languages today than ever before. Never have people travelled around the world as much as they do today. We grew up during a time when these phenomena expanded and we are in a position to appreciate the chances which have arisen from them. Those younger than we are grew up with these means and will take them for granted. We are in a position to ensure that future generations continue to value the advantages bestowed upon us.

We came together with the common hope of making a lasting change in the world. For us it is not merely a chance to become active, it is a means of fulfilling an obligation. All of us here are in the fortunate positions to be able to attend university and are given the chance to participate in such conferences. When meeting other people with similar goals and visions for the future, we realize that it is in our power to unite our efforts. Being able to present our work at a conference such as this one allows us to be heard on a level that will hopefully make a difference.

During the first C’MUN session in May, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations analyzed the previous work and the structure of the Alliance and the High Level Group. The Committee passed two resolutions with suggestions on how to improve the process of the Alliance. By unanimous consent, it was agreed that the Alliance should be a permanent body. A special focus was put on reforming the High Level Group. Increase the High Level Group to 30 members who rotate similar to the Security Council rotation system. Other ideas included creating working groups within the Alliance.

This session was divided into four working groups: Immigration, Gender, Education, and Media. We have come up with calls for action as to how to use the concept and the expertise of the Alliance in these different fields. We did not focus on how youth can be mobilized because we feel that the youth is already active. Even though the Alliance has already issued the Report on Education, we can offer a youth view of how the Alliance may function in the future.
Our work presented here is based on the results of the first C’MUN session as well as the Declaration adopted by the Mediterranean Forum of the Young Alliance of Civilizations and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Media

Media is one of the most influential components of the Alliance of Civilizations. Media should play a leading role in cultural dialogue together with civil society. Therefore, it is vital to establish a plan of action focusing not only on the responsibility of the media alone, but also on the responsibility of the civil society within the media. A healthy dialogue between media and society will lead to a healthy dialogue amongst cultures.

1. Critical Thinking Education

Project aim
Critical thinking education will equip people with the crucial tool of critical thinking. The benefits of this will be applicable not only for the media, but for all aspects of society, hence benefiting the Alliance as a whole.

Project target
Teen and pre-teen age groups

Method
A great deal of responsibility lies with the teacher who will execute the program, to ensure it will take into account important differences in age and ensure cultural sensivity in order to integrate within the domestic arena. The program will also feature an optional focus on media. Discussion about the difference in perspectives for various issues will help foster critical thinking, while also focusing upon the importance of sources, citation, and research methods.

2. Exchange of Media Professionals:

Project aim
Facilitate two-way exchange of technical expertise and contribute to cultural understanding in order to increase credibility of articles upon return.

Project target
All people with relation to media.

Method
Can be organized by the International Media Convention outlined in number Six, or on bilateral terms between various news agencies.

3. Feedback Opportunities

Project aim
To encourage members of society who do not normally actively participate in dialogue with the media, and to help members of the media become more informed on various perspectives present within society. A wealth of response to subjective media articles will also encourage the media to present news in a more unbiased manner. Such response will also show people different viewpoints even if they are not expressly published by the media.
Project target
All of society.

Method
Beginning with support for current feedback related initiatives, this concept could be broadened both in scope and in effectivity. Newspapers could offer regular feedback supplements that encourage participation, as opposed to being based solely on the initiative of concerned readers. News programs could offer specific time for public response to their news items.

4. Public Voice
Project aim
Promote public initiatives to broadcast their voice as opposed to only responding to the news items of others.

Project target
All of society.

Method
Televisioned debates can encourage public participation from the audience, and also lead to participation on the actual panel of speakers. Websites of news channels could offer viewers the opportunity to specifically request more detailed programs on the background of a contemporary conflict, with the channel making the final decision based on public response.

Support initiatives creating multilingual archives of news items.

5. Debates on Media
Project aim
Primarily seeks to raise awareness of the media, its effects and role within society. Later reflection of these conclusions can also begin grass-roots initiatives.

Project target
Uninformed public.

Method
These debates would be attended by:
- Governmental officials
- Civil society
- NGOs from different parts of the world
- Members of the media
- Experts on ‘the issue’ (if the media is accused with portraying an event inaccurately, these experts would offer a perspective on the bias, rather their opinion on the truth).

6. International Media Convention
Project aim
To bring together members of the media from around the world, allowing them to share their technical expertise and cultural experience, and later bring them back to their home country.

Project target
All members of the media around the world.

Method
Organized by the United Nations and the Alliance of Civilizations High-Level Group. Should be televised and highly publicized. All necessary local and regional preparatory conferences will also be organized by the same group.

Education

Education is the basic tool to achieve a multicultural and tolerant society. Educating people with common and universal values makes a mutual understanding between civilizations possible. In order to achieve these goals, cooperation between the states, institutions, international organizations, NGOs, teachers and professors is necessary.

As measures to achieve a quality education at a global level, we propose states to,

1. Recognize UNESCO as main reference for the promotion of education at an international level.

2. Design a core subject or class on cultures of the world with a special emphasis on different religions, thought in primary and secondary schools in order to achieve the goal of an education based on diversity

3. Educate teachers and professors according to the UNESCO guidelines providing them with a solid and fundamental knowledge for the correct implementation of the subject on cultures of the world

4. Promote exchange programs among students within Mediterranean countries hoping to extend these programs to other countries around the world to help students obtain a non formal education on other cultures and ways of life.

5. Give financial aid to NGOs, groups, associations and youth movements involved in multicultural education and promote social pedagogic policies.

6. Offer education to make immigrant’s integration possible, giving them access to the language of the host country by providing free, obligatory language courses for children as well as adults, in order to eliminate the language barrier that may exist.

7. Invest in infrastructure: appropriate transportation, building schools where necessary with adequate facilities.

The role of the institutions would be:

8. Collaborating with State governments in order to help families to understand the importance of receiving an education and give them financial aid to avoid child labour.

9. Advising and supporting State governments to design and implement education policies and encourage them to invest more in education.

10. Cooperating with the States in their Aid programmes to design and implement education policies in underdeveloped countries.
11. Promoting the forgiveness of part of the foreign debt, amount that will be proportional to what was invested in education as to guarantee a primary education.

Furthermore, we propose:

12. Freedom of movements that allows for instance informal relationships, intercultural trade, inter-racial and intercultural marriage, as a way of achieving non formal intercultural education.

13. Interfaith conferences could be held by religious leaders in order to assure a correct, accurate and respectful dialogue among them.

14. Promotion of critical-thinking in school

15. Taking into account the differences in levels of education, we should try to adjust the existing resources (Media, Internet,...) to them.

Gender Equality

1. Introduction

Seizing the opportunity of the gathered expertise within the Alliance, following the example set by the UN in diversity of cultures, religions, and proclaiming the policy of gender equality, we suggest the creation of a permanent Working Group within the Alliance of Civilizations improving and promoting gender equality. This group will consist of members from various fields of expertise. The goal is to use the intercultural knowledge to empower gender equality tackled at a regional level, by cooperating with existing UN-agencies, regional NGOs and especially government institutions. Since the High Level Group already has tasks, it would be more effective to have representatives from similarly diverse backgrounds.

2. Structure

Working Group dependant on the Alliance of Civilisation, but at the same time under the auspices of the UN Secretariat.

We suggest selecting 10-15 members from the following areas:

- ILO
- UNIFEM
- UNDP
- UNESCO
- UNICEF
- WHO
- a maximum of nine experts selected by the High Level Group, reflecting the religious, social, cultural and geographic diversity. These specialists, internationally recognized and respected for their expertise, should have insight into the civil society and at the same time have the ability to interact with local governments

3. Tasks
3.1 General

- the working group will gather and evaluate existing projects and form a publically available database whilst keeping in mind how social, cultural or religious approaches can contribute and strengthen the efforts being made by existing projects.

- local organisations, sensing a threat to gender equality or following an individual complaint can report this situation to the working group. In adequate response to situation the group analyses the report and if needed coordinate and/or take local action.

- the working group, staying in touch with the local authorities, the local groups and the civil society, will monitor the evolution within the field and when needed they will undertake action in the region.

3.2 Local

- Stressing the need of keeping the dialogue with local groups, the working group will start awareness programs to inform locals of their gender rights and/or support local initiatives.

- The working group will send out experts to different regions to tackle local challenges and put up lasting local programs. In fulfillment of this task the group will take inspiration from the database.

- If the local legal system is not in accordance with the gender equality principles and the authorities wish to overcome this, the working group can select an ad hoc commission of legal advisors to assist the local legislators in adapting their laws.

3.3 Annual report

The working group will present an annual report of the undertaken action and submit this to the Alliance of Civilizations, the Human Rights Council and the organisations linked with gender equality and women rights.

4. Family Friendly Labour Law

- Firstly with reference to the spirit of gender equality, both men and women should have the fundamental access to work.

As a consequence there should be sufficient child care facilities, and

- Secondly, they should be able to enjoy both career and family life,

Therefore alternative form of working should be offered and promoted such as: part time working, job sharing, flexible work time, maternity and paternity leave, family leave, working from home and other suitable mechanism.

- Countries that wish to adapt their legislation in that sense can report this to the working group, who can then give advice or send an ad hoc commission of legal advisors to that country.

5. Family Friendly Politics

Gender equality can only be achieved if politics are gender equal. In order to create a
balance between the genders, women must be encouraged and given the possibility to let their voices be heard in politics.

Politics in general must be more family friendly so that both men and women can combine political career with family life.

Countries that wish to adapt their legislation in that sense can report this to the working group, who as a consequence can give advice or send an ad hoc commission of legal advisors to that country.

6. Funds

The working group and its projects will be funded and supported by the sponsors of the Alliance and with the support and the cooperation of the Friends of the Alliance of Civilisations. We also suggest that the afore mentioned UN-actors who are delegating the experts contribute in the most suitable way.

Immigration

Fundamental: Respect for human rights and the constitution of the host country.

Projects:

1. Culture classes:
Organized and planned by the UNESCO, approved by the High Level Group Interfaith Councils and projects such as mentioned in the Report on Education submitted by the High Level Group (National Coalition on Asia and International Education in the Schools or the Information Network on Education in Europe)

Curriculum:

Elementary school:
- culture
- special focus on the religions of immigrants and neighboring countries + discussion of Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism
- religious calendar

Highschool:
- politics class: introduction to different political systems with special focus on the role of religion

Requirements for teachers:
- teachers should NOT be religion teachers, establish a new culture training to be offered as subject for studying teachers

2. Language courses

- free and accessible for all, with special emphasis on the attendance of women
- mandatory with link to social welfare
3. Creation of a Permanent Working Group on Cultural Education
- build a network of highschool partnerships to promote cultural exchange
- organization of international AoC conferences for highschool-students
- to organize a pool of experts from politics, economics, the media and the youth willing to attend annual conferences or schools as guest speakers
- set standards for teachers of culture classes

4. “Global contest on Dialogue of Civilizations” for school classes (age group 14-16)
- winners chosen by the permanent working group on cultural education
- prizes are trips to a country of another civilization

5. International Fund for the Alliance of Civilizations
Recognizes the Dialogue between Civilizations as a global necessity in the thrive for peace and global stability.
- IMF, World Bank
- NGOs
- UN member states
- religious institutions

6. Religious Dialogue between immigrant populations and host country populations

Country based Religious Dialogue:

- cooperation-projects for dialogue organized by religious institutions
  - day of the open mosque
  - day of the open synagogue...
- religious services in the host countries’ language
- recognition of religious holidays of all sufficiently represented religions
- political dialogue with religious leaders
- cultures day > national holiday
- Youth Day of the AoC every two years (like the World Youth Day, Cologne) with the first host country being African
  - for three months a book will be carried around the world and ideas and hopes will be written inside (Olympic torch idea)
  - this will be accompanied by a tour of concerts and events to reach the youth
“The only security of all is in a free press. The force of public opinion cannot be resisted when permitted freely to be expressed. The agitation it produces must be submitted to. It is necessary to keep the waters pure.”

Freedom of expression regardless of race, gender, and religious background is an indispensable element of true democracy. Any kind of intervention into the media, particularly by the governments and corporations with financial interests, is against this very principle. Nevertheless, media, as a powerful actor with a strong influence over the masses, has the responsibility to respect cultural differences, human life, dignity, and other fundamental human rights. In addition to promotion of cultural understanding, media, as de facto the fourth branch of power in a democracy has vast influence over human security.

The above-mentioned unique power brings an unequivocal responsibility; the duty to empower people by informing them. This responsibility is not recognized by a vast number of media organizations as they provide the public with a pre-constructed opinion. On the other hand, citizens have the duty to fully participate in the democratic process and for this they require neutral, fact based, and free from manipulation information.

