

# BIOPOLITICS - THE BIO-ENVIRONMENT - VOLUME III

## RESOLUTIONS OF THE FOURTH B.I.O. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY FOR THE BIO-ENVIRONMENT

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At the end of the Fourth B.I.O. International Conference on the International University for the Bio-Environment (I.U.B.E.), held in Athens from January 10 to 14, 1991, the following resolutions were accepted by participants unanimously:

### Introduction

The survival of humanity has reached a critical juncture, and much depends on our willingness and determination to maintain life in all its diverse forms. To do so successfully entails no less than the intelligent and effective management and utilization of earth's finite resources, guided by an appropriate and globally relevant moral-ethical system that is bio-sensitive. Technology will continue to be of high priority in our ceaseless search for solutions to the challenges of survival and material improvement yet, at the same time, it must be a technology tempered by wisdom. The evidence available points to the urgent need for both national and international action to arrest and, better still, reverse the destructive processes set in motion by decades of unrestrained misuse and exploitation of life-supporting systems throughout the world. New values must be created and new perspectives formulated to harness the benefits of technology to direct humankind safely into the next millennium.

### The Rationale behind the I.U.B.E.

Recognizing the cumulative threats to bios (life) and the urgent need to promote a global and holistic approach to addressing them, the Biopolitics International Organisation (B.I.O.) arranged the Fourth International Conference to discuss, plan and initiate the establishment of the I.U.B.E. This initiative to create a formal educational structure to promote, facilitate and implement the objectives of the B.I.O. represents a logical and tangible step forward to safeguard Earth for generations to come. The international representatives gathered at the conference were unanimous in their support of the initiative and pledged their continual commitment to the following B.I.O. goals:

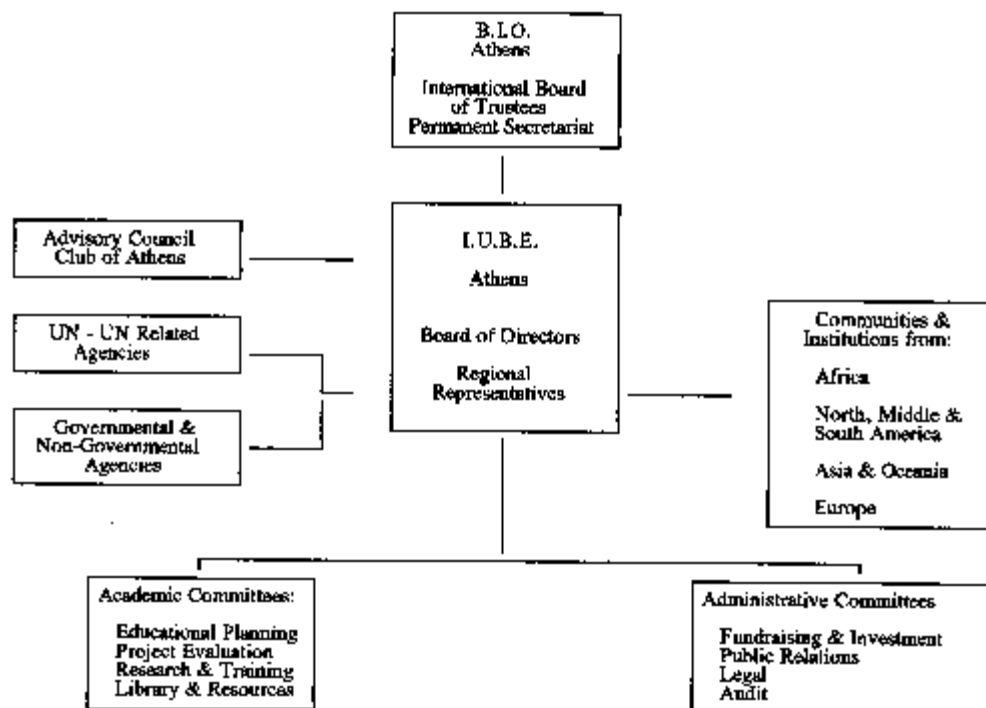
- (i) promote international cooperation for better understanding bios;
- (ii) promote the development of international legislation on Bios Rights;
- (iii) promote the bio-assessment of technology, a dialectic approach to examining potential perspectives in all fields of human endeavour in an effort to improve the quality of life. Greece has been proposed as an ideal meeting place for the dialectic exchange of ideas and search for values for the new millennium. Scientists, academicians and philosophers, as well as every individual, may bequeath their thoughts to a Bank of Ideas;
- (iv) sensitize public opinion to the ramifications of the biological sciences and the impact this progress may have on other fields of study (bio-diplomacy, bio-law, bio-economics, bio-art, bio-literature, bio-environment);
- (v) introduce educational reforms internationally so as to shift from an anthropocentric to a biocentric curriculum and place the better understanding and appreciation of the bio-environment as the core of an integrated educational system.

