

FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE CONGRESS

The World Congress on Disarmament Education, convened by the Director-General of Unesco and meeting at Unesco Headquarters in Paris from 9 to 13 June 1980, in accordance with resolution 3/2.1/1 adopted by the General Conference at its twentieth session,

1. Deeply concerned by the lack of real progress towards disarmament and by the worsening of international tensions which threaten to unleash a war so devastating as to imperil the survival of mankind,
2. Convinced that education and information may make a significant contribution to reducing tensions and to promoting disarmament, and that it is urgent to undertake vigorous action in these areas,
3. Taking into account the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly and in particular paragraph 106, according to which the General Assembly urged governments and governmental and non-governmental organizations to take steps to develop programmes of education for disarmament and peace studies at all levels, and paragraph 107, according to which the General Assembly welcomed the holding of this Congress and urged Unesco to step up its programme aimed at the development of disarmament education as a distinct field of study,
4. Bearing in mind other pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly, such as resolution 34/75 according to which the General Assembly declared the decade beginning in 1980 the Second Disarmament Decade, and resolution 33/73 by which the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies to live in Peace,
5. Considering resolution 11.1 adopted by the General Conference at its twentieth session concerning the role of Unesco in generating a climate of public opinion conducive to the halting of the arms race and transition to disarmament,
6. Considering further the Declaration on fundamental principles concerning the contribution of the mass media to strengthening peace and international understanding, to the promotion of human rights and to countering racism, apartheid and incitement to war, adopted by the General Conference at its twentieth session (1978),
7. Desiring to promote the implementation of the Recommendation on Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education Relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session (1974),
8. Recalling the Expert Meeting for the preparation of the World Congress on Disarmament Education held in Prague, Czechoslovakia, on 4-8 June 1979 at the invitation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic,

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Believes that disarmament education should be guided by the following principles and considerations:

Relation of
education to
disarmament

1. Disarmament education, an essential component of peace education, implies both education about disarmament and education for disarmament. All who engage in education or communication may contribute to disarmament education by being aware and creating an awareness of the factors underlying the production and acquisition of arms, of the social, political, economic and cultural repercussions of the arms race and of the grave danger for the survival of humanity of the existence and potential use of nuclear weapons.

Definition of
disarmament

2. For the purposes of disarmament education, disarmament may be understood as any form of action aimed at limiting, controlling or reducing arms, including unilateral disarmament initiatives, and, ultimately, general and complete disarmament under effective international control. It may also be understood as a process aimed at transforming the current system of armed nation States into a new world order of planned unarmed peace in which war is no longer an instrument of national policy and peoples determine their own future and live in security based on justice and solidarity.

Role of
information

3. Disarmament education requires the collection and dissemination of reliable information from sources offering the highest degree of objectivity in accordance with a free and more balanced international flow of information. It should prepare learners, in the strictest respect for freedom of opinion, expression and information, to resist incitement to war, military propaganda and militarism in general.

Relation to
economic and
political
realities

4. Disarmament education cannot, however, confine itself to the dissemination of data and information on disarmament projects and prospects nor even to commenting on the hopes and ideals which inspired them. It should recognize fully the relationship disarmament has with achieving international security and realizing development. To be effective in this regard, disarmament education should be related to the lives and concerns of the learners and to the political realities within which disarmament is sought and should provide insights into the political, economic and social factors on which the security of peoples could be based.

Research and
decision-making

5. In addition to reaching the general public, disarmament education has a more specific and equally crucial task of providing rational arguments for disarmament based on independent scientific research which can guide decision-makers and, to the extent possible, rectify perceptions of a potential adversary based on incomplete or inaccurate information.

Substantive
approaches

6. As an approach to international peace and security, disarmament education should take due account of the principles of international law based on the Charter of the United Nations, in particular, the refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of States, the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-intervention in domestic affairs and self-determination of peoples. It should also draw upon the international law of human rights and international humanitarian law applicable in time of armed conflict and consider

alternative approaches to security, including such non-military defence systems as non-violent civilian action. The study of United Nations efforts, of confidence-building measures, of peace-keeping, of non-violent conflict resolution and of other means of controlling international violence take on special importance in this regard. Due attention should be accorded in programmes of disarmament education to the right of conscientious objection and the right to refuse to kill. Disarmament education should provide an occasion to explore, without prejudging the issue, the implications for disarmament of the root causes of individual and collective violence and the objective and subjective causes of tensions, crises, disputes and conflicts which characterize the current national and international structures reflecting factors of inequality and injustice.

Links with
human rights
and development

7. As an integral part of peace education, disarmament education has essential links with human rights education and development education, in so far as each of the three terms peace, human rights and development must be defined in relation to the other two. Moreover, disarmament education offers an occasion to elucidate emerging concepts such as the individual and collective rights to peace and to development, based on the satisfaction of material and non-material human needs.

Pedagogical
objectives

8. Whether conceived as education in the spirit of disarmament, as the incorporation of relevant materials in existing disciplines or as the development of a distinct field of study, disarmament education should apply the most imaginative educational methods, particularly those of participatory learning, geared to each specific cultural and social situation and level of education. It aims at teaching how to think about disarmament rather than what to think about it. It should therefore be problem-centred so as to develop the analytical and critical capacity to examine and evaluate practical steps towards the reduction of arms and the elimination of war as an acceptable international practice.

Values

9. Disarmament education should be based upon the values of international understanding, tolerance of ideological and cultural diversity and commitment to social justice and human solidarity.

Sectors of
society
concerned

10. Disarmament education should be the concern of all sectors of society and public opinion. Indeed, schools, non-formal and informal education circles such as the family, community organizations and the world of work, universities and other research centres and information media, all have a part to play in this task. Educators and communicators should strive to develop the most appropriate and effective language and teaching methods for each situation. The challenge is all the greater as the stakes are so high.

The World Congress on Disarmament Education,

Considering that in this initial year of the Second Disarmament Decade special impetus should be given to the development of disarmament education,

Accordingly requests the Director-General to:

- (a) set out, on the basis of the aforementioned principles and considerations, elements to be included in the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade aimed at making disarmament education one of the vital means of achieving the objectives of the Decade, and transmit them to the United Nations Secretary-General for submission to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session;
- (b) encourage initiatives designed to make adequate funds available for the significant development of disarmament education, by supporting, inter alia, the suggestion of the United Nations Secretary-General that one-tenth of one per cent of military spending should be devoted to national and international efforts in favour of disarmament, including disarmament education and information;
- (c) strengthen social science research activities on disarmament, peace and international relations with a view, inter alia, to improving education and information programmes in these fields, in collaboration with the United Nations, in particular with the Centre for Disarmament and the Institute for Disarmament Research, with national and international research bodies, and with appropriate non-governmental organizations;
- (d) investigate the possibility of drawing up standard clauses whereby States parties to arms control or limitation agreements would undertake, on the one hand, to foster the dissemination of the instrument in question and, on the other, to promote, to the greatest possible extent, and by appropriate means, disarmament education in general;
- (e) examine, in collaboration with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the possibility of setting up a United Nations-Unesco Radio Station, to provide information and to promote the objectives of the United Nations relating, inter alia to disarmament, human rights and development;
- (f) draw up, on the basis of the work of the Congress, a detailed, phased action plan, on the understanding that this plan will coincide with Unesco's next Medium-Term Plan.

For the purpose of implementing this final recommendation, the Congress took note of the recommendations contained on the working papers and of the points proposed by the rapporteurs of the commissions on the basis of suggestions submitted by the participants and observers (reproduced in Annex I).