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Kazakhstan and UNESCO: some aspects of cooperation

This article considers some aspects of cooperation between Kazakhstan and UNESCO in the field of culture, education, science and information. The article also analyzes the activity of Kazakhstan on the implementation of the provisions of international conventions in the above areas, such as the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, ratified by Kazakhstan in 2003. The authors assess the work of UNESCO in all fields and projects that are implemented in Kazakhstan.

Key words: UN, UNESCO, Kazakhstan, global development, cooperation, cultural and natural heritage.

Today, Kazakhstan is one of the leading countries in Central Asia on the level of international activity; passes a stage of internal socio-economic changes which are reflected in the foreign policy of the country [1]. The ambitious task of becoming one of the thirty most competitive countries of the world objectively encourages Kazakhstan to greater involvement in the affairs of the international community [2].

President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev, addressing the participants of the 28th session of the General Conference on 15th November 1995, said that over half a century, UNESCO has become a reputable international organization, which actively influences the processes of global development. Occupying a central position between Europe and Asia, being the scene of economic and political contacts, Kazakhstan is able to become a link connecting the two great civilizations of East and West. Since independence, the country is experiencing a spiritual renaissance and is committed to the revival of the cultural traditions of the Great Silk Road, the spirituality artery, which has left a deep mark in the outlook of Kazakhs. However, without the blossoming of national cultures, capable of mutual enrichment, there cannot be a stable economic development, social progress, democracy and durable peace in the world [3].

Kazakhstan, playing a prominent role in the international arena, has managed to transform its position from international aid recipient country to a donor country in the twenty years of independence. In Kazakhstan, a number of reforms were held in the fields of culture, education, science and information.

On an ongoing basis in cooperation with the UNESCO Cluster Office in Almaty implemented projects for the preservation and promotion of cultural and natural heritage of Kazakhstan. As a result of this interaction «The Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yassauï» (2003), «Petroglyphs within the Archaeological Landscape of Tamgaly» (2004), Korgalzhyn and Nauryzum national parks within the category «Sary-Arka — Steppe and Lakes Northern Kazakhstan» (2008), «Akzhayik» state nature reserve and «Katon-Karagay» national park (2014) included in the UNESCO World Heritage List [4].

In early 2013 the National Commission of Kazakhstan on UNESCO and ISESCO jointly with the Chinese and Kyrgyz parties has completed the preparation of the first segment of a serial transboundary nomination to the UNESCO World Heritage List — «Silk Road: the initial section and the route network of the Tien Shan corridor». In the framework of first phase has been nominated 8 monuments of Silk Road's Zhetysay segment: Ancient settlements Talgar Kayalyk, Karamergen located in Almaty region and Aktobe, Ornek, Kulan, Kostobe, Akyrtyas located in Zhambyl region. In February, 2013 nomination dossier was submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre (WHC). On June 22, 2014 in Doha, Qatar at the 38th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee's was taken decision for the inclusion of properties on the World Heritage List [5].

In order to implement the WHC recommendations for the conservation of the outstanding universal value of the World Heritage site — the petroglyphs of Tamgaly in 2013 had developed a feasibility study for construction of visit-center in the area of regulation of the reserve-museum building, work has begun on the preparation of a management plan for the study, preservation and popularization of this wonderful architectural monument.

Active work is being done to implement the provisions of the International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003), which was ratified by Kazakhstan. National Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) created in 2012 under the National Committee

of the Kazakhstan continued its work. As a result of the work done by the Committee the Head of State was approved in January 2013 and in April 2013 Government approved the concept of preservation and development of ICH of RK designed to be a basic document for the development of comprehensive measures for ICH protection, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement and transmission through formal and informal education. Also in this period, the order of the Minister of Culture approved National list of intangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan, which originally included 45 items.

At the initiative of UNESCO Cluster Office in Almaty from April 2012 to February 2013 were held series of sub-regional training on mechanisms for implementation of the International UNESCO Convention on the protection of intangible cultural heritage in Kazakhstan. The purpose of these trainings was the training of national and regional experts on procedures of completion and submission of nominations to the UNESCO registries, strengthening regional cooperation on drawing up joint multinational applications, exchange of experiences and practices in the field of inventory, protection and promotion of intangible cultural heritage in the region.

However, in the UNESCO country program document for the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2012–2014 is noted that Kazakhstan has not yet ratified key international agreements such as the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property of 1970 [6; 147–155] and the Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions of 2005.

