CONFEDERATIVE APPROACH
TO HIGHER EDUCATION :
ACCORD'S POINT OF VIEW

It has often been taken for granted that universities are international. The universal nature of knowledge, a long tradition of international collegiality and cooperation in research, the comings and goings of faculty and students since Antiquity have all served to create this impression. Conscious that this impression only partially reflects the day to day reality of higher education institutions and noting that internationalisation of higher education is today more than ever a worthy goal, there is an urgent need to reaffirm the commitment and to urge all stakeholders to contribute to its realisation.

As we have entered the 21st Century, a number of major challenges face women and men as they interact with one another as individuals, groups, and with nature. Globalisation of trade, of production, and of communications has created a highly interconnected world. Yet the tremendous gaps between the rich and the poor continue to widen both within, and between nations. Sustainable development remains an elusive long-term goal, too often sacrificed for short-term gains.

It is imperative that higher education offers solutions to existing problems and innovate to avoid problems in the future. Whether in the economic, political, or social realms, higher education is expected to contribute to raising the overall quality of life. To fulfil its role effectively and maintain excellence, higher education must become far more internationalised; it must integrate an international and intercultural dimension into its teaching, research, and service functions.

Preparing future leaders and citizens for a highly interdependent world, requires a higher education system where internationalisation promotes cultural diversity and fosters intercultural understanding, respect, and tolerance among peoples. Such internationalisation of higher education contributes to building more than economically competitive and politically powerful regional blocks; it represents a commitment to international solidarity, human security and helps to build a climate of global peace.

Technological advances in communications are powerful instruments, which can serve to further internationalisation of higher education and to democratise access to opportunities. However, to the extent that access to new information technologies remains unevenly distributed in the world, the adverse side effects of their

widespread use can threaten cultural diversity and widen the gaps in the production, dissemination, and appropriation of knowledge.

Highly educated manpower at the highest levels are essential to increasingly knowledge-based development. Internationalisation and international cooperation can serve to improve higher education by increasing efficiency in teaching and learning as well as in research through shared efforts and joint actions.

The ACCORD at this point of time thinks it proper to define the principle of Institutional Autonomy as the necessary degree of independence from external interference that the University requires in respect of its internal organisation and governance, the internal distribution of financial resources and the generation of income from non public sources, the recruitment of its staff, the setting of the conditions of study and, finally, the freedom to conduct teaching and research.

The ACCORD wishes to further define the principle of Academic Freedom as the freedom for members of the academic community that is, scholars, teachers and students to follow their scholarly activities within a framework determined by that community in respect of ethical rules and international standards, and without outside pressure.

Rights confer obligations. These obligations are as much incumbent on the individuals and on the University of which they are part, as they are upon the State and the Society.

Academic Freedom engages the obligation by each individual member of the academic profession to excellence, to innovation, and to advancing the frontiers of knowledge through research and the diffusion of its results through teaching and publications. Academic Freedom also engages the ethical responsibility of the individuals and the academic community in the conduct of research, both in determining the priorities of that research and in taking account of the implications, which its results may have for Humanity and Nature.

For its part, the University has the obligation to uphold and demonstrate to Society that it stands by its collective obligation to quality and ethics, to fairness and tolerance, to the setting and the upkeep of standards - academic when applied to research and teaching, administrative when applied to due process, to the rendering of accounts to Society, to self-verification, to institutional review and to transparency in the conduct of institutional self-government.

For their part, organising powers and stakeholders public or private, stand equally under the obligation to prevent arbitrary interference, to provide and to ensure those conditions necessary, in compliance with internationally recognised

standards, for the exercise of Academic Freedom by individual members of the academic profession and for University Autonomy to be exercised by the institution.

In particular, the organising powers and stakeholders public or private, and the interests they represent, should recognise that by its very nature the obligation upon the academic profession to advance knowledge is inseparable from the examination, questioning and testing of accepted ideas and of established wisdom. And that the expression of views, which follows from scientific insight or scholarly investigation may often be contrary to popular conviction or judged as unacceptable and intolerable.

Hence, agencies which exercise responsibility for the advancement of knowledge as to particular interests which provide support for, or stand in a contractual relationship with, the University for the services it may furnish, must recognise that such expressions of scholarly judgement and scientific inquiry shall not place in jeopardy the career or the existence of the individual expressing them nor leave that individual open to pursual for *delit d'opinion* on account of such views being expressed.

If the free range of inquiry, examination and the advance of knowledge are held to be benefits Society derives from the University, the latter must assume the responsibility for the choices and the priorities it sets freely. Society for its part, must recognise its part in providing means appropriate for the achievement of that end.

Resources should be commensurate with expectations - especially those which, like fundamental research, demand a long-term commitment if they are to yield their full benefits.

The obligation to transmit and to advance knowledge is the basic purpose for which Academic Freedom and University Autonomy are required and recognised. Since knowledge is universal, so too is this obligation.

In practice, however, Universities fulfil this obligation primarily in respect of the Societies in which they are located. And it is these communities, cultural, regional, national and local, which establish with the University the terms by which such responsibilities are to be assumed, who is to assume them and by what means and procedures.

Responsibilities met within the setting of 'national' society, extend beyond the physical boundaries of that society. Since its earliest days, the University has professed intellectual and spiritual engagement to the principles of 'universalism' and to 'internationalism' whilst Academic Freedom and University Autonomy evolved within the setting of the historic national community.

For Universities to serve a world society requires that Academic Freedom and University Autonomy form the bedrock to a new Social Contract - a contract to uphold values common to Humanity and to meet the expectations of a world where frontiers are rapidly dissolving.

In the context of international cooperation, the exercise of Academic Freedom and University Autonomy by some should not lead to intellectual hegemony over others. It should, on the contrary, be a means of strengthening the principles of pluralism, tolerance and academic solidarity between institutions of higher learning and between individual scholars and students. At a time when the ties, obligations and commitments between Society and the University are becoming more complex, more urgent and more direct, it appears desirable to establish a broadly recognised Charter of mutual rights and obligations governing the relationship between University and Society, including adequate monitoring mechanisms for its application.

The Afro-Asian-American Chamber of Commerce, Occupational Research and Development (ACCORD), being founded to promote cooperation among higher education institutions, notes that despite the universality of knowledge, which has always served to affirm the nature of higher education, the level of internationalisation remains low and uneven. Furthermore, cooperation has had relatively little impact of global wealth and resource distribution even in the realm of higher education. Worse, the external brain drain and other negative consequences of poorly designed cooperative activities have, at times, even exacerbated the conditions in developing nations.

In more recent times, commercial and financial interests have gained prominence in the internationalisation process and threaten to displace the less utilitarian and equally valuable aspects of this enriching and necessary transformation of higher education.

MASTERPLAN ENVISAGED BY THE AFRO-ASIAN-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, OCCUPATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (ACCORD)

INTRODUCTION

1. There is an unprecedented demand for and a great diversification in higher education, as well as an increased awareness of its vital importance for sociocultural and economic development, and for building the future, for which the younger generations will need to be equipped with new skills, knowledge and ideals.

2. Higher education includes 'all types of studies, teaching, training and research at the post-secondary level, provided by universities or other educational establishments that are approved as institutions of higher education by the Competent Authorities.

3. Everywhere higher education is faced with great challenges and difficulties related to financing, equity of conditions at access into and during the course of studies, improved staff development, skills-based training, enhancement and preservation of quality in teaching, research and services, relevance of programmes, employability of graduates, post-graduates and doctorates, establishment of efficient co-operation agreements and equitable access to the benefits of international co-operation.

4. At the same time, higher education is being challenged by new opportunities relating to technologies that are improving the ways in which knowledge can be produced, managed, disseminated, accessed and controlled. Equitable access to these technologies should be ensured at all levels of education systems.

5. The initial years of this century and the last 50 years of the twentieth century will go down in the history of higher education as the period of its most spectacular expansion: an over sixfold increase in student enrolments worldwide. But it is also the period which has seen the gap between the industrially developed, the developing countries and in particular the least developed countries with regard to access and resources for higher learning and research, already enormous, becoming even wider. It has also been a period of increased socio-economic stratification and greater difference in educational opportunity within countries, including in some of the most developed and wealthiest nations.

