

## **WORLD ORGANISATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (OMEP)**

### **MINUTES OF THE WORLD ASSEMBLY HELD ON MONDAY AUGUST 3 TO TUESDAY AUGUST 4, 2009, LAGOS AIRPORT HOTEL**

#### **1. Opening Session**

**A word of welcome from the World President** – Mrs. Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson welcomes members to the World Assembly. She said the V.P. Africa Mrs. Victoria helped assuage her fear of the programme not being a flop. She welcomes all member nations that were not discouraged by recent happenings and news about Nigeria. She said we are happy to host the assembly in spite of all odds.

She expatiated the essence of the convention and related the theme for this year to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child, 20 years ago, which she said is a catalyst for change, and that OMEP took part in the development of UNCRC, Ghana was the first country to ratify, with only Somalia and US yet to.

Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson emphasized the necessity for partnership in education in relation to the theme of this conference i.e. by creating a world fit for children, by listening to their voices and creating environment devoid of exploitation and abuse, providing good-quality education and health care. Doing these, by providing conditions that would not make children victims of political, economic, cultural, religious and environmental discrimination. Children she said must be listened to and allowed to express their opinion. She summarized briefly the terms of the UNCRC, and Shier's (2002) model: pathway to participation (see Annex 1) and left the Assembly with a poser: what can OMEP do to promote children's voices?

**A word of welcome from the regional Vice President for Africa.** Mrs. Victoria Bilewu welcomed OMEP World members to the Assembly which the preparation has started since 2007 immediately after the Mexico meeting. She commended the great effort of the planning committee chaired by energetic lady Oyindamola Sonola with her hardworking members. She also appreciated the courage of all members who have come from various countries to discuss the future of the world's children.

OMEP's aim is to catch them young from birth to 3 years – these children she said need health care facilities, they need to be educated. We need to protect their right to play, right to voice out their opinion (must not be suppressed); right to holistic development and right to live in peace. Concluding, she said children are the same all over the world, but the way and manner adults handle them together with environment they live usually contribute to some differences that exist in them. She wished the members good deliberation and happy stay in Nigeria in the 61<sup>st</sup> OMEP World Assembly.

**The President of OMEP Nigeria** Mrs. Abimbola Are also welcomed all the members, she expressed gratitude and wished the new Executive a fruitful tenure. She urged participants to consider the situation in our different countries and formulate ways of improving the lot of the children.

**Logistics:** Mrs. Oyindamola Sonola announced the details of breaks and dinner logistics.

2. **Appointment of Scrutineers** was done and announced to members, followed by a roll call and announcement of arriving members.
3. **Passing of the agenda:** the Agenda was adopted by a majority vote.
4. **The minutes of Quebec2008 World Assembly were adopted also by a majority.**
5. **Presentation and Adoption of World President's Report and Update**

Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson made a presentation where she exposed the contribution of Early childhood education to a sustainable society. She drew attention to the Gothenburg recommendations which she said are still relevant and does not require to be changed. i.e.:

- Access for all to a life-long learning
- Gender Equity
- Learning for change
- Networks, arenas and partnerships
- Professional development to strengthen ESD across all sectors
- ESD curriculum
- Sustainable development in practice
- Research

She stated the Gothenburg recommendation deal with the complex questions of social and Environmental works.

**Statements** – Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson emphasized the need for

- Literacy and numeracy
- Changes in life styles
- Gender equality
- Professional Teachers must follow and take the declaration into consideration in their daily work.

**Other Meetings:**

White House – literacy and numeracy Conference

Word Education Forum Belfast – (Need for future collaboration).

About professional education for the teachers, we need to have teachers in the area of early childhood education. There is an urgent need for capacity building. It has also to do with democracy. It is also about research, most research she said is about nature, but very few about action for change which is needed to be inculcated in children.

Further discussion in her update was done under the following sub-heads.

The mid-term review of the UN Decade for ESD

ESD in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

Progress in the ESD (Education for sustainable Development)

Other important meetings

Summarily she concluded that the way forward lies in further cooperation with other organizations, more research projects and development work.

**Adoption:** The update and report was adopted unanimously.

**World Treasurer's Report:** Was read by the World President as Maggie Koong was not in attendance. In summary, the income for the period was US\$ 48,503.34 and the expenditure for the period was US\$ 33,472.11, this represents a surplus of US\$ 15,031.23. This was due to the good performance of membership fees collection and outstanding payment from previous years. The total amount remaining to date is US\$ 49,919.

The President of Japanese National Committee wanted to know why her committee should pay higher levy. The World President promised to find out from the World Treasurer.

**Adoption:** The report was adopted by majority while awaiting more explanation from World Treasurer.

**Next day:** - Explanation came from Maggie said the new regime of fee had already been voted for in Canada, last year that the annual fee be raised by 10%, the criteria was based on UNESCO standard, Countries Gross National Product (GNP) and Dollar Exchange rate. But that Japan, UK, USA and Germany's payment should not increase because they were already paying more than others.

### **Regional Vice Presidents 2009 Reports Update**

a. **Africa:** Victoria Bilewu gave the report that five countries forwarded their Annual Reports attended with 12 participants, the Regional Newsletter has been forwarded in English and French to all members. The date for the next regional meeting was to be ratified during this Assembly. Membership in African Countries increased from nine (9) to ten (10) with Burkina Faso as individual member.

#### **Projects in Africa:**

Congo – Toy library proposal

Liberia – Toys to be given for their Mobile Library Project.

Each National Committee was requested to bring toys.

**Main Challenges** – Lack of health care centers, personnel and the attitude of African leaders leave much to be desired (not cooperating).

#### **Summary:**

**Visits:** Contacts made with under listed countries:

- \* Benin – doing well, they were in Nigerian National Conference at Ibadan in 2008.
- \* Ghana – always responds to mails
- \* Mauritius – Last mail in 2007, paid dues and sent reports
- \* Egypt – Finance is a problem, and help is needed, no regular communication.
- \* Burundi – Members couldn't attend due to financial constraint, but is coming up well and working hard.

- \* Congo – doing well. Madeleine Baillargeon is working hard on the Toy Library Project and brought toys for the library.
- \* Nigeria – 19 OMEP State Chapter members, also doing well.
- \* South Africa – Communication with them has been difficult but they are really interested and enthusiastic. Assistance in the quest for link with them is welcomed.
- \* Burkina Faso – lost contact for over five months, recently contact was made. Sent in her dues as Individual member – plans are in progress to becoming a Preparatory Committee.
- \* Cote d'Ivoire – Youths and adults very cooperative and dedicated. Working for real recognition with the Association. Doing good projects, they are quite committed but lack health care facilities and personnel.
- \* Cameroon – A group that had indicated interest in starting a preparatory committee has been contacted.

The next Africa Regional conference will hold in Accra, Ghana between March and May 2010. Sierra Leone, Kenya, Uganda are the next targets to come on board.

Invitation is extended to the World Executive Committee to hold the next spring meeting in Accra.

**Adoption:** Report Adopted by majority.

## **North America & The Caribbean**

### **OMEP Canada:**

- \* Hosted the 2008 OMEP World Assembly and Seminar
- \* Celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by a publication and CD
- \* Children Visiting Prisons is a continuous project for children with an incarcerated parent and their families taking place in Ontario.
- \* Elaborated a Toy library in Africa project.

Omepe Canada has since January this year worked to prepare elaborately to give support to the establishment of a Toy Library in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and establish a network of toy libraries in Africa.

**U.S.A:** The US National Committee is very active and is working on several things, and mainly on the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC) through the Campaign for the ratification by the USA of the CRC, on networking and on participating in conferences. It regularly holds meetings and organizes activities during the annual Conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), in fall; and during the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) Conference, in spring.

