



### **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>*