

1.2

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE 21ST CENTURY: POLITICAL AND SOCIAL TRENDS OF GLOBALIZATION – CHALLENGES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Federico Mayor-Zaragoza

Abstract

Globalization is intensifying economic differences and social and cultural divisions. Democratic principles, rather than the laws of the market, need to be used to guide human behaviour and economic policies. ‘It is foolish to confuse value with price’, wrote the great poet Antonio Machado. Those in power have been foolish and have irresponsibly abandoned the ideologies and ideals that the university community has striven so hard to preserve through the years.

The world is in a deplorable state: the democracy embodied in the United Nations, designed by Roosevelt, has been replaced by a plutocracy (G7/G8) and a hegemonic power. Furthermore, states have been weakened by the transfer of much of their power to big multinational companies that do as they please, with total impunity, at a supranational level. They are involved in all kinds of trafficking (arms, capital, patents, drugs and even people) and make use of tax havens. They invest more than US\$3 billion per day in arms (not counting the missile defence shield that the US government wants to implement in contravention of the 1988 treaties), while more than 60,000 people die of hunger.

Universities can remain silent no longer. The functions of

- training
- assessment
- production

are now more important than ever. Daring to know, and knowing how to dare. Universities – with European leadership – must be a beacon and watchtower in the 21st century.

I hold with what has been said:

Justice must be done,
despite law and customs,
despite money and alms.

(Pedro Casaldàliga, 2006)

CONTEXT

The process of ‘globalization’ has replaced universal ethical principles with market laws. This has led to a situation that is truly worrying and

requires firm and urgent solutions that can only be implemented – as brilliantly intuited by those who drafted the Charter of the United Nations in 1945, at the end of a horrific world war – by the ‘peoples’, for the people, and not by the powerful, short-sighted and limited individuals who respond to immediate-term interests. ‘It is foolish to confuse value with price’, warned Antonio Machado in one of his proverbs, drawn from his Castilian background, that I like to quote. Those in power have been foolish. They have exchanged the values of justice, liberty, equality and solidarity – on which the construction of a peaceful and creative world should be based – for the norms that govern commercial transactions. ‘The peoples’ have been replaced by the states, which are being increasingly weakened, to the benefit of big transnational corporations. In addition, the United Nations that, in Roosevelt’s design, constituted a ‘democratic’ system on a planetary scale, has been sidelined in favour of the group of the richest countries on earth (G-7/G-8).

THE WIDENING GAP BETWEEN RICH AND POOR

The divide separating rich and poor has been widened instead of being narrowed, and the rents in the social fabric have not been mended. The attempt to staunch wounds caused by rancour and animosity has been made using thorns and bullets instead of generous aid, dialogue and understanding. Whether or not we wish to acknowledge it, in 2007 we are heading, with more or less reluctance, towards a war economy that is gradually concentrating economic power in very few hands and that will use any pretext to reach colossal proportions. The Iraq war, based on false premises, gave the war industry a huge boost. Now, unable to extend the number of ‘enemies’ – due to another resounding failure of war – the current US administration has managed to extend the tentacles of its military power, in the face of the deafening silence of the European Union. Added to the anti-missile shield – which breaks the agreements reached with such difficulty

between the two superpowers in Reykjavik at the end of the cold war – is the massive rearmament not only of Israel but also of all the countries in the Gulf region.

It has been calculated that US\$3 billion are invested in arms each day. This amount will undoubtedly increase in the coming months and years. We invest 365 times less than this on food. Indeed, the World Food Programme only has an *annual* budget of US\$3 million. As a result, approximately 60,000 people die of hunger every day. Are the US military really looking for weapons of mass destruction? The name of such weapons is *hunger*. Poverty and misery are spreading everywhere and are breeding grounds of frustration at so many broken promises. From these breeding grounds emerge radicalization and feelings of revenge, foci of violence, desperate people who – often at the risk of their own lives – try to reach the shores of plenty or immolate themselves in protest, defeat or ignorance. The use of violence, regardless of its origins, is absolutely unjustifiable. But we must make an effort to identify its roots, to explain what causes it.