**OMEP Haiti:** A lot of work in Haiti, but the political situation in the country made things difficult, however there is progress now and more good news are reported. The Committee now has two main areas of work:

- \* Training of Childhood Education Teachers
- \* Increase membership by creating new member groups in order to reach out more people and improve the financial situation.

**Increasing membership in the region:** All three North America countries are OMEP members, including Mexico, member of the Latin America region. The Caribbean are multiple

islands that expand in a stretch of geographical landmass, with cultural differences. Haiti is a member of our region, but like Mexico, for cultural and linguistic reasons, Cuba is a member of the Latin America region. Some efforts have been made to attract the English speaking non member Caribbean countries, and contacts were established in many of them. Recently, a group met in Jamaica to eventually join OMEP. We hope possibly next year, we would welcome this new committee.

Many other Caribbean islands are departments or territories belonging to other countries such as the United Kingdom, France, and USA. It is the responsibility of these countries' National Committees to get members in these islands.

Report approved.

### **Asia and the Pacific**

**Doreen Launder** – reports: Region is composed of 15 member countries – the 15 countries are very diverse with areas of wealth and poverty both within countries and across countries over. Vice President highlighted the major projects which include:

- \* Building networks, which is a major task.  
This includes holding annual Asia Pacific Region Assemblies and Conferences which have been held in:  
Korea in 2006  
Thailand in 2007  
Hong Kong in 2008  
Singapore in 2009  
Network building also includes sending 3 Newsletters and minutes from each Annual Assembly to the Region's National Presidents.
- \* Preparatory Committees: India is to become a Preparatory Committee.
- \* Developing Libraries in two specific areas devastated by the 2008 earthquake in Sichuan, China.
- \* Collating Fact sheet from (5) countries so far – About situation of children in each country taking into account. Situation of staffing, appropriate curriculum, qualification for provision of early childhood education etc. The intention is to develop a resource that will be available to all countries in the region and beyond.
- \* Differences and commonalities in the area of “Take off your shoes” – this is considered important for the maintenance of cleanliness of environment.

Report approved.

### **Latin America**

The region hope to continue with the objectives that were arrived at in Buenos Aries which are: to consider qualitative education, the right of children to education, collaboration with organizations that are already existing, the level of poverty etc. The active member nations include Brazil, Argentina, and Colombia. Other activities include publication of newspapers, organizing seminars, and congress, Investment on children group, Publication of web pages and the support of the OMEP 60<sup>th</sup> commemoration. Elections were held in different countries.

**Visits** – made to Uruguay, WP Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson was attending, and meetings were also held in Peru and Argentina.

In Chile – there was seminar conference and workshop. In Brazil congress of ECE took place (Brazilian Children congress).

CD, Books, Website etc. were set up for children projects.

This year there will be the celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> year of Latin American history. Work was also done in education, training of family group and educational groups e.g. in Trinidad.

Report approved.

## **Europe**

Milada Rabusicova reports

Presentation divided into three parts:

Events in the region which could be summarized thus, two major events brought national committees across Europe to meet face to face.

- a. European conference at Bratislava, Slovakia – 9-12 April 2008 themed “Education from Early Age – Chance for all children”. Conference was attended by over 200 participants from more than 15 countries including the First Lady of Slovakia.
- b. European Regional meeting in Quebec

President’s Activities:-

- Publishing of European Newsletter resumed in 2008 – National OMEP representatives were sent two copies each i.e. the spring and autumn editions.
- Activities of International OMEP archive in Comenius Museum. The 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of OMEP Commemorated by a thematic exhibition in Bratislava.
- In Stockholm delivered (November 2008) a paper titled “Qualified Teachers – A key to Quality in early childhood Education” at the University of Stockholm for the Swedish Teachers Union.
- September 2008 – Attended the International Step by Step Association (ISSA) Conference to represent OMEP.

Milada represented an overview of current stage of Early Childhood Education and care in Europe. She highlighted the under listed points.

- Different views and expectations on ECE in EU
- Dealing with aging society
- Helping the families
- Women in the labour force
- Investment to the future
- Social and culture cohesion
- Targets adopted at the summit of Barcelona (2002)
- Different ways of achieving improvement of standards of pre-school care and education – widely implemented
- Condition to be met.

Membership activities: - There are 22 member countries. To-be member country is Cyprus, though nothing new yet but it is new that we have a preparatory committee in Ukraine.

Report approved.

## **Approval of International Cooperation**

- (a) UNESCO (see Annex 2a)
- (b) United Nations (see Annex 2b)

## **Coffee Break**

### **Presentation of 2008 OMEP Annual Report World President – Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson.**

The report was presented on power point and translated by interpreters. President mentioned that a lot of countries have their own different structures. The number of reports for 2008 were summarized thus:

Africa – 5 countries, Asia and the Pacific – 15 countries

Europe – 22 countries, Latin America – 5 countries and North America – 2 countries.

Thanks to the countries who translated this report into one or two of the other official languages!

**Themes:** Though they vary from country to country, they are advocacy, policy (money and ideas)

Education (teachers and parents)

Networking / Capacity building i.e. conferences, seminars workshops and work for children

Specific contents include standards and assessments

Birth to 3 years old

UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the right of the child)

ESD Education for sustainable Development (ESD)

**IJEC Editorial Board** – Report from Professor Eva Johnson highlighted the need to widen the editorial board and ensure UNCRC as a base (Annex 3). Reference was made to issue 40.1 which had articles from Australia, Finland, Norway, Spain, Sweden and USA, and issue 40.2 which was a special theme of ECE in Asia / Pacific, guest editor Nirmala Rao.

**2010 Springer is taking over the production of IJEC** – The role of OMEP having the responsibility to decide about articles, theme, guest editors and reviewers / guidelines will remain. The financial benefits to OMEP will be 10,000 US\$ when the contract is finalized and 5% of the benefit from subscriptions each year. The roles of the Springer were also stated, they include extending the journal to 3 issues per year, maintaining the subscription rate for OMEP members until 2013, and digitalizing all back copies since the beginning.

### **OMEP Website**

Report that the website went down for some few days as observed by members. This implies that it has to be changed. It is still under construction. The work with translations from English to the other two languages is in process. Secretary of OMEP informed that the website has to be constructed in accordance to Gothenburg University frames and that the English site will be updated first. All suggestions and help regarding translations for the French and Spanish sites are welcome.

## **Information and Approval of Projects**

**Toy Libraries in Africa** – Madeleine Baillargeon reports on a project in two steps: 1) establishing a toy library in the Democratic Republic of Congo, following the request made by OMEP DRC in Mexico in 2007; 2) establishing an African toy libraries network. Three partners are working on the project: OMEP Canada, C.I.E.L.O (Coopération Internationale pour les Équilibres Locaux) a French NGO with considerable experience in toy libraries in Latin America and Africa; OMEP D. R. of Congo. Canada appointed Rolande Filion to take charge, and Patrick Bernard will be in charge for C.I.E.L.O.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> step, toy librarians will be trained in order to establish a toy library in D. R. of Congo. The Toy libraries already set-up by CIELO in Burkina Faso, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Conakry, Senegal, Togo and Congo (in the 1<sup>st</sup> step) will participate in the network to be established in the 2<sup>nd</sup> step. Liberia already has a Mobile Library. In order to achieve the sustainability of the project, after the initial training and funding, it is expected that they source means of sustenance on their own

The project has been written and partners have agreed. They are now busy raising funds. An amount of \$3,000.CAD has been obtained at this point and more funds are needed.

**Proposal by OMEP-Canada:** That 2/5 of the OMEP Children's Foundation Fund be used for the Toy Library Project, considering that 2 OMEP regions out of 5 are involved was accepted and adopted by unanimously after the presentation of the Treasurer's Report.

## **OMEP World Project on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)**

The proposal was developed by Milada Rabusicova, V.P. OMEP Europe, Ingrid Engdahl OMEP Sweden and Judith Wagner, OMEP USA, and presented to the Assembly by Ingrid Engdahl.

