

At the proposal and invitation of Josep Ferrer Llop, rector of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Federico Mayor Zaragoza, President of the Foundation for a Culture of Peace, and Josep Laporte i Salas, President of the Institute of Catalan Studies, we, the undersigned Nobel Laureates, meeting in Barcelona today, Wednesday, 20 October 2004, wish to make the following declaration:

1. Aware that the Universal Forum of Cultures – Barcelona 2004, which closed on September 26, presents ‘a new opportunity to learn about and help to resolve problems the world faces today, as an experience enabling us to achieve, through the word and through encounter, different levels of knowledge and action in favour of a better world’.
 - 1.1 We share, in particular, its final call to ‘strengthen the standing of principles defending peace, sustainability and diversity’.
2. Appraised of the work achieved by the Barcelona International Conference on Higher Education, which took place on October 18 and 19 and focused particularly on the theme of the social commitment of universities in the 21st century and on content and aspects that should be taken into account in drawing up the ‘World Report on Higher Education’, which will be presented for the first time in 2005.
 - 2.1 We have considered and discussed, taking as our starting-point an introductory address formulated and presented by Federico Mayor, some of the concepts that, in our opinion, should form the basis of the university’s social commitment in the 21st century. The proceedings will, over the coming weeks, be edited, published and given widespread publicity. In advance of this, we should like to put forward the following points:
 - 2.1.1 Helping to reduce and prevent poverty and conflicts by providing the necessary funding to guarantee education for all, with respect for diversity, can help us to meet global challenges.
 - 2.1.2 As we live today in a world whose peoples are brought closer together by telecommunications and transport systems, world leaders should take the necessary measures and find the necessary funding to guarantee universal education for all, particularly in Third World countries.
 - 2.1.3 Education should be a priority responsibility in all countries; universities should promote the spread of education in developing countries, listening and imposing neither criteria nor models.
 - 2.1.4 The future of higher education depends to a large extent on the students who gain access to it; it is therefore essential that the university should maintain a permanent dialogue with teachers at other educational levels, helping to ensure the quality of the entire educational process.
 - 2.1.5 As established in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all citizens should enjoy truly equal opportunities with regard to access to higher education.
 - 2.1.6 Students should be helped to think and to take ethical considerations into account, thus equipping them to take part in the day-to-day task of building peace.
 - 2.1.7 Illiteracy is often confused with ignorance, knowledge with wisdom, instruction with education; the university should help to model each individual’s civil responsibilities, complementing and developing the educational role of both the family and society as a whole.
 - 2.1.8 Basic scientific education should be promoted for all university students whilst also promoting their humanist education.
 - 2.1.9 An international grant fund should be established for student exchanges all over the world, as well as summer campuses for adolescents, in order to promote cultural exchanges and world peace.
 - 2.1.10 Funds should be provided to make it possible for researchers trained in foreign countries to return home.
 - 2.1.11 Society should be duly informed about scientific advances and the benefits these have on quality of life. To this end, universities should play the role of advisers to parliaments, local authorities, companies, and so on.
 - 2.1.12 Education should take upon itself the goal of regenerating democracy to foster the transition to a culture of peace.
3. Considering that this Meeting of Nobel Laureates in Barcelona has presented an opportunity for debate amongst ourselves in what we consider to be a highly positive development, providing a good embryonic space in which to generate a forum for broad, universal reflection on the moral and intellectual challenges we face as we enter the 21st century (such as the genetic revolution, environmental deterioration, the information society, the new challenges for higher education ...).

3.1 We, the undersigned Nobel Laureates consider that the existence of spaces/forums in which we can debate, from a forward-looking standpoint, the crucial issues linked to the challenges that face humanity as we enter the new century is an opportunity and a challenge that we wish to take up and use as advantageously as possible. We are

aware that the complexities and uncertainties of these times are so great that only through the most diverse knowledge and visions that can be brought to bear in an open, plural debate can we contribute to a better understanding and, perhaps, propose appropriate measures to respond to these challenges.

3.2 We therefore propose to

attend a second meeting in Autumn 2005 with the aim, again within the general framework of 'the social commitment of higher education', of contributing as far as possible to the prevention, early identification and anticipation of challenges that exist or may exist in future, in order to build this future in peace, harmony, diversity and sustainability.

SPECIAL COLLABORATION B

FIRST INTERNATIONAL BARCELONA CONFERENCE ON HIGHER EDUCATION (October 18–19, 2004)

THE SOCIAL COMMITMENT OF UNIVERSITIES



DECLARATION OF BARCELONA

We, the Global University Network for Innovation representatives, distinguished Nobel Prize Winners and Conference participants have met together at the First International Barcelona Conference on Higher Education, six years after the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education (1998), one year after the Follow-up Meeting of the World Conference on Higher Education (Paris, 2003), and just after the Universal Forum of Cultures (Barcelona, 2004), with the objective of evaluating the work developed by GUNI, debating the Report presented by its President on 'The social commitment of the University in the 21st century' and making new proposals related to the contents and methodologies of two main GUNI proj-

ects: The authors of the series of World Reports on Higher Education and the International Observatory of Best University Practices:

- **are convinced** of the need for constructing social equity to eradicate the excluding effects of globalization and obtain a lifelong quality education for all
- **are inspired** by the principles of the Declaration of the World Conference on Higher Education (Higher Education in the 21st Century: Vision and Action)
- **consider** that every University should have a commitment towards the society that it represents and that this social commitment is part of its essence
- **wish** to contribute to the development of the Action Plan of the World Conference on Higher Education and its follow-up
- **are committed** within **their** respective

institutions to undertake, through GUNI, whatever **they** can to encourage policies and actions leading to a stronger social commitment of universities

- **promote** cooperation, in particular through UNESCO chairs, among universities of the developed and developing countries, not only as an ethical duty but, above all, as an irreplaceable source of knowledge
- **support** the projects being carried out by GUNI (regional activities and Newsletter) and especially the two new GUNI projects – the series of World Reports on Higher Education and the International Observatory of Best University Practices
- **agree** to closely cooperate in order to implement the two main GUNI projects and to meet again in November 2005 for the Second International Barcelona Conference on Higher Education.