Participation of individuals in the democratic process is hindered by their ignorance and prejudice. Further alienation caused by biased media intensifies these obstacles to mutual understanding. Given that our societies are even more pluralistic than ever, a similar approach by the media is necessary. Media should be accountable for portraying these diverse and pluralistic points of view. Planting seeds of hatred into the hearts of individuals cannot be justified. Giving a voice to those whose views and circumstances are not usually under the spotlight will contribute vastly to cultural understanding. These notions are rooted in the concept of universal values that are shared by all human beings. A threshold of ethics is essential for the promotion of common values designated to protect human life and dignity. These values to be set by all of the parties involved should apply to all means of communication, including the internet.

Reports by Non-Governmental Organizations such as Reporters Without Borders stating that a large number of journalists being subject to aggression by governments and other non-state agents are worrying. Security of media actors has to be guaranteed whether it be a direct attack on journalists or the hindrance of corporations due to

---

1 Thomas Jefferson, 1823.
commercial interests. All parties must pay additional attention to protection of journalists and media corporations for the sake of democracy. This, nonetheless, does not suggest direct or indirect regulation of media by the government in form of censorship.

We recommend that journalists, representatives of parliaments and media corporations, and civil society are brought together in an international setting in form of an annual conference. This step towards mutual understanding and elimination of ungrounded prejudices should take place through the exchange of people, ideas, and experiences. Furthermore, as customers are the final decision makers in the market, their attention should be brought on this matter by making the direct and indirect consequences of their actions more visible to them. For this, we suggest that this annual conference awards and certifies responsible sources of media that fit the above-mentioned definition, both at national and international level.

We recognize the challenge of defining and shaping intangible notions like accountability, ethics, and values. Nevertheless, we believe that the unprecedented capacity we have in 21st century should be able to empower us to deal with these cognitive concepts in a way that does not undermine the cultural differences while promoting cultural understanding. This, we further acknowledge, is what we the privileged owe to humanity.
Gender

The gender committee of the CMUN East-West Dialogue 2007 commenced their discussions by debating the definition of gender. It was agreed that sex relates to biological stratification of men and women. Gender, however, encompasses a broader definition including men and women, sexuality, those identified as transgender. The social and psychological construction of identities are considered important influences in conceptions of gender.

Gender is often considered from a Western perspective based on Western norms and values. As the title of this conference is the East-West Dialogue, our goal was to consider gender from a cross-cultural and global perspective. It can be said that no knowledge is inferior knowledge as knowledge is validated in relation to truth. Whilst dominant western perspectives may claim to hold the truth, people’s conceptions of truth differ in a variety of contexts. Accordingly, in the discussion of women waging war for peace and sustainable development, the committee agrees that East and West must work in partnership and make every effort to understand each others beliefs.

Upon reviewing the UN Security Council resolution 1325/2000 on women and conflict it was recognized that such documents are vital in order to clarify the issues facing women in conflict. It was concluded however that there was no distinction between East and West, no mention of society’s impact on gender construction, no mention of youth, and no mention of media or religion. The committee advocate for all literature, resolutions and legislation to be fully inclusive on minorities within women, including youth. We further advocate for the documentation of influential forces around women and conflict including concrete solutions. This paper will summarize the lengthy debates that were covered over the course of the meeting:

1. Peacekeeping forces

We agreed that there needs to be monitoring of instability in order to prevent conflict. While people from developing countries are involved in UN peacekeeping forces, too often men occupy positions in the field while women are limited to administrative roles. We suggested that existing peacekeeping forces in Western and Eastern countries should be utilized to train new in-country women’s peacekeeping teams who understand their own internal challenges.
The committee also felt that specific units within peacekeeping forces need to address youth. Adolescence is arguably the most challenging social, psychological and biological period in a woman’s life due the array of rapid changes taking place. Whilst living through conflict is horrifying in all situations, the dual challenges faced by youth during this time should be considered within peace keeping forces.

2. Tokenism and women’s representation

We discussed the topic of tokenism and the danger of women’s representation being purely as a façade rather than meaningful participation. The gender committee advocates for greater representation of women and youth in a range of institutions including political, legal, and non-governmental. The issue of quotas and positive discrimination were concluded as being effective and necessary but as short-term solutions.

There was mutual consensus that identifying groups as minorities through positive discrimination can further emphasize their vulnerable position in society. Long-term solutions around participation need to challenge the broader causes in society that are responsible for women’s limited representation such as the historical dominance of men in legal and political institutions.

3. Economic empowerment

Women in post-war environments, where men may be lost to conflict, do not have the support networks they once had. This is especially the case where women may have relied on male partners for financial support. In order to enable women’s independence it is necessary to equip them with economic bargaining power.

Traditional hierarchies that typically place men as breadwinners need to be challenged. This can start from simple empowerment projects such as profit-making arts and crafts projects. Such enterprises can be supported by NGOs working within societies undergoing the process of post-conflict reconstruction. The importance of micro credit and long-term low-interest loans was pointed to as a viable resource. The current fashion of corporate social responsibility can be used to the advantage of supporting such schemes. We also pointed to the further inclusion of women in existing fair-trade campaigns.

Realistic projects were called for that utilize existing resources and networks. Simple ideas such as providing raw foods can be used for women to cook and sell. Such simple actions still have the potential to provide women with economic independence which is often a prerequisite to empowerment. Many NGO’s working in post conflict reconstruction offer aid packages. We argue that aid needs to focus on sustainable development and consult women in order to provide aid that is relevant and has the potential to create a lasting impact.

4. Millennium Development Goals (MDG´s)

It was agreed that the Millennium Development Goals offer many viable suggestions relating to women’s vital role in the world in the domain of development.
The committee felt that 2015 was an unrealistic deadline to achieve all the goals. However, due to the MDG’s vital recognition of women we argue that they should be given time to succeed and forces such as the media could be influential in promoting the goals and renewing enthusiasm.

5. **Exchanges in East-West knowledge:**

   Debates around East and West often include phrases such as ‘us and them’ or ‘here and there’. Just as in gender we need to include both men an women, transgender and different sexualities, in East and West we need to consider both perspectives. Consultations with individuals and women’s groups in the West should be carried out in order to assess how women in the West have coped in various conflicts and what advice they may be able to offer for supporting women in the East.

   Eastern countries are often looked to in discussion of conflict. However, within the West there have been numerous divisions including the Northern Ireland conflict, the Basque separatist movement and the Holocaust in Germany. Also, the West has suffered natural disasters including hurricane Katrina in the U.S.A., severe water bans in Australia and devastations such as 9 11. It can be argued that these do not compare to cases such as genocide in Rwanda or civil in East Timor due to the resources and infrastructure that Western countries can utilize in reconstruction. However, we should not underestimate both the trauma and strength of women in the West who have experienced conflict.

   NGO’s that wish to develop gender specific support post conflict should carry out wide spread consultations with women in both the East and West in order to inform effective strategies.

6. **Conflict and civil war:**

   Female child soldiers:

   On the topic of child soldiers, we discussed the synonomous image of the black African boy holding an AK47 gun as the dominant image of child soldiers. Child soldiers however do not just affect one continent, colour, sex or gender. Girls are also child soldiers and are often abducted and forced into sexual acts. The committee commented that in order for action to be taken and support given to female child soldiers, the facts of this issue need to be known.

   We discussed the effective broadcast abilities of new media such as the internet but concluded that if media is going to be an effective tool in awareness raising there needs to be a specific audience in mind. Youth for example regularly access blog sites and online video sites such as You tube and facebook. Whilst such mediums would be effective for rallying youth into the cause of female child soldiers, they also open up the possibilities for distortion.

   The committee suggested that an award should be created that recognizes the effort of youth, specifically women, in documenting conflicts such as the issue of female child soldiers. The award would offer an incentive for eager young reporters to become involved in important matters of human rights and equality and offer empowerment to women through the recognition of their professional talent.
Refugee camps:

The committee discussed the situation of women in refugee camps. We agreed upon the value of peer support and concluded that it is essential to focus on rebuilding lives even under such destitute conditions as refugee camps or other temporary living arrangements for displaced peoples. Whilst we recognize that women in refugee camps will have immediate concerns such as relocating family and securing food, we highlight the value of a long term based approach.

It was decided that simple support networks could be initiated by the organizations or individuals running the camps. Such activities could include a discussion or story telling group, an activity group such as dance or a skills group such as learning how to support one another. Through these peer support networks it was felt that women would feel more empowered to cope with their situation and also gradually gain the inspiration to realize there is the possibility of a new life after conflict.

We focused on the importance of local women sharing knowledge as counselors working in camps on issues such as post traumatic stress disorder may not understand how it feels or what the full effects and coping mechanisms have been during conflict. Furthermore, research by the likes of Dr. Catherine Campbell based at the London School of Economics in the UK points to the fact that women who are part of a group such as one focused on sport or religion are more likely to discuss topics such as safe sex. The impact in this scenario for example can lead to more negotiation of condom use through the increased sense of self worth which hence results in a reduction in HIV infection among women.

This point is particularly important given the fact that rape is often used as a tool in warfare. Not only can it physically attack women through the spreading of sexually transmitted infections such as HIV, but it can also result in social and psychological trauma, and family breakdown where the male partner leaves the wife due to her rape. Such actions are completely unjust hence the need to encourage supportive women’s networks in order to encourage the strength to resist such crippling social practices.

Action:

Whilst theories exist to justify and support ideas, practical action is necessary for any changes to be realized. It is argued that youth contribute valuable insights into decision and policy making at all levels due to their innovation and creative solutions. We would therefore like to summarize one of the gender committees innovative exercises. The group was asked what they would do if they were given one million pounds towards the goal of supporting women in the area of peace and war. The suggestions were as follows:

- To create more fee free girls schools in developing and war torn countries. Within the schools provide training women in leadership skills.
- Create specific training programs for women and political leadership
• Invest in more media campaigns to raise awareness of gender inequality, and in the context of this conference to focus specifically around women’s involvement in peace and war
• Provide more women with microcredit loans
• To fund a research study which combines a range of existing studies, especially impact case studies in order to produce compact data and recommendations on the subject of women in peace and war
• Invest in conflict prevention programs including HIV prevention programs
• Build women staffed and women only hospitals
• Buy a helicopter to airlift peacekeepers in the hope that more women would be interested in the field of peacekeeping if they had an increased sense of security

Conclusion

In summary, the group decided that overall the main issues that hindered women’s full participation in peacekeeping were representation, prejudice, education and equal access to resources. Whilst this paper in not comprehensive in topics covered or solutions, we hope that the alliance of civilizations will consider the viewpoint of the voice of the young women and men who have contributed. Ultimately, the group feels that the impact of society on the construction of norms has an infinite impact upon the real and psychological restrictions on women’s participation in peacekeeping and conflict resolution.

We advocate for the sharing of experiences of women and men in Eastern and Western countries in order to learn from one another and also to challenge the fear of the unknown which so often leads to ignorance and prejudice. We feel it is vital to include men in the in the process of achieving women’s rights as undermining existing power sources and hierarchies is unlikely to achieve lasting change or equality. Furthermore, minorities among women such as youth, children, the elderly, women living with disabilities, transgenders, lesbians and bi-sexuals, minority ethnic groups and other vulnerable groups need to be considered.
II C’MUN SPECIAL MEETING: Human Security

Environment

• Introduction:

The 2007 ANUE Special Session had as its theme Human Security. When one discusses Human Security many thing come to mind such as land mines, human rights, small arms and development. The relationship between the environment and human security one that is easily and therefore often overlooked, while Mother Nature has proven to be very effective in compromising security of human beings.

In 1994 the UNDP argued that the definition of Human Security had to be expanded to included seven main areas, one of which was Environment Security. Environmental Security aims to protect people from short and long term effects from nature, man-made threats in nature and the deterioration of the natural environment.

The Committee decided that due to the vastness of the topic, to focus on the energy problem, several man made natural disasters or has been claimed as such and a discussion about why current measures are not working or why new solutions are not effective or implemented at all.

• Consequences of Human Behavior in the Environment:

Our ecosystem is a very fragile combination and even slight changes can have devastating consequences. In some cases it is clear that human beings are responsible for this change, in other cases it is uncertain to what extent we contributed to the problem and there are also cases where human beings have no blame or responsibility at all. Whatever the case may be, humans will feel the effects of the changing climate.

Deforestation is the conversion of forested areas to non-forest land for use such as arable land, pasture, urban use, logged area, or wasteland. There are several causes for deforestation such as wildfires, slash and burn methods to clear sections of wood or urban development. This results in a decline of natural habitat, biodiversity, availability of wood and in overall quality of life.