6. Without adequate higher education and research institutions providing a critical mass of skilled and educated people, no country can ensure genuine endogenous and sustainable development and, in particular, developing countries and the least developed countries cannot reduce the gap separating them from the industrially developed ones. Sharing knowledge, international co-operation and new technologies can offer new opportunities to reduce this gap.

7. Higher education has given ample proof of its viability over the centuries and of its ability to change and to induce change and progress in society. Owing to the scope and pace of change, society has become increasingly knowledge-based so that higher learning and research now act as essential components of cultural, socio-economic and environmentally sustainable development of individuals, communities and nations.

8. Higher education itself is confronted, therefore, with formidable challenges and must proceed to the most radical change and renewal it has ever been required to undertake, so that our society, which is currently undergoing a profound crisis of values, can transcend mere economic considerations and incorporate deeper dimensions of morality and spirituality.

9. It is with the aim of providing solutions to these challenges and of setting in motion a process of in-depth reform in higher education worldwide that the Afro-Asian-American Chamber of Commerce, Occupational Research and Development (ACCORD) is being established with a view to designing a Masterplan Paradigm for introducing development systems for strengthening the cause of higher education in the third millennium.

ACCORD'S DECLARATION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

10. Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states in Article 26, paragraph 1, that 'Everyone has the right to education' and that 'higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit', and endorsing the basic principles of the Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), which, by Article 4, commits the States Parties to it to 'make higher education equally accessible to all on the basis of individual capacity'.

11. Convinced that education is a fundamental pillar of human rights, democracy, sustainable development and peace, and shall therefore become accessible to all throughout life and that measures are required to ensure co-ordination and co-operation across and between the various sectors, particularly between general, technical and professional secondary and post-secondary education as well as between universities, colleges and technical institutions.

12. Believing that, in this context, the solution of the problems faced in the twenty-first century will be determined by the vision of the future society and by the role that is assigned to education in general and to higher education in particular.

13. Aware that at the beginning of a new millennium it is the duty of higher education to ensure that the values and ideals of a culture of peace prevail and that the intellectual community should be mobilized to that end.

14. Considering that a substantial change and development of higher education, the enhancement of its quality and relevance, and the solution to the major challenges it faces, require the strong involvement not only of governments

and of higher education institutions, but also of all stakeholders, including students and their families, teachers, business and industry, the public and private sectors of the economy, legislatures, the media, the community, professional associations and society as well as a greater responsibility of higher education institutions towards society and accountability in the use of public and private, national or international resources;

15. Emphasizing that higher education systems should enhance their capacity to live with uncertainty, to change and bring about change, and to address social needs and to promote solidarity and equity; should preserve and exercise scientific rigour and originality, in a spirit of impartiality, as a basic prerequisite for attaining and sustaining an indispensable level of quality; and should place students at the centre of their concerns, within a lifelong perspective, so as to allow their full integration into the global knowledge society of this new century; and

16. Also believing that international co-operation and exchange are major avenues for advancing higher education throughout the world.

Proclaim the following:

MISSIONS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE AFRO-ASIAN-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, OCCUPATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (ACCORD) RELATED TO TERTIARY EDUCATION

MISSION TO EDUCATE, TO TRAIN AND TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH

We affirm that the core missions and values of higher education, in particular the mission to contribute to the sustainable development and improvement of society as a whole, should be preserved, reinforced and further expanded, namely, to:

17. Educate highly qualified graduates and responsible citizens able to meet the needs of all sectors of human activity, by offering relevant qualifications, including professional training, which combine high-level knowledge and skills, using courses and content continually tailored to the present and future needs of society.

18. Provide opportunities for higher learning and for learning throughout life, giving to learners an optimal range of choice and a flexibility of entry and exit points within the system, as well as an opportunity for individual development and social mobility in order to educate for citizenship and for active participation in society, with a worldwide vision, for endogenous capacity-building, and for the consolidation of human rights, sustainable development, democracy and peace, in a context of justice.

19.   Advance, create and disseminate knowledge through research and provide, as part of its service to the community, relevant expertise to assist societies in cultural, social and economic development, promoting and developing scientific and technological research as well as research in the social sciences, the humanities and the creative arts.

20.   Help understand, interpret, preserve, enhance, promote and disseminate national and regional, international and historic cultures, in a context of cultural pluralism and diversity.

21.   Help protect and enhance societal values by training young people in the values which form the basis of democratic citizenship and by providing critical and detached perspectives to assist in the discussion of strategic options and the reinforcement of humanistic perspectives; and

22.   Contribute to the development and improvement of education at all levels, including through the training of teachers.

ETHICAL ROLE, AUTONOMY, RESPONSIBILITY AND ANTICIPATORY FUNCTION

Higher education institutions and their personnel and students should :

23.   Preserve and develop their crucial functions, through the exercise of ethics and scientific and intellectual rigour in their various activities.

24.   Be able to speak out on ethical, cultural and social problems completely independently and in full awareness of their responsibilities, exercising a kind of intellectual authority that society needs to help it to reflect, understand and act.

25.   Enhance their critical and forward-looking functions, through continuing analysis of emerging social, economic, cultural and political trends, providing a focus for forecasting, warning and prevention.

26.   Exercise their intellectual capacity and their moral prestige to defend and actively disseminate universally accepted values, including peace, justice, freedom, equality and solidarity.

27.   Enjoy full academic autonomy and freedom, conceived as a set of rights and duties, while being fully responsible and accountable to society.

28. Play a role to help identify and to address issues that affect the well-being of communities, nations and global society.

SHAPING A NEW VISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION
Equity of Access

29. In keeping with Article 26.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, admission to higher education should be based on the merit, capacity, efforts, perseverance and devotion, showed by those seeking access to it, and can take place in a lifelong scheme, at any time, with due recognition of previously acquired skills. As a consequence, no discrimination can be accepted in granting access to higher education on grounds of race, gender, language or religion, or economic, cultural or social distinctions, or physical disabilities.

30. Equity of access to higher education should begin with the reinforcement and, if need be, the reordering of its links with all other levels of education, particularly with secondary education. Higher education institutions must be viewed as, and must also work within themselves to be a part of and encourage, a seamless system starting with early childhood and primary education and continuing through life. Higher education institutions must work in active partnership with parents, schools, students, socio-economic groups and communities.

31. Secondary education should not only prepare qualified candidates for access to higher education by developing the capacity to learn on a broad basis but also open the way to active life by providing training on a wide range of jobs. However, access to higher education should remain open to those successfully completing secondary school, or its equivalent, or presenting entry qualifications, as far as possible, at any age and without any discrimination.

32. As a consequence, the rapid and wide-reaching demand for higher education requires, where appropriate, all policies concerning access to higher education to give priority in the future to the approach based on the merit of the individual.

33. Access to higher education for members of some special target groups, such as indigenous peoples, cultural and linguistic minorities, disadvantaged groups, peoples living under occupation and those who suffer from disabilities, must be actively facilitated, since these groups as collectivities and as individuals may have both experience and talent that can be of great value for the development of societies and nations. Special material help and educational solutions can help overcome the obstacles that these groups face, both in accessing and in continuing higher education.

ENHANCING PARTICIPATION AND PROMOTING THE ROLE OF WOMEN

34. Although significant progress has been achieved to enhance the access of women to higher education, various socio-economic, cultural and political obstacles continue in many places in the world to impede their full access and effective integration. To overcome them remains an urgent priority in the renewal process for ensuring an equitable and non-discriminatory system of higher education based on the principle of merit.

35. Further efforts are required to eliminate all gender stereotyping in higher education, to consider gender aspects in different disciplines and to consolidate women's participation at all levels and in all disciplines, in which they are under-represented and, in particular, to enhance their active involvement in decision-making.