### The Educational Dimension of the I.U.B.E.

Humankind's current existence seems to be underlined by paradox. On the one hand, technological progress holds great promise for a more secure future, positioning humankind to enter the next millennium with confidence. On the other, however, there is great moral-ethical uncertainty as to how technology may be fruitfully enhanced to fulfill humankind's material and spiritual needs. In other words, technology has been both life-enhancing and life-threatening.

The key to overcoming this predicament without a doubt lies with education, and must rest on two basic premises: (1) it must increase, improve and extend humankind's technological competence to enable us to seek viable and appropriate solutions to maintain life in all its diversity; (2) it must create a system of moral-ethical values that can serve as a guide for technology and its application. The latter would require a fundamental shift or re-alignment of currently accepted ways of thought and action with respect to bios. The educational practice today is characterized by excessive specialisation resulting in the fragmentation of thought or a distorted vision of reality. Science and technology have become purely instrumental and utilitarian, out of harmony with basic life-sustaining processes. To reverse this trend therefore requires a new educational vision, one that is holistic and bio-sensitive and yet capable of addressing the continually evolving needs of humankind as a whole. Such an approach to education recognizes no artificial boundaries based on geography or ideology. The unifying feature of this new educational approach is life itself -- its preservation, protection and enhancement in all its variety and forms. Humankind must be made to recognise that life is an interdependent and harmonious whole and, having realized its nature, we must formulate ideas and initiate actions in order to preserve it.

This would require effective international cooperation for a better understanding of bios and the bio-environment and the institution of a global educational philosophy that stresses the value of life in all its diversity.



## The International University for the Bio-Environment (I.U.B.E.)

### *Preamble*

In consideration of bios in the next millennium and in consideration of the need to create, transmit and internalize a shared value system conducive to the protection of bios, a formal educational structure designated as the International University for the Bio-Environment (I.U.B.E.) was proposed and adopted by the Conference. The decision to establish the I.U.B.E. gives full credence to the activating role of education in the creation of a meta-university model, one that embraces the needs of the future generations and assures the respect and preservation of the bio-environment. The I.U.B.E. will not only offer educational alternatives but will also actively engage educational institutions throughout the world as partners in the process of effecting necessary changes of curricula and teaching to promote bios.

### *Structure and Governance*

The I.U.B.E. will be guided by the traditional functions of a university with respect to teaching, research and public service, as well as cooperating with other universities, international organizations, environmental institutions and industries. The I.U.B.E. aims to influence decision-makers at every level, so as to impress upon them the need to incorporate respect for the bio-environment in their short- and long-term planning. However, its central concern will be to formulate and disseminate new educational alternatives with a view to instituting a value system that is bio-sensitive. In doing so, it will avoid duplicating efforts initiated by other organisations. Therefore, its main aims are to:

- (i) propagate educational reforms principally by identifying and developing a model global bio-education to meet the needs of the meta-industrial era, and infuse original models for existing educational institutions to implement bio-environmental education;
- (ii) identify, develop and implement trans-disciplinary educational strategies on bios;
- (iii) construct and develop needed concepts for the effective teaching of bios and bios-related subjects at all educational levels;
- (iv) educate and train experts in all fields of bio-environmental education;
- (v) initiate regional cooperation principally in developing feasible systems or models for bio-environmental protection and the implementation of plans and programs requiring trans-national cooperation;
- (vi) facilitate the establishment of an international information system on the bio-environment through the media, and especially satellites;
- (vii) initiate an international exchange for scholars and practitioners in bio-environmental education;
- (viii) propose and initiate needed legislation and policy reforms in bio-environmental protection;
- (ix) encourage the creation of a clearing house for both dedicated individuals and established organizations to provide, through the use of computer link-ups, a network of people wishing to cooperate and contribute towards saving the bio-environment;
- (x) generate environmental action groups, drawing from the enthusiasm of youth and the experience of retired people to tackle local

bio-environmental issues;  
(xi) set the foundation for the furthering of bio-cultural models;

To achieve the aforementioned aims over the short and long terms, the following recommendations were made

- (i) the B.I.O. should establish a Scientific Council composed of eminent scientists to help identify issues and problems threatening bios and recommend individuals of merit and stature from a broad spectrum of expertise who can be involved in addressing them;
- (ii) holding consultative meetings to formulate educational and research programmes relevant to the pursuit of B.I.O. objectives;
- (iii) proposing policy changes that will facilitate the implementation of decisions adopted.

To ensure that the I.U.B.E. attains the optimum outreach, it was proposed that political leaders, community groups, and corporate interests be sensitized to the objectives of bios. Furthermore, media must also be engaged in the cultivation of public opinion and the dissemination of relevant information on issues pertaining to bios. Indeed, for the I.U.B.E. to become fully effective, a quadripartite relationship involving the B.I.O., universities, industry and labour must be instituted so as to place the required linkages.

Clearly, for the I.U.B.E. to make the expected impact, it has to communicate effectively and adequately, using all appropriate media including networking and satellite communication. Similarly, it will have to explore and develop original methods of conveying bio-environmental information, including the construction of informational models and programs to be aimed at groups and communities with special needs, particularly youth, the aged, and the deprived.

The Conference adopted a tentative scheme to actualize the concept of the I.U.B.E. under the aegis of the B.I.O.:

- (i) the institution of a Governing Board;
- (ii) the establishment of a central facility incorporating the I.U.B.E. secretariat, library and facilities for sabbaticals, student internships, workshops and meetings. The central facility will also function as a data base listing industry, academic institutions and environmental groups throughout the world;
- (iii) the creation of a body known as the Club of Athens. The membership of the Club will be composed of eminent and influential individuals, particularly those sympathetic to the objectives of the B.I.O. and whose presence would contribute to the growth of the I.U.B.E.

The Conference adopted the proposal to draw up a legal charter for the I.U.B.E. It also accepted the recommendation to create a Fund Raising Committee with the appropriate status and authority to solicit seed money for the implementation of the I.U.B.E. The Committee's immediate task is to plan the realization of this objective. Finally, it was proposed that the I.U.B.E. should take immediate steps to set up the administrative headquarters in Athens to undertake the task of coordination and implementation. The administrative headquarters' main task is to lay the foundation for the formal incorporation of the I.U.B.E. at the appropriate time under the auspices of the B.I.O.

## **Conclusion**

The Conference took note of the need to move with caution and realism in implementing the I.U.B.E. goals. It recognized the importance of mobilizing more support from the international community. At the same time, participants of the conference understood the need for commitment and hard work and pledged their full assistance. To that end, they willingly pledged their support to Dr. Agni Vlavianos-Arvanitis, President Founder of the B.I.O., in her efforts to promote the objectives envisaged for the I.U.B.E. in Athens. The I.U.B.E. will serve as the prime vehicle for both the pursuit of B.I.O. objectives as well as in the implementation of the proposed programs and projects on a global basis.