Contrary to what was expected, globalization does not heed working conditions, power mechanisms or respect for human rights. The only thing that is important is the deal. From the most atrocious dictatorships, to countries that are trying to rise or re-emerge from secular colonialism and subjection, from China to Ecuador and Gabon, what is important is buying and selling, exploiting natural resources, and privatizing goods that were previously considered to belong to the public. Thus, through takeovers and major mergers, the world panorama has become more rarefied with increased disparities. Worse still, the responsibilities of those who carried out the functions of government in the name of their citizens have disappeared. Economic, social and environmental impacts; cultural standardization; the lack of moral references and so on have been largely brought about by the ‘faceless power’ of the big multinationals, which act as they please with total impunity.

Everything seems to be affected: the main beneficiaries of the war economy can see how the poverty rate is increasing in their own country. While they are able to reach the moon and develop the greatest technological prowess, they are completely unprepared when hit by natural disasters, such as hurricane Katrina. A bridge recently collapsed in Minneapolis in the state of Minnesota, even though technical studies had detected faults more than six months previously. There are hundreds of other similar cases in the USA. The presidents of the USA and the other most powerful countries on Earth should thoroughly read and understand the 1918–1919 reflections and projects of President Woodrow Wilson (the Covenant of the League of Nations promoting ‘lasting peace’), and of Franklin

Delano Roosevelt in 1944–1945 (the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund; United Nations Organization). Both presidents believed that the solution to the world’s problems could only be reached by the people themselves. They considered that different peoples needed to come together, united by a common destiny, in organizations in which cooperation, dialogue and comprehension would be facilitated.

The aim was to prevent and anticipate future events, and to be totally committed to the welfare of future generations. The preamble to the UN Charter, which I like to quote, says: ‘We the peoples of the United Nations are determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war’ Who? ‘We the peoples.’ ‘Save’, that is, we build peace daily through our behaviour. To achieve what? To ensure that our descendants do not have to experience the scourges of confrontation, humiliation, exclusion, discrimination and violence. The solution, therefore, is to unite the peoples in one international organization, guided by universally accepted principles. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, promoted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948, constitutes a compendium of the ethics on which to base personal and collective action to provide humankind with ‘freedom from fear and want’, as stated in the preamble to the Declaration.

To achieve this, we must keep the future in mind, know that the past can be described and has to be reliably described, but also be aware that it has already been written. What future generations must be able to write with total freedom is the future – their present. To attain this, it is essential to encourage the ability to anticipate, to foresee and to act in time. It is not enough to know the right treatment; it must also be applied at the right time. Based on my experience in the diagnosis of postnatal disorders that can develop irreversibly with severe mental deterioration, I published *Tomorrow Will be Too Late* (Mayor, 1984) to highlight the government actions that must be given priority so that they do not reach the point of no return. The aforementioned diseases have to be *treated in time* to stop them from becoming irreversible pathological disorders.

We need to act in time, draw on the lessons learnt in the past and always keep the future in mind (Mayor, 1996). Only then is it possible to walk with hope and self-esteem, in new directions towards the world of equal human dignity we yearn for. Equal dignity! If we all really believed in equal dignity for every individual human being, regardless of the colour of their skin, their ethnic background, their ideology, their beliefs and so on, most of the challenges we face could be resolved. However, in

order to look forwards, knowing where we came from and what we have left behind, it is essential to eradicate the impediments and baggage that prevent us from walking free. We should press on and know how to distinguish what is important from what is urgent. The right institutions need to tackle the major economic, social, cultural, environmental, energy and moral challenges of our times. We should not be resigned, submissive citizens – receivers but not emitters – who observe what is happening around us passively and even with indifference.

THE 'SCOURGE OF WAR'

The United Nations Organization is an attempt at creating international order through an institution that provides guidelines for political action in international relations. It includes a number of organizations capable of establishing guidelines on health, employment, nutrition, education, science, culture, development, childhood and so on. The aim is to make international agreements work and to *get nations to work together* to 'spare us from the scourge of war'. The diversity and pluralism that constitute the wealth of humankind, and that are so feared by those who want to ensure their power of command over uniform and uniformed beings, must be inspired – as befits their common destiny – by the universally accepted ideals that the UNESCO constitution establishes in the name of 'democratic principles'. These are: justice, liberty, equality and solidarity. The constitution adds 'intellectual and moral solidarity', as only an attitude of solidarity will make it possible to achieve the supreme objective of equal dignity for all human beings and, as stated in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration, allow them to 'act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood'.

Yet, as happened in the opening months of 1919 with the peace proposals of President Wilson, the interests of the immense war machine soon ruined this great project, which is so urgently needed and the absence of which is so conspicuous. As a result, we must continually remind ourselves of the reasons, given at the end of the two great 20th century wars, why brawn can prevail over the mind, and force over words.

