

Quebec Declaration concerning Intergenerational Solidarity
Québec City, May 23, 1999

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Word from the Mayor of Quebec City

Today, under the effects of globalization, cultural and national boundaries are being abolished in favour of a vast network of exchange of information, services and goods. In business, as in private life, you are now in contact with people in Pakistan, the U.S.A., Bolivia, or Italy.

In a way, globalization takes on a pattern of “horizontal development” of all human activities on the surface of the globe. Without neglecting the benefits of this trend, one forgets all too often that by encouraging intergenerational solidarity, the entire planet can also take advantage of what I would call “vertical” development, the fruit of exchanges and collaboration between all age groups in our societies.

The Quebec Declaration on Intergenerational Solidarity, signed on May 23, 1999, emphasizes the need to cultivate harmonious and productive relationships between the generations, particularly to foster human dignity, peace and social justice.

If we are fortunate, the energy and hope that we are now investing in globalization will be shared with intergenerational solidarity in the coming years. The quality of the world that we live in depends on this.

The Mayor of Quebec City,

Jean-Paul L’Allier

Foreword

Under the distinguished patronage of the Intergovernmental Agency for Francophone Communities (Agence intergouvernementale de la Francophonie) and UNESCO along with the the International Francophone Senior Citizens' Association (Association Internationale francophone des aînés/AIFA), in partnership with the International Youth Forum for Francophone Communities (Forum international des jeunes pour la Francophonie/FIJEF), organized an International Symposium in Quebec city with the theme of Intergenerational Understanding: A Strategy for All Ages. This Symposium took place from May 21 to May 23, 1999.

Six months prior to the event many people in Francophone communities around the world formed discussion groups to evaluate the problems to be addressed to the Symposium. Based on comments and suggestions received, a committee prepared a draft statement concerning intergenerational rights and duties which were to be discussed during the Symposium. For the first time within Francophone communities, a declaration pertaining to intergenerational rights and freedoms shall acknowledge duties among generations, while referring to the following areas: human values, culture, education, society, and economic matters.

In a statement issued in November 1997 regarding the responsibilities of current generations with respect to future generations, UNESCO solemnly proclaimed that "current generations possess the responsibility of ensuring that the needs and interests of current and future generations shall be fully safeguarded." As a result, the AIFA and the FIJEF had placed top priority in attempting to comprehend intergenerational relations and understanding; it is essential that each generation understands its role and its responsibilities toward one another. Moreover, in a speech given in Paris on March 22, 1999, the Secretary-General of the International Organization of Francophone communities (Organisation internationale de la Francophonie), Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, emphasized that "solidarity, reciprocity, and partnership are the essential conditions for allowing a collective project to live and to grow."

The outcome of the work sessions which took place during the Symposium was the adoption, the issuing, and the signing of the Quebec Declaration concerning Intergenerational Solidarity by more than one hundred delegates and representatives of local and national associations and international nongovernmental organizations. Before adjourning, the delegates unanimously adopted a resolution pertaining the establishment of an international follow-up committee which would be responsible for disseminating the Declaration. Formation of this committee demonstrates the organizers' intent of promoting awareness among the general population as well as governmental and nongovernmental organizations whose activities are oriented toward development and social cohesion.

(Excerpt from L'Année francophone internationale [International French Speakers' Yearbook], 2000 edition)

Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali welcomes the AIFA
and the FIJEF

Messrs. Louis-Philippe Blanchard and Jocelyn Tremblay, who are respectively the President of the Association internationale francophone des aînés (AIFA) and the Director-General of the Forum international des jeunes pour la Francophonie (FIJEF), were received by the Secretary-General of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie [International Organization of Francophone communities], Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, during his visit to Quebec city in September, 1998. This meeting commenced the effort which led to the adoption of the Quebec Declaration concerning Intergenerational Solidarity.