Deforestation affects the amount of water in the soil and in the atmosphere. This can affect whole areas where ground water is running off much faster than surface water does. It also affects water evaporation in an area, which makes the air much dryer and...
decreases the chance of rainfall in whole regions because the water is not recycled by the forest but is transported directly to the ocean.

**Desertification** is the degradation of the soil from a humid to a dry and arid land. Human beings are primarily responsible for this by several activities such as deforestation, overgrazing and depleting of the soil due to agriculture. A major impact is the loss of biodiversity and also the loss of productive capacity of the soil to sustain life.

Desertification is observed in the United States, Madagascar (where almost 7% of the total landmass has become barren land), but also even in the interior right here in Spain. In Nigeria, the current trend is that desertification overtakes about 1350 square miles per year. In a country with over a 135 million people and a population broth rate of about 2.3 percent, the changing climate will have devastating consequences.

**Global Dimming** is another trend that can trigger climate change. Global dimming is the gradual reduction of intensity of the sunlight radiation due to several particles in the air such as sulfur aerosols. In the last decades, an average worldwide decrease of 4% has been measured. This dimming actually ‘cools’ down the planet, which in its turn might have masked the effects of global warming to some extent.

**Global Warming** is the best known consequence of climate change and is the most discussed topic at the moment. Global Warming is the rising of the average temperature of the near surface air and the world’s oceans. Responsible for this effect is most likely the increased concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere due to human activities. Consequences of this could be that due to the rising of the temperature that the polar caps will melt which will result in a rise of the sea level. The change of temperature in the atmosphere can result in more frequent and harder storms and shifts of climate zones.

**Consequences Climate Change for Human Security:**

As is the case with many man made climate threats, Short term benefits are often preferred over long term benefits.

The rising sea level will pose a serious threat to many small island states. But the problem is much larger, over 500 million people live within 30 feet over sea-level and about 2/3 of the cities with more than five million inhabitants fall within the same category. If these islands and cities are flooded, a massive exodus can be expected. Over 500 million people will need help and the economical damage of the destruction of capital when considering that some of the most important cities in the world are build next to the ocean. New York City, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Singapore are among them.

Deforestation and desertification will have the same consequences. A growing portion of the land will not be able to sustain human activities, thus forcing the inhabitants of those lands to migrate to other places. Less land will be available for human activities, such as urban development and agriculture, while this land has to sustain more inhabitants.

These developments will increase human migration. Less land will be available while the human population continues to grow. Migration already causes many
difficulties nowadays, hatred and violence against the newcomers due to perceived negative consequences. It is very likely that such difficulties will only increase with larger refugee streams.

Climate changes will greatly increase the vulnerability of the poorest to natural disasters, imperil food and water security, enhancing the vulnerability to their livelihoods. Projected climate changes during the 21st century will likely increase the north-south divide by worsening poverty in developing countries. The adverse impacts of climate change will be most striking in the developing nations because of their geographical and climatic conditions, a high dependency on natural resources, and lack of resources to adapt to a changing climate.

- **Measures to deal with climate change**

  The committee highlighted several measures that are already in existence. They can be categorized as measures to stop the climate change and measures to cope with the changing climate. An example is the cooperation on the field of environmental friendly production methods and sharing these with developing countries and especially those with those countries that are likely to have a big impact on the world climate in the near future such as China, India and Brazil.

  More important are future solutions to these problems. The committee decided not so much to look for specific solutions but analyze what the economic and political constraints are on any measure taken. Any measure taken must be a worldwide effort, anything voluntary will increase the chance of free riders who continue their own way while benefiting of the good behavior of others. As long as there is a possibility that states or companies will lose their competitive advantage to agencies who do not pledge to a better climate taking effective measures will be impossible. This is perhaps the most difficult dilemma that many states are facing. Sanctions or other forms of punishment for non cooperation must be considered.

  Although the environment is the most global issue of all, the solutions will probably be very local. Many solutions that are already in existence only work under specific circumstances: for solar energy one need enough days with sunshine and wind energy is usually only possible near the coast. The human being excels in adapting to new situations, this time we will have to adapt to changing consumptions patterns and available goods. Fossil fuels are running out and we will probably not be able to sustain our current level of consumption for very long without the ever scarser resources. Changes will be made and changes can sometimes hurt. It requires awareness of the situation and the acting to solve it.
II C’MUN SPECIAL MEETING: Human Security

Disarmament

As arms are meant to hurt and kill, as well as threatening Human Security, they contradict the principle of life promoted by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That is why we understand human security through disarmament and through the development of a culture of peace. Disarmament could be the act of reducing or depriving totally of arms – if we consider arms are useless for human security but also, to a lesser extent, it can be understood as “arms control” – if we think that no one will want to be totally unprotected.

As disarmament in the context of Human security should not only tackle with Nuclear, we have agreed upon enlarging the debate from Weapons of Mass Destruction to light arms which are today, the cause of the majority of death, affecting the most civilians. We should also consider that the arm trade is not only about arms but rather about business and that they are strong economic interests behind.

In order to decrease considerably the production of arms, on one hand, we encourage our governments to gather and to build together a Treaty to lower their military budget and instead, invest in development, education, health and technology. On the other hand, we would suggest to make it more difficult to obtain arms by increasing the price, reducing its accessibility and blocking the access of it to countries where Human Rights are not respected.

This could only be feasible if we integrate, along with the UN, governments and NGOs, arm and technologies companies in the process. Arm producing firms have to bear in mind that they have an important role to play in the establishment of a world of peace. Consequently they might find the benefice of adding a corporate dimension of social responsibility to develop peace keeping and building project, if they build strategic alliances investing in alternative activities (such as the Internet in the 60s) when conflicts might be avoided in the future and countries in conflict could come back to a situation of peace.

Considering the level of violence in our societies, such as terrorism acts, blasts, guerrillas, civil wars, we would like to condemn the illegal arms trade taking first action on the legal ones. To do so, we propose to create an International Commission that would have the mandate to control, regulate and monitor the international arms trade of small and light weapons, under the auspices of UN and OIT regulations on the matter bearing in mind states’ sovereignty. The Organization will be responsible for creating the necessary institutional environment to implement the following:
- a better system of seller-buyer certificate regarding small and light weapons;
- a UN Fund to deal with improving borders control even more in conflict or post-conflict regions.

Despite all the actions taken by the UN and NGOs, to remove and increase people awareness regarding landmines, we are deeply concerned by the fact that they are still provoking innocent victims. Therefore, we encourage the Security Council and the General Assembly to reinforce the cooperation between countries to continue the process of removing landmines meanwhile urging the non ratifying and not obeying countries to respect the existing Treaty of Ottawa1.

Taking into account the rise of Nuclear, biological and chemical, arms that threat and might attempt against civilians, we want to stress the importance of respecting non proliferation treaty2 in order to increase human security.

At the moment the only international organization capable of dealing with the disarmament issue is UN. Though, the last conflicts show its incapacity for taking bending solutions into action. A faster organization is required. The first step should be based on the communication aspect, implementing an efficient network to prevent terrorism and develop arm controls throughout the world like Europol. Following this example, the UN might require the creation of a specialized department for today's threat such as illegal trade and terrorism. The second step could also be to encourage the decentralization of the organization into smaller groups to tackle with more flexibility regional problems, making pressure to the rest of the international community.

Finally, we all agreed that in a post conflict situation, a committee can gather to build a relevant strategic plan for a program based on the “Food 4 Guns3” project initiated in Brazil and reproduced in Afghanistan between 1999 and 2002. Though the answer might not be only to provide food but maybe combine it with social services, collaboration, health care, economic and technical helps according to the region and the background.

During the last centuries, people have been used to violence through conflicts, civil wars or even through the channels of Media, making it part of their lives no matter where they are. It’s difficult to imagine a world without wars, landmines, guns, soldiers; even the word PEACE has somehow lost its power and credibility.

In the light of the good examples that already exist, we still believe in the Union of the Nations regarding Human security. For this purpose, disarmament has an essential role.

---

1 http://www.icbl.org/treaty
2 http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Infcircs/Others/infcirc140.pdf
3 http://meltguns.com/pages/afghan.html
Introduction

“If one day China should change her color and turn into a superpower, if she too should play the tyrant in the world, and everywhere subject others to her bullying, aggression and exploitation, the people of the world should identify her as social-imperialism, expose it, oppose it and work together with the Chinese people to overthrow it.”

Deng Xiaoping
Speech in the General Assembly of the United Nations - 1974

Over the past three days, the youth from different cultures, from the east and from the west, have been discussing what the rise of China and India will mean for the world. Our voice, the voice of youth, is extremely important for this topic. Our generation is going to be the one that’s going to experience the emergence of these two countries in international affairs. That’s why our voice HAS to be heard. Can we accept that China and India violate human rights systematically? Do we even share common human rights or does the western vision of human rights differ from the eastern view? What is the role of women in these two countries? Are their rights respected? And how about the role of international companies, what is their role in the violation of human rights in these countries?

What are Human Rights? Are they Universal?

They only thing we agree on regarding the definition of human rights is that they relate to humans. While some believe that human rights are universal, others believe that the notion of human rights changes with location, culture and time.

The universalist point of view denies the idea that human rights may differ from East to West. This is why they expect the developed world to act responsibly - to promote and implement human rights in the rest of the world.

Cultural relativists emphasize the influence of cultural, geographical and historical background. Therefore they think it is wrong to impose human rights as seen by the West under the pretext of universality.
Are Human Rights universal? – The question of Asian values

What is the link between Human Rights and Culture? How does one affect the other? Every culture brings along values. In the era of globalization and various migration processes it sometimes happens that the values of a particular culture do not correspond to the notion of Human Rights, as stated in the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

Taking the example of China, the perception of the women’s role within the family and within the society differs significantly from the western point of view. On the other hand, there is a common feeling that the west is slowly forgetting the importance of the family, while in China, family is still the sociological core of the society.

And now taking the example of India. The cast system is widely accepted as the natural way of structuring the society. But the western countries believe that this structure is inherently discriminatory. On the other hand, the high level of integration of several worldwide religions into a democratic society, could be used as an example for numerous european countries.

The aforementioned examples highlight the importance of understanding and consideration of the link between culture and human rights, especially within the East-West dialogue.

The first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that all HR are „universal, individual and interdependant“. But what happens in practice? Take the example of torture, freedom of religion, or freedom of expression. How do we overcome the problems of semantic inconclusiveness, lack of definitions of international legal concepts, or the extent of the obligation to respect these concepts?

The concept of human rights is without a doubt embedded in one’s culture. If we agree that no culture has precedence over another than the idea of imposing the concept of human rights from West to East or vice versa becomes a futile debate. So what are the grounds on which this exchange could take place?

One of the concepts that the West has been most criticized for is the concept of exporting its human rights, its values and perceptions of what is right and wrong. On the other hand, China and India do not tend to make their concepts of human rights into categorical imperatives that should be universally applicable. Instead, they represent an example of respecting the right of each culture to decide what their particular set of human rights should be.

In this regard, we would like to point to values that are deep-rooted in the Indian and Chinese society such as collective identity, respect for their elders as a base for the family and consequently the entire society, and in India in particular, the respect for religious diversity. What we think the other cultures could do is to learn and reflect upon whether these values could bring improvements into their own societies. How would the European communities react if someone tried to impose one-child policy
into their legislation? How would we react to the imposition of dowry? So why does the West expect the East to react any different?

To conclude, what we believe is that rather than debating about importing or exporting values, we should talk about what we can learn from the Other (in our case, China and India).

From our perspective the West could learn precisely from their belief in not making the concept of human rights into a universal concept free from culture, tradition, and context.

**China and India’s role in International Relations and its implications on HR**

China and India have become important actors in the international community. Their economic power has increased during the past decades. The growth of China in international relations has become a deep concern for the international community due especially to the systematic violation of human rights that China commits both on its territory as abroad. A clear example can be provided by their practice in Africa. For instance, in Ghana, while creating new infrastructures they’re not in fact promoting the creation of employment. This is due to the fact that Chinese workers are the ones used as labour force. Labour conditions are not respected both in China and India. Taking in consideration this aspect, can you imagine what sort of effect can their labour policies have in African countries? In April of 2005 the explosion of a coal mine in Zambia killed at least 50 people. The coal mine was property of two Chinese men. They both were accused of ignoring basic security rules. This is a clear example of how China is not taking into account the rights of workers in Africa. So we should ask ourselves, what is more important development or the respect of human rights? This is a controversial issue. In one side we cannot deny China is having some good influence in Africa, for example in Congo. China is providing a lot of assistance in the construction of school, roads, housings and other infrastructures.