Project was unanimously adopted/approved.

Read more about OMEP WORLD PROJECT on Education for Sustainable Development / Éducation pour la développement durable / Educación para el desarrollo sostenible on:

[http://www.ipd.gu.se/english/OMEP/projects/sustainable\\_development/ESD\\_World\\_Project/](http://www.ipd.gu.se/english/OMEP/projects/sustainable_development/ESD_World_Project/)

9. **Members Announcement:** Toys Donor Countries - Chile, Uruguay, Canada, Switzerland and Nigeria presented toys to support the ECE, they are meant to train the teachers so that they can reproduce according to their own country's need. The Toys are to be given to countries like DCR Congo, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire. Announcement of the arrival of representatives of Benin, making the attendance 20 followed by Delegates group photograph.

## **Lunch**

### 10. **Membership**

**Ukraine:** letter from Ukraine requesting for preparatory committee was read (Request for Registration with OMEP International) official letter from the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine and minutes of their meetings.

Adopted unanimously.

**Cyprus/Greece:** Applied since last year, but no representative present, so their consideration for National Committee (full membership) postponed till next year, although, they sent in their Annual report and paid their US \$ 50 acceptance fee.

**Estonia:** Not present but Preparatory Committee was expected to be in attendance, unable to attend for financial reason.

**India:** Application and subsequent membership from India was first received in 1970, but their membership lapsed. A new group of early childhood professionals have formed a Preparatory Committee in Mumbai (India) with a President and a Vice President, and Committee made up of eight (8) people. The President is from the Woman's University of Mumbai. The application has been developed over the past two years. India Preparatory Committee was accepted.

**Burundi:** Request for Burundi Preparatory Committee was made by V.P. Africa Region. Burundi had been an individual member for about six (6) years. A group of some interested and committed members have been set up. An Executive Committee has been put in place and their plans of action have been forwarded. Burundi was accepted as Preparatory Committee, unanimously.

**Cote d'Ivoire:** Victoria O. Bilewu reported that they had an Association on ground before now, Vice President went personally to visit and reported that they have been working closely with the mothers and children, there are no E.C.E centers, and no health care facilities. But they are concerned about the problem of facilities. Calls have been made to UNICEF and their home government to assist. Membership is scattered all over Cote d'Ivoire. The President and Secretary were also present as their country has been presented for consideration as Preparatory Committee.

Adopted unanimously.

The President, Evariste Kowoussa thanked the Assembly for their kind gesture in accepting his country into OMEP.

**Burkina Faso:** Working very hard and hopefully next year in Sweden they will be presented as a Preparatory Committee.

**Republic of Benin:** Was accepted in Quebec as a Preparatory Committee in 2008. They now requested for a full National Committee status. This request was unanimously accepted.

## 11. BUDGET 2009

The budget for 2010 reported to be similar to that of 2009, because there is actually no critical difference. The proposal that the 2/5 percent of the Children's Foundation Fund should be used for the Toy library was accepted unanimously.

Sister Country Scheme: In 2008 the World Treasurer proposed the Sister Country Scheme wherein countries could help countries struggling to pay their dues. This idea responded to the

fact that sometimes it is the most needy countries, who are struggling to remain as members of OMEP, that are having difficulties retaining their membership due to financial hardship. UK volunteered to help find solutions for struggling countries that have financial problems OMEP UK proposed that OMEP World Body establish a fund/foundation to help struggling countries. Individual countries that can afford may contribute to the fund. The allocation of funds would be at the discretion and guidance of the World Executive. Proposal was accepted.

**Provision:** However, this provision is different from the sister country arrangement where particular country sponsors specific countries. This arrangement provides for the support of valuable members who are no longer able to do so from the fund.

### **Coffee break**

#### **12. Working Groups**

##### **12.1 Presentation of Group works:** Ingrid Pramling Samuelson.

- Group A - Children birth to 3 years
- Group B - Research Projects e.g. Interview of children on what they know about the OMEP 2010 World Congress and International Conference logo.
- Group C - Development Project –Toy library and new ideas.

#### **Activities in Working Group:**

Pramling Samuelsson briefed members of the details of each group work and thereafter members break into groups for discussion. At the end of group discussion, session was put to an end.

## TUESDAY AUGUST 4<sup>th</sup>

**Omission:** Membership – Nicaragua’s application for full membership was not considered along with others on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August, and they have been an active committee. Nicaragua was presented.

Accepted by majority.

### 13. **Report of Working groups and discussions**

13.1 **Birth to three:** 10 participating countries (see Annex 4.1 for details).

13.2 **Research Projects:** 8 members participated three topics were discussed (see Annex 4.2).

- New proposal for next year:- To get feedback and improve on them
- European project: A multicultural approach is suggested.
- Research for future: possible research for the future were also considered.

13.3 **Development Projects** – coordinated by V.P. Africa Region (Victoria Bilewu) and V.P. North America and the Caribbean (Madeleine Baillargeon). Report presented by Kofi Nyaye (see Annex 4.3). Fewer members took part in this working group than it was last year.

14. **Regional Meetings:** The groups met by region in the sections of the hall that were assigned.

### Coffee break

15. **Regions – Vice Presidents Reporting** (see [www.omep.org.gu.se](http://www.omep.org.gu.se), Regions, Regional news and events)

15.1 Asia Pacific Region – Mari Mori

15.2 Africa Region – Victoria Bilewu

15.3 European Region – Milada Rabusicova

15.4 North America and the Caribbean – Madeleine Baillargeon

15.5 Latin America – (reported by Gabriela Etchebehere, representing Uruguay)

### 16. **Elections**

Regional Vice President for Asia Pacific, and Europe.

Each candidate was given some minutes to address the Assembly about herself and what she will do for OMEP in her respective region.

Milada Rabusicova: was elected unanimously for Europe.

Doreen Launder elected by majority for Asia and the Pacific.

## 17. **Future Meetings**

**2010:** Next World Assembly is August 9-10 and the World Congress August 11-13, 2010 in Gothenburg, Sweden. Theme: “Children – Citizens in a Challenged World”.

Ingrid Engdahl made presentation on the 2010 World Congress taking place in the second largest city in Sweden – Goteborg. For further details and how to get there see [www.omep2010.org](http://www.omep2010.org).

### **Important Cues**

- Opportunity to present projects and papers
- Key note speakers
- Five sessions – call for abstracts open March 1<sup>st</sup> online
- Study visits
- Social programme – museums, botanical gardens
- Registration online – open 15<sup>th</sup> of January, 2010
- Accommodation
- Travel information and maps
- Stockholm, Norway are planning pre and post conference tours
- Visa application problems – Was discussed, members are advised to start early enough to forestall rejection.

Japan will consider the possibility to host the OMEP WA in 2011.

## 18. **Honorary Members**

The following persons were recommended by OMEP USNC and presented to the Assembly by Madeleine Baillargeon as Honorary members of OMEP for year 2009.

1. John Surr
2. Leah Adams

Both were unanimously accepted.

### **Coffee break**

## 19. **OMEP 60 Years ahead?**

World President – raises the question of discussing what OMEP would be in the future. The discussion covered questions about:

- Looking at young children’s life in a link with Parents. The role of parents as key persons for children’s upbringing.
- Looking forward to a financially strong OMEP so that we can move away from the ‘beggar syndrome’ from companies and organizations that are no more willing to give support.
- Quality, certification and standards – what do we assess? Do you evaluate the pre-school or the children? Some actually evaluate i.e. in Sweden the pre-school is evaluated not children. How are children evaluated? But the question is, shouldn’t there be some kind of assessment/ evaluation of the sustainable environment that we are talking about.
- Everybody wants to be financially strong but how do we do this? Suggestions are needed in this area.