36. Gender studies (women's studies) should be promoted as a field of knowledge, strategic for the transformation of higher education and society.

37. Efforts should be made to eliminate political and social barriers whereby women are under-represented and in particular to enhance their active involvement at policy and decision-making levels within higher education and society.

ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE THROUGH RESEARCH IN SCIENCE, THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES AND THE DISSEMINATION OF ITS RESULTS

38. The advancement of knowledge through research is an essential function of all systems of higher education, which should promote postgraduate studies. Innovation, interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity should be promoted and reinforced in programmes with long-term orientations on social and cultural aims and needs. An appropriate balance should be established between basic and target-oriented research.

40. Institutions should ensure that all members of the academic community engaged in research are provided with appropriate training, resources and support. The intellectual and cultural rights on the results of research should be used to the benefit of humanity and should be protected so that they cannot be abused.

41. Research must be enhanced in all disciplines, including the social and human sciences, education (including higher education), engineering, natural sciences, mathematics, informatics and the arts within the framework of national, regional and international research and development policies. Of special importance is the enhancement of research capacities in higher

education research institutions, as mutual enhancement of quality takes place when higher education and research are conducted at a high level within the same institution. These institutions should find the material and financial support required, from both public and private sources.

LONG-TERM ORIENTATION BASED ON RELEVANCE

42. Relevance in higher education should be assessed in terms of the fit between what society expects of institutions and what they do. This requires ethical standards, political impartiality, critical capacities and, at the same time, a better articulation with the problems of society and the world of work, basing long-term orientations on societal aims and needs, including respect for cultures and environmental protection. The concern is to provide access to both broad general education and targeted, career-specific education, often interdisciplinary, focusing on skills and aptitudes, both of which equip individuals to live in a variety of changing settings, and to be able to change occupations.

43. Higher education should reinforce its role of service to society, especially its activities aimed at eliminating poverty, intolerance, violence, illiteracy, hunger, environmental degradation and disease, mainly through an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach in the analysis of problems and issues.

44. Higher education should enhance its contribution to the development of the whole education system, notably through improved teacher education, curriculum development and educational research.

45. Ultimately, higher education should aim at the creation of a new society - non-violent and non-exploitative - consisting of highly cultivated, motivated and integrated individuals, inspired by love for humanity and guided by wisdom.

STRENGTHENING CO-OPERATION WITH THE WORLD OF WORK AND ANALYSING AND ANTICIPATING SOCIETAL NEEDS

46. In economies characterized by changes and the emergence of new production paradigms based on knowledge and its application, and on the handling of information, the links between higher education, the world of work and other parts of society should be strengthened and renewed.

47. Links with the world of work can be strengthened, through the participation of its representatives in the governance of institutions, the increased use of domestic and international apprenticeship/work-study opportunities for

students and teachers, the exchange of personnel between the world of work and higher education institutions and revised curricula more closely aligned with working practices.

48.   As a lifelong source of professional training, updating and recycling, institutions of higher education should systematically take into account trends in the world of work and in the scientific, technological and economic sectors. In order to respond to the work requirements, higher education systems and the world of work should jointly develop and assess learning processes, bridging programmes and prior learning assessment and recognition programmes, which integrate theory and training on the job. Within the framework of their anticipatory function, higher education institutions could contribute to the creation of new jobs, although that is not their only function.

49.   Developing entrepreneurial skills and initiative should become major concerns of higher education, in order to facilitate employability of graduates who will increasingly be called upon to be not only job seekers but also and above all to become job creators. Higher education institutions should give the opportunity to students to fully develop their own abilities with a sense of social responsibility, educating them to become full participants in democratic society and promoters of changes that will foster equity and justice.

DIVERSIFICATION FOR ENHANCED EQUITY OF OPPORTUNITY

50.   Diversifying higher education models and recruitment methods and criteria is essential both to meet increasing international demand and to provide access to various delivery modes and to extend access to an ever-wider public, in a lifelong perspective, based on flexible entry and exit points to and from the system of higher education.

51.   More diversified systems of higher education are characterized by new types of tertiary institutions: public, private and non-profit institutions, amongst others. Institutions should be able to offer a wide variety of education and training opportunities: traditional degrees, short courses, part-time study, flexible schedules, modularized courses, supported learning at a distance, etc.

INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL APPROACHES: CRITICAL THINKING AND CREATIVITY

52.   In a world undergoing rapid changes, there is a perceived need for a new vision and paradigm of higher education, which should be student-oriented, calling in most countries for in-depth reforms and an open access policy so as

to cater to ever more diversified categories of people, and of its contents, methods, practices and means of delivery, based on new types of links and partnerships with the community and with the broadest sectors of society.

53. Higher education institutions should educate students to become well informed and deeply motivated citizens, who can think critically, analyse problems of society, look for solutions to the problems of society, apply them and accept social responsibilities.

54. To achieve these goals, it may be necessary to recast curricula, using new and appropriate methods, so as to go beyond cognitive mastery of disciplines. New pedagogical and didactical approaches should be accessible and promoted in order to facilitate the acquisition of skills, competencies and abilities for communication, creative and critical analysis, independent thinking and team work in multicultural contexts, where creativity also involves combining traditional or local knowledge and know-how with advanced science and technology. These recast curricula should take into account the gender dimension and the specific cultural, historic and economic context of each country. The teaching of human rights standards and education on the needs of communities in all parts of the world should be reflected in the curricula of all disciplines, particularly those preparing for entrepreneurship. Academic personnel should play a significant role in determining the curriculum.

55. New methods of education will also imply new types of teaching-learning materials. These have to be coupled with new methods of testing that will promote not only powers of memory but also powers of comprehension, skills for practical work and creativity.

HIGHER EDUCATION PERSONNEL AND STUDENTS AS MAJOR ACTORS

56. A vigorous policy of staff development is an essential element of higher education institutions. Clear policies should be established concerning higher education teachers, who nowadays need to focus on teaching students how to learn and how to take initiatives rather than being exclusively founts of knowledge. Adequate provision should be made for research and for updating and improving pedagogical skills, through appropriate staff development programmes, encouraging constant innovation in curriculum, teaching and learning methods, and ensuring appropriate professional and financial status, and for excellence in research and teaching. Furthermore, in view of the role of higher education for lifelong learning, experience outside the institutions ought to be considered as a relevant qualification for higher educational staff.

57. Clear policies should be established by all higher education institutions preparing teachers of early childhood education and for primary and secondary schools, providing stimulus for constant innovation in curriculum, best practices in teaching methods and familiarity with diverse learning styles. It is vital to have appropriately trained administrative and technical personnel.

58. National and institutional decision-makers should place students and their needs at the centre of their concerns, and should consider them as major partners and responsible stakeholders in the renewal of higher education. This should include student involvement in issues that affect that level of education, in evaluation, the renovation of teaching methods and curricula and, in the institutional framework in force, in policy-formulation and institutional management. As students have the right to organize and represent themselves, students' involvement in these issues should be guaranteed.

59. Guidance and counselling services should be developed, in co-operation with student organizations, in order to assist students in the transition to higher education at whatever age and to take account of the needs of ever more diversified categories of learners. Apart from those entering higher education from schools or further education colleges, they should also take account of the needs of those leaving and returning in a lifelong process. Such support is important in ensuring a good match between student and course, reducing drop-out. Students who do drop out should have suitable opportunities to return to higher education if and when appropriate.

FROM VISION TO ACTION
Qualitative Evaluation

60. Quality in higher education is a multidimensional concept, which should embrace all its functions, and activities: teaching and academic programmes, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, services to the community and the academic environment. Internal self-evaluation and external review, conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible with international expertise, are vital for enhancing quality. Independent national bodies should be established and comparative standards of quality, recognized at international level, should be defined. Due attention should be paid to specific institutional, national and regional contexts in order to take into account diversity and to avoid uniformity. Stakeholders should be an integral part of the institutional evaluation process.

61.   Quality also requires that higher education should be characterized by its international dimension: exchange of knowledge, interactive networking, mobility of teachers and students, and international research projects, while taking into account the national cultural values and circumstances.