So, should China be sanctioned for their actions? At first sight this can be an easy solution, but we strongly believe this is not the way of approaching this problem. If we impose sanctions the repercussion of these measures will affect the civil society, which is not the aim of sanctioning. From our point of view the best way of solving this problem is by changing the actual model of the IMF and the WTO, ILO so that they can be more influential. Adapting their functions and structure can make their decisions be more effective.

To sum up, we would like to point out that the issue of respecting HR in China and India cannot be overlooked

**Gender and Human Rights**

The Human Rights group of the ANUE East-West dialogue chose to focus on gender issues in India and China. In specific we discussed the rights of women and the challenges and problems they face. The group conducted role-plays of both feminist activists and government representatives. There was awareness that we had to be cautious when analysing these issues in order to be sensitive towards the cultural values of these women. We will present our debate in the format of the feminist
versus the government perspectives and summarize with the opinions of individuals within the group.

The grievances of the Chinese feminist were: female infanticide; the lack of female representation in high level public and private sector positions; penalizing individual sex workers rather than trafficking organizations and the maltreatment of ethnic minorities. The feminists advocate that international legislation should be implemented into Chinese law in order to provide legal protection for women. We also advocate for the Chinese government to raise the profile of women in society and provide more support for victims of abuse. In response the Chinese government argues that they are reducing female infanticide through the allowance of women to have two children and their creation of state adoption programmes. Women account for around ten per cent of positions in government and there is an association for children and families which deals with related issues.

The discrepancies of the Indian feminist group include: female infanticide causing in part the high ratio of men to women in the population; the lack of support and provisions for single mothers; female children ‘sold’ for marriage; the lack of legal definition for human trafficking thereby increasing the vulnerability of women forced into this trade; stereotyping and inequality of women including school texts used in the national curriculum. The government responded that a constitutional amendment reserves one third of seats elected in local bodies for women; creation of job quotas for women guaranteeing them one hundred days of work especially for women of castes and tribes; India has achieved the MDG goal five of improving child mortality which indicates the improvement in the position of the female child. This exercise highlights the gap in achievement towards improving women’s rights from the viewpoint of civil society versus government.

Role of Corporates and Multinational Organizations

The Human Rights group of the ANUE East-West dialogue also investigated the conflicting situation between Human Rights activists and multi-national corporations.

Group divided in to two, each representing the general attitude of the roles. The Human Rights activists feel that the main motive of multinational companies is profit without respect for working conditions. However, any corporation has a responsibility to safeguard the rights safety of employees. In particular, we are disgraced with: low salaries; long working hours; child labour and poor health and safety guarantees. We propose that workers in China and India are guaranteed comparable treatment as employees in the corporations home countries.

We advocate to companies to consider that human rights and ethical standards create a consumer friendly image of the company thereby increasing sales. Companies should ensure that development of their business and local infrastructure should be parallel to upholding human rights. CEO’s of the accused multinational companies in India and China point out to the Human Rights activists have not considered the situation in reality. The working conditions we provide meet local standards and furthermore ensure productivity. Also almost every multinational cooperation has its own CSR policy, which are there to ensure workers’ rights. A local case study from a young worker in China demonstrates that the salaries and opportunities brought to the
area by our companies improve the economic conditions of workers’ families dramatically. Our corporations work in the natural economic cycle of supply and demand. Therefore, if wages are increased above local standard, the price of the products would also need to increase to cover these costs. If this were to happen demand would decrease lowering productivity and putting local workers out of job. Companies respect the cultural sovereignty of areas that we work in. Hence we will not attempt to alter local laws and customs.

Our group recommends that influential organisations such as IMF, WTO and ILO help with implementation, monitoring and evaluation of existing corporate social responsibility records. This also includes the promotion of such reputable initiatives as the Global Fund.

**Conclusion**

Is this simply the voice of idealistic youth? Of course not. Are today’s youth tomorrow’s future? Of course not. We feel the responsibility today. States such as China and India shouldn’t focus mainly on economic growth; they have a second responsibility: establishing an environment where its citizens have the opportunity to develop themselves as they choose.

How can we achieve this? Key players: the government.

Bridge between the governments and the citizens: Civil Society. Raising awareness: the responsibility of the media. To strengthen and facilitate this process: the international community.

This is the recipe for an ambition with a conscience.

We must understand that change has to come within these two countries.

Economic growth produces both winners and losers. So how long will the Bread Vs Democracy argument work for China? At some point in the near future, both the winners and losers will demand their freedom.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor to be here and to present our work from the youth session of this year’s East-West Dialogue conference.

We discussed environmental issues and climate change in China and India, but also the impacts on a global level.

India and China are fast growing countries. Not only are they already important players concerning the economy and have considerable power in world politics, but they also have a high impact on the global environment and pollution. China for instance is the second ranking country in terms of levels of contamination of the environment with carbon emissions while India is the fourth. (resource: national paper of Spain, UNDP report 2007/2008).

Examples like climate change in India that caused a dramatic drop in agricultural output or environmental disasters in China like the chemical spill in the Senghua River which affected thousands of people show that the environment is a present challenge. On top, the interdependence between all countries and global actors make this topic a problem that needs a comprehensive solution on a global level. However, regional differences should be considered when thinking about solutions.

What will happen, if we do not take action on time? The Stern report of 2006 demonstrates that we only need to spend 1% of our GDP in order to stop greenhouse gases rising to dangerous levels. If we do not take any actions now, it could cost us up to 20% of world GDP.

At this point, we would like to quote the State of the Future Report 2004 of the Millennium Project: “It becomes increasingly clear that humanity has the resources to address its global challenges. What is less clear is how much wisdom, good will and intelligence will be focused on these challenges.”
Development is a very comprehensive term, it should not only include economic development, but also socio-political and environmental issues. Only a definition like this can contribute to a sustainable development which is crucial for solving the environmental challenge. And the role of India and China for dealing with pending environmental issues should not be underestimated.

However, it is worth mentioning that those two countries are not the only duty bearers. It should be evident that developed countries should set the example. Japan and Russia are ranking fifth and third in terms of carbon emissions and the first place is occupied by the United States of America.

In our discussion, we focused on three aspects that are in our opinion crucial in order to understand and solve the problem: global responsibility, economic development versus environmental protection, and raising awareness among population.

Global Responsibility

The first aspect concerns global responsibility. The environmental problem has already been identified by the UN which led to landmark international agreements like the Framework Convention for Climate Change, the Millennium Declaration, and the Rio Declaration. However, as we can see, there is only limited possibility to enforce those commitments. For example, the targets included in the seventh Millennium Development Goal on environment have not yet been met even in developed areas like Europe and North America. Therefore, in order to overcome the ineffectiveness, environment needs to be accepted as a hard security issue rather than being only a soft security problem. This should entail the inclusion of the topic in the agenda of the Security Council. Furthermore, since a fundamental human right implies living in a secure environment, we believe the UN Human Rights Council should also take up the debate on environment during its sessions.

An example shall support these suggestions: According to Foreign Policy magazine, 20% of the world population lives in China, but they only dispose of 7% of the total water resources. If the country continues to apply the same consumption and pollution patterns, the resources will be depleted within 50 years\(^1\). This challenge can eventually cause instability in the country and pose humanitarian threats.

We would also like to emphasize that mentioned global initiatives need a multi-stakeholder approaches that include not only state actors, but also civil society and the private sector.

Some Chinese companies have made concrete commitments concerning social responsibility and environmental protection through the business platform of Global Compact. However, difficulties are arising because of the inherent structure of the Global Compact which does not lay down a concrete road map towards achieving a sound environmental policy. In addition, there is no serious monitoring and evaluation mechanism nor any possibilities for sanctions, so the solution might lay in the renovation of the Global Compact environmental clauses.

\(^1\) Foreign Policy’China tiene Sed p. 32
China has already taken important steps on a national level towards building technologies for clean, environmentally friendly energy. Information about India’s national strategy to deal with environmental challenges is currently scarce and therefore needs to be elaborated in the future.

**Economic versus environmental development**

The second aspect we have touched upon deals with environmental protection and economic development. Is it possible to have both processes simultaneously?

We believe it is necessary to make a balance between both environmental protection and economic development. In fact, investing in environmental issues is actually a long term decision that is necessary for the economical development in China and India.

In 2006, the Chinese government decided to encourage the renewable energy development and introduced legislation in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In India, several programs were launched in cooperation with the UNDP. For example, the National Watershed Development Project in Rainfed Areas (NWDGRA), under the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture, tries to improve arable lands through better crop management technologies.

As already mentioned, measures taken in order to protect the environment are long-term investments that ensure a sustainable development. In addition, initiatives to encourage research and development of using renewable energies could offer further opportunities by creating new jobs.

**Awareness**

The third aspect of the problem is raising public awareness about environmental issues. This is crucial for the formation of responsible citizens. It is important that people are provided with the necessary information about environment-related activities and projects in their community, eco-friendly products, the environmental policy of the government, and the actions taken by the private sector.

In this context diverse strategies need to be applied to raise the awareness of the different target groups: the youth, the government and the private sector.

Children and youth should be informed about what they can do as responsible citizens for the further protection of the environment. We would like to stress the importance of using creative and interactive methods when addressing a younger audience. In this context it is very important to have capable teachers. Chinese and Indian youth constitute more than 50% of the world youth population, which makes it even more important to reach this target group. There are successfully implemented projects such as the Indian University in Ahmedabad – The Centre for Environmental Education, which has created policies of being self sustainable, living along with the nature and wildlife.
The Chinese and Indian population that is not in the education system anymore can be informed through the media. Campaigns and advertisements concerning environmental issues deserve to be encouraged.

As outlined, the governments of China and India have already started to address environmental issues. Including NGOs as an important partner in reaching sustainability would accelerate the process. These would ensure that environmental goals are mentioned in the governments’ agenda and that the achievement will be taken seriously.

Our third target group, the private sector, could raise not only the awareness among its employees, but also among its consumers and the broader public through their advertisements, corporate culture, etc. It is important that, for instance, Multi National Companies in China and India introduce new energy-efficient projects and technologies.

Last, but not least, we would like to emphasize the inherent value of nature and its leading role in ensuring a stable human development. We believe that acting in accordance with sustainable development principles would ensure equitable sharing for the well-being of future generations.
The Working Group on Migration and Human Rights has framed this complex debate from both a thematic and an institutional perspective. From a thematic point of view, four main issue areas concerning migrants’ Human Rights have been dealt with: refugees and asylum, which refer to the so-called ‘political migrants’, as well as labour, family reunification and housing rights, which concern both ‘political’ and ‘economical’ migrants. From an institutional perspective, the Working Group has focused particularly on all the administrations involved in the translation into regulation and policies of the aforementioned issue areas, from the local to the international level, with a special focus on cooperation at the level of regional international organisations such as the European Union. The Working Group has stressed the fact that the decision to emigrate is a necessary and not a voluntary act in most cases, due to political or economic reasons. Furthermore, the Group recalls Member States of their responsibility to provide services to their populations.

Migration has traditionally been linked to the exercise of sovereignty by States. Hence, on the one hand, migration cooperation in the framework of other institutions like regional international organisations and the United Nations has been scarce. On the other hand, substate entities like regions and local authorities participate also in the regulation and, above all, implementation of migration policies in application of the principle of subsidiarity. An interinstitutional pattern where all levels participate has to be borne in mind in designing any migration policy.

The debate on the thematic areas drew the following conclusions. First, as regarding refugees and asylum, we remind that cooperation under the auspices of the United Nations in the aftermath of the Second World War led to the creation of an international refugee protection regime, being the 1951 Geneva Convention on the
Protection of Refugees and its 1967 adjacent Protocol the cornerstone thereof. The Working Group stresses the value of this international regulation, but also the need to amend it in order to adapt the current regulation to the reality of refugee protection in the XXIst century. In this sense, we urge the signatory parties of the Convention to take into consideration the inclusion as a new category for refugee status of the so-called ‘climate refugees’, i.e., those who flee from their State as a result of climate change. Moreover, further enforceable mechanisms should be developed in order to guarantee the compliance by States of their obligations regarding refugee protection.

Cooperation at the regional level in the field of asylum has been noteworthy in the case of the European Union. Ever since asylum policy was included in the Treaty of Amsterdam as a Community policy, significant steps have been undertaken, although regulation at the EU level is of minimum standards and mainly focused on the redistribution of asylum claims among EU Member States. We therefore recall the EU to set Human Rights of asylum applicants as the main driving force in designing and implementing asylum policy. Despite efforts to enhance Member States cooperation in harmonising the asylum applications procedures, we underline that judicial cooperation in this domain should be further developed. We finally call States to be responsible for the refugees coming from Afghanistan and Iraq as a result of the war conflicts that have taken place on their soil.