## Summary of Discussion

- The World President, with reference to 60 years ahead of OMEP, said that awareness about Early Childhood Education has to be raised with respect to children's right. Political stakeholders are to be approached in order to increase their interest in young children. We need to put in progress simple things that would affect the life of the child.

With the economic meltdown, we are facing new realities and the challenge will be how to sustain what we have achieved, if we are not going to fall back to the position of those who are trying to come up.

## 20. Any Other Business

**\*Annual Report from the Regions will be published only on the homepage.** There are questions that we want people to answer. Uniformity is also necessary in making reports.

What should we have in the Annual Report? In these respect four (4) Questions are to be answered

Is OMEP a pressure group on Early Childhood Education?

What is the most important thing you have done?

What have you done in relation to childhood education?

What have we done re Education for Sustainable Development over the past twelve months (ie. 2009)

Member nations are enjoined to go home and think about these questions, what do you want OMEP to be in the next 60 years. This should also be in the Annual Report. Annual reports should be no longer than 800 words and where possible should be translated into the three official languages.

## World Assembly Closing

Passing the Baton: President OMEP Nigeria, Abimbola Are, along with Honorary members, Chief Mrs. Christie Ade Ajayi, Alhaji Ishaq S'ai handed over the baton to Ingrid Engdahl President (Sweden) as a symbol for hosting next World Congress to be held in Sweden in August 2010 and a gift was made in return by the World President.

- The National Anthem.
- OMEP Anthem – "We stand together for what we believe"
- Declaration from the World Assembly (Annex 5).

## End of Session

## **PARTICIPANTS – OMEP WORLD ASSEMBLY**

**3-4 AUGUST, 2009**

National Committee of Proxy

Argentina

Canada

Chile - 1 - Turkey

Ghana

Haiti

Ireland - 2 - Norway, Czech Rep

Japan - 2 - Singapore, USA

Korea - 1 - Pakistan

Nigeria

Switzerland - 2 - Germany, Denmark

Sweden - 2 - Finland, Bulgaria

United Kingdom 2 - Russia, Slovakia

Uruguay

Democratic Republic of Congo

Republic of Benin (Preparatory Committee 2008)

Cote D'Ivoire (Observer)

**As at 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug. 2009**

**As at 4<sup>th</sup> Aug. 2009**

13 Countries present

15 countries

8 Proxies

12 proxies

1 observer (Cote d'Ivoire)

1 observer.

**LIST OF ATTENDANCE  
DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS (O) (ATTORNEY)**

Nom/Name/Appedio Nombre	Pays/Country/Pais +Proxy	Date / Fecha	
		03/08/09	04/08/09
Idenyi Endurance	Benin Republic	x	x
Maria Aparecida Salmaze	Brazil	x	x
Robin Milani	Canada	x	x
Loreto Amunatequi Ety Pamagua (o) Valerie Ambrosio (o)	Chile	x	x
Dede Basele	Congo D.R.	x	x
Kofi Nyiaye	Ghana	x	x
Marie Evelyn Champagne St. Louis	Haiti	x	x
Pat O'Connor	Ireland	x	x
Toshiko Kaneda Mari Mori (o)	Japan	x	x
Lee, Soon-Iye Park, Shin Khung (o)	Korea	x	x
Abimbola Are Patricia O. Okeke (o) Ishaq Sa'I	Nigeria	x	x
Ingrid Engdahl Lisbeth Soderberg (o)	Sweden	x	x
Cook Yvonne	Switzerland	x	x
Jane Morris Hugh Morris (o)	U.K.	x	x
Gabriela Etchebehere	Uruguay	x	x
Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson	World President	x	x
Doreen Launder	Vice President Asia / Pacific	x	x
Milada Rabusicova	Vice President Europe	x	x
Madeleine Baillargeon	Vice President North America and the Caribbean	x	x
Victoria Bilewu	Vice President Africa region	x	x

# World Assembly 2009 Lagos, Nigeria

Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson

# UN Convention of the Rights of the Child 20 years

- Representatives from OMEP took part in the development of UNCRC
- Only Somalia and USA have not ratified it
- The most widespread and rapidly ratified convention
- Ghana was the first country to ratify
- A catalyst for change

# A world fit for children - their voices

- We are the world's children
- We are the victims of exploration and abuse
- We are street children
- We are the children of war
- We are victims and orphans of HIV/AIDS

# Children's voices...

- We are denied good-quality education and health care
- We are victims of political, economical, cultural, religious and environmental discrimination
- We are children whose voices are not heard
- We want a world fit for children, because a world fit for us fit for everybody!

## Shier's (2002) model: Pathways to participation

- 1. Children are listened to
- 2. Children are supported in expressing their views
- 3. Children's views are taken into account
- 4. Children are involved in decision-making
- 5. Children share power and responsibility for decision-making

What can OMEP do to promote children's voices?



Micheline d'Agostino, OMEP Representative to UNESCO

September 2008 – June 2009 Report

Over the past period, OMEP was represented by Madeleine Goutard, Lisbeth Gouin (since February 2009), substitutes, and myself, Micheline d'Agostino. I warmly thank Madeleine Goutard and Lisbeth Gouin for their help, which allowed OMEP to be represented at many meetings, conferences, and workshops. Only the most important among the numerous activities held at UNESCO in which OMEP participated will be mentioned in this report.

#### Participation in the Joint Programme Commissions

These numerous work groups meet regularly on specific themes. These themes are related to UNESCO priority domains as defined in the middle term strategy and within the resolutions of the NGO International Conferences.

After many difficulties, OMEP accessed these work groups, and in particular Education for All (EFA), Human Rights and ad hoc Group on the rights of the Child, Dialogue between Cultures, Water...

In Dakar 2000, most countries of the world have committed to achieve Education for All by 2015 the latest.

In December 2002, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2005 - 2014 the United Nations' decade for Education to Sustainable Development and charged UNESCO to lead it.

Six goals were established:

- Early childhood care and education;
- Primary education for all;
- Meeting lifelong learning needs of youth and adults;
- Adult literacy;
- Gender;
- Quality of education.

The 2009 UNESCO global monitoring report mentioned that although half-way and in spite of the progress observed the world will not achieve the set goals by the 2015 deadline.

- Early childhood care and education

Progress indicators related to children's well-being (health and nutrition) before entering school are causes for concern. The slow rate of progress in the fight against malnutrition (world epidemic affecting one out of three children under five), and the bad health of children are obstacles to the achievement of goals relative to primary education for all. These factors jeopardize the learning abilities of the children.

Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia are especially of concern.

There are major disparities between children from richest and poorest countries of the world. Pre-primary education attendance tends to grow with the average national income but this is not automatic.

Many Arab States with high income have lower education rates than some poorer countries. Rich countries with a normative or regulatory structure secure a better coverage and higher quality pre-primary education than those without it.

In 2006, 79% of children were educated at the pre-primary level in developed countries, 36% in developing countries, and 14% in sub-Saharan Africa.

There are important gaps within countries in relationship with family incomes (20% of the richest households have 5 times more chances to attend preschool programs than children from the 20% poorest households), home location (rural, city and slum areas), socio-cultural groups (language, ethnicity and religion influence pre-primary education access and attendance).

#### - Primary Education for all

Average flat education rates in developing countries have not stopped increasing since Dakar. Sub-Saharan Africa's average rate grew from 54% to 70% between 1999 and 2006. South and West Asia rates have risen from 75% to 86%. However in 2006, 75 million children, including 55% of girls were not in school, nearly half from sub-Saharan Africa.

Based on present trends, millions of children will be keep being out of school in 2015.

Trends in primary education are sensitive to public policies. Lack in education governance slow down progress and leave millions of children out of school.

#### - Meeting lifelong learning needs of youth and adults

Governments do not give priority to youth and adult lifelong learning needs in their educational policies. Firmer political commitment and public funds are needed, but also clearer concepts and better data to secure effective follow-up.