62.   To attain and sustain national, regional or international quality, certain components are particularly relevant, notably careful selection of staff and continuous staff development, in particular through the promotion of appropriate programmes for academic staff development, including teaching/learning methodology and mobility between countries, between higher education institutions, and between higher education institutions and the world of work, as well as student mobility within and between countries. The new information technologies are an important tool in this process, owing to their impact on the acquisition of knowledge and know-how.

THE POTENTIAL AND THE CHALLENGE OF TECHNOLOGY

63.   The rapid breakthroughs in new information and communication technologies will further change the way knowledge is developed, acquired and delivered. It is also important to note that the new technologies offer opportunities to innovate on course content and teaching methods and to widen access to higher learning. However, it should be borne in mind that new information technology does not reduce the need for teachers but changes their role in relation to the learning process and that the continuous dialogue that converts information into knowledge and understanding becomes fundamental. Higher education institutions should lead in drawing on the advantages and potential of new information and communication technologies, ensuring quality and maintaining high standards for education practices and outcomes in a spirit of openness, equity and international co-operation by:

64.   Engaging in networks, technology transfer, capacity-building, developing teaching materials and sharing experience of their application in teaching, training and research, and making knowledge accessible to all;

65.   Creating new learning environments, ranging from distance education facilities to complete virtual higher education institutions and systems, capable of bridging distances and developing high-quality systems of education, thus serving social and economic advancement and democratization as well as other relevant priorities of society, while ensuring that these virtual education facilities, based on regional, continental or global networks, function in a way that respects cultural and social identities;

66. Noting that, in making full use of information and communication technology (ICT) for educational purposes, particular attention should be paid to removing the grave inequalities which exist among and also within the countries of the world with regard to access to new information and communication technologies and to the production of the corresponding resources;

67. Adapting ICT to national, regional and local needs and securing technical, educational, management and institutional systems to sustain it;

68. Facilitating, through international co-operation, the identification of the objectives and interests of all countries, particularly the developing countries, equitable access and the strengthening of infrastructures in this field and the dissemination of such technology throughout society;

69. Closely following the evolution of the 'knowledge society' in order to ensure high quality and equitable regulations for access to prevail;

70. Taking the new possibilities created by the use of ICTs into account, while realizing that it is, above all, institutions of higher education that are using ICTs in order to modernize their work, and not ICTs transforming institutions of higher education from real to virtual institutions.

STRENGTHENING HIGHER EDUCATION MANAGEMENT AND FINANCING

71. The management and financing of higher education require the development of appropriate planning and policy-analysis capacities and strategies, based on partnerships established between higher education institutions and state and national planning and co-ordination bodies, so as to secure appropriately streamlined management and the cost-effective use of resources. Higher education institutions should adopt forward-looking management practices that respond to the needs of their environments. Managers in higher education must be responsive, competent and able to evaluate regularly, by internal and external mechanisms, the effectiveness of procedures and administrative rules.

72. Higher education institutions must be given autonomy to manage their internal affairs, but with this autonomy must come clear and transparent accountability to the government, legislature, students and the wider society.

73. The ultimate goal of management should be to enhance the institutional mission by ensuring high-quality teaching, training and research, and services to the community. This objective requires governance that combines

social vision, including understanding of global issues, with efficient managerial skills. Leadership in higher education is thus a major social responsibility and can be significantly strengthened through dialogue with all stakeholders, especially teachers and students, in higher education. The participation of teaching faculty in the governing bodies of higher education institutions should be taken into account, within the framework of current institutional arrangements, bearing in mind the need to keep the size of these bodies within reasonable bounds.

74. The promotion of North-South co-operation to ensure the necessary financing for strengthening higher education in the developing countries is essential.

FINANCING OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS A PUBLIC SERVICE

The funding of higher education requires both public and private resources. The role of the government remains essential in this regard.

75. The diversification of funding sources reflects the support that society provides to higher education and must be further strengthened to ensure the development of higher education, increase its efficiency and maintain its quality and relevance. Public support for higher education and research remains essential to ensure a balanced achievement of educational and social missions.

76. Society as a whole must support education at all levels, including higher education, given its role in promoting sustainable economic, social and cultural development. Mobilization for this purpose depends on public awareness and involvement of the public and private sectors of the economy, legislature, the media, governmental and non-governmental organizations, students as well as institutions, families and all the social actors involved with higher education.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND KNOW-HOW ACROSS BORDERS AND CONTINENTS

77. The principle of solidarity and true partnership amongst higher education institutions worldwide is crucial for education and training in all fields that encourage an understanding of global issues, the role of democratic governance and skilled human resources in their resolution, and the need for living together with different cultures and values. The practice of multilingualism, faculty and student exchange programmes and institutional linkage to promote intellectual and scientific co-operation should be an integral part of all higher education systems.

78. The principles of international co-operation based on solidarity, recognition and mutual support, true partnership that equitably serves the interests of the partners and the value of sharing knowledge and know-how across borders should govern relationships among higher education institutions in both developed and developing countries and should benefit the least developed countries in particular. Consideration should be given to the need for safeguarding higher education institutional capacities in regions suffering from conflict or natural disasters. Consequently, an international dimension should permeate the curriculum, and the teaching and learning processes.

79. Regional and international normative instruments for the recognition of studies should be ratified and implemented, including certification of the skills, competencies and abilities of graduates, making it easier for students to change courses, in order to facilitate mobility within and between national systems.

FROM 'BRAIN DRAIN' TO 'BRAIN GAIN'

80. The 'brain drain' has yet to be stemmed, since it continues to deprive the developing countries and those in transition, of the high-level expertise necessary to accelerate their socio-economic progress. International co-operation schemes should be based on long-term partnerships between institutions in the South and the North, and also promote South-South co-operation. Priority should be given to training programmes in the developing countries, in centres of excellence forming regional and international networks, with short periods of specialized and intensive study abroad.

81. Consideration should be given to creating an environment conducive to attracting and retaining skilled human capital, either through national policies or international arrangements to facilitate the return - permanent or temporary - of highly trained scholars and researchers to their countries of origin. At the same time, efforts must be directed towards a process of 'brain gain' through collaboration programmes that, by virtue of their international dimension, enhance the building and strengthening of institutions and facilitate full use of endogenous capacities.

PARTNERSHIP AND ALLIANCES

82. Partnership and alliances amongst stakeholders - national and institutional policy-makers, teaching and related staff, researchers and students, and administrative and technical personnel in institutions of higher education, the world of work, community groups - is a powerful force in managing change. Also, non-governmental organizations are key actors in this process.

Henceforth, partnership, based on common interest, mutual respect and credibility, should be a prime matrix for renewal in higher education.

The Afro-Asian-American Chamber of Commerce, Occupational Research and Development (ACCORD) adopts this Declaration and reaffirms the right of all people to education and the right of access to higher education based on individual merit and capacity.

The Afro-Asian-American Chamber of Commerce, Occupational Research and Development (ACCORD) pledges to act together within the frame of our individual and collective responsibilities, by taking all necessary measures in order to realize the principles concerning higher education contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the Convention against Discrimination in Education.

The Afro-Asian-American Chamber of Commerce, Occupational Research and Development (ACCORD) solemnly reaffirms the commitment to peace. To that end, ACCORD is determined to accord high priority to education for reducing peacelessness, unemployment, pollution and intolerance.

The Afro-Asian-American Chamber of Commerce, Occupational Research and Development (ACCORD) adopts, therefore, this Declaration on Higher Education and Development. To achieve the goals set forth in this Declaration and, in particular, for immediate action, ACCORD agrees on the following Framework for Priority Action for Change and Development of Higher Education.