In a masculine society (95% of decisions at world level continue to be taken exclusively by men), the perverse adage 'if you want peace, prepare for war' has been irrevocably implemented. It is always based on two equally perverse suppositions. The first is that humans have a tendency towards violence. The second, that subjects can be called on at any time to give their lives, if necessary, without argument and with blind obedience, for the causes that the omnipresent and indisputable powers

decide. Thus, the requirements for war are served: weapons and soldiers. Weapons are provided by manufacturers, who are gradually becoming the most important businesspeople on Earth. Soldiers are acquired by means of propaganda, biased information and fear; education that subjects rather than freeing, that emphasizes divisions instead of uniting; and training that makes automata of humans whose defining faculty is the ability to think, reflect and invent. Those who obey, often at the cost of their own lives, become heroes. 'Unknown' soldiers, but heroes. Those who dissent, retreat or desert are traitors. And we all know the fate reserved for traitors. All this explains why, against all the evidence, we are preparing for war instead of peace; why we tolerate the fact that 80% of humankind live precariously on 20% of all resources, while in the wealthy neighbourhoods of the global village less than 20% of humankind enjoys more than 80% of all resources, including – in the first place – knowledge. This also clarifies why the powerful are unwilling to accept the diversity that, to the extent of uniqueness, characterizes the human species. It explains why they are afraid of freedom of expression and unrestricted freedom of information. It also reveals why the powerful prefer democracy to consist of getting citizens to express their preferences every four or five years in a truly oppressive atmosphere of media interference, instead of really taking them into consideration, facilitating their participation and encouraging a culture of listening – the essence of democracy.

In the 1950s, hopes faded for a system that claimed to represent the 'peoples', but in fact consisted entirely of states – five of them (the victors in the war) with the power of veto. Instead of 'sparing' us from the 'scourge of war' and building peace, these states were preparing for war. It has taken many years of confrontation, bloody conflicts, revolutions and suffering of all kinds for humankind to realize, against the tide and against the practices that even today continue to muddy the dark horizon, that 'if you want peace, help to build it with your day-to-day behaviour', with your everyday attitude, with your hands stretched out but never raised.

DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES

The time of 'the peoples' has now arrived. The time of people has come. The 21st century really can become the century of people. Thanks to distance participation, in a few years, we will have real democracies, which will confound the manoeuvres that have characterized the different power scenarios throughout history. In a few years, women will finally be relevant in the decision-

making. In a few years, the voice of the people will finally be heard in the government of nations.

At the UNESCO General Conference held in New Delhi in 1956, Pandit Nehru stated that the high function of the intellectual organization of the United Nations was to act as the ‘conscience of mankind’. This is the mission of educators, creators, artists and scientists: in the midst of all the shouting and *mêlée*, remember the points of reference, the beacons that should guide our course.

‘Acting towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood’ required a better *distribution* of resources. This was the beginning of the ‘new international order’ that the United Nations attempted to put into effect, which was thwarted once more. Development for what? For whom? To provide citizens with the skills that would allow them to use their own resources, or at least contribute to the use of these resources, so that their living conditions could reach a minimum level that would prevent migration and brewing resentment; to ensure equal opportunities and the absence of discrimination due to place of birth, ethnic origins and so on; to make possible the supreme principle of equal dignity for all human beings. What kind of development needed to be promoted to reach these goals? The General Assembly argued for decades about the factors that should make up the perfect development model. Meanwhile, the resources that prosperous countries contributed to this development decreased.

In the 1960s, it became clear that development needed to be social, educational, cultural and scientific, as well as economic. It needed to be comprehensive. However, it took 50 years for the first world summit on social development to be held in Copenhagen. Let us no longer be fooled by those who insist that good economic development is needed to be able to distribute wealth adequately and equitably. That moment never arrives. Thus, on the eve of the 50th anniversary of its founding, the United Nations decided to focus the commemoration on three fundamental axes: social development, the fundamental role of women, and tolerance. However, in 1995 the commitments made in Copenhagen on social development fell into the vacuum created by the height of the market economy. The ‘globalizers’ were satisfied, and spent much time looking into the mirrors of their fortresses instead of opening doors and windows and looking at what was really going on in the world. So much so, that on 11 May 1996 the US president stated that results were so encouraging that it would be worth extending the economic criteria to a ‘market society’ and ‘market democracy’.