#### - Adult literacy

775 million adults (16% of the global adult population) lack minimal literacy competence. About two thirds of them are women. If present trends persist, there will be more than 700 million illiterate adults in 2015.

#### - Gender

In 2006, out of 176 countries with available data, only 59 have achieved equality between genders in primary and secondary education. More than half of the countries from sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia and Arab States have not reached the target. Poverty and other forms of social disadvantages magnify gender disparity. Once girls are in school, their progress is often hampered by teacher attitudes and gender-biased textbooks than reinforce gender stereotypes. These school-based factors interact with wider social and economic factors that influence school performance along gender lines.

#### - Quality

International assessments highlight large achievement gaps between students in rich and poor countries. Also within countries inequality exists at all level (regions, communities, schools, classrooms). There are also large national and regional disparities in pupil/teacher ratios.

There are important teacher shortages in South and West Asia and in sub-Saharan Africa. There is also an uneven distribution of teachers across regions.

Main recommendations for action to meet the EFA goals:

#### - Early childhood Education and Care

It is proposed: - to strengthen the links between planning and child health provision;

- to prioritize early childhood education and care in planning for all children including the most vulnerable and disadvantaged;

- to strengthen wider anti-poverty commitments by tackling malnutrition and improving public health systems, using innovative social welfare programs which target poor households.

#### Progress towards education for all

Good education governance is the key in meeting the EFA goals to improve school achievements and equity. Government leadership and establishment of public policy aimed at overcoming inequity have central importance but the role of non-government actors is critical. Partnerships at many levels are required (school-parents, civil society organizations and government actors, state and non-state education providers).

#### Human rights and rights of the child

The Human rights Joint Program Commission attended the Durban Review Conference held in April 20-24, 2009 in Geneva.

The Ad hoc Commission on the Rights of the child is preparing to celebrate the International Day of the Rights of the Child this coming November 25.

#### Important meetings

- First world forum on lifelong learning (October 28-29, 2008)

This forum was dedicated to adult education within professional activities. The opening conference given by Adama Ouane, director of the UNESCO Institute in Hamburg, emphasized the importance of the participation of all (learning with others), and of anticipation (the need to make quick decisions). Referring to the report by Jacques Delors and in a perspective of evolution Ouane suggested adding three essentials pillars: learning to learn, learning to change, learning to become.

Mr. Paul Bélanger, President of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), following the need for a continuity principle, advocated for a revision of the Delors report in order to add the forgotten: the youngest ones and the seniors.

Ms. Barbara Ischinger, OECD Director for Education, recognized the progress made in the field of early childhood while highlighting a high demand of countries in this field and a political commitment to go further. She advocated for a synergy between formal and informal education, including NGOs and the media.

Actual stories on adult education were presented. As it is becoming less and less possible to develop education on a national basis, there is a need for a coherence of educational systems over the world. In a participation and dialogue concept and from a Human rights perspective, there is a growing need to create new ways of *living together*.

-UNESCO Future Forum: (March 2, 2009) *The global financial and economic crisis. What impacts Multilateralism and UNESCO*. The participants of five round tables were mostly in charge of international institutions, which led to many repetitions and too wide considerations.

All underscored the fact that education, culture, science, technology and communication are essentials for long term development. Their budgets cannot be cut down.

Seen as financial only, the present crisis will likely increase poverty, be responsible for less time in school and poorer health, especially for girls, a lack of vocational training for numerous people, an increase in child work, and the number of sexually abused women and children.

In fact, the crisis is also moral, ethical and calls for a complete change of stance. It was recommended to avoid uniformity and to support a multilateral vision and global coordination, to revise the United Nations way of functioning, to expand micro-credit (World Bank), to train women and men for *green activities*, to develop *clean* energies, to work in education in open systems (open universities on the Internet), to support relationships between NGOs, universities, and North and South countries, to anticipate consequences of eventual *climate refugees* in the future. In conclusion, it seems urgent to become creative in new orientations.

-UNESCO *against racism: Lessons from the Past, Current Challenges and Perspectives*. (March 20, 2009)

This meeting was organized for the International Day of Elimination of Racial Discrimination of March 21.

The official opening of the conference was made by Mr. Marcio Barbosa, Deputy Director-General of UNESCO, who chaired the first session entitled *UNESCO's 60 years of combating racism: achievements and legacy*.

During the past sixty years, perception of the other has been a key element in UNESCO's fight against racism, a core element of the scientific research that has started in the fifties for deconstruction of the pseudo-scientific theories of the time supporting racial superiority.

Three important dates should be remembered: - 1978 writing the Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice; - 1995 Adoption of the Declaration on the Principles of Tolerance; - 2001 World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban (South Africa).

The second session, chaired by his Excellency Olabiyi Babalola Joseph Yaï, Chairman of UNESCO's Executive Board, ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Benin to UNESCO, was on the theme: *Building the image of the other within and through culture, education, science and media*.

Culture, education, science and media play a crucial role in building the image of the other.

The third session was entitled *Living together in multicultural and multiethnic societies: local authority perspectives*. It was chaired by his Excellency Georges Anastassopoulos, President of the UNESCO General Conference and Permanent Delegate of Greece to UNESCO.

The cities today are home to over half of the world's population. They play a preponderant role in the fight against racism and are places where new forms of citizenship and new ways of living together can be forged. The International Coalition of Cities against Racism, launched by UNESCO in 2004, offers a wealth of innovatory practices to local authorities to fight racism and discrimination and promote inclusive societies.

A bibliography was published to celebrate the International Day against Racism and Discrimination. Keywords are: racism, discrimination, xenophobia. The e-mail address is: [m.abderrahmane@unesco.org](mailto:m.abderrahmane@unesco.org)

- 181<sup>st</sup> Executive Board Non Governmental Organization's (NGO) Committee

Thursday April 16 and Friday April 17, 2009

Mr. Andras Lakatos, President of the NGO Committee opened the meeting. Lakatos emphasized that cooperation with NGOs is essential in all fields that normative activity is at the core of UNESCO's mandate, particularly in the field of culture, and that NGOs participate in all stages of the normative process.

The first day consisted of a round-table conference on the role of NGOs in the normative process, with culture as an example. The elaboration and adoption of conventions as well as their implementation were also addressed.

The second day consisted of an open forum. UNESCO and NGOs facing multiple crisis: threats and opportunities as well as the analysis and adoption of the project document 181 EX/44 (Relationships with INGOs, foundations and similar institutions). OMEP was not concerned by this document relative to NGOs with formal association relationships and NGOs with formal consultative relationships with UNESCO. OMEP is an operational organization.

The numerous attending NGOs belonging mainly to the cultural sector and as one of the speakers mentioned that NGOs sometimes takes action ahead of UNESCO conventions, Madeleine Goutard asked to speak and addressed the three following points: 1 UNESCO cultural conventions may also concern NGOs from the educational sector; 2 OMEP, for one, was quite ahead of UNESCO to get involved in the preservation of intangible heritage. As early as in the early 1980s, worrying about the cultural heritage of childhood being less and less handed down, our organization launched an international collection of songs, nursery rhymes, stories and legends, games and traditional toys that each committee published in its own language; ever since, as OMEP has launched other international projects, some of our committees spontaneously restart that collection effort. This corroborates what was said here by the Vice-President of the International Council of traditional music : preservation of the intangible cultural heritage can only be secured by revitalizing it constantly.

Meetings and contacts with various UNESCO officers including with Ms. Kaga, deputy specialist of Early Childhood and Inclusive Education-Basic Education program.

**To:** Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson, OMEP President  
**From:** Carol Darcy, OMEP Liaison at the UN  
**Date:** May 10, 2009  
**Re:** Year-end Report--OMEP Representation and Activities  
 July '08--June '09 and Plans for --July '09-June'10

During the past year OMEP's presence at the United Nations has continued to be strong. The following report describes accomplishments and issues regarding the advocacy on behalf of young children, a concern and thoughts about OMEP's continuing involvement in New York and beyond.