Second, concerning labour rights, we encourage States to adopt the International Convention on the Protection of Migrant Workers and their Family Members, as well as the deepening of its vague content, in light of articles 23 and 24 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. At the regional level, we challenge the workability of initiatives such as the launch of circular migration schemes, i.e. the temporary recruitment of foreign workers with the possibility renewal of contracts. As circular migration implies a selective recruitment process according to the economic interests of States, workers’ Human Rights might be undermined. In order to promote the rights of migrant workers at the international level, we propose the reinforcement of the International Labour Organisation since workers are included in its composition. In
doing so, their voice can be not only heard but that they can actively participate in the regulation of labour rights.

Third, the debate on the issue of family reunification has come to a series of recommendations dealing with the scope of family members covered and the definition of family in itself. Concerning the former, the aforementioned International Convention on the Protection of Migrant Workers and their Family Members should enlarge the scope of those eligible for reunification to others than the spouse or children minors of age. We consider this restriction to be a major barrier not reflecting the reality of many migrant families. As regards the latter, we consider that a debate at the international level on the concept of family should be launched, including new kinds of families such as monoparental ones and those based on marriages of the same sex. All those measure should be inspired by article 16 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Lastly, the Working Group is also willing to contribute with some recommendations concerning the right of migrants to housing. This is an issue that concerns the population as a whole, but the migrant community is particularly vulnerable of acts of discrimination in the access to housing. All policies have to be reinforced and cooperation among all levels of administration further enhanced, especially at the local level, the closest to citizens. Despite the non recognition of housing as Human Right with direct and effective implementation in the regulation of most States and its market-oriented nature, equal access to housing has to be provided to all migrants.

To conclude, we highlight on the one hand, that an increase in cooperation at both the international and regional level has to be given an impetus in order to cope with the challenges of migration. An interinstitutional pattern including from the local to the international level has to be fully operational. We recall that unternational cooperation in the field remains very weak due to the reluctance of States to cooperate in a domain closely linked with the exercise of sovereignty. Hence, we call for an enhancement of the International Organisation for Migration which leads to an institution serving exclusively the interests of migrants. On the other hand, we call for the inclusion of
civil society organisations in this reinforced cooperation dynamic. We consider civil society as a key agent in the reception and integration of migrants. Hence, its effective participation should be a priority for the institutional actors involved in migration cooperation.

Since this debate has taken place in the framework of the VI Edition of the East-West Dialogue organised by Casa Àsia, we cannot forget to refer to cooperation among Asian States in the migration field. In this sense, the successful multilateral cooperation under ASEAN can serve as a precedent for further pragmatic cooperation in a continent with permanent migration flows that have been so far exclusively managed by States, regardless of the phase of migration policies, its design or implementation, the full respect for Human Rights should be the driving force underlying any further cooperation in the field. We finish quoting the 2009 Human Development Report, entitled *Overcoming Barriers: human mobility and development*, which illustrated this point stating that any measure concerning the right to mobility “should follow the rule of law and basic rights should be respected”.
MIGRATION AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Introduction

We, as the younger generation, are not bound to policies which we are obliged to represent and therefore we have the possibility to voice opinions and criticism openly. Young people, especially migrants, are often overlooked, as they represent neither a voting force, nor a voice in the working world. We have been given the opportunity to come together in an environment in which we can exchange ideas, aware that despite our diverse backgrounds, we are listened to and asked for our opinions. Such an environment can only be wished for at all levels of social interaction, be it between neighbors, pupils in schools, at the workplace, in our free time, while engaging in leisure activities. While we all take basic human rights for granted, or expect that they are respected and implemented by our governments and societies, the topic of cultural rights is one that has so far been neglected. While a human needs food, water, and shelter to survive physically, we need traditions, identity, and culture to survive as a diverse society. And cultural rights of migrants are often grossly neglected. Following, we shall present basic principles, which we feel are vital in the process of receiving immigrants in a new society. We thereby take a look at both sides – the expectations migrants have as well as the expectations the receiving society lay down. We then focus on the individual, how one can succeed in being perceived as such as opposed to a number or element of the labor force. We then go on to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of local ethnic communities in the new society. Finally, we present how civil society and NGOs can pick up where governments leave off in supporting the process of bringing local societies and immigrants closer, by promoting an active exchange of ideas and dialogues.

The reasons for focusing on the young generation are manifold and we have done so not merely because we belong to that group. On the one hand young migrants are more likely to suffer, they are more vulnerable – often facing exploitation. And those who suffer for example from domestic violence are even less likely to seek help in a strange environment, than they were at home. On the other hand, young migrants, but also the young generation in a receiving society are full of potential regarding an open exchange. As they are often more open and welcoming, young people have the ability to find to one another more easily, focusing on common interests rather than
cultural differences, they also have the means which enable them to do this – making use of the internet for social purposes, meeting in public places to socialize. Young people also have fewer difficulties in learning a new language and can therefore serve as a bridge between the parent generations. During our discussion we will keep this potential in mind.

Principles

Our objective is to

- Promote a positive image of immigrants as individuals, rather than being perceived merely as numbers or a labor force;
- Ensure that while governments should provide immigrants with the possibilities of integrating, it should not be forced upon them, rather it should be up to each individual to decide for themselves whether or to what extent to integrate in the new culture (i.e. by learning the language, interacting with the locals, etc.);
- Elevate the importance of cultural rights, which have so far been neglected in the debate of migration;
- Build vibrant communities with diverse backgrounds in which the diversity is celebrated rather than denied;
- Engage NGOs and civil society in the support of immigrants, to pick up where the government leaves off;
- Ensure that governments make full use of their resources in order to promote local level activities which will further the exchange between immigrant and local communities, at the same time individuals should take the initiative to seek an intercultural-exchange;
- Have media actors reflect on the negative effect inclusion or omission of specific details which help strengthen stigmas can have on the process of bringing immigrant and local cultures closer.

The Individual:

crucial to have agency over their engagement with the new society

While it is essential for receiving governments to actively inform immigrants of their rights and to provide programs which will enable them to integrate in society,
respecting the cultural rights of the immigrants, it is important that such measures are not forced upon the individual, but that the latter must decide for themselves whether and to what extent they are prepared to actively make use of the offer and integrate.

- It is vital for governments to offer accessible language classes. Immigrants must be made aware of their existence, they must be easily accessible, of high quality and their effectiveness assessed regularly.
- Support including translation for dealing with public agency, provided by the government, will help avoid marginalisation of immigrants who might otherwise not approach such institutions.
- Governments can be expected to inform immigrants about what programs are available in order to do this effectively, governments should strategically address spaces which young people occupy.
- Individuals can help the local society to better understand them by celebrating their own culture, for example their gastronomic heritage/national cuisine – by having open feasts/festivals, for example public Ramadan fast-breaking events.
- One of the easiest ways of coming in touch and forming bridges between cultures, are sporting activities.
- While learning the new language is helpful in better understanding the new surrounding, teaching one’s own language in accessible public spaces will allow for interested locals to come in touch with the immigrant culture.
- Immigrants who come with children or who have children in the new society, have a particular responsibility to enable their children to have complete access to the local society.
- Both the local society as well as the individual immigrant must avoid and reject attempts to create sectarian or racial divisions in society.
- The individuals also should make use of the opportunity to participate in civil society institutions and encourage the creation of sections of relevance to them e.g. divisions of labour unions concerned with immigrants of a particular background/skill set or new and unique NGOs to celebrate the contributions of and promote the interests of these individuals.

**Communities: Advantages and Disadvantages**

Existing immigrant communities are often a place of sanctuary for new immigrants. They offer such individuals a feeling of familiarity, often a way of finding access to the local society. How important the contact with such a community for the individual is, can depend on the level of education and the capability of learning a new language. If both prove to be especially difficult, such a community is essential for the individual to
find similar minded people who are empathetic in understanding the challenges one faces in such a situations. Youth communities are often more easily formed, are not limited to ethnic elements, rather youth can form their communities on the one hand by other means than older generations might and they are often more open to engage in diverse surroundings.

The advantages of such immigrant communities are among others:

- Offers a “welcoming” space to new immigrants, a place where they can feel home away from home, a feeling of security, of being understood
- Established immigrants have the capability of supporting new immigrants in finding jobs, orientating themselves in the new surroundings, activities, etc.
- The culture of the country of origin is upheld in these communities, giving immigrants the assurance that their identity, their cultural rights will not be lost.

On the other hand, limiting oneself to such communities can have the following disadvantages:

- The social-economic situation influences the community, which can often lead to a vicious cycle – children from households with low-income levels or only little education can have extreme difficulties in being successful in school, thereby being caught in the spiral of poverty.
- This similarly applies to grown-ups who may have high-skills, yet do not interact with the local society, but limit them to job opportunities within the immigrant community, thereby becoming trapped in a job that is far below their potential.

The key to overcoming the disadvantages of such communities lies in actively interacting with the local society, as is listed under the Individual and Civil Society sections. The two sides coming together to attempt to clarify misunderstandings and promote better understanding.

**Engagement of Civil Society, NGOs, and Media**

While national governments should be expected to invest all the resources that are feasible to promote the basic and cultural rights of immigrants, the possibilities are limited and there are areas where it is up to civil society, NGOs, and the media to take action to promote the aforementioned cultural exchange between immigrant cultures and local culture. These three forces form the bridge between individuals and the government and have the ability to promote a dialogue between these two actors.

- Since immigrants do not represent a voting force and it takes time for them to establish themselves and make their voices heard, it is up to civil society, in the
form of NGOs to give these immigrants a voice, by lobbying at the governmental – local or national level.

- Likewise the media can contribute to giving them a voice, be it by avoiding spreading negative images, or by actively promoting immigrants´ interests.
- Especially the media is the crucial means to change or even shape the perception of the local society, clearly showing that immigrants are individuals, not merely a part of a cheap labor force. At this point there are two different approaches – that of creating a code of conduct to ensure that the media does not distort individual cases, thereby affecting the image of an entire ethnic group. The other approach is to allow for complete freedom of speech to the point where what is published may provoke radical responses, but also a much needed debate.
- Young people are important in the overcoming of cultural barriers, therefore their participation may not be neglected in all three areas mentioned above.
- Civil society can be especially active in schools, where children of all backgrounds come together. Involving parents in such activities is helpful in spreading the intercultural exchange.

**Conclusion**

During our debates there was a common feeling that it is possible to identify with more than one´s country, this applies especially to young people – common interests, values, outlooks on life, facing similar and common challenges. Such factors can bind together. And such aspects go beyond any form of cultural borders. The young generation is optimistic that it is possible to have a healthy and productive intercultural exchange whilst respecting and even valuing each others´ diversity. And there are clearly points on which there will never be a common consent.

Defining cultural rights as such has proven to be very difficult, the topic is broad and subjective, yet everyone feels affected by it. However, the fact that such open, critical, reasoned debate is possible, goes to prove that the goal of governments, immigrants and respective local societies should not be limited to creating a peaceful coexistence, but should go much further. The goal should be a society in which cultural diversity is celebrated not only by the practicing culture, but by the other cultures, in which an active exchange takes place in all facets of life.

It seems as though we are only at the beginning of openly discussing the importance of cultural rights (regarding migration), which represents a first step in the direction of bringing the cultures closer, as youth we feel we are full of potential to continue this dialogue, the framework for which would need to be created.
The gender based violence working group was composed by university students coming from different countries (like Peru, China, Spain, Italy, Armenia, Mexico) with an heterogeneous fund of experiences, social and cultural backgrounds, academic skills and ideas. As a matter of fact, thanks to their enthusiasm, commitment and judgment, we were able to establish not just a challenging debate for us, with interesting inputs and innovative ideas, but we were also able to provide to this dialogue a unique point of view on topic.

In order to better address this broaden and complex issue we recall the appeal of Charlotte Bunch, executive director of the Centre for Women’s Global Leadership, I’m quoting “what we really need is leadership at the highest level of the UN in the form of action to end violence against women, not just another report followed by yet another resolution”.

How to bridge the gap between international legislation aimed at promote human rights and the violences or stigmas which are still present in the society? How to implement UN declarations against human rights violations in a concrete, realistic and feasible way? Those are the main questions that, according to our perception of the problem, need an immediate answer.

The first obstacle that we had to overcome in our debate is the lack of a clear and a comprehensive definition of what it is to be considered a gender based violence. Although we totally understand the benefits of a flexible and broaden definition, we came to the astonishing conclusion that the gender-based violence it is a phenomenon that goes beyond economical disparities, educational levels, personal consciousness and cultural differences or religious beliefs.

Women around the world suffer in the same way and they have the same fears. No matter which country we are studying, breaking the wall of silence of victims and having certainty in the persecution of the culpables remain the pivotal challenge of new generations.