The Declaration

Whereas the United Nations Charter affirms the importance of humanity, maintaining peace, and sparing future generations from the scourge of war;
Whereas there is a basis for close cooperation with the United Nations Organization for Education, Science, and Culture (UNESCO) and with the Intergovernmental Agency for French-Speaking Communities (AIF) for the purpose of promoting the development of harmonious and productive relationships among generations;
Whereas UNESCO seeks to ensure protection of future generations' needs and interests, which is explained within its Convention concerning Protection of International Cultural and Natural Resources;
Whereas it is important to contribute to the success of the International Year of Older Persons, which was proclaimed by the United Nations Organization for 1999, as well as to the success of the September 1999 Summit for Francophone Heads of State and Government Leaders in Moncton, Canada which will concentrate upon youth;
Whereas men and women in every generation seek development and improvement of their living conditions within a society which promotes intergenerational solidarity;
Whereas intergenerational solidarity depends upon sharing of knowledge and experiences not only within the same region or the same country, but at the level of French speaking areas and in every humane and pluralistic community in the world;
Whereas solidarity among generations and among people is essential in order for economic development to promote human dignity, peace, and social justice;
The Association internationale francophone des aînés (AIFA) and the Forum international des jeunes pour la Francophonie (FIJEF), along with cooperating institutions and with participants in the Symposium concerning Intergenerational Understanding, a Strategy for All Ages, are proclaiming adoption of the present Declaration concerning Intergenerational Solidarity in Quebec on this twenty-third day of May, in the year nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and they hope that this day shall be recognized each year as the International Day for Intergenerational Solidarity.
This Declaration concerning Intergenerational Solidarity defines an ideal which is to be attained in respect for individuals' rights and freedoms, as a moral obligation for those who shall endorse it. This ideal poses challenges in different degrees according to specific regions or countries and the issues which are being faced. The Declaration also

cites the importance of recognizing that affirmation of rights involves affirmation of duties.

1. Human Values

Article 1

Every person is urged to live in accordance with fundamental human values such as recognition and respect for human beings in the multiple dimensions of their development and in accordance with the social responsibilities which intergenerational solidarity establishes.

Article 2

Women and men from every generation are being urged to base intergenerational solidarity upon respectful dialogue, common sense, and openness to changes, which should lead to reciprocal understanding as well as mutual transmission of human values.

Article 3

Women and men from every generation are being urged to cooperate in the development of communities which value human beings for themselves instead of on account of their social status, and where solidarity (i.e. "the group") is more strongly promoted than individualism.

II. Education and Culture

Article 4

In order to gain access to basic education, professional instruction, and continuous development, all generations must cooperate in order to induce society's leaders to safeguard these rights.

Article 5

1. All generations must unite in order to participate in the development of culture, which is the source of a community's identity.
2. As an indication of cultural development, members of different generations must promote their own forms of expression.

Article 6

1. Older persons, who represent a living memory, possess the duty of preserving their cultural heritage and transmitting it by all possible means of communication to other generations which, in turn, must safeguard and preserve this heritage.
2. Different institutions such as the family, educational institutions, the media, and private sector, must contribute to the development and the transmission of this cultural heritage.

III. Life in Society

Article 7

1. Governments, pressure groups, and society in general must encourage cooperation among generations in order to develop their sense of belonging within their communities.
2. Every generation possesses the duty of encouraging social interaction so as to create and maintain firm intergenerational ties.

Article 8

Young persons and senior citizens have the right and the duty to contribute to society's development. To accomplish this, they must be provided with resources to pursue their own destinies as well as allowing them to have active roles in society.

Article 9

Because the family, in different forms constitutes the very first site for education, forming meaningful ties, and sharing, governments must provide families with the necessary support on a cultural, social, and economic level.

Article 10

1. Every society, through those who govern it and through its institutions, must offer appropriate assistance and every other adequate form of services to its members who are most vulnerable, whether on account of limited capabilities or poverty.
2. Families which offer care to persons who are no longer independent must be able to rely upon various forms of government assistance and upon other resources from society when necessary.