## **Accomplishments**

### ***OMEP World President's Visit to New York, NY Late June/early July 2008***

OMEP World President Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson's visit to New York at was eagerly anticipated. . The overall purpose of the trip was to provide Dr. Samuelsson with as many opportunities during her stay to meet and establish relationships with UNICEF personnel and other NGO organization leaders who share an interest in early childhood development. With invaluable support from Dr. Nurper Ulkuer, UNICEF Senior Advisor Chief, Early Childhood Development, formal and informal meetings were arranged. Also, Drs. Edna Ranck and Carol Darcy accompanied Dr. Samuelsson to New Haven, CT. His colleague Dr. Pia Rebello Britta hosted a luncheon meeting with Dr. Edward Zeigler.

Near the end of the visit, OMEP-USA Region 1 member and UNICEF team member, Kate Kolchin, hosted a gathering to welcome and honor Dr. Samuelsson. OMEP-USA members, residing in the Metro-NY area were invited along with other NGO representatives she had met throughout her visit.

## **OMEP's Presence at the UN**

### ***Attending UN Sponsored Conferences and Other Meetings***

Until September 2008, the Annual Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) associated with the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) has been held at UN Headquarters in New York. For the first time, the NGO/DPI conference was held in Paris. In the past, a full complement of US-based representatives has attended previous conferences. However, travel expenses to Paris were prohibitive. Unfortunately, efforts to identify OMEP members in closer proximity to Paris were unsuccessful.

## **OMEP's Active Involvement at the UN**

### ***NGO Committee on UNICEF Working Group on Education (WGE)***

Serving as the Acting Secretary for the NGO Committee on UNICEF Working Group on Education (WGE) is a continuing responsibility for the OMEP liaison. The other two members of the OMEP team (Kate Kolchin and Anne O'Neill) are active WGE members. Together, the team remains steadfast and focused on advocacy for young children (Birth to age 8). When the OMEP Liaison has been unable to travel to New York for NGO Executive Meeting, the other team members step in as alternatives for the Liaison. Kate Kolchin and Anne O'Neill have been active as OMEP representatives on other NGO on UNICEF Committees including the Girls Committee and the Conference on Teaching About the UN (CTAUN).

### ***Speaker Series Program***

The "Speaker Series" program continues to be the major initiative that involves the OMEP team members. The primary purpose of the series is to showcase early childhood programs and related initiatives that directly impact the lives of young children throughout the world. Two (2) programs were held during Fall 2008. One (1) program is scheduled for Spring 2009--June 4, 2009.

For the first program of the year (October 6, 2008), Dr. Nurper Ulkuer, Senior Advisor Chief, Early Childhood Development Unit/PDDP UNICEF House was the invited speaker (Appendix 1). A well-attended audience listened attentively as she spoke about the current ideas and issues specific to early childhood development and the necessity for the development of policies and practices that will ensure the well being of all young children throughout the world. Based upon the evidence provided, the needs of young children are acknowledged but broad-based initiatives that reflect sound policies and an understanding about early childhood development remain limited. Dr. Ulkuer's presentation served as a powerful reminder that OMEP, as a world organization with members situated in countries throughout the world, is well positioned to assume an intentional leadership role as an advocacy group that is known as an organization that maintains the view that young children are its highest priority.

The second Speaker Series program of the year was held on December 3, 2008 (Appendix 2). Dr. Barbara Mowder, Director of Graduate Psychology Programs at Pace University, New York, NY spoke to a full-house about her evidence-based research which is focusing on parenting and child development outcomes. She described the development and use of a questionnaire, Parent

Behavior Importance Questionnaire (PBIQ) that has been translated into Hebrew, Russian and Spanish.

A third program is in the final stages of preparation. Scheduled for June 4, 2009, a panel including Dr. Nurper Ulkuer, Dr. Carolyn Sattin Bajaj, New York University (NYU) Steinhardt Immigration Study Center and a representative from the European Union at the UN, have been invited to discuss issues specific to immigration and migration as it relates to the young children. The WGE committee believes the topics are timely and complex, requiring more than a single program to explore and understand the issues. Therefore, the June 2009 meeting is viewed as an "exploratory discussion" and will be the first in a series of meetings to be scheduled throughout the coming year.

When planning for the third program began in March 2009, the WGE committee spoke with Dr. Ulkuer about the topic and program plans being developed. She responded enthusiastically, expressing an interest in participating as a panelist and possible speakers.

Beyond the expectation that the meeting will be well attended and informative the WGE committee members will draft a yearlong schedule of Speaker Series program that build upon the content presented during the initial meeting. With a focus on a specific theme extended over an extended time frame, the WGE committee wants to contribute to greater understanding and collaboration among all interested stakeholders.

### ***Other initiatives***

*Jamaican Connections*, remains an interest to the WGE committee, particularly the OMEP representatives, even though development of the project has been relatively limited this past year. However, during February 2009, OMEP Liaison, Carol Darcy and OMEP representative to the UN, Anne O'Neill accompanied WGE colleague, Dr. Claudia Williams, who represents the Council for International Programmes (CIP), to Jamaica. During the visit, Drs. Darcy and O'Neill lead a series of professional development workshops for "basis school" (a.k.a. preschool), kindergarten and primary school teachers. Early literacy development and the value of play in early childhood were the topics presented.

After completing the four days of workshops with teachers, Carol and Anne met with early childhood educators at Mico College University located in Kingston. An early childhood program began in Fall 2008 and faculty are interested in sharing their initial experiences and networking. Discussion about

creating an OMEP National Committee and establishing an OMEP student chapter at Mico has been met with enthusiasm. However, actualizing the plan has not moved forward at the time this report is being prepared.

The Mico Early Childhood faculty invited Dr. O'Neill to meet with the early childhood education students. Anne's lecture topic, Play and the Young Child, was presented to two audiences. Mrs. Lorna Golding, the Jamaican Prime Minister's wife, who is leading initiatives for young children in Jamaica, attended one of Anne's presentations. Afterwards, she spoke with Anne and other team members her appreciation and desire to collaborate.

### **A Continuing Concern**

As an NGO in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at the United Nations, OMEP can designate up to five (5) representatives each year. Presently, only four (4) of the five (5) positions are filled (Carol Darcy, Kate Kolchin and Anne O'Neill US-based and President Samuelsson). With so many events and programs being scheduled on a daily basis at the UN, identifying a fifth person to join the team US-based team would ensure even greater presence than is currently possible.

To date, several OMEP-USA members residing in the Metro-NY area have been approached. All have declined the invitation extended to join the team because of other commitments. Efforts to find an OMEP-USA member who would like to join the team will continue until a representative is found.

On the other hand, the quest to fill the vacancy has resulted in a successful initiative. Meetings specifically planned for OMEP-USA members in Region 1 and 2, who reside in relatively close proximity to New York City, begun in December 2007 by Carol Darcy and Dr. Nancy Brown (OMEP-Region 4) continued to be planned. Originally one of the primary reasons for organizing the meetings was to "share the wealth of knowledge about OMEP's presence at the UN and the potential opportunities available to OMEP-USA members.

An evening meeting was organized for November 20, 2008. Dr. JoAnn Hoffman (OMEP-USA Region 2) spoke about her February 2008 trip to Uganda with a group of colleagues who have been setting up a library and two clinics in the Elgon Mountain region. Dr. Virginia Casper (Bank Street College of Education/OMEP-Region 1) arranged for the use of space at the college (Appendix 3). As with previous meetings the gathering was informative as well as an opportunity for OMEP-USA members to network with one another. Also, the

meeting posted at Bank Street College, drew non-OMEP members. Some were especially interested because of their own work in other areas in Uganda.