FRAMEWORK FOR PRIORITY ACTION FOR CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
Priority Actions at National Level
States, including their governments, legislatures and other decision-makers, should:

83. Establish, where appropriate, the legislative, political and financial framework for the reform and further development of higher education, in keeping with the terms of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which establishes that higher education shall be 'accessible to all on the basis of merit'. No discrimination can be accepted, no one can be excluded from higher education or its study fields, degree levels and types of institutions on grounds of race, gender, language, religion, or age or because of any economic or social distinctions or physical disabilities;

84. Reinforce the links between higher education and research;

85. Consider and use higher education as a catalyst for the entire education system;

86. Develop higher education institutions to include lifelong learning approaches, giving learners an optimal range of choice and a flexibility of entry and exit points within the system, and redefine their role accordingly, which implies the development of open and continuous access to higher learning and the need for bridging programmes and prior learning assessment and recognition;

87. Make efforts, when necessary, to establish close links between higher education and research institutions, taking into account the fact that education and research are two closely related elements in the establishment of knowledge;

88. Develop innovative schemes of collaboration between institutions of higher education and different sectors of society to ensure that higher education and research programmes effectively contribute to local, regional and national development;

89. Fulfil their commitments to higher education and be accountable for the pledges adopted with their concurrence, at several forums, particularly over the past decade, with regard to human, material and financial resources, human development and education in general, and to higher education in particular;

90. Have a policy framework to ensure new partnerships and the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in all aspects of higher education: the evaluation process, including curriculum and pedagogical renewal, and guidance and counselling services; and, in the framework of existing institutional arrangements, policy-making and institutional governance;

91. Define and implement policies to eliminate all gender stereotyping in higher education and to consolidate women's participation at all levels and in all disciplines in which they are under-represented at present and, in particular, to enhance their active involvement in decision-making;

92. Recognize students as the centre of attention of higher education, and one of its stakeholders. They should be involved, by means of adequate institutional structures, in the renewal of their level of education (including curriculum and pedagogical reform), and policy decision, in the framework of existing institutional arrangements;

93. Recognize that students have the right to organize themselves autonomously;

94. Promote and facilitate national and international mobility of teaching staff and students as an essential part of the quality and relevance of higher education;

95. Provide and ensure those conditions necessary for the exercise of academic freedom and institutional autonomy so as to allow institutions of higher education, as well as those individuals engaged in higher education and research, to fulfil their obligations to society.

96. States in which enrolment in higher education is low by internationally accepted comparative standards should strive to ensure a level of higher education adequate for relevant needs in the public and private sectors of society and to establish plans for diversifying and expanding access, particularly benefiting all minorities and disadvantaged groups.

97. The interface with general, technical and professional secondary education should be reviewed in depth, in the context of lifelong learning. Access to higher education in whatever form must remain open to those successfully completing secondary education or its equivalent or meeting entry qualifications at any age, while creating gateways to higher education, especially for older students without any formal secondary education certificates, by attaching more importance to their professional experience. However, preparation for higher education should not be the sole or primary purpose of secondary education, which should also prepare for the world of work, with complementary training whenever required, in order to provide knowledge, capacities and skills for a wide range of jobs. The concept of bridging programmes should be promoted to allow those entering the job market to return to studies at a later date.

98. Concrete steps should be taken to reduce the widening gap between industrially developed and developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, with regard to higher education and research. Concrete steps are also needed to encourage increased co-operation between countries at all levels of economic development with regard to higher education and research. Consideration should be given to making budgetary provisions for that purpose, and developing mutually beneficial agreements in order to sustain co-operative activities and projects through appropriate incentives and funding in education, research and the development of high-level experts.

PRIORITY ACTIONS AT THE LEVEL OF SYSTEMS AND INSTITUTIONS

99. Each higher education institution should define its mission according to the present and future needs of society and base it on an awareness of the fact that higher education is essential for any country or region to reach the

necessary level of sustainable and environmentally sound economic and social development, cultural creativity nourished by better knowledge and understanding of the cultural heritage, higher living standards, and internal and international harmony and peace, based on human rights, democracy, tolerance and mutual respect. These missions should incorporate the concept of academic freedom.

In establishing priorities in their programmes and structures, higher education institutions should:

100. Take into account the need to abide by the rules of ethics and scientific and intellectual rigour, and the multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach;

101. Be primarily concerned to establish systems of access for the benefit of all persons who have the necessary abilities and motivations;

102. Use their autonomy and high academic standards to contribute to the sustainable development of society and to the resolution of the issues facing the society of the future. They should develop their capacity to give forewarning through the analysis of emerging social, cultural, economic and political trends, approached in a multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary manner, giving particular attention to:

      high quality, a clear sense of the social pertinence of studies and their anticipatory function, based on scientific grounds;

      knowledge of fundamental social questions, in particular related to the elimination of poverty, to sustainable development, to intercultural dialogue and to the shaping of a culture of peace;

      the need for close connection with effective research organizations or institutions that perform well in the sphere of research; and

      fundamentals of human ethics, applied to each profession and to all areas of human endeavour.

103. Ensure, especially in universities and as far as possible, that faculty members participate in teaching, research, tutoring students and steering institutional affairs.

104. Take all necessary measures to reinforce their service to the community, especially their activities aimed at eliminating poverty, intolerance, violence, illiteracy, hunger and disease, through an interdisciplinary and

transdisciplinary approach in the analysis of challenges, problems and different subjects.

105. Set their relations with the world of work on a new basis involving effective partnerships with all social actors concerned, starting from a reciprocal harmonization of action and the search for solutions to pressing problems of humanity, all this within a framework of responsible autonomy and academic freedom.

106. Ensure high quality of international standing, consider accountability and both internal and external evaluation, with due respect for autonomy and academic freedom, as being normal and inherent in their functioning, and institutionalize transparent systems, structures or mechanisms specific thereto.

107. As lifelong education requires academic staff to update and improve their teaching skills and learning methods, even more than in the present systems mainly based on short periods of higher teaching, establish appropriate academic staff development structures and/or mechanisms and programmes.

108. Promote and develop research, which is a necessary feature of all higher education systems, in all disciplines, including the human and social sciences and arts, given their relevance for development are needed to ensure continued progress towards such key national objectives as access, equity, quality, relevance and diversification.

109. Remove gender inequalities and biases in curricula and research, and take all appropriate measures to ensure balanced representation of both men and women among students and teachers, at all levels of management.

110. Provide, where appropriate, guidance and counselling, remedial courses, training in how to study and other forms of student support, including measures to improve student living conditions.

111. While the need for closer links between higher education and the world of work is important worldwide, it is particularly vital for the developing countries and especially the least developed countries, given their low level of economic development. Governments of these countries should take appropriate measures to reach this objective through appropriate measures such as strengthening institutions for higher/professional/vocational education. At the same time, international action is needed in order to help establish joint undertakings between higher education and industry in these countries. It will be necessary to give consideration to ways in which higher education graduates could be supported, through various schemes, following

the positive experience of the micro-credit system and other incentives, in order to start small- and medium-size enterprises. At the institutional level, developing entrepreneurial skills and initiative should become a major concern of higher education, in order to facilitate employability of graduates who will increasingly be required not only to be job-seekers but to become job-creators.

112. The use of new technologies should be generalized to the greatest extent possible to help higher education institutions, to reinforce academic development, to widen access, to attain universal scope and to extend knowledge, as well as to facilitate education throughout life. Governments, educational institutions and the private sector should ensure that informatics and communication network infrastructures, computer facilities and human resources training are adequately provided.

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHOULD BE OPEN TO ADULT LEARNERS:

113. By developing coherent mechanisms to recognize the outcomes of learning undertaken in different contexts, and to ensure that credit is transferable within and between institutions, sectors and states.

114. By establishing joint higher education/community research and training partnerships, and by bringing the services of higher education institutions to outside groups.

115. By carrying out interdisciplinary research in all aspects of adult education and learning with the participation of adult learners themselves.

116. By creating opportunities for adult learning in flexible, open and creative ways.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

117. Co-operation should be conceived of as an integral part of the institutional missions of higher education institutions and systems. Intergovernmental organizations, donor agencies and non-governmental organizations should extend their action in order to develop inter-university co-operation projects in particular through twinning institutions, based on solidarity and partnership, as a means of bridging the gap between rich and poor countries in the vital areas of knowledge production and application. Each institution of higher education should envisage the creation of an appropriate structure and/or mechanism for promoting and managing international co-operation.