In the 1970s, a distinction was rightly made between *immediate* aid (rescue aid) for getting out of dramatic situations, and *rehabilitation aid* for ‘normalizing’ situations of underdevelopment by fostering endogenous skills,

training, and knowledge and technology transfer so that countries could acquire skills. In 1974, the General Assembly agreed that the wealthier countries would facilitate the development of the more needy by means of aid that totalled 0.7% of their GDP. This is obviously a very reasonable percentage, as most rich countries retain 99.3% of their GDP. Sadly, we all know what happened. Soon, most countries, with the exception of the Scandinavian nations, reduced their contributions to laughable percentages. Aid was replaced with loans granted under intolerable conditions by the World Bank, *their* bank, the bank of the most developed countries, which, by the way, had omitted its ‘surname’: ‘Reconstruction and Development’.

The borrowers were required to privatize, reduce their administrative force, and carry out infrastructure work in order to secure these loans. Such work would be undertaken by the lenders, since they had the qualified personnel and the machinery. How shameful that aid was replaced by loans, that poor countries became even poorer and ended up in debt and underselling the exploitation of their natural resources to major multinational concerns. Thus, financial flows were reversed: instead of moving from North to South, they began – to the disgust of a perplexed yet resigned humankind – to move from South to North. Today, there is a demand for the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization to radically change their methods. If they do not, popular resistance will achieve the transformations that commonsense imposes in a very short space of time.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In her capacity as chairwoman of the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1983, Gro Harlem Brundtland, the Norwegian prime minister, came up with the notion of ‘sustainable development’. This is development that allows for the renewal of natural resources that are consumed. Thus, we can stop the ecological deterioration caused by the process of industrialization and production and by a lifestyle that leads to the consumption of vast quantities of fuel and energy, all of which is in the hands of a privileged few. Development must respect the natural environment. A few years later, in 1992, the Rio de Janeiro Summit, called the Earth Summit, established global measures in Agenda 21. These measures aim for future generations to receive the legacy of a natural environment that does not restrict the quality of life of the inhabitants of the planet.

Like the Copenhagen commitments, the Rio agreements were not upheld by the richest and most powerful countries. The Kyoto Protocol for the reduction of green-

house gas emissions, and carbon dioxide in particular, contains ‘diluted’ measures in terms of both the release of these gases and their re-uptake. However, even these were completely ignored by the Bush administration, because the measures were ‘contrary to the interests of American industry’. The scientific community remained silent. Scientists and specialized institutions around the world did not raise their voices in disagreement, as they should have done, with yet another arbitrary decision of the American president. In August 2007, President Bush called a meeting in Washington, DC on climate change, thus confusing the issue. I have repeated endlessly that the best diagnosis is the one that allows you to effect treatment in time. New meetings, like the one called by the president of the USA, serve no other purpose than to delay the changes in direction that scientific rigour is urgently recommending.

It is time for action. If we want guidelines for general education on environmental matters, from the security of peace and never again from the peace of silence and mistrust and suspicion; if we want to create attitudes that promote environmental conservation, the construction of peace and the strengthening of democracy, we can use existing documents such as the Earth Charter. Since 2000, the Earth Charter has been a wonderful inspiration for action on many levels. It has led to participation in and contributions to the works of reflection of many panels and commissions. However, more than new diagnostic reports, recommendations and resolutions, what is needed is action. Major changes are required rapidly to reduce military spending and increase funds. This will meet the immediate demand of the world conscience: stop the death of thousands of people every day from starvation and from a lack of access to the right treatment for their health and quality of life.

Having analysed comprehensive, endogenous and sustainable development, the assistant administrator of UNICEF, Richard Jolly, wrote *Development with a Human Face* (Mehrotra and Jolly, 1987). This book was needed to make us realize that we had looked at many aspects and dimensions of the development process but had forgotten who its protagonists and beneficiaries should be. The beneficiaries were not those in urgent need but those who have turned the process of development into another source of income – one of the biggest – while most of humankind lives in ethically unacceptable conditions.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Despite being marginalized, and despite the fact that international power is gradually being transferred from