### **Looking Ahead**

There is general consensus that early childhood development must remain on the global agenda. The OMEP Liaison and other members of the team will continue to work with Dr. Ulkuer and other UNICEF personnel and NGOs. In particular, the team will remain in close contact with Dr. Ulkuer who expresses high regard for OMEP and views our organization as one that can play an important advocacy, especially contributing to the achievement of the MDGs by 2015 and actively participating in establishing priorities new initiatives that will begin in 2015 and continue through 2030.

- **Assistance Planning Visits to the UN**

As Liaison serving on the WGE Committee, the scheduling of presentations by OMEP members and other NGOs with a specific interest in early childhood development remains the priority. Based upon the success of President Samuelsson's trip last year, OMEP Executive Board members who are planning trips to the US, particularly New York City, are encouraged to contact the OMEP Liaison about scheduling visits with UNICEF and NGO representatives.

- **Speaker Series Calendar for 2009-10**

Once the WGE Committee has completed plans for the '09-10 "Speaker Series" program a copy will be sent to Dr. Samuelsson for distribution. Again, Executive Board members will be welcomed to attend if travels bring them to New York City. Also, Executive Board members are encouraged to send ideas about potential speakers for the program. Unfortunately, there are no funds available to support a speaker's travel to NYC. However, recommendations of individuals living or anticipating travel to the Metro-NY during the coming year are greatly appreciated and will be considered for inclusion in the program.

- **OMEP Representation--NGO/DPI Mexico City Conference**

The 62nd Annual NGO/DPI conference will be held in Mexico City September 9-11, 2009. Although none of the US-based OMEP team members will be able to attend, it is highly recommended that the OMEP Executive Board identify and support OMEP representation at the NGO/DPI conference in Mexico City. The NGO/DPI conference planners especially value delegations that include youth (18-24 year olds). Therefore the Executive Board is encouraged to include youth as part of an OMEP delegation. In 2007, Dr. Blythe Hinitz (OMEP-USA Region 2) and several of her students attended the 2007 NGO/DPI Conference in

New York. After the conference, the students submitted a report about their experiences that was published in the OMEP-USA newsletter. Based on a successful past experience, the intentional inclusion of youth will reflect OMEP's commitment to nurturing the "next generation" of early childhood educators and is, therefore, highly recommended. A copy of the conference invitation is attached (Appendix 4)

- **Supporting Executive Board Suggestions**

While OMEP representation and involvement on the WGE Committee will continue to be strong, the team would welcome Executive Board suggestions about additional ways to foster relationships with UNICEF and utilize networks and partnerships with other NGOs. The Liaison and other team members welcome the opportunity to support initiatives.

Appendix 1

**World Organization for Early Childhood Education  
Organisation Mondiale pour l'Education Préscolaire  
Organización Mundial para la Educación Preescolar**

As the leading international early childhood organization, OMEP represents the global community of professionals dedicated to advocacy on behalf of young children and families throughout the world.

**Focus on Early Childhood Education: Continuing the Dialogue and Making a Difference**

**Guest Speaker: Jo-Ann Hoffman  
Professor Emeritus, Rutgers University**

**"Books can't be shared 'cause too many people reading them wears off the print on the pages"**

Dr. Hoffman, OMEP-USNC Region 3 member will talk about her experiences in Uganda during February 2008. As one of twelve Americans, she traveled to the Elgon Mountains (Elev. 4500 feet above sea level) to set up a library and clinic for two villages.

**Where:** Bank Street College of Education  
610 West 112th Street-- Room 424  
New York, NY

**When:** Thursday evening, November 20, 2008

Time: 7 PM – 8:45 PM

RSVP: [crdarcy@tiac.net](mailto:crdarcy@tiac.net)

*On December 13, 2007 members of the OMEP-US National Committee sponsored a meeting for early childhood educators. Based on interest expressed by the group, topical meetings are continuing to be organized. The meetings are envisioned as an opportunity for members to talk about their current work in the field, network with colleagues and consider issues and ideas that impact children and families throughout the world*

	Appendix 2
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H-1142 unicef house / 3 un plaza @ 44<sup>th</sup> Street / new york, new york 10017 / usa  
phone (212) 326-7713 / fax (212) 735-4406 / e-mail [ngocommittee@unicef.org](mailto:ngocommittee@unicef.org) / website [www.ngosatunicef.org](http://www.ngosatunicef.org)

## *Speaker Series Program Announcement*

Sponsored by NGO Committee on UNICEF  
Working Group on Education.

### *The Role of NGOs in Placing Early Childhood Development High on the Global Agenda*

**Dr. Nurper Ulkuer, Senior Advisor Chief,  
Early Childhood Development Unit/PDDO UNICEF House**

**Monday, October 6, 2008 1:00 - 3:00 PM**

**Location:** Church Center 7th Floor Conference Room

777 UN Plaza at 44th Street  
(Corner of 1st Avenue)

Dr. Ulkuer will present ideas, issues and considerations that are currently informing Early Childhood Development. Particular attention will be given to the necessity for a comprehensive approach to all aspects of young children's social, emotional, physical and cognitive development (Birth to 8) and research that supports initiatives that ensure the well-being of all children throughout the world.

Space is limited.

RSVP: Carol Darcy <[crdarcy@tiac.net](mailto:crdarcy@tiac.net)>



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## *Speaker Series Program Announcement*

Sponsored by NGO Committee on UNICEF  
Working Group on Education.

### **Parent Development Theory and Evidence-based Parent Education Programs**

**Dr Barbara Mowder**

Director of Graduate Psychology Programs  
at Pace University--New York

Co-Editor, *Evidence-based Practice in Infant and Early Childhood*

**Wednesday, December 3, 2008     1 - 2:30 PM**

**Location:** Church Center 7th Floor Conference Room  
777 UN Plaza at 44th Street  
(Corner of 1st Avenue)

Although parents are key components in children's development, there are few theoretically derived, evidence-based parent education programs. In other words, even though parenting is critical in terms of children's positive development, there are few parent education materials firmly based on theory and research

Dr. Mowder will describe the parent development theory (PDT) and discuss the theory in terms of parenting characteristics and implications for developing parent education programs. Her research regarding parenting and child development outcomes, examines positive and negative developmental consequences. Use of the Parent Behavior Importance Questionnaire (PBIQ) which has been translated into Hebrew, Russian and Spanish will be shared. There will be an opportunity for discussion about parenting and the societal and global ramifications.

**RSVP as soon as possible. Space is limited. Contact: Carol Darcy <[crdarcy@tiac.net](mailto:crdarcy@tiac.net)>**

Annual report 2008  
International Journal of Early Childhood

During the year of 2008 the setting of the editorial board has changed. The former Chief Editor Professor Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson left for other duties and Professor Eva Johansson was elected as the new Chief Editor. Eva Johansson works both at Stavanger University and Gothenburg University. Also Associate Professor Sonja Sheridan and Professor Maj Asplund Carlsson have left the editorial board for other duties. Newly elected members of the editorial board are: Associate Professor Donna Berthelsen, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia, PhD Anna Klerfelt and PhD Eva Hjörne, both from Department of Education, Gothenburg University. Associate Professor Pia Williams, Department of Education, Göteborg University is a former member, still on the editorial committee. Jonna Larsson and Ulrika Agby constitute our new valuable secretarial team and they replace Anne Kultti. Lisbeth Söderberg continues to work with the setting of the journal. Guest editors for the special issue this year are Nirmala Rao and Emma Pearson.

We send our grateful thanks to all those who are departing members of IJEC and extend our warm welcome to new members!

The editorial board is grateful to OMEP for trusting us to be responsible for this important and interesting work and to do this in the spirit of OMEP. This journal has a specific history and a specific goal: To work for the child's right to education and care all over the world. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is the bases of the extensive work of OMEP. Our aim has been both to secure the continuity of the journal and to give room for new persons and ideas. In this respect, old members have been important in supporting the new editorial committee.