118. The intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations active in higher education, the states through their bilateral and multilateral co-operation programmes, the academic community and all concerned partners in society should further promote international academic mobility as a means to advance knowledge and knowledge-sharing in order to bring about and promote solidarity as a main element of the global knowledge society of tomorrow, including through strong support a the joint work plan 2004-2010 on the recognition of studies, degrees and diplomas in higher education and through large-scale co-operative action involving, inter alia, the establishment of an educational credit transfer scheme, with particular emphasis on South-South co-operation, the needs of the least developed countries and of the small states with few higher education institutions or none at all.

119. Institutions of higher education in industrialized countries should strive to make arrangements for international co-operation with sister institutions in developing countries and in particular with those of poor countries. In their co-operation, the institutions should make efforts to ensure fair and just recognition of studies abroad. Initiatives should be taken to develop higher education throughout the world, setting itself clear-cut goals that could lead to tangible results. One method might be to implement projects in different regions renewing efforts towards creating and/or strengthening centres of excellence in developing countries relying on networks of national, regional and international higher education institutions.

120. All concerned parts of society, should also undertake action in order to alleviate the negative effects of 'brain drain' and to shift to a dynamic process of 'brain gain'. An overall analysis is required in all regions of the world of the causes and effects of brain drain. A vigorous campaign should be launched through the concerted effort of the international community and on the basis of academic solidarity and should encourage the return to their home country of expatriate academics, as well as the involvement of university volunteers - newly retired academics or young academics at the beginning of their career - who wish to teach and undertake research at higher education institutions in developing countries. At the same time it is essential to support the developing countries in their efforts to build and strengthen their own educational capacities.

WITHIN THIS FRAMEWORK, INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS SHOULD:

121. Promote better co-ordination among intergovernmental, supranational and non-governmental organizations, agencies and foundations that sponsor existing programmes and projects for international co-operation in higher

education. Furthermore, co-ordination efforts should take place in the context of national priorities. This could be conducive to the pooling and sharing of resources, avoid overlapping and promote better identification of projects, greater impact of action and increased assurance of their validity through collective agreement and review. Programmes aiming at the rapid transfer of knowledge, supporting institutional development and establishing centres of excellence in all areas of knowledge, in particular for peace education, conflict resolution, human rights and democracy, should be supported by institutions and by public and private donors.

122. Jointly with the various intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, become a forum of reflection on higher education issues aiming at:

(i) preparing update reports on the state of knowledge on higher education issues in all parts of the world;

(ii) promoting innovative projects of training and research, intended to enhance the specific role of higher education in lifelong education;

(iii) reinforcing international co-operation and emphasizing the role of higher education for citizenship education, sustainable development and peace; and

(iv) facilitating exchange of information and establishing, when appropriate, a database on successful experiences and innovations that can be consulted by institutions confronted with problems in their reforms of higher education.

123. Take specific action to support institutions of higher education in the least developed parts of the world and in regions suffering the effects of conflict or natural disasters.

124. Make renewed efforts towards creating or/and strengthening centres of excellence in developing countries.

125. Take the initiative to draw up an international instrument on academic freedom, autonomy and social responsibility.

Ensure follow-up of this Declaration jointly with other inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations and with all higher education stakeholders. It should have a crucial role in promoting international cooperation in the field of higher education in implementing this follow-up under the aegis of the Afro-Asian-

American Chamber of Commerce, Occupational Research and Development (ACCORD) and in the light of the following context :

126. At the start of the twenty-first century, universities nationwide and worldwide, though their circumstances differ, face important and common challenges.

127. The phenomenon of globalisation which affects diverse sectors - the economy, the media, etc. - also has its impact on higher education throughout the world. It demands change and an explicit policy of internationalisation by universities.

127. The unprecedented development of information and communication technologies is an important vehicle in the processes of globalisation and technological accleration which carry with them opportunities and challenges that are specific to universities and to the way they fulfil their missions.

128. More than ever, the creation of knowledge, access to knowledge and its development are central to the development of societies. The knowledge society requires a new generation of skilled people. In this context, demand for more differentiated higher and continuing education, including professional development as well as open and distance learning, is in all countries expanding and, in some regions, overwhelming.

129. The rapid production of knowledge and technological development spur on the quest for quality, excellence and relevance. The university has a special responsibility to ensure that attention is paid to solving ethical questions. In this setting, the university's critical role towards society assumes a new urgency.

130. The preconditions for universities and other types of higher education institutions to cope successfully with new challenges such as these remain, however, basically unchanged. These preconditions include autonomy of action, academic freedom and adequate human and financial resources.

131. For higher education of quality to be today and in the future a motor of social, cultural and economic development, other conditions are required, amongst which effective dialogue with external partners and responsible university governance.

As a social institution, the university cannot be replaced. Hence, it must continue to adapt and change if the challenges are to be met. It will remain an institution

central to societies throughout the world as long as its activities make a difference to better the condition of humankind.

AIMS AND OBJECTS

1. To encourage links between institutions of higher education throughout the country.

2. To base the mission of the ACCORD on the fundamental principles for which every university should stand, namely the right to pursue knowledge for its own sake, to follow wherever the search for truth may lead, the tolerance of divergent opinion and freedom from political interference.

3. To aim to give expression to the obligation of universities to promote, through teaching and research, the principles of freedom and justice, of human dignity and solidarity, and to contribute through regional, national and international cooperation to the development of national and moral assistance for the strengthening of higher education generally.

4. To link up its members, offer them quality services and provide a forum for the universities from all over the country to work together and to speak on behalf of universities, and of higher education in general, and to represent their concerns and interests in public debate and to outside parties.

5. To pursue its goals through future oriented collective action including information services, informed policy discussion, research and publications.

6. To facilitate the exchange of experience and learning.

7. To restate and defend the values that underlie and determine the proper functioning of universities in the Indian subcontinent.

8. To uphold and contribute to the development of a long term vision of universities' role and responsibility in society.

9. To voice the concerns for higher education with regard to policies of national and international bodies.

10. To contribute to a better understanding of current trends and developments through analysis, research and debate.

11. To provide comprehensive and authoritative information on higher education systems, institutions and qualifications worldwide.

12. To act as a cooperation and service-oriented organisation to promote the exchange of information, experience and ideas to facilitate academic mobility and mutual, technical, national and international collaboration among universities, and to contribute through research and meetings to informed higher education policy debate.

13. To organise congress, conferences, seminars, round tables and workshops.

14. To conduct comparative studies and higher education policy research.

15. To strengthen cooperation and clearing-house activities.

16. To establish national information networks.

17. To provide consultancy, credential evaluation and advice.

18. To invite university level degree granting institutions whose main objective is higher education and research, irrespective of whether or not they carry the name of university.

19. To maintain and preserve university autonomy, academic freedom and mutual understanding.

20. To stand for the right to pursue knowledge for its own sake.

21. To remain free from political and economic interference, and give, room for divergent opinion.

22. To work for the advancement of ethical values in the work of the ACCORD and its members as well as in society and respect for diversity.

23. To remember the responsibility of universities and academies as guardians of free intellectual activity.

24. To stand for the universities' obligation as social institutions to deliver education, research and service to the community, and, in connection with this, to advance the principles of freedom and of justice, of sustainable development, human dignity and of solidarity.

25. To conserve the obligation of universities to foster constructive criticism and intellectual independence in the research for truth.

26. To contribute to the development of the long term vision of the university's role and responsibilities in society.

27. To strengthen solidarity and to contribute to reducing inequalities amongst universities, while keeping alive their cultural differences.

28. To promote access to higher education and equal opportunities for students.

29. To encourage quality and excellence worldwide, through sharing, knowledge, know-how and experience, through collaboration and through networking.