the ‘democracy’ of the United Nations to the ‘plutocracy’ of the G-7/G-8, the UN has not ceased to work to fulfil its mission by establishing guidelines and measures that, when put into practice, can rectify so many of the mistaken current trends. Thus, in addition to the summits and the aforementioned documents, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed a resolution in 1998 on the dialogue between civilizations; devised the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (United Nations, 1999); and the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2000). To facilitate the transition from a culture of force, brawn, imposition, violence and war to a culture of dialogue, understanding, conciliation and peace, we must encourage the participation of all citizens. All citizens must realize that they have to contribute, even if it is only by a small amount – a small seed – to the construction of the new world that we wish to pass on to our descendants. To achieve this, it is necessary to foster education in human rights and democracy, tolerance and mutual national and international understanding; to fight against all forms of discrimination; to promote democratic principles and practices in all areas of society; to combat poverty and achieve endogenous and sustainable development that benefits all and provides each person with a dignified way of life. More than 110 million signatures were obtained at the beginning of the century and of the millennium in favour of the Manifesto 2000 for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence. This manifesto committed signatories ‘in my everyday life, in my family, in my work, my community, my country and my region to respect all life, reject violence, share with others, listen to understand, preserve the planet and rediscover solidarity’. The Declaration and Programme of Action (United Nations, 1999) contains a considerable number of measures that require urgent implementation. These include fostering freedom of expression and information, and the ability and role of women in decision-making.

MILLENNIUM GOALS

In 2000, 189 heads of government and state met at the headquarters of the United Nations to commit to meeting the eight goals that make up the Millennium Declaration before 2015. The first goal consists of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. It has been calculated that 1.2 billion people (one in five) currently subsist on less than a dollar a day. 1.8 billion people (almost a third of the world population) live in a state of ‘poverty’. Eight hundred million people suffer from malnutrition. Poverty is not exclusive to developing countries: it is calculated that, in many

advanced countries, one fifth of the population lives below the poverty threshold.

The second goal is to achieve universal primary education. The third goal involves promoting equality between the sexes and the autonomy of women. The fourth consists of reducing infant mortality. The fifth aims to improve maternal health. The sixth is to fight AIDS, malaria and other diseases. The seventh involves ensuring environmental sustainability and the eighth consists of encouraging a global society for development.

The measures for achieving these goals are the result of the work of many specialists worldwide, and of first-class reports that, generally, do not require any amendments. We must now *quickly* convince ourselves of this, and *demand that those in power* stop postponing possible and feasible action, so that the few may become many, peacefully, without turmoil, 'in a spirit of brotherhood'. I frequently insist that the price of rejecting evolution is revolution. Revolutions do not tend to be good for anybody. We must understand that the difference between one and the other is the letter *R* for *responsibility*, and assuming this responsibility. In *The World Ahead* (Mayor, 1999), I examined, with the help of Jérôme Bindé, the state of the world at the end of the last century. A wealth of data and sources of information to analyse what needed to be done to meet the great demographic, healthcare, educational, energy, environmental, cultural and ethical challenges, was used. I proposed four 'new contracts': a new social contract, a new natural contract, a new cultural contract and a new moral contract. If based on sound principles, all these contracts flow like tributaries into the main river, which is a global endogenous development contract, *The Global Contract* (Fundación Cultura de Paz, 2001) that would enable the building of the other possible world that the vast majority of humankind is dreaming of.

Despite the chilling figures shown above, despite the images that move us from time to time, those who rule the world continue – with some exceptions – to be immersed in a culture of war and force. The tragic terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 were a terrible cry for attention from the whole of humanity (many of whom were watching live). With the exception of some callous people (who are capable of inducing the blind single-mindedness that leads to terrorists destroying themselves), the whole world has come out on the side of life, on the side of the victims. By coincidence, only a few hours before the attack, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) had announced from its Rome headquarters that over 35,000 children die every day, forgotten and unloved. However, out of sight, out of mind. We must always be aware of the things we do not

see, so that they can also become motives for emotion, reflection and action.

Following the reprisals in Afghanistan, everyone indulgently looked the other way and tried to take on board the logic of the wounded giant's reaction. But then, inexplicably and inadmissibly, there was a terrible war based on lies, on false premises and on potential threats with no basis. In September 2004, President Lula proposed passing measures for eradicating poverty. Through justice, not through charity. It is time to honour the many broken promises. It is not a time for handouts, but for solidarity based on justice, on the equal dignity of all.