Bearing in mind this premise, we decide to list all the actors that, according to us, should be involved in the debate in order to implement the international legislation and, hopefully, eradicate some practices of gender-based violence; the group suggests to involve: governments, religious authorities as well community authorities, NGOs (such as health care organizations, women and youth movement, trade organization, LGBT organizations and, above all the cultural one); relevant international organizations (like the UN, specific agencies, regional institutions), health professions (especially doctors and
Then we decided to identify possible goals upon which the international community should work in a short period time, for example we have:

- the necessity to promote an active dialogue on the issue in the civil society;
- the protection of women in the labour market, which mean equality in retribution, pregnancy assistance, spread the idea that both man and women can be useful to the society and that they both contribute to the welfare of the international community, recognition of the importance of domestic work;
- the promotion of education: equality in academic opportunities, sexual education and awareness about civic society, provide psychological assistance in schools,
- the development of the health care system: take into account the biological differences in health assistance, formulate the assistance according to the situation: in EU for example women are more affected by cancer and mental illness while in Africa we have a huge rate of maternal mortality, introduce the figure of the mediator in hospitals (especially in migration destination country).

Our proposal is to adopt a step by step approach while facing the issue:

1. The first stage of this approach should be focus on data collection; indeed, within the group we underlined the fact that collecting reliable datas is one of the most difficult aspect of the issue. Government and institutions should assure a minimum level of transparency and impartiality in the collection of datas. Moreover there is a need of investigate in a better way certain areas, like informal labour markets, where specific gender based violence occur;

2. The second step that should be take is an accurate analysis and an impartial interpretation of those datas in order to make a realistic and feasible list of priorities and areas where to drive resources;

3. The third step consists in the starting of the negotiation process with all actors involved, and within this step we underlined the importance of bearing in mind the so called “good practices”, for example we have the feeling that some regional organization in this moment in history could exercise a considerable economic pressure upon member states if human rights violation occurs (as it is here with the European Union or the American State Organization), those organizations have economical power and at the same time they can bridge the gap between the necessity of a comprehensive approach with the specificity of the region; of course this suggestion is not valid for Asia where such a regional organization does not exist.
C’MUN Special Meeting- Gender Based-Violence and Health

So, thanks to the help of our chinese colleague we suggest to implement leagues of women at work and health care;

4. Then fourth step should be the implementation of the international legal framework;

5. While the last one should be of course to solve the problem. Here we would like to stress the necessity of a positive discrimination in priorities and measures in accordance with the location where those measures are going to be implemented, for example women in africa may need first an immediate relief from poverty and hunger while in EU women need more psychological and legal support;

In the last part of our debate we thought about realistic and concrete measures that, according to our point of view, should be put in action immediately in order to implement the situation of gender based violence. Among all the brilliant ideas that we collected, we give precedents to certain aspects, such as:

- to organize a awareness campaigns, (as spread as for example the chicken flu one), especially in the rural areas about gender equality and human rights, stressing the fact that giving birth to a girl it is not a disadvantage for the family;
- to spread Education, especially providing sexual information;
- to promote the Medicalization of FGM in order to eradicate GFM;
- to implement of a ethics code of conduct among doctors in order to separate the aim of the profession from personal or religious beliefs;
- to create network between institutions involved such as the police, hospitals, NGOs, both at a local as well as at an international level;
- to promote equal opportunities for men and women;
- to implement the registration of births and marriages in order to fight against human trafficking;
- to put woman in connection trough social network in order for them to share their experience;
- to introduce the figure of the mediator in the hospitals (especially in migration destination country).
Introduction

The committee on political participation and economic development comprises a group of committed young people in the age range of 21 to 26. The group includes both males and females which we consider to be a vital component in addressing gender inequality. Participants are from the following countries- Argentina, France, Great Britain, Mozambique, Spain and The Ukraine.

The committee’s ideas are influenced not only by developments in their home countries but by travel and work experience in Australia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Saudi Arabia and The United States of America. The participants educational background and professional experience includes the fields of Business Marketing and Management, Economics, International Relations, Journalism, Health Management, Law, Management of Communication and Knowledge, Political Advocacy, Policy making and Political Science.

Why gender inequality needs to be addressed

The UN convention on Human Rights 1948 describes which rights should be afforded to every person in the world. The group agrees that it is a priority to guarantee the most fundamental rights of right to life, shelter and access to food and clean and drinking water. Once these fundamental rights are guaranteed it is important to focus on more advanced rights and civil liberties such as economic and political rights. In terms of gender equality we feel a basic civil liberty is women having the right to vote. It is recognized, however, that not all political systems are transparent and government and business can be intertwined.

The committee reviewed some of the latest discussions around policy and legislation concerning gender equality, political participation and economic development and contrasted these to long established debates. The committee also considered the impact of gender inequality and agreed that inequality brings with it significant social and economic costs. The issue that lack of female representation in government can lead to biased spending was also seen as an issue and an economic reason for addressing inequality.

For example evidence shows that in Male dominated Governments, more is spent on military and economic departments (UN World’s Women Report 2010 Chapter 5, p-g 122). This report also highlights that high ranking female administrators were more likely to occupy posts in socio-
cultural ministries such as education and welfare rather than basic government functions such as foreign affairs and defence.

Policy and Legislation

The committee debated the new proposed EU directive which would make it mandatory for women to stay at home for the first six weeks after childbirth. We felt that it can be difficult for women to progress to high-ranking positions in the labour market and that mandatory maternity leave may exacerbate this. The committee recognized that it is important for the child’s development and the mothers’ well-being to have a minimum of six weeks maternity leave. However, we felt this idea is good in theory, but women should be given the choice rather than having this imposed on them. This requirement could also prevent some women from succeeding in the most competitive industries such as Business and Finance.

The committee also advocates for an increase in maternity and paternity leave, in order to ensure more equal distribution of childcare duties between men and women. In terms of economic growth the committee had concerns that a mandatory maternity leave could inhibit the growth of small businesses and thereby could have a disproportionate negative impact on female business owners. Ultimately however, we do support the legal protection of maternity and paternity rights.

In highly developed countries the focus needs to be on improving legislation and representation of women in influential organizations. However, in some developing countries we recognize that improving women’s basic rights, such as access to food, shelter and the right to life are necessary prior to the fulfilment of political and civil rights.

The group discussed the fact that some legislation needs to have a while remit such as the European Court of Human Rights. Such functions can safeguard human rights abuses by individual countries. We also recognize the importance of tribunals such as those created to try perpetrators genocides, for example, research suggest that more women were killed in the Rwandan genocide than men, hence it is clear that the inclusion of women in politics and economics is a human right. According to the UN World Women’s Report 2010 the majority of survivors of the Rwandan conflict were women. This is explained as a possible reason for Rwanda being the country with the highest level of females in parliament in its 2008 elections.

Finally we argued that the importance of legislation needs to be recognized. Specifically, it’s vital that traditional laws are modernized, for example legislation that prevents women from inheriting land and property needs to be amended to extend more rights to women.
Equality during a recession

In times of economic and political crisis the committee felt that it may be a good opportunity for underrepresented groups, such as women, immigrants and minority ethnic communities to join forces in an effort to gain more representation in the labour market and government. Although it was recognized that the financial crisis has brought many challenges we also feel that it brings new opportunities. Whilst gender inequality should be confronted globally, different approaches are necessary depending on the economic and political situation in each country.

The committee recognizes that tackling inequalities is important for the economic growth of countries. We felt that women need to be recruited to influential positions in business finance and economics not just traditional female roles dealing with social and cultural issues. We felt that the economy would benefit from a more gender-neutral insight to balance out spending such as defence versus social budgets. One concern raised is the issue that women may have to adopt “masculine” traits to succeed in leadership. In addition, there was the concern that women are sometimes put in a position of power purely for the image it represents. It was felt that using quotas can sometimes be abused for tokenistic purposes.

There was also a discussion of the fact that various national banks such as the bank of England are private companies and not owned by the state. We discussed the fact that governments are now in huge debts to these banks during the recession. There have been many cuts in budgets and jobs and there is evidence to suggest that this would have a greater impact on women. Due to globalization the debt in developed countries will have a knock on effect on the economies and trade in developing countries.

According to the executive summary of the UN world women report 2010 (page 9) it argues that agriculture accounts for over half of the employment of women and men in sub-Saharan Africa and of women in south Asia. The majority of workers in these regions are women in vulnerable employment. Furthermore, it has been argued that due to the higher numbers of men working in banking mortgages and investment that men are more to blame for the current economic crisis which may have a worse impact on women.

The group discussed access to the labour market for young women. The group felt that young women are affected negatively by the current recession with the feeling of widespread unemployment, even in highly developed countries such as the UK and Spain. A report on Labour Force Participation and Employment by the Interactive Population Centre shows that, for
example, in many parts of Latin America and Africa, the proportion of women in desirable jobs is low.

Due to the fact that women are often employed in low level and vulnerable jobs there is concern that women will pay a greater price than men. It was also noticed that historically men have been more dominant in influential positions in business, finance and governments. Considering the historical growth of world banking was initiated predominantly by males in influential families such as the Rothschild family from Germany men’s dominance is entrenched in many structures.

**Women in the labour force**

The group agreed that it is important to involve women at all levels of business and decision-making not just in government or at the chief-executive level. It has been argued that women bring more social benefit than economic to companies; however research shows improved financial performance in companies that have more women on the board of directors. According to the UN the world’s women report 2010 (pages 1-3) companies where three or more women are board members have better than average results in financial performance. This financial benefit has been reported from a range of industries.

In order for women to have a better chance to successfully contribute to the labour market companies need to allow flexibility such as part time working for those with child care and caring duties. We also would like to highlight that one negative impact of globalization has been a breakdown in community and family support networks. Companies therefore need to recognize that is may be harder for women working internationally to manage their caring duties without flexible working options.

The group felt that in highly developed countries it is probably easier for young women without women with children or caring children to secure employment than older women with more family responsibilities. However, for women to succeed in competitive industries that are traditionally male dominated, such as business and economics, it is necessary to have a very high level of education and experience. The commitment required may make it difficult for young women with childcare responsibilities. The situation, however, will be to and even harder in many developing countries where women do not have free access to education.
Developing Countries

The group discussed whether failing to address gender inequality now would have an impact in the future worth of the poorest regions of the world where high levels of gender based discrimination exist. We felt that a key part of improving gender equality is to improve education for girls. We recognize that while international policies are important we need to address needs at the local level. There needs to be a combination of internal action and external support. We feel and it’s vital to engage men in all discussions and decision making relating to gender equality especially as many societies are patriarchal.

A realistic solution to address gender discrimination will only be found if men are included. If men feel that gender equality initiatives are supported by other men they are more likely to be successful. We also recognize that policies and legislation in some countries do not recognize people who identify as transgender. One example where the rights of the transgender people are recognized is the new United Kingdom Equality Act which came into force in October 2010. This Act should be taken as a lesson of good practice by others as gender is also a protected characteristic.

Use of quotas and positive discrimination

The committee agreed that growing inequality between men and women is a divisive factor in politics too. We discussed the topic of positive discrimination which exists in order to improve imbalances and create opportunities for under represented groups. According to the quota project, which is an initiative between the Inter-parliamentary Union, the University of Stockholm and IDEA, some quota systems are gender neutral and aim to correct the under-representation of both, women and men. In this case neither gender may occupy more than 60% or less than 40% of seats in parliament.

Quota systems are important as a first step when considering that some countries such as Belize, The Solomon Islands and Tonga had no female representatives in the lower or single house of parliament (UN the World’s Women Report 2010 p. 116).

Quotas that reserve seats in political and business positions exist to help recruit more women. However, it can be seen that the topic of gender is not always a priority. For example, Spain’s Minister for Gender has recently been removed due to a Government restructure. We feel that positive discrimination should not be relied on as a long term measure but in some countries it is a necessary step to address the lack of women in influential positions.
Gender empowerment

The committee asked the question as to why the UN has never had a female General Secretary. The group recommends that in order for the UN to demonstrate their commitment to gender equality they should Appoint a female as the next General Secretary.

Although we know that there are numerous benefits of increasing women’s representation in decision making, such as more well-rounded perspectives on issues, not enough research has been done to demonstrate that increased female representation in politics translates to improved economic growth. Another factor that can be divisive in gender politics is the concern that women are only recruited to meet legal and political expectations. We therefore stress the importance of women being recruited for their skills and intelligence as well as empowerment.

In countries where there is more gender equality evidence shows that there is less poverty. According to the Human Development Report 2009 regarding the Gender empowerment measure and its components, the top ranking countries for gender empowerment were wealthy countries including Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, and the Netherlands. The lowest ranking countries with the exception of Saudi Arabia are the less wealthy states of Algeria, Egypt, Bangladesh and Yemen.