In the field of traditional crafts, UNESCO continues to work with the artisans to establish quality standards and adapt products to national, regional and international markets, which has an impact on job creation for vulnerable groups, especially women and young people through the project of UNESCO and the Korean Trust Fund for the development of creative industries in Kazakhstan (2011–2012) [7; 19].

In education, Kazakhstan consistently implements global UNESCO program «Education for All» and «Education for Sustainable Development». The country is also an active participant of the system of UNESCO Associated Schools (ASPnet). Today, under the «UNESCO Associated Schools» project there are 20 schools, 4 more schools are candidate schools. 3 ASPnet schools of Almaty city are involved in international pilot project of UNESCO's «Education for the Future».

August 21, 2013 in Astana hosted a regional forum dedicated to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the education and development of appropriate development strategy after 2015. In the event was attended by the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education K. Singh, which subsequently highlighted results the Forum in his report at the next UN General Assembly session in September 2013 [8; 10].

A very important contribution to the development of cultural and educational programs through the youth in the country is making by Kazakhstan National Federation of UNESCO Clubs, which consists of 32 clubs with more than 3000 active members all over Kazakhstan. Organizing and carrying on a permanent basis the various national, regional and international activities of UNESCO Clubs Federation are working on inculcation of the country's younger generation high ideals and principles of UNESCO.

For example, August 22–23, 2013 International Conference «Global Ethics: Save Planet Earth» was held in Astana with the support of the National Commission and the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs with the participation of renowned experts and UNESCO experts on ethics and intercultural communication, education and cultural heritage of Central Asia, the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and America. The outcome of the event was the adoption of the Astana Declaration and transference it to the Director General of UNESCO I. Bokova for the further promotion of ideas of global ethics within the Organization [9]. During the conference, also held an Extraordinary Executive Council of the Asian Federation of UNESCO Clubs (AFUCA), where one of the topics of discussion was the opening AFUCA Delegation in Kazakhstan.

In the Republic of Kazakhstan project «Children are painting the world» was launched in 1999. The initiative, announced by the Director-General of UNESCO, has been highly successful: the number of UNESCO Clubs, increased to thirty-two, significantly strengthened and reflects the geography of the country, expanded network of educational organizations, as well as increased the number of participants. In 2010, in the framework of the official, the «rapprochement of cultures», which became a milestone and a new stage in the development of the project, Kazakhstan initiated a biennial international festival of children's art «Children are painting the world. Central Asia».

From 20 to 24 August 2014 in Astana was held the next stage of the International Festival «Children Draw World. Central Asia», which was attended by 150 young artists from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajiki-

stan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The event was timed to the celebration of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures. This project is supported by the UNESCO Cluster Office in Almaty and the National Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan for UNESCO and ISESCO. Over the years the festival has become one of the most important and promising projects in the cultural sphere, involving a growing number of young participants.

According to speech of S.A. Lazarev, Director of the UNESCO Cluster Office in Almaty for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan: «...regular holding of the festival and the publication of the album «Children Draw World. Central Asia» have become a sort of starting point for the activation of the youth as the main driving force of the UNESCO Club movement. Young people should be given opportunities for active participation in the organization of various events in order to promote cultural diversity, dialogue, tolerance, mutual understanding and cooperation. In other words — in the implementation of UNESCO's ideals and principles» [10].

In the field of science Kazakhstan actively participates in the UNITWIN of UNESCO Department. Currently in Kazakhstan there are 4 UNESCO Departments: UNESCO Department «Science and Spirituality» at the Institute of Oriental Studies named after R.Suleymenov, UNESCO Department on Pedagogy at the Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, UNESCO Department on Journalism and Communication at the Kazakh National University named after Al-Farabi, and the UNESCO Department on tolerance at L.Gumilyov ENU [11; 8].

In the field of information and communication there progressively implementing training programs on journalism in the national educational context, as well as becoming more popular applications of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). For example, in 2013, Almaty hosted the Central Asian Symposium «Information and Communication Technologies in Education: Innovative ICT practices for learning throughout life», organized by the National Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan for UNESCO and ISESCO in cooperation with MES and the Regional educational Bureau for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok.

It is worth mentioning separately the main achievements of Kazakhstan in UNESCO line activities. In the first place, it is the adoption of the Declaration of Alma-Ata on Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Asian Media in October, 1992 [1]. In the period 1999–2001, Kazakhstan was elected and served as Deputy Chairman of the Executive Board of UNESCO from the Group of Asian-Pacific region, representing all the countries of the region in the main governing body of UNESCO, coordinate and make suggestions and questions for consideration by the Organization on behalf of the Asia-Pacific region [12].