One recent image, which has had a great impact, showed the interlaced hands of the UN's Secretary-General Kofi Annan, presidents Lula, Lagos and Chirac, and the Spanish prime minister, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, who furthermore proposed, to the surprise of many, promoting the 'Alliance of Civilizations', the building of bridges between cultures and interaction between beliefs. At the Millennium Goals Summit + 5 (United Nations, 2005), held in September 2005, the heads of state and government gave the warmest welcome to the Alliance of Civilizations initiative by firmly reaffirming their good intentions and unanimously recommending the transition towards a culture of peace and dialogue throughout the world.

By mid-2007, few actions had been undertaken in favour of this great transition. However, many activities continue to fuel current trends, with the turbulent panorama that I mentioned at the beginning of this paper. Yet each day (and this is what must be highlighted), there are more reasons for hope; for the participation of people; the consolidation of democracy; and the profound reform of the United Nations (Ubuntu, 2006); for words to finally replace force, imposition and violence; for citizens no longer to be subjects, but to be members of the human family, able to develop their distinctive creative ability to the full; citizens who are no longer silent because they are aware of the voice they owe to future generations. The voice of life.

EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION'S FUTURE ROLE

What are the main functions of higher education in contributing to all aspects of this potential world? How can we mobilize political will to provide solutions to the major challenges facing the world?

FUNCTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The main functions of higher education at national and

international level (particularly at the European Union level) are:

- *Training*: to transmit and disseminate up-to-date knowledge; to generate new knowledge and ensure the progress of knowledge; to promote excellent qualifications for professionals; and to strengthen democracy.
- *Consultation*: to improve the social dimension of higher education by facilitating its active participation in society. Such participation could involve advisory services for governments and parliaments on matters of profound public impact (current examples include climate change, avian flu, energy sources, neurological diseases and so on) and in setting national priorities. Europe should be, above all, a world reference for democratic behaviour. Higher education must produce highly qualified graduates and responsible citizens (UNESCO, 1998).
- *Prevention*: the duty of global forecasting, which will allow higher education to play an active role in society, especially in meeting new social and environmental needs. It will help society to plan for the future and be in charge of its own destiny (Tanguiane and Mayor, 2000). Universities must be a global watch tower (EC, 2006).

UNIVERSITIES IN SOCIETY AND FOR SOCIETY

- *The cultural and ethical mission*: today, higher education and research are essential for the sustainable cultural, socioeconomic and ecological development of people, communities and nations (UNESCO, 1998).
- *Autonomy, social responsibility and academic freedom*.
- *Education, higher education, economy and profitability*: education is not a branch of the economy. Nor is the educational process, its aims or results comparable to those of the economy.

Education is a vital function and an essential sector of society in and of itself – a condition of society's existence. Without it, there can be no 'full' society, because it brings together cultural, social, economic, civic and ethical functions. It ensures the continuity of society, and transmits the knowledge, skills and experience accumulated by humankind throughout history. It provides the skills that will allow society to programme, innovate and change, *even* in the area of the economy (Tanguiane and Mayor, 2000).

Higher education is essential for social progress, production, academic growth, affirming cultural identity, maintaining social cohesion, fighting against poverty and promoting a culture of peace (UNESCO, 1996).

One of the main missions of universities is to serve society and to contribute to resolving the major problems it faces (UNESCO, 1998).

Furthermore, universities must foster closer cooperation with the private sector. Industry must understand that there will be no future progress if the rate of innovation is not increased (EC, 2006). Incentives, particularly through tax laws, may increase the involvement of businesses, which is currently low.

We can only transform reality if we have complete, in-depth knowledge of it. It is important to use a transdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach to contribute to this knowledge.

INTEGRATING EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS AND POLICIES

Educational efforts and policies should be integrated in:

- Autonomous communities
- States
- Europe.

It is essential to ensure proper coordination between the universities of autonomous communities and those of states.

Focusing on Europe, the basic objective is to maximize the potential of universities and to increase their ability to provide the EU with the skills and the application of knowledge required for 'European quality' and competitiveness. However, we should bear in mind that what is important in the long term is the crucial contribution of higher education to a European Union with consolidated participatory, inclusive and anticipatory democracies (EC, 2006).

With 4,000 institutions, more than 17 million students and 1.5 million employees (of which 435,000 are researchers), European universities have tremendous potential (EC, 2006). Universities can contribute to implementing the Community Lisbon Programme (Commission of the European Communities, 2005) through political dialogue and mutual learning, especially within the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme.