*To secure quality through improved information*

During the year of 2008 the board has been working with the aim of improving the information about IJEC, the instructions to authors and reviewers and to clarify different levels of acceptance. This work continues this year and is part of the aim to constantly improve the quality of the journal and to hold on to the ideas of OMEP. There is also an ongoing process of negotiation with Springer on taking over the journal. There is still an open question on the results of this process.

*Publications*

We have published two issues during the year; one open issue 40:1 and one special issue 40:2 (Policy change).

The 40:1 issue consisted of five articles and one essay. The authors represent different parts of the world: Australia, Finland, Norway, Spain, Sweden and USA. These papers concern interesting and important topics of different character. Two articles explored the favourable conditions for children to learn basic aspects of mathematics in early education. One article

concerned the play activities in day-care settings and the social engagement of young children with special needs. One article investigated the organisation of space in infant education, and another concerned child-raising and violence. The essay pointed to the fact that acculturation includes more than just minority individuals incorporating into the majority culture, cultural differences as well as personal characteristics must be considered.

The special issue (40:2) this year was edited by Nirmala Rao and Emma Pearson and concerned policy change in Early Childhood in the Asia Pacific region. The issue consisted of one introduction, seven articles, a policy review and a book review. Taken as a whole the papers present an outstanding review of current issues surrounding early childhood policy and practice in the Asia Pacific region. Efforts have been directed in many countries in this region to increasing investment and attention in early childhood development. This has been achieved in three main ways: thorough policy reviews, the development of policy and through the conduct of scholarly research. We are especially happy about this issue since it represents an aspect not very frequent in the journal!

#### *Submissions*

On the one hand, we have received slightly more papers this year than in 2007. On the other hand, the rejection rate remains at 80%, which is a relatively high level. During the year 26 articles were submitted to the journal. They represent the following parts of the world: Africa: 1 article, Asia/Pacific 4 articles; Europe: 7 articles; North America 9 articles. Five papers have been published. Please note that this concerns the free issue. Submissions to the special issue are taken care of by the invited editors.

This year our aim is to encourage authors from all over the world to contribute to the journal and this has been achieved. This is, however, an important and constant mission for the Journal.

The work aims to constantly improve the quality of the journal *and* to hold on to the ideas of OMEP continues. Our ambition is to be included in the ISI Social Sciences Citation Index (R), but this is a work that probably will take both time and effort.

Gothenburg, April 2009

Eva Johansson  
Chief Editor

Children birth to three years  
OMEP World Assembly  
Lagos Airport Hotel 3 August 2009

Karin Engdahl	Sweden	<a href="mailto:karinengdahl@educ.umu.se">karinengdahl@educ.umu.se</a>
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# Discussion

- Governments of Chile, Sweden, UK, South Korea and NZ have policies for Children from birth to three years old.
- The policies of these countries vary.
- **Edu/care integrated** in various ways in all.
- **General Theme:** Mothers in work force.
- The Governments of Benin and Congo Democratic do not have policies for children from birth to three years nor do they have policies for early childhood education as a whole.

# Government Policies

- Chile: Govt provide social security for low income families with children from 3mths to 2yrs. Edu/care integrated full day services, philosophy of respect for culture of the family. Issue: to make more connection with the families. This is difficult
- Sweden: Govt policies for 1yr to 3yr age children, children in edu/care integrated services. Issue: Debate about edu/care has reopened.

# Government Policies

- United Kingdom - England Dept of “*Children, Schools & Families*” responsible for all children under 18 years. One Govt agenda – mothers into work force. Curriculum Guidelines developed across age groups Edu/care integrated. Policies have an economic and pedagogical focus.
- South Korea: Low birth rate. Diminishing workforce demographic. Govt providing social security for families who have more than 2 children. Edu/care integrated.

# Government Policies

- Benin and Congo Democratic. No Government policies for early childhood education. People in rural areas are generally very poor. Children accompany parents, usually mothers, to work place. Some development in urban areas but absence of policy. Issues of costs and quality.
- suggestion that OMEP convey concerns re this situation to governments of Benin and Congo Democratic pointing out UNCROC.

## **Working group on research projects**

*(Milada Rabusicova & Ingrid Engdahl)*

Thursday, August 6, 2009, Lagos

Members Present:

Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson (WP)  
Patricia O'Connor (Ireland)  
Mari Mori (Japan)  
Toshiko Kaneda (Japan)  
Célio Adolfo (Brasil)  
Maria Aparecista Solmaze (Brasil)  
Gabriela Etchebehesa (Uruguay)  
Ingrid Engdahl (Sweden)  
Milada Rabusicova (VP for Europe)

During the meeting mainly two topics were discussed: research project on Education for sustainable development and research-development project on multicultural schemes in early childhood education.

Ingrid Engdahl presented proposal for research project on ESD for the coming year. It was discussed in details then and participants suggested following:

- precise information on process of interviews
- more clear instructions on the project as a whole
- precise timetable for further steps
- possibility of giving examples of categories

All these suggestions were taken into consideration and are being incorporated in the project, for more information (see OMEP web site). The world council adopted the project.

Milada Rabusicova presented a proposal for the project on “investigation into cross-cultural schemes and awareness programmes in ECE”. From discussion on this proposal following comments and suggestions occurred:

- Differences between terms like foreign and additional language must be considered because they have different meanings for different countries.
- It must be clarified whether the project will concentrate more on foreign cultures or foreign languages and it was suggested to concentrate more on the first one.
- There are big differences among European countries in multicultural issues and also on approaches towards their implementing to ECE.
- Better to think about the project in terms of development project instead of a research one.

There were also other suggestions which Milada would (and she already did) share with Czech OMEP Committee which is the author of this proposal. The Czech colleagues are going to propose the project after considering the above mentioned comments and suggestions to European grant scheme Grundtvig on adult education in January 2010.

Further, information was given about ongoing projects for OMEP initiated Teacher education (Brazil and Uruguay), a Children's Month (September in Montevideo) and about children's well-being, linked to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Japan).



**Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire**  
**World Organisation for Early Childhood Education**  
**Organización Mundial para la Educación Preescolar**

**Declaration from the OMEP international Conference and Workshop held at the Lagos Airport Hotel, Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria, August 3-7, 2009**

## **LEARNING TO LISTEN, LISTENING TO LEARN**

Listening is one of a child's basic rights. Articles 12 and 13 in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) reinstates that children have the right to be listened to and be heard, hence the theme of the conference and workshops.

Scholarly papers were presented on different sub-themes and workshop sessions were also held. The following issues were highlighted:

1. Learning starts from the conception as the result of interactive communication between people.
2. The well-being of children is dependant on quality in the early childhood education and care settings and the attachment to important adults; i.e. parents, teachers and relatives.
3. Children have the right to be listened to, to participate and to actively engage in matters that relate directly to them.
4. The world is facing great challenges and we need to work with Education for Sustainable Development to build a democratic and sustainable world.

### **Recommendations**

1. Adults should give unconditional respect to the rights of the children.
2. Children should be given ample opportunities to express themselves and to participate in everyday life, play and learning.
3. Parents should lay solid background and foundation for development of communication, including listening skills, in children right from early years.
4. Parents should create time to give quality attention to children.
5. Teachers should be dedicated and committed to their jobs by engaging children with care and love.
6. Teachers should be involved and active listeners to what is expressed by the children, trying to understand, support and challenge them in their learning.
7. The environment affects children deeply, and is an encouraging partner in learning. Corners, indoors and outdoors, should be created and equipped with books, toys and listening devices for children's play and learning.
8. Government should adequately fund Early Childhood Education through the training of teachers and care givers and the provision of Early Childhood Settings and Resource centres.

**Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson**  
World President of OMEP

**Abimbola Are**  
President of OMEP – Nigeria

**Victoria O. Bilewu**  
Regional VP of OMEP – Africa