International Advocacy Reports and Statements

UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in Europe, North America and Israel
Bucharest, 22-23 May 2009

The two-day session addressed the Main Challenges for Higher Education. Speeches and messages were provided by:

• Mrs. Ecaterina Andronescu, Minister of Education, Research and Innovation
• Mr. Emil Boc, Prime-Minister of the Romanian Government
• Mr. Cristian Diaconescu, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs
• Mr. Jean Figel, European Committee for Education, Training, Culture and Youth;
• Mr. Qian Tang, General Director of UNESCO;
• Mr. Georges Haddad, Director of UNESCO’s Higher Education Division;
• Ms Marlies Leegwater, representative of the Bologna Group;
• Mr. Emil Constantinescu, former Rector of Bucharest University (1992-1996) and former President of Romania (1996-2000).
• HRH the Prince El Hassan bin Talal, Chairman of the Arab Thought Forum, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Five parallel half-day sessions addressed questions related to accession, values, quality, competitiveness and challenges for higher education in a globalizing world.

IFUW was represented by three members of the Romanian Association of University Women (ANFDUR): Mrs. Julieta Mirea, Mrs. Ileana Mustata and Mrs, Gabriela Lupchian. They identified the following key issues for IFUW follow-up:

• Need for flexible education focused on youth potential;
• Role of higher education in removing insecurities and recovering of the sense of duty and being a good citizen who knows the law, his/her rights and responsibilities, capable of communicating, creating and criticising;
• Increasing role of universities in striking a balance between cultural origins and common environment, an important issue considering the increased mobility in the academic area;
• Contributions of higher education institutions to culture discovery and creating an image of the future based on the memory of the past;
• Need for providing attractive conditions in home countries, to enable those abroad to return home to support spiritual enrichment and the creation of a positive vision on the future of their fellow citizens;
• Elimination of all forms of discrimination among students (based on gender, age, religion etc.);
• Providing access to university education for disabled people and students coming from families without school education;
• Educating students to become active citizens, involved in the process of discovering the positive moral values, not mere “customers”, as happens in some private universities.

Report submitted by
Julieta Mirea, Ileana Mustata and, Gabriela Lupchian, Romanian Association Members

For additional conference background - http://www.cepes.ro/forum/outline.htm