Article 11

1. By means of appropriate institutions, society must provide adequate medical assistance which takes patients' personal situations into account, regardless of their age and economic condition.
2. In terms of respecting the wishes expressed by persons who are in the final phase of their lives, society possesses the responsibility of providing personalized support.

IV. The economy and social policies

Article 12

Every adult person is entitled to employment and to economic conditions which respect his or her human dignity, while allowing satisfaction of his or her essential needs and promoting his or her participation in society.

Article 13

1. Collective decisions concerning establishment and organization of retirement systems must be based upon equitable distribution of the portion of taxation arising from intergenerational solidarity.
2. Retirement supported by a pension represents a social, economic, and intergenerational value if the person receiving a pension is able to occupy an active role in society according to his or her capabilities, and if retirement promotes participation in the labor market by young persons.

Article 14

1. Notwithstanding competition and excessive emphasis upon the profitability and performance which an economic system may foster, governments must ensure that employers are fulfilling their social responsibilities.
2. Employers must maintain employment and must adequately prepare the younger generations in order to safeguard society's economic resources.

Article 15

Persons who are stockholders in institutions of an economic nature must pursue responsible behavior on a social level while promoting establishment of equitable working conditions. Additionally, international institutions and governments must, in turn, fulfill their roles as administrators of human welfare.

Article 16

The assistance which is offered to young workers and young businesspersons by senior citizens and the role which non-profit institutions such as nongovernmental organizations (NGO's) occupy in relation to younger generations can provide a valuable contribution.

Article 17

Through its associations and pressure groups, intergenerational solidarity must combat any causes of social inequity, as well as any forms of labor which restrict children's right to education and prevent them from gaining full access to freedom, equality, and solidarity at an adult age.

Article 18

Intergenerational groups should unify their efforts to make governments give priority in their financial decisions to the areas of education, health, and social protection, as well as to environmental protection for future generations.

Quebec, May 23, 1999

Mrs. Aïssata Kane, former Mauritanian minister, president of the Association internationale des femmes francophones (AIFF), signing the Declaration.

Follow-up

Excerpt from the minutes of the closing session of the International Symposium on *La compréhension intergénérationnelle: une stratégie pour tous les âges* [Inter-generational Understanding: A Strategy for all Ages]. Quebec, May 23, 1999.

RESOLUTION

On this twenty-third day of May, in the year one thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine, at the official closing session of the International Symposium on *La compréhension intergénérationnelle: une stratégie pour tous les âges*, which has brought together members from various Francophone countries and regions and organized by the Association internationale francophone des aînés (AIFA) and the Forum international des jeunes pour la francophonie (FIJEF), it has been proposed that:

- The two organizations listed above ensure the broad distribution of the *Déclaration de Québec sur la solidarité intergénérationnelle* throughout the Francophone community and international community in collaboration with the involved regions and their governments;
 - This distribution lead to policy definitions and the taking of actions that will ensure real progress in intergenerational solidarity;
 - A follow-up committee be established within the AIFA and the FIJEF regarding the present Declaration, thereby ensuring the application of the preceding proposals.
- Unanimously adopted by the assembly.

Jocelyn Tremblay
Secretary General

INTERNATIONAL FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE

MANDATE

Ensure the distribution of the *Déclaration sur la solidarité intergénérationnelle* adopted at the Quebec International Symposium on May 23, 1999, under the aegis of the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* and UNESCO.

Represent the parties who have signed the *Déclaration de Québec* among intergovernmental organizations, public authorities and organizations and associations sharing common objectives.

FUNCTIONNING

The *Association internationale francophone des aînés* (AIFA) and the *Forum international des jeunes pour la francophonie* (FIJEF), duly mandated by the representatives of the associations and organizations attending the *Symposium international de Québec sur la compréhension intergénérationnelle* will:

- Supervise the preparation and holding of follow-up committee meetings;
- Ensure the replacement and renewal of members in order to see to the continuity of follow-up committee activities;
- Ensure the administrative support needed for the follow-up committee to function.

