

"UNESCO FOR AND WITH YOUTH"

UNESCO, 20 January 2016

That meeting organized by the Association of Former UNESCO Staff Club "Memory and Future" aimed to demonstrate the involvement of the Organization near Young and in partnership with them since several decades; and we know that Youth is one of the Priorities Group of the current UNESCO Program. Young, actually working within the Organization were some of the speakers; NGOs official partners of UNESCO have been invited to attend the meeting.

Several speakers, former Director of the Division for Youth and Sport Activities, former Vice-President of the NGO-UNESCO Collective Consultation, current Chief for the Section for Youth and Sport, young activist working at UNESCO, all, as noticed the Leader of the meeting, had a common origin: they were or are coming from the civil society. The meeting Leader drawn also our attention on the fact that the spirit of the meeting was to evoke the past and learn from the present, in order to have a better vision of the future concerning the place of young in our world.

TAKING OFFICIALLY INTO ACCOUNT THE ROLE OF YOUTH

Pierluigi VAGLIANI, former Chief and Director of the Division for Youth and Sport Activities from 1975 to 1992, insisted on the involvement of the Organization for and with the young: in fact, as well as on the level of the programs of young volunteers, as on that of chantiers de reconstruction, UNESCO showed a never deny on commitment and role of youth.

During the **15th Session of the UNESCO General Conference**, the decision was adopted to set up "**For and With Youth**", a new kind of action in order "*to contribute in the analysis and explanation of the problems of youth and help the member States in finding practical solutions to be implemented*". Following up the events of 1968, the Executive Board of UNESCO asked eminent searchers and sociologists to prepare a report on the subject. He reminded too that the **World Youth Assembly** was held, in **1970**, in New York, in the room of the United Nations General Assembly.

He also reminded the first General-Director of the Division for Youth at UNESCO: **Ershan NARAGHI**, Iranian and sociologist full of attention toward young and the problem they had to face, everywhere in the world. That new Division had to be, according to Ershan NARAGHI, "*the bridge pirates use to climb on board*". The Division had to allow, according him, providing some renewal face to UNESCO Administration.

That open mind policy towards youth was increased when the Collective Consultation of Youth NGOs was created and relayed everywhere in the world by the Regional Consultations (in the meaning given to region by UNESCO)

RECOGNIZING JOINT REFLECTION THROUGH THE COLLECTIVE CONSULTATIONS

Those permanent consultations with youth NGOs, in official relations with UNESCO, allowed a collective work of reflection and the realization of joint projects that associated youth to the implementation of the Programs of the Organization.

Then, Pierluigi VAGLIANI evoked to crucial moments of the cooperation UNESCO-Youth NGOs: the **International Year of Youth in 1985** and the **World Congress held in Barcelona, Spain, on Youth**. Quoting the Report of the Congress of Barcelona, and making some comparison with several aspects of their current situation, he quoted *"young are the first and more numerous victims of armed conflicts; the degradation of the economic situation impacts, with a special force, their possibilities to find an employment, their working conditions, their situation relating to education, health, settlement..."* in spite of the changes occurred in the world...

Arthur GILLETTE, past Vice-President of the Collective Consultation on Youth for UNESCO, (a second Vice-President was representing the Youth NGOs), insisted on his care to **pay attention and support the projects of local development imagined by NGOs**, projects that did not enough draw, according him, the attention as well as a correct consideration from the Organization.

He also evoked the project **"Hope and Solidarity around a Balloon"**, that was presented to the participants by Marie José LALLART, in charge of the project. In June 2001, the Section "Fighting exclusion through education" (FEE) was created in the framework of the Division of Basic education of UNESCO. "Hope and Solidarity around a Balloon" was one of the 5 set up programs. By using the sport, game very loved by the young, in the training for their personality, UNESCO recognized its unique capacity *"to be able to transform physic pulsing into the positive value which is that of effort and self- confidence"*. The program provided the creation of positive links beyond social, cultural and economic conflicts. Encounters, exchanges, conducted youngsters to re-learn how to live together, to respect one another, and, by the way, find again hope to come back to formal education. Innovative and concrete actions provided partnerships and sponsors on all the continents, and the involvement of media and personalities from the sport. An amazing program for youth!

YOUTH FACING CHALLENGES EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD

Alexander SCHISCHLICK, current Chief of the Section for Youth and Sport, Sector for Social and Human Sciences, reminded that youth is one of the Priority Groups of the Program of UNESCO, the objective of which is to **creating a safety environment that allows the young to become essential actors** to search solutions facing the challenges to overcome in our world.

Then, he referred to the **Youth Forum** held at UNESCO every two years, at the eve of the Session of the General Conference, where representatives of young, coming from all the regions of the world, conduct reflections concerning the challenges they have to face every day and then deliver some recommendations to the General Conference (member States) following the venue of the Forum.

However, he had the regret that those recommendations are not yet really taken into account in the writing of the UNESCO Program (C5). **For him, he played advocacy in order for youth to be more and more associated in the definition of the policies at a National level.**

"YOUNG EVENTS" A YOUYH NETWORKS FOR INFORMAL MEETINGS AT UNESCO

Sudeep RANGI, assistant in the framework of the Program of the Organization in the Social and Human Sciences Sector, is participating, since 2014, in the organization of informal events **in a view of promoting the collective action of young**, interns or professionals at UNESCO. He noticed, as he thanked the organizers for having invited him, that it is his **first participation, as young, in a wider meeting within UNESCO**. He also underlined that the action of young within the Organization is important, whichever the time they spend in the organization; as well as the knowledge of international life they experiment is very precious for their training.

The history of the presence of youth at UNESCO shows that youth, which can face the challenges of the current times, has a real vision of future that puts into light their creativity. Youth wishes to learn as well from the programs set up within UNESCO as from those that are implemented within the regions; in addition, the **Youth Forum** provides young the opportunity to act as facilitators. For him, **the ideal is to be part of the process of any program and not only for specific programs for youth**. The inclusion of young into the implementation of the current programs should be a concrete demonstration of the responsible involvement of youth, thanks to their own vision and ideas.

"By inviting us, you say that you did understand that we want to participate more... **Working with other groups, gives sense to our presence that overpasses the only idea of work and productivity.**"

"We are listening and, once again, thank you for having invited us to attend this meeting" did he say in conclusion.

A short debate took place with the floor, on the **role and place of young within the Organization**, debate that conducted to that if the part "Memory" of the topic shown the necessity of a place for youth within UNESCO, and this during four decades, the part "Future" needs the venue of a following meeting, since that meeting was really appreciated by the audience.

Janine Marin
ISOCARP Representative near UNESCO

NOTE :

The venue of that meeting makes us think that, during several years, UNESCO, through the Program MOST (Management of Social Transformations), was a partner and sponsor for the ISOCARP YYP Workshop, and published its reports. That partnership was cut, at the beginning of the 21st Century, due to the financial impossibilities of the Organization.

That also reminded me the International NGO-UNESCO Forum, held in Sozopol, Bulgaria, in September 2014, the theme of which was "The Role of Youth in the Safeguarding of Tangible and Intangible Heritages". The question is still open to know which place really have those who play however a role within the society.

So, it seemed to me that ISOCARP made, along the 5 decades since its creation, an important effort relating to the place that the Society wants to give to the young, associating them to the Congresses, UPATs and other international meetings. It is why I thought interesting, even it is a contribution in a Forum held on 2014, to join to this report on a meeting relating to youth, the contribution I made, on behalf of ISOCARP, on that occasion and that aims to put into light ISOCARP action with youth as NGO.

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