30. To help universities to become better learning organisations (for students, for teachers, for administrators).

31. To contribute to a better understanding of developments in higher education, through analysis, research and debate, as well as through the provision of information services on higher education.

32. To design and implement programmes for its members in partnership with other organisations working in the same field.

33. To pledge itself to be an open, inclusive and transparent organisation, the common voice of the university level institutions.

34. To provide a centre of cooperation among the universities and similar institutions of higher education, as well as organisations in the field of higher education generally, and to be an advocate for their concerns.

35. To facilitate the interchange of students and academic staff, and develop means for the better distribution and exchange of laboratory material, books and other equipment for university study and research.

36. To formulate the basic principles and higher education values for which the ACCORD will stand for.

37. To establish a strong structural relationship with the national as well as regional associations of universities and seek their direct involvement in the life and work of ACCORD.

38. To focus its activities on institutional examples regarding the use of new information and communication technologies in teaching and learning.

39. To encourage sustainability to be considered as being central to teaching, research, outreach and operations at universities and to identified exemplary practices and strategies.

40.   To prepare comprehensive assessments periodically on how the principles of sustainable development can best be pursued and promoted by higher education institutions.

41.   To identify the key issues of a future-oriented higher education policy debate, as well as concrete needs for support in academic exchange, knowledge transfer, and capacity building through international cooperation.

42.   To assess our respective capacities to respond to such needs, the complementarity and uniqueness of our respective possibilities and responsibilities, as compared with what can be better done by others, bilaterally or multi-laterally, on the institutional, national, regional or international level.

43.   To establish appropriate networking structures and facilities that will allow to serve better, through shared efforts, the needs and interests of our common higher education constituency.

44.   To translate into action the services set out by ACCORD more clearly in terms of support to concrete cooperation needs, both of individual universities and of partner organisations, and to identify new services as best corresponding to the vocation and possibilities; and to give expression to its internal and external missions through a strengthened confederative life, including a broader interaction with other university organisations.

45.   To disseminate relevant information on the world of higher education in an international perspective, on missions, policies and strategies, in the form of concise briefs and overviews, easily accessible and usable for higher education policy and decision-makers.

46.   To have a similar approach in relation to issues of research and debate, comparison of experiences, publications or conjointly organised special meetings and seminars for university leaders and administrators.

47.   To provide a link to consultancy, second opinions and referee networks for universities, particularly in developing countries, who wish to have access to independent advice, for example on directives from Governments and different agencies or on institutional development plans.

48.   To maintain a pool of independent advisors to be made available for special tasks, third party assessments, legal advice, management advice, helping with analysis, formulation of strategic plans, governance strategies, and codes related to academic freedom, etc.

49. To offer consultancy to agencies related to university cooperation.

50. To evaluate the institutional impact of university links and collaborative programmes, independent from the usual evaluation by sponsors to be pointed to practical and ethical guidelines for collaboration and codes of good practice, which could serve universities in their interaction.

51. To benefit from academic freedom and institutional autonomy with regard to the Central Mission of research and teaching.

52. To assume, in carrying out the tasks, its responsibility to society and to promote the principles of freedom, justice, human dignity and solidarity.

53. To reduce the tensions arising within the universities between the requirements of technological and economic globalisation and the specificities of cultural and national roots.

54. To contribute to the production and dissemination of information and knowledge concerning facts, trends and developments in higher education.

55. To help contribute to the production and dissemination of reflection, research and debate concerning the universities.

56. To help clarify, disseminate and refine a vision of the university and of its value base.

57. To pay particular attention to strengthening solidarity and reducing inequalities between universities of different backgrounds, resources and capacities.

58. To express a common voice of the universities, on national as well as global level, vis-a-vis partners like national and international statutory bodies and UN agencies as well as the public opinion.

59. To catalyse the cooperation of universities and university organisations amongst themselves and with other partners, with regard to major questions of society, which are national as well as international in nature and to which universities must make an important contribution, such as: the construction of peace and democracy; sustainable development; the challenges and stakes of globalisation and accelerated change in society; the commitment to ethical standards in the conduct of science and technology.

60. To offer to other national and international university and higher education organisations a preferential platform for information, contacts and networking, and to participate itself in such international networks.

61. To stipulate the indissociable principles for which every university should stand, including the right to pursue knowledge for its own sake and to follow wherever the search for truth may lead; the tolerance of divergent opinion and freedom from political interference; the obligation as social institutions to promote, through teaching and research, the principles of freedom and justice, of human dignity and to develop mutually material and moral aid on both national as well as international levels.

62. To collect data regarding the new forms of higher education over the ensuing half century with special reference to the number of universities, of academic staff, of students, of the emergence of a world economy, of its benefits and its dangers with a view to locating the required practical nature of the university's historic and abiding commitment to universalism, pluralism and humanism.

63. To evaluate whether in the course of the twentieth century, which has seen an unparalleled growth in knowledge, in research and their diffusion, the universities have shouldered the responsibilities in the common endeavour of human development, social, economic, technical and cultural advancement, and in responding to the major planetary problems such as environmental protection and poverty eradication, violence and social exclusion.

64. To promote the philosophy that human development and the continued extension of knowledge depend upon the freedom to examine, to enquire, and that academic freedom and university autonomy are essential to that end.

65. To urge universities to seek, establish and disseminate a clearer understanding of Sustainable Development - "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations" - and encourage more appropriate sustainable development principles and practices at the local, national and global levels, in ways consistent with their missions.

66. To utilise resources of the university to encourage a better understanding on the part of the Central and the State Governments and the public at large of the inter-related physical, biological and social dangers facing the planet Earth, and to recognise the significant interdependence and international dimensions of sustainable development.

67. To emphasise the ethical obligation of the present generation to overcome those practices of resource utilisation and those widespread disparities which lie at the root of environmental unsustainability.

68. To enhance the capacity of the university to teach and undertake research and action in society on sustainable development principles, to increase environmental literacy, and to enhance the understanding of environmental ethics within the university and with the public at large.

69. To cooperate with one another and with all segments of society in the pursuit of practical and policy measures to achieve sustainable development and thereby safeguard the interests of future generations.

70. To encourage universities to review their own operations to reflect best sustainable development practices.

71. To make an institutional commitment to the principle and practice of sustainable development within the academic milieu and to communicate that commitment to its students, its employees and to the public at large.

72. To promote sustainable consumption practices in its own operations.

73. To develop the capacities of its academic staff to teach environmental literacy.

74. To encourage among both staff and students an environmental perspective, whatever the field of study.

75. To utilise the intellectual resources of the university to build strong environmental education programmes.

76. To encourage interdisciplinary and collaborative research programmes related to sustainable development as part of the institution's central mission and to overcome traditional barriers between disciplines and departments.

77. To emphasise the ethical obligations of the university community - current students, faculty and staff - to understand and defeat the forces that lead to environmental degradation, and the inter-generational inequities; to work at ways that will help its academic community, and the graduates, and the governments that support it, to accept these ethical obligations.

78. To promote interdisciplinary networks of environmental experts at the local, national and international levels in order to disseminate knowledge and to

collaborate on common environmental projects in both research and education.

79.   To promote the mobility of staff and students as essential to the free trade of knowledge.

80.   To forge partnerships with other sectors of society in transferring innovative and appropriate technologies that can benefit and enhance sustainable development practices.

81.   To devote its activities to the study of systems, institutions and processes in higher education to specially focus on the historical role of higher education in society, contemporary policy problems, and how universities and colleges can change to meet the growing educational, research, and public service needs of a "knowledge" society.

82.   To promote public confidence that quality of provision and standards of awards in higher education are being safeguarded and enhanced.

83.   To help other confederal bodies of universities and higher education institutions in other countries aimed at providing quality education and at supporting synergistic ventures in teaching, examination, research and community service programmes.

84.   To seek to make a significant contribution to the understanding of policy-making, governance and management of universities and other higher education institutions.

85.   To emphasise equity and access and the improvement of educational experiences of people of all age levels and backgrounds.

86.   To include partnerships with other like minded organisations to address a wide array of problems, drawing upon the insights of academic disciplines and professional perspectives.