So whilst we can see that there is generally more gender empowerment in wealthy nations there are several exceptions. For example Trinidad and Tobago ranks 14th highest in the index and oil rich states such as Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia rank among the lowest at 87, 88, and 106 respectively. The group speculated whether this was related to culture.

We recognize that many debates in the media are currently focused on the possible role of religion in contributing to gender inequality. Ultimately, however, we felt that it made sense that if a country believed in gender equality they are more likely to fight poverty regardless of the obstacles posed by culture and tradition. Another policy we discussed was mentoring with the idea that women in influential positions need to share their experience in order to help other women improve their political and economic ability.

Women’s participation

The group discussed various policies that could be implemented to promote women’s participation in politics. There was consensus that we need to involve men in the development of
policies concerning gender equality. An important point to note, however, is that any change should be gradual and progressive rather than sudden. We felt that if change is implemented gradually there will be more support and understanding from civil society and gender equality initiatives are more likely to have a lasting impact.

According to the World Bank, “The World Bank and Gender Equality: At a Glance” (2010), a GAP (Gender Equality as Smart Economics) funded study in Ethiopia found that by providing space for both spouses’ names and photos on the property land certificate, women’s registration for land ownership increased significantly. As a consequence, women reported improved economic and social status and agricultural productivity increased.

Women can also connect with other minorities in order to gather a stronger voice. We feel that policies regarding gender equality need to consider the importance of education from the primary level. In certain countries, such as Afghanistan, girls do not have equal access to education. So education initiatives need to be promoted through influential international policy, but implemented at the local level. This ties into the world-known idea “Think Global, Act Local”.

Another important policy to promote women’s participation in politics, is to make it easier for women to return to work through providing maternity leave, helping to ensure that women are not always economically dependent on men. If women have more economic dependence, this may equate to greater empowerment leading to more females involved in politics. The group also feels that consultation with citizens and community members is vital. One way this can be achieved is through political devolution, such as the case of Scotland, in order to bring politics closer to the people. It is vital to have local contributions to national and international policies.

Image

The committee discussed the fact that in some European countries such as France it is expected to put a photo on your resume (CV) and we felt this could be used as discrimination against women as a photo clearly identifies the gender. We argued that the increased use of human resources professionals in recruitment could help to eliminate gender-based discrimination in recruitment. However, unless gender equality improves socially we are unlikely to achieve equality in the workplace.

The committee discussed whether the political image of women in society is the same as men. We feel that the media does not focus on the political and economic skills of female politicians but rather creates controversy about them. In addition, it depends on the country. Former Prime
Minister of the UK Margaret Thatcher for example, was often referred to as the Iron Lady. Therefore, the image of female politicians is often as masculine or extremely tough which are not mandatory qualities to be a charismatic leader. Another example of this is Spain’s current Defence Minister Carme Chacón who created controversy by marching in a military parade while being pregnant. The media focused on the fact that the Defence Minister was a woman and pregnant in a military parade rather than looking at her skills and policies.

Local Initiatives

The group felt that it is very important to consider local actions that we can all implement in our own communities. The following examples have been suggested as actions by the committee members:

• In the North-East region of England a volunteering scheme has been set up for females who are unpaid carers. The women involved are from Indian Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities and assist professionals in identifying vulnerable women who may need support. Professional support includes training on new policies such as personal budgets which give people with disabilities the opportunity to decide how they want to spend their own health budgets. The scheme also provides interpreters so that women can involved in local decision-making and access more services. Free training is also provided in order to improve women’s skills and knowledge to access the labour markets.

• In Yorkshire a legal scheme exists for trainee lawyers to provide free legal advice to those that cannot afford full fees. Advice includes topics on the human rights and employment rights for women. This work is supervised by qualified solicitors ensure that vulnerable groups have access to legal expertise.

• A suggestion that could be applied to all countries is to give young boys cooking lessons so that they can assist women in the home and allow women more time to focus on other activities such as training.

• In Spain it was suggested that women do not often work due to child care being too expensive. This was recognized as a problem for example in Barcelona. It was suggested that a child care network could be created between families in order to exchange free support such as baby-sitting. It was also suggested that this network could be established online with web-sites such as Facebook to keep it low-cost. It was also suggested that the Government should invest in more nurseries in order to make them more affordable and enable mothers to return to work.
• In Mozambique one participant has published articles on gender equality and will continue to contribute using journalism to raise awareness of gender inequality. It was also suggested that presentations can be given in universities to create networking and encourage more people to advocate and write about about gender equality. It was felt that in Mozambique public needs to be involved in discussing women’s needs and local communities need to be included. In addition it was suggested that existing gender support initiatives in the country such as World Bank Micro-financing for women should be promoted.

• In Guatemala and El Salvador some NGOs create workshops for women to make and sell arts and crafts. Initially, this was not a success. However, the NGOs started to include men and husbands in the workshops and now the activities are more successful. The husbands that understand that the workshops are not a threat are now supporting their wives to sell their arts and crafts. Activities such as this which promote economic independence and raise household income should be promoted in communities world-wide.

• In the Ukraine it was suggested that a free legal advice line should be set up especially to offer employment advice. The Ukraine does not benefit from the same legislation as many EU countries so it was felt that this initiative would be a positive step in addressing gender equality too. It was also suggested that data should be recorded regarding the type of legal advice that women are calling for in order to start collating some statistics on women and legal issues.

• In Spain it was suggested that large companies do not have enough representation from females. it was felt that the Government needs to legislate to improve women’s representation. The Spanish youth representative of this committee who raised this issue will write to the government on this matter and try to raise awareness and male support for improving female representation.

• In Spain it was also highlighted that there have been a number of recent debates on the topic of Muslim women wearing the Burqa. It was felt that the media makes presumptions and stereotypes that may not always be true as there is little presence of Muslim women who wear the Burqa that engage in these debates. It was therefore suggested that a network of Muslim women who wear the Burqa could be set up in order to support each other and engage in civil society and media discussions. It was suggested that Casa Asia could support this network due to their existing ties with Asian communities in Spain.

• In Spain it was suggested that the government should invest more money in programs to support female entrepreneurs. For example a young entrepreneurs project could be established in order to provide business advice including woman to woman support.
• In Argentina there is currently dialogue regarding homosexual couples adopting children. Projects have been established in some Universities to discuss this along with other issues relating to maternity and paternity rights. Our participant from Argentina will recommend to these groups to engage with more university students and to raise awareness of the project and the debates at a state level. The idea is also to include NGOs in the university projects.

Conclusions

Whilst many important points were discussed and agreed upon, in conclusion the following issues were felt to be most important in order to improve gender equality and female representation and politics and the economy:

• It was agreed that legislation is a vital factor in embedding gender equality in activity in business, society the economy and finance. Policies relating to political participation and economic development are vital but it was felt that legislation is needed to secure these principles. In many developing countries this is especially the case since many regions are not as progressive as the EU in terms of legislating around gender equality.

• It is recognized that education is a fundamental aspect of empowering women and equipping them with the necessary skills, knowledge and confidence to participate in politics and the labour market. Since funding is not free in many countries, international financial commitments of NGOs and overseas development agencies need to provide continued financial support for the education of girls.

• It is felt that whilst international policies are important, consultation and involvement needs to happen and the national and local level to ensure that measures to address inequality and realistic. Furthermore, the women who are affected by different issues are the people that need to be involved in developing solutions that work for them rather than having ideas imposed from external agencies.

• Funding is another vital aspect. the group agree that micro-financing initiatives such as the investment provided by the World Bank to support female lead business in many countries around the world is a key step in improving women’s access to politics and the labour market. This investment also gives women the freedom to create initiatives that are attainable and culturally appropriate for their community.
• We felt there needs to be consideration for the fact that in some countries basic human rights such as the right to life are still threatened. It is important for governments and NGOs to remain focused on securing fundamental human rights too. Once peoples basic needs have been met it is only then appropriate to focus more attention on civil liberties such as women’s involvement in political participation and economic development.

• We feel that the use of quotas as an initial step to improve female representation in politics and business is a necessary form of positive discrimination in countries where women are very poorly represented and face gender discrimination when attempting to progress in business and politics.

• We strongly agree that the involvement of men at all levels in policies and actions towards improving gender equality is vital. For solutions to work men need to support them as much as women both in terms of political participation and economic development. men are also in many of the influential positions needed to make vital changes in legislation and policy.

• The group advocate for the media to take more responsibility for how they report and to include more positive representation of women, especially those in influential positions in politics and business who may be able to support other women too.

• Finally we would like to see more people from the east and developing countries involved in this special meeting which is a responsibility which we all must take by promoting the meeting through our networks. Casa Asia is also in a strong position to promote the CMUN Special meeting to migrant groups in Spain.
**Education and culture for development**

Within our group we have recognised and assessed a broad range of issues from the obvious, such as a desire to promote free education for all, to the highly controversial for example the question of responsibility in areas where women’s rights are being infringed upon. Within such a debate it remains complicated and problematic to reach a final and universally accepted conclusion especially when contentious and sensitive polemics such as religion and culture are discussed. Thus it can be noted that to some extent, the discussions and debates of the last day and a half can be viewed as representative of the actual debate of gender issues and development that is taking place in the world at large in which parties representing different nations and cultures face a daily struggle with the issue of equality.

Within our subcommittee of education and culture for development, we were fortunate to have men and women as well as participants from both the east and the west. We were therefore able to bring a broad range of knowledge and different cultures into our forum of debate. We agreed from the onset that a positive a proactive attitude to development could prove far more effective than trying to dismantle institutions that are already in place. Many sociologists and other scholars agree that even in small scale operations such as primary school education, incentives prove more effective in achieving goals than punishments. Whilst our proposals remain hypothetical, this theme of incentives and proactive measures remain constant throughout.

It also became apparent during our discussions that the very nature of gender equality is contentious. The issues relevant to gender equality in the west are by no means the same as those in the east and within this generalised division of the world into ‘east’ and ‘west’, we must also recognise not only the differences between countries but also regions and societies. It is also fundamental to note that the notion of culture and the practical implications of educational and development projects always function within a broader society in which other factors such as politics and economics play a key role, both in general, and also in terms of gender relations.

We also affirmed the importance of recognising issues of development and gender equality at different levels, both in terms of the problems themselves and the way in which we can attempt to tackle them. We believe that it is important to recognise that as a whole we are discussing a topic which has many layers, from small independently-
operating societies, to national and later, international relations. The way in which we not only assess these issues but also attempt to address them should always recognise this factor of locality. We also deliberated the importance of treating each area subjectively, taking into account local tradition and culture. Therefore, we would assert that before any practical measures are even suggested, a full analysis and documentation of the specific context should always be presented and examined.

The main focus of our discussions was education. We unanimously agree that the role of education is absolutely fundamental both to development in general but also the issue of gender equality. Whilst initially, we toyed with the idea of a universally applicable scheme which would directly educate young people on the importance of morals, ethics and the treatment of women, we later decided that what would be more effective in the long-term is a more subtle approach. By creating a universal, free and easily accessible education system based on the principles of gender equality and involving and promoting the participation of women in this process, we would hope to subtly transmit ideas of female empowerment which would later filter through to other areas of society. We also believe that this would encourage ‘change from within’ as opposed to the implementation or even imposition of the principles and values of an outside culture. The system in place would then be able to develop in its own way, encompassing different aspects of the local culture in which it was situated.

Furthermore we would introduce simple incentives such as providing each child who attends school with at least one free meal during the day. Through our research, we discovered that in some cases where education is costly or the parents need at least one of their children to work to sustain the household, parents invariably opt to send their sons to school, not their daughters. We hope that such incentives such as that of food would encourage parents or guardians to send all children to school because of their basic human need to eat as opposed to their gender. This could open up many opportunities for young girls later in life.

Funding in any development project is always a contentious issue. A practical and innovative scheme already in place in some universities in Indonesia inspired our group to discuss the concept of mandatory participation in their local society as part of a university education. Our proposed scheme would mirror some of those already in place in other countries around the world where students as part of their degree have to
dedicate at specified period of time to community work. We believe that a programme such as this could not only benefit the individual student but also stimulate much needed development around the globe. As well as developing individual assets such as teamwork and open-mindedness towards other the cultures, the student involved would also be participating in something that was linked to his or her degree. The projects would be tailor-made to suit each individual student, for example, those studying architecture would work on building basic latrine systems, and those with literature based degrees could teach or be involved in literacy schemes. It is again hoped that through subtly challenging gender norms by promoting women in influential and crucial roles in society, these ideas of equality will begin to permeate other areas of the society and combat gender stereotypes.