INTERNATIONAL FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE

PROPOSED MEMBERS

Ms. Aïssata KANE (Mauritania), Chair

President of the Association internationale
des femmes francophones (AIFF)

Mr. Jocelyn TREMBLAY (Quebec),

Secretary General

General Director of the Forum international
des jeunes pour la francophonie (FIJEF)

Ms. Fatima ABOULHAYANE (Morocco)

Vice president of Jeune francophonie France

Mr. Jérôme Baloge (France)

President of the Forum international des jeunes pour la francophonie (FIJEF)

Mr. Louis-Philippe BLANCHARD (Acadie)

President of the Association internationale
francophone des aînés (AIFA)

Ms. Jeannine BUGAIN (Ivory Coast)

Secretary General of the Comité international des femmes africaines pour le
développement (CIFAD)

Mr. Ramanou KOUFERIDJI (Benin)

President of the Groupe Afrique conscience
et solidarité

Ms. Francine LAMONTAGNE (United States of America)

Program Manager, International Activities (AARP)

Mr. Laurent Rodrigue (Quebec)

Association internationale francophone des aînés (AIFA)

Ms. Nathalie ZEMO (Gabon)

Forum pour un avenir commun (Global Meeting of Generations)

The AIFA

The Association internationale francophone des aînés (AIFA)

The AIFA, which was founded in 1981, allows senior citizens to participate in the growth of the international Francophone community around the world. Under the slogan “Seniors participating in society,” the AIFA seeks to bring together institutions and services for senior citizens, as well as individual seniors that value the older people and who defend their interests.

- It encourages seniors citizens maximum participation in society by being active at every level, specially where decisions that affect them are being implemented.
- It also promotes contact among various age groups and seeks to increase consciousness among the entire population in relation to aging and retirement.
- It promotes the use of the French language and understanding of Francophone cultures by stressing greater mutual knowledge among senior citizens in French-speaking countries and communities.

Leaders from senior citizens groups meet every two years to explore a general theme. The plan of action that develops from these meetings permit each region to create or update strategies jointly with senior citizens’ associations. On the threshold of the year 2000, senior citizens are recognized under the “gray power” designation with its rights and obligations.

The AIFA has adopted “social participation by seniors” as its warhorse. Senior citizens and retired persons are therefore invited on a voluntary basis to contribute within their environments to less poverty, more justice, less suffering, more love, less exclusion, and more joy of living. The AIFA supports the idea of senior citizens’ planning new commitments for themselves after retirement.

The FIJEF

The Forum international des jeunes pour la francophonie (FIJEF)

The International Youth Forum for Francophone Communities (FIJEF) originated from a desire to bring together Francophone young persons throughout the world. In more specific terms, its goal is:

- Participation in the awakening of Francophone consciousness by initiating projects supporting cooperation among French-speaking people, as well as development and dissemination of the French language in its richness and diversity;
- Forming a new generation of Francophone community activists;
- Reinforcing existing ties and cohesion among different local or faraway associations which are involved in Francophone communities around the world.
- Striving to ensure better representation of youth from French-speaking communities in French-speaking events, both nationally and internationally.
- Having been established in 1997, at the time of the Francophone Communities' Conference at Jonquiere, in Quebec, Canada, the FIJEF consists of national committees which exist in Acadia, Benin, Cameroon, the French-speaking Regions of Belgium, France, and Quebec. Other committees shall be added in the Côte d'Ivoire, in Haiti, in Lebanon, in Morocco, in Romania, and in Sénégal.

Since March, 1998, the FIJEF has maintained a permanent office on the premises of the new *Maison de la francophonie* [Center for Francophone Communities] in Quebec city, which was officially opened by Quebec's Minister of International Relations on the occasion of the International Day for Francophone Communities.

La Francophonie,
lieu d'échange entre les peuples
et entre les générations

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