87.   To meet the widely felt need in the Indian subcontinent for a centre for policy research and cooperation in education in the Indian perspective, with the sole purpose to contribute to policy analysis in education and training, to carry out evaluation of systems, reforms, programmes and institutions, and to provide technical assistance and support to all interested actors in this field.

88.   To help the member universities in designing new information and communications technologies for heralding as a revolution for the world of

learning and to fulfil the promise of better and cheaper higher education for more students.

89. To review the open and distance learning in the context of present challenges and opportunities, describe relevant concepts and contribution, outline significant current global and regional trends, suggest policy and strategy considerations and identify ACCORD's role in capacity building, national as well international cooperation.

89. To maintain an inventory of successful strategies to increase the participation of women in higher education and promote the principle of gender equity, and to increase access and retention as well as to improve the quality of education for all women in universities.

90. To serve as a clearing house of information for providing regular opportunities for the discussion on university development in general and on academic development in particular with a view to assisting the member universities in the recruitment and placement of faculty and staff, exchange of teachers and students and in the development of cooperative arrangements.

91. To establish relations with significant players and opinion makers from education, business, culture, law, and government sectors in order to facilitate strategic alliances with other organisations.

92. To support preparation, production and widespread distribution of educational materials on higher education with a view to strengthen the employment generation movement.

92. To help promote such new Central and State legislation or amendments as may be deemed necessary for the development of higher education.

93. To encourage the students of all universities to be active, to emphasize the personal nature of learning, to accept that difference is desirable, to recognise student's right to make mistakes, to tolerate imperfection, to encourage openness of mind and trust in self, to make feel respected and accepted, to facilitate discovery, to put emphasis on self evaluation in cooperation, to permit confrontation of ideas.

94. To promote the hypothesis that learning is primarily controlled by the learner, is unique and individual, is affected by the total state of the learner, is cooperative and collaborative, is a consequence of experience, is not directly observable, is both an emotional and intellectual process, is evolutionary process, is development oriented, and, is quite sustainable.

95. To collaborate, affiliate and federate with the Central and the State Governments, agencies and bodies for implementing the projects on higher education.

96. To raise and borrow money for the purpose of the ACCORD in such a manner as may be decided from time to time and to prescribe the membership fees, charges, grants in aid etc.

97. To purchase, take on lease or exchange, hire or otherwise acquire properties, movable or immovable and rights and privileges all over the world, which may be deemed necessary or convenient for the benefit of the ACCORD and to sell, lease, mortgage, dispose or otherwise deal with all or any part of the property of the ACCORD.

98. To open branches, chapters and constitutent centres in different parts of the country and get them registered with appropriate authorities if needed and felt conducive for the attainment of the aims and objects of the ACCORD.

99. To invest the money of the ACCORD not immediately required in such securities and in such manner as may be decided from time to time, the money especially collected through subscriptions, advertisements, sponsorship, sale of publications, fees, gifts, endowments, donations, grants etc.

100. To finally provide information, knowledge, wisdom, and education that prepares every body for educational leadership and social responsibility enabling to think and communicate effectively and to develop a global awareness and sensitivity for a better global understanding, world peace and unity.

101. To motivate the Member Universities and Organisations to maintain integrity, honesty, fairness and impartiality in all the dealings and treat others with dignity and respect, care and curtesy.

102. To guide the Member Universities and Organisations for using University's funds, equipment, buildings, information and other resources with care and responsibility.

103. To educate the Member Universities and Organisations regarding their obligations to maintain confidentiality of information.

104. To train the Member Universities and Organisations to be fair and honest in their relationship with the suppliers and purchasers of the Univeristy's goods and services.

105. And to generally do all that is incidental and conducive to the attainment of the aims and objects mentioned above.

INCOME OF AFRO-ASIAN-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, OCCUPATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (ACCORD)

The income and the property of the Afro-Asian-American Chamber of Commerce, Occupational Research and Development (ACCORD) shall be utilized only for the purpose of the aims and objects as set forth above and no portion of the fund shall be directly or indirectly diverted to any other organisation(s) or person(s). This would identify the ACCORD as a Non Profit Making Organisation.

Accordingly the registeration taking place by the name of the "AFRO-ASIAN-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, OCCUPATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (ACCORD)" will be applying from time to time to the Income Tax Department for seeking exemption under different sections and provisions of the Income Tax Act of the Government of India.

POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE AFRO-ASIAN-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, OCCUPATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (ACCORD)

Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing powers of the management and control, the ACCORD shall have the following functions it may consider necessary or desirable:

a) To purchase, hire, take on lease, land, movable or immovable properties and assets anywhere in the world, accept gifts, grants or loans on such terms and conditions and subjects to the payment of interest or otherwise as the ACCORD may consider necessary.

b) To enter into contracts, agreements and arrangements with any including the Government authorities, municipal, local and others for the purpose of obtaining concessions, privileges or other benefits or which may seem conducive to carrying out all the objects and purposes of the ACCORD or any of them to obtain and carry out, exercise and comply with any such contracts, agreements or arrangements.

c) To borrow or receive money with or without security or secured by bonds, mortgages, or other securities charged on the undertaking of all or any of the assets of the ACCORD.

d) To deal with, sell, mortgage, charge, lease, invest, open bank accounts, advance loans against adequate security and generally deal with the fund or any part thereof as the ACCORD may decide and consider desirable or necessary.

e) To invest money of the ACCORD in such a manner and in such investments as the ACCORD may in their absolute discretion from time to time deem fit so to be in confirmity with any law or provision of the relevant acts of the Government.

f) To open, operate and close such accounts with any bank or banks as the ACCORD may deem necessary.

g) To manage the ACCORD's fund and to collect and recover interest, dividends and income thereof and to pay the expenses for collection and other outgoings if any.

h) To pay or utilise the balance of such interest and dividends and income of the ACCORD and if the ACCORD so desires, to utilise the corpus of the ACCORD's Fund if any or part thereof for the ACCORD's purposes.

i) To maintain separate accounts of the ACCORD for facilities like provident funds, pension funds, or any other fund for the support or relief or maintenance of any employee or class of employees either full time or part time or their dependents or any other person/persons.

j) To institute, defend, compound, compromise or abandon any legal proceedings by or against the ACCORD or its officers or otherwise concerning the assets of the ACCORD and also to compound and allow time for payment or satisfaction of any debt due to be paid and claim or demands by or against the ACCORD.

k) To refer matters to arbitration.

l) To engage the services of any person or persons upon such remuneration and terms as the ACCORD may deem fit, to take disciplinary action against them and also to terminate their services.

m) The ACCORD may incur all costs and expenses considered necessay for the due and efficient management of the affairs and properties of the ACCORD.

n) To sign, endorse, transfer and negotiate all kinds of documents relating to the investment of the funds of the ACCORD.

o) To receive money and to grant receipts and discharge thereof.

p) To delegate to any person or persons all or any of the foregoing powers conferred on the ACCORD in so far as they may lawfully do, subject however to the ACCORD retaining the ultimate control and descretion over the delegated action and conduct.

q) To transfer any funds or property of the ACCORD with objects or purposes similar to those of the ACCORD and whose income is exempt from any liability by virtue of different sections related to the non profit making organisation.

r) To frame and implement from time to time rules and regulations for the administration of the ACCORD fund and carrying out of all/any of the ACCORD purposes.

s) To help organise full time, part time, weekend, correspondence and distance learning educational programmes for conferring secondary, post secondary, bachelor's, master's and doctoral level degrees, diplomas and certificates in different areas and subjects through the insitutions including universities, colleges and schools already existing anywhere in the world or established / to be established with the assistance/approval of the ACCORD.

t) To empanel the institutions, colleges and universities offering recognised degrees, diplomas and certificates.

u) To establish branch offices and campuses of ACCORD for educational planning, publication, study, training, research and consultancy as may be required for the benefit of regional, national as well as global society.

v) To do all such things as may be necessary for the effective functioning of the ACCORD.