MOBILITY OF TALENT

- *Lisbon Summit 2000*: Europe should be the leader of the knowledge-based economy by 2010. It is essential to hold onto the best talent (in terms of lecturers, researchers and students) by offering them the opportunity to train in centres of excellence abroad, but with opportunities to come back to European universities and centres.
- *ERC (The European Research Council)*: the ERC and its EU resource fund was launched on 1 January 2007.

It aims to promote basic research in all disciplines. Likewise, a major European university fund should be established that answers to a European university council. Such a council should include existing higher education organizations. It should cooperate closely with the Bologna Process, the ERC and related organizations. It is also essential to increase community programmes such as Socrates, Leonardo, Erasmus, Tempus, Marie Curie and so on, and the loans provided by the European Investment Bank Group and the structural funds. The financing mechanisms must be flexible and free from the slow bureaucratic requirements of the European Union (EC, 2006).

- *ISE (Initiative for Science in Europe)*: this institution maintains the impetus achieved by the ERC, with the *entire* scientific community united as a partner at the national (COSCE) and European (ISE) level (ISE, 2007).

MAIN PERSISTING PROBLEMS

- *Student access* (by *merit*, established in article 26.2 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights). Improved use of existing EU programmes for mobilizing students. The promotion of financial instruments, in basic and cooperative projects (EC, 2006).
- *Access of teaching staff, quality assurance*. Some ‘universities’ discredit the higher education system. *Quality alone* should guide university life. Improve the access of university teaching staff to research posts. Avoid premature lifetime appointments: the system of five-year contracts should be used. Once an employee’s ability has been accredited, tenure (as used in the USA) is a good option.
- *Application of science, patents* (van Ginkel, 1995; Salaburu, 2007). ‘There is no applied science if there is no science to apply’ (Houssay, 1965). The contribution of universities to research must therefore improve. Furthermore, there is no applied science if there is a lack of ability to transfer knowledge to patents and licences. *Both* are essential for leadership in ‘the knowledge-based economy’ (EC, 2006). Giving universities the flexibility to generate alternative sources of income is essential to guaranteeing their financial strength (La Caixa, 2007). In summary, they require an organized structure that is able to compete and to take risks (Gabilondo, 2006).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Casaldàliga, Pedro (2006) *Antología personal*. Trotta.
- Commission of the European Communities (2005) Common Actions for Growth and Employment: The Community Lisbon Programme.
- EC (2006) Communiqué of the European Commission to the European Parliament and Council: *Carrying out the reforms necessary for modernizing the higher education sector: education, research and innovation*, M. Figel and M. Potocnik. Contribution of F. Mayor in monitoring the informal meeting of heads of state and government at Hampton Court.
- Fundación Cultura de Paz (2001) *El contrato global*. Madrid.
- Gabilondo, Ángel (2006) 2010: odisea en el espacio de educación superior, *El País*.
- Ginkel, Hans, J.A. van (1995) University 2050. The organization of creativity and innovation, *Higher Education Policy*, 8(4), December.
- Houssay, Bernardo (1965) Nobel laureate in Physiology and Medicine.
- ISE Green Paper (2007) European Commission: *Inventing our Future Together*, ERA, *New Perspectives*, 4 April.
- La Caixa (2007) *Universidades americanas y europeas, cuestión de Estado*. Servicio de Estudios de la Caixa, April.
- Mayor, F. (1984) *Mañana siempre es tarde*. Espasa-Calpe. (English version 1987).
- Mayor, F. (1996) *Memoria del futuro*. UNESCO.
- Mayor, F. (1999) *Un mundo nuevo (Un monde nouveau, The World Ahead)*. Paris: Odile Jacob.
- Mehrotra, S. and Jolly, R. (1987) *Development with a Human Face*. Oxford: OUP.
- Salaburu, Pello (2007) *La universidad en la encrucijada. Europa y EE. UU.* Spain: European Academy of Science and Arts.
- Tanguiane, S. and Mayor F. (2000) *L’enseignement supérieur au XXI^{ème} siècle*, Paris: Herm Sc. Pub.
- Ubuntu (World Forum of Civil Society Networks) (2006) *Reforma en profundidad de las organizaciones internacionales*. Geneva, November.
- UNESCO (1996) Declaration on Higher Education, Latin America and Cuba. Havana, Cuba.
- UNESCO (1998) Declaration at the World Conference on Higher Education, Paris.
- United Nations General Assembly (1999) Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. Resolution of 13 September.
- United Nations (2000) Resolution on the Millennium Goals, September.
- United Nations General Assembly (2005) Summit on Millennium Goals + 5, September.