The recent visits of UNESCO General Director Irina Bokova to Astana in May, 2012 and in August, 2013 reinforce the growing prestige of Kazakhstan in the Organization. Kazakhstan's chairmanship in the UNESCO Committee on conventions and recommendations for the period from 2011 to 2013, which is a permanent subsidiary body of the Executive Council of the organization and was established in accordance with the 70th Session of the decision of the Executive Board in 1965, also made a significant contribution to the role of the country's development Organization [13]. A significant event of the reviewed period was the election of Kazakhstan in 19 November, 2013 as a member of the World Heritage Committee for the next four-year cycle. This success was the result of intense campaigning and effective interaction between representatives of the Republic of Kazakhstan with foreign delegations [11; 1].

The undoubted success of foreign policy of Kazakhstan in UNESCO, can rightly be considered the announcement of 2010 year as the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures by the country's initiative, which then received the unanimous support of the UN General Assembly at its 67th Session, proclaimed the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures for the 2013–2022.

In resolution 62/90 the UN General Assembly recommended Member States to consider appropriate and, where appropriate, to propose initiatives that identify areas for action in all sectors and at all levels of society in order to promote inter-religious and intercultural dialogue, tolerance, mutual understanding and cooperation, in particular, with the help of the ideas put forward in the high-level Dialogue on interreligious and intercultural understanding and cooperation for peace [14].

In July, 2014 in Kazakhstan was organized and hosted the first interregional meeting of National Commissions for UNESCO. For the first time in the history of UNESCO representatives of National Commissions for UNESCO gathered outside the headquarters of UNESCO to discuss topical issues of development. The meeting was attended by heads and representatives of National Commissions of more than 110 member countries, the UNESCO Secretariat, observers from partner organizations (Mica, ALECSO), as well as representatives of cultural, academic and civil society of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The main objective of the meeting was to discuss the issues of further growth and development of the National Commissions for

UNESCO at the country, regional and global levels, and their active involvement in the work of the UNESCO Secretariat, strengthening existing and creating new partnerships with the National Commissions around the world.

As noted in his speech at the 37th session of the UNESCO General Conference in Paris in November, 2013, Chairman of the National Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan for UNESCO I.N. Tasmagametov: «for Kazakhstan cooperation with this Organization has always been one of the priorities of foreign policy». For over twenty years, UNESCO has provided substantial support to Kazakhstan in reforming the national education system, science and culture. Through UNESCO it has received an opportunity to adopt best international practices in the sphere of information and communication. In this difficult period of financial difficulties for the UNESCO Kazakhstan is making additional efforts to support the Organization. Since 2011, the country is making voluntary contributions to the extraordinary multi-donor fund and the UNESCO Cluster Office in Almaty, as well as on specific projects of the Organization [15].

In light of the above, it seems clear that the example of Kazakhstan's cooperation with UNESCO, as a country with a dynamic economy and growing political influence in the international arena, can serve as a good example of mutually beneficial partnership. At the same time it can substantially contribute to UNESCO to improve the financial situation of the Organization, as well as in the more productive resolution of its tasks in Central Asia.

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Қазақстан және ЮНЕСКО: ынтымақтастықтың кейбір мәселелері

Мақалада Қазақстан Республикасы мен ЮНЕСКО арасындағы мәдениет, білім беру, ғылым мен ақпарат саласындағы әріптестіктің кейбір мәселелері зерттелді. Сонымен қатар жоғарыда аталған салаларда Қазақстанның халықаралық тұжырымдамаларын іске асыру бойынша қызметіне сараптама жүргізілді. Авторлар тарапынан Қазақстанда іске асырылатын жобалар мен барлық бағыттардағы ЮНЕСКО қызметі зерттеліп, іс-әрекеттеріне баға берілді.

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Казахстан и ЮНЕСКО: некоторые аспекты сотрудничества

В статье рассмотрены некоторые аспекты сотрудничества Республики Казахстан и ЮНЕСКО в области культуры, образования, науки и информации. Дан анализ деятельности Казахстана по реализации положений международных конвенций в указанных выше областях, таких как охрана нематериального культурного наследия, ратифицированного Казахстаном. Дана оценка деятельности ЮНЕСКО по всем направлениям и проектам, которые реализуются в Казахстане.

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