We also discussed the idea of more scholarships and incentives to encourage both people from impoverished backgrounds and also young women who live in remote areas where taking education to a higher level is not the norm. It was later suggested that the promotion of such scholarships (as occasionally realised in China) could also be a positive way of encouraging those who would not normally apply for university to do so thus opening up opportunities in individual lives and later communities. Whilst financing such an initiative could prove problematic, we would like to emphasise the importance of collaboration, encouraging universities, local and national authorities and where needed, international and NGO funding.

In our group we also tackled the role of education and promotion of gender equality in western societies. Whilst the situations are no way comparable in terms of the level of education, we also pointed out some fundamental flaws in the way in which we transmit social values through the schooling process. It became apparent, that even societies which claim to be advanced and developed in terms of their education system still institutionalise stereotypical roles of men and women. We commented on how there is very little done to encourage boys to participate in vocational classes such as cooking and sewing within secondary schools whilst similarly young girls were not active in more manual subjects such as electronics and resistant materials. Whilst it clearly up to the individual to choose what they wish to study, this seemingly obvious discrepancy does little to create a ‘rounded individual’ nor does it help break down stereotypical gender boundaries.
We realised during our debates that stereotypes are not only formed by the education system but also created by culture in general. It is important to recognize that many things that we perceive to be the norms of the society are socially constructed. Therefore culture plays an intrinsic role in the construction of how we view gender. Whilst we acknowledge that the term ‘culture’ encompasses many different aspects we focused on the role of the media.

The way in which women are portrayed in the media also raised contentious and interesting debates. In the modern world, the impact of the media is phenomenal and has yet has not realised its full potential. We agreed that the way in which women are represented in TV, magazines, the internet etc as well as the booming ‘celebrity culture’ and obsession with the appearance of women is something which is having a huge impact on the younger generations. Whilst duly noting the differences in media culture between our native countries, we all agreed that there is a universally disproportionate representation of positive male role models in the media to that of their female counterpart. Whilst it is all too easy to debate the source of this media culture and speculate on how and indeed why physically beautiful women and indeed men are constantly utilised to market products, we have taken a more proactive approach to the problem which hopefully looks to stabilise the situation in a positive and progressive manner instead of attempting to destroy this media culture from within (something that we all acknowledged as virtually impossible to accomplish). We therefore propose that instead of fighting to reduce the amount of women used in marketing and advertising thus often being seen as little more than a ‘pretty face’ we propose to complement this with a more positive promotion of women’s intelligence and abilities. We believe that media strategies, be it direct advertising or individual programmes or articles analysing and promoting powerful women who are influential in the contemporary world could prove both interesting and influential in shaping how women are viewed on a local and global scale. Thus we use the same tool, that of the media, but in a different way and look at the positive NOT the negative potentials of the media to promote the image of women.

We have debated how in some circumstances culture and the elements that make up said culture including that of religion can be an obstacle to both development in general and also gender relations and equality, however we unanimously agree that education and progressive measures can help to resolve and overcome these issues.
Although the role of societies, countries and international organisations are important at every level of development and the promotion of gender equality, we should not forget the role of the individual in modifying his or her daily behaviour in the struggle for equality. Within this movement, women have an important role, but also other actors should be implicated, the collaboration or men is crucial. Public and private spheres, civil society, the government and nation and international organisations should be prioritise the promotion of a fairer society where men and women have the same opportunities.
United Nations Association of Spain

III C’MUN Special Meeting

European Conference:
The New Limits of Human Rights
Barcelona 27-29 February 2008

Religious and cultural rights: Final document

Guided by the following documents The Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948; The European Convention on Human Rights 1950; The Charter of Fundamental Rights of The European Union 2000; The Universal Declaration of Emerging Human Rights 2004 and The Alliance of Civilizations High level Group Report 2006; The Religious and Cultural Rights Committee of the Catalonia Model United Nations special meeting on human rights formulate the following resolutions,

*Acknowledges* that various definitions of culture exist including race, religion, ethnicity, language and beliefs,

*Advocates* that a cohesive definition of culture needs to include ones scientific, artistic and literary alignments,

*Recognizing* that certain topics permeate throughout key legislations and documents including an appeal to personal liberty; freedom of thought, conscience and expression; prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, sex, colour, language, religion, nationality, political or other opinion,

*Concerned* about the widespread declarations based on older legislations namely the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, ambiguous terminology, dominant Eurocentric perspectives; the failure to agree on a unified definition of culture,

*Also concerned* with the focus on innate attributes of culture rather than those acquired including intellectual property and ‘other’ solidarity or belief, rare reference to equality between the rights of minority and majority groups within states and societies,

*Stressing* that cultural relativism does not justify human rights violations,

*Recognising* the impact of the media in shaping public perception of cultures, drawing awareness to the potential influence of new media and technologies,
Advocating that legislation, declarations, conventions and charters avoids classifying the global society into limiting categories and reduce the use of polarising terminology,

Emphasizes the importance of education in combating prejudice and discrimination,

Expresses concern with the current juxtaposition of Islam and the West rather than religions and regions in general

Advancing the belief that mutual understanding between cultures is vital and ensuring that legislation is drafted not only from a Eurocentric perspective

Disturbed by the frequent use of symbolism of religious and cultural elements in the media, politics and civil society as a scapegoat for discussing the actual issue at hand

1. Calls for legislation to address the roots of resentment and anger rather than attacking ideologies;

2. Demands that all media take responsibility for their broadcasting and an objective international regulatory body be established to moderate the spread of inaccurate information;

3. Urges governments and intergovernmental organizations to provide factual materials on religious documents in order to promote inter-religious understanding and prevent proselytism;

4. Requests that all minority rights are protected within international legislation thereby influencing national laws;

5. Recommends that legislators avoid ambiguous terminology pertaining to definitions of culture and the recipients of protection;

6. Suggests that cultural tolerance is extended to include acceptance, preservation and the right to promotion of ones culture.
WORKING GROUP ON EMERGING HUMAN RIGHTS

The participants of the working group on emerging human rights

Acknowledging the relevance of the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights, as well as the suggestions put forward by the 2007 Declaration on Emerging Human Rights,

Taking into account the whole system of instruments and institutions endorsing the promotion and protection of Human Rights

Concerned about the limitations posed by social, political, and economical evolution and the recent technological advances, to the ever more connected international society and the inefficient tackling of current issues, stemming from violations of existing or Emerging Human Rights,

Adopting Emerging Human Rights as a necessary concept for the complementation and expansion of the scope of the rights recognized by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the rest of universal and regional Human Rights instruments,

Recognizing the inalienable, universal and interdependent nature of all Human Rights and reaffirming the same features of Emerging Human Rights, in both their individual and collective dimensions,

Noting with concern the lack of binding instruments for the implementation of Emerging Human Rights,

Reaffirming the key role played by developed countries in ensuring the observance of principles of reciprocal help and solidarity and assuming responsibility for past and current actions,

Deploring the lack of coherence and fairness of European Union policies and encouraging the collaboration of the European Union, the Council of Europe, the
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe tackling the issue of effective implementation of Human Rights,

*Calling for* the UN Council of Human Rights to endorse and promote Emerging Human Rights, and thus strengthen the principle of human security,

*Recognizing* the importance of strengthening the collaboration between International Organizations, International Financial Institutions, national governments and the civil society for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals,

*Identifying* the following Emerging Human Rights as essential: the right to water, the right to sustainable development and healthy environment and the rights related to sexual orientation,

*Affirming* that the right to sustainable development and healthy environment establishes that all human beings, as the central subject of development, have the individual and collective equal right to participate in a economic, social, cultural, ecological and political sustainable development in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms may be fully achieved.

*Reaffirming* that water is the basic requirement for life and health, it is a fundamental necessity to qualify it as a human right. The human right to water applies to providing everyone with a quality and sufficient supply.

*Noting* that the public sector is responsible to guarantee equal access to water for everyone with the possible model of public management relaying on the participation and social control.

*Reaffirming* that the rights related to sexual orientation are those defined in the base of real or perceived sexual practices with consenting adults, or an experience of expression of people’s own gender.

*Observing* the multiplicity of legal instruments regulating a vague concept of sexual orientation, it is believed that, due to the this lack of determination and to the deficiency in the compulsory adoption of those instruments, better formulated regulation is needed.

Therefore, we have the following recommendations and requests to

**States:**

To recognise that all human beings and the peoples of whom they form a part have the inalienable right to the individual and collective sustainable development and healthy environment

To codify those interdependent rights in the form of an international convention to which the states should comply with, as well as in their national legislation;
Members states of international financial organisations, such as IMF and World Bank, should promote pressure on developing countries to protect the water service from uncontrolled privatisation.

To make transnational Companies accountable for their actions when operating and violating the human right to a sustainable development and healthy environment outside the EU, avoiding the corporate veil;

Regarding sexual orientation, states should make an effort to define,
  a. the types of discriminations
  b. the types of prevention of sexual orientation
  c. the measures to abolish discriminating legislation on LGBT people and to reform all laws criminalizing private, consensual, adult, same-sex activity.

and also should promote social awareness and equality in order to eradicate the discrimination on sexual minorities.

**International organizations:**

To keep in mind the needs of developing countries and their obligation towards the International Community when pursuing their trade policies.

To the EU to only give external aid funds to sustainable projects implemented with Human Rights based approach.

To the European Union to recognize that water is not only a primary human need but a human right, taking into account that it is the largest water donor in the world.

European Union should urge member states to put pressure on the governments of countries that keep violating the essential human rights of LGBT people.

**Civil society:**

To work together with local authorities and think tanks in order to make citizens and companies aware of their rights and duties towards education regarding environmental protection and sustainable development.

Civil society is requested to promote and intensify opinions regarding water specific programs, encourage the moderate use of water and the most efficient ways to do so, and raise consciousness about the issue of “right to water.”

Civil society must assume the claims of the LGBT community and in that sense, support of like-minded NGO’s and sympathetic governments in the preparation and running of a world-wide information campaign is essential.
Minorities protection: Final document

The participants of the work group on Minorities protection

Reaffirming that it is necessary to achieve a definition of minorities;
Noting that the different types of minorities include national, regional, linguistic, ethnic and religious;
Considering that the freedom of everyone whether to choose or not to belong to a minority must be recognized and the fact that every country must establish the legal framework of the protection of minorities;
Recognizing Human rights as the “universal religion” of modern secular States;
Reaffirming that it is necessary to work together on an international, regional and domestic level to ensure full integration of minorities and recognise their rights in Europe

a) Linguistic rights

Recognizing the importance of the protection of the minority language;
Recognizing that legal instruments in the European dimension are more concrete and developed than the universal legal instruments;
Taking into account the difference between legal provisions and its effective implementation;

1. Recommend that minority languages must be protected and their use encouraged;
2. Recommend that it would be compulsory for immigrants to learn the official language of the country which they arrive to;
3. Request that access to citizenship must depend on a more efficient and non discriminatory official language exam

b) Religious and educational rights
Emphasizing that freedom of religion should be exercised within the context of other fundamental freedoms;
Having considered the difficulties of cooperation between legal systems belonging to various cultures;
Keeping in mind that ignorance is one of the origins of the problems between majority and minorities;
Reaffirming that education is the best form of integration of a minority into a society;
Advocating the understanding of legal system of nations by pointing out similarities of the minority’s value system;
Reaffirming that it is not feasible to achieve *de facto* equality without positive obligations of the States;

1. *Invite* States to include the minority topic in the national curriculum in order to appreciate the differences among religions while still remaining secular states;
2. *Request* States to recognize the right of persons belonging to minorities to have access to public education in their mother tongue as well as the national language

c) The specific situation of the Roma

Noting the specific situation of the Roma as an issue within all Europe;
Considering the lack of full integration of the Roma minority into the society in which they are present;
Recognizing the labour of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and the European Roma Rights Center;

1. *Request* the implementation of numerous projects;
   1. Cooperation, dialogue and exchange of information between the States with a Roma minority in order to arrive at a better understanding of the issue;
   2. Having more Roma representatives in the government;
   3. Job training programmes and educational programmes;
   4. Promoting effective use of money invested in Roma integration and corruption prevention;
   5. Funding rehabilitation programmes in prisons

d) Kosovo

Recognizing the need for minority protection in Kosovo specifically how to integrate them and respect their rights;
Bearing in mind the situation of refugees and displaced persons in the Balkans;

1. *Desire* the strict implementation of Ahtisaari Plan and the provision of its politics in the future constitution of Kosovo;
2. *Urge* the political representation of all the minorities and implementing non-discriminatory legislation;
3. *Recommend* the continued presence of NATO and the EU mission in Kosovo to ensure stability;

4. *Request* the necessary preparations to integrate the possible return of Refugees and displaced persons