



CONGREGATIO  
DE INSTITUTIONE CATHOLICA

# Final Report

Summary and Synthesis

of the

BOLOGNA PROCESS OFFICIAL SEMINAR

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## The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area

ORGANIZED BY THE HOLY SEE

IN COLLABORATION WITH:

*ASSOCIATION OF RECTORS OF PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITIES*

*PONTIFICAL ACADEMIES OF SCIENCES*

*UNESCO—CEPES*

*COUNCIL OF EUROPE*

*UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION*

By Archbishop Dr. J. Michael Miller, CSB, Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education

## ***Introduction***

Stimulating lectures, vigorous discussion and lively debate characterized the official Bologna Follow-up Group Seminar on “The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area”, held at the Vatican from 30 March through 1 April 2006. The Congregation of Catholic Education of the Holy See, hosted this event in collaboration with the Association of Rectors of the Pontifical Roman Universities, the Pontifical Academies of Science, UNESCO-European Centre for Higher Education (UNESCO-CEPES), the Council of Europe, and with the patronage of the European Commission. The generous collaboration and willing cooperation of these various bodies bear witness to the genuine spirit of the Bologna Process. This Process entails more than strengthening structural relationships in the world of European higher education; rather, it is aimed at building bridges, the kind of bridges founded on knowledge and friendship that are enabling significant changes in the continent’s systems of higher education to be smoothly introduced.

As was pointed out several times during the discussion, this Conference took place at a timely moment on the way to the creation of the European Higher Education Area projected for 2010. Moreover, it was held in a fitting place – the Vatican. As is well known, all major European universities in the middle ages – from Oxford, to Paris, to Cologne, to Prague, to Bologna, to Krakow and many others – were established with close ties to the Church, especially to the Holy See.

The initial seminars of the Bologna Follow-up Group dealt for the most part with the practical and organizational matters necessary to launch the Bologna Process. But challenges other than administrative are also on the horizon. This Seminar at the Vatican allowed these challenges to be brought into the open: to make the conversation about educational reform more inclusive, expanding the discussion to include matters often left aside. The time together was well spent. These days provided an opportunity to pose serious questions about the cultural heritage which formed and continues to influence the European university and, in turn, was shaped by that same institution. It was worthwhile to step back from the necessary practical concerns of the Bologna Process and bring to light some of the deeper considerations at the foundation of the hoped-for reform of the European university.

With the active participation of representatives from more than fifty countries, most but not all of them European, and from various sectors of the worldwide

Academy and international organizations, this meeting of minds was successful in achieving the objective set out in the final communiqué released at Bergen, Norway, by the European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, in May 2005. That document stated:

The European Higher Education Area must be open and should be attractive to other parts of the world. . . . We reiterate that in international academic cooperation, academic values should prevail. . . . We ask the Follow-up Group to elaborate and agree on a strategy for the external dimension.

The Seminar took to heart the Ministers' mandate and discussed at length ways in which the European university can and should be an increasingly preferred destination of students, scholars and researchers from around the world.

The flow of students, professors and scholars from one country in Europe to another is rising annually, not to mention the increased flow from other continents. The Seminar participants accepted the need for the European university to be ever more competitive in a world where the number of students studying abroad will quadruple within a generation, with 75% of these students coming from India and China.

The participants were also convinced that European centres of higher education, precisely because of their history as guardians of culture and as custodians of academic values, have available the necessary instruments which, if made more widely known and strategically marketed, can give their institutions a genuine competitive advantage in the world of globalized higher education. This awareness of Europe's unique cultural identity and the common academic values embedded in that identity are crucial factors to be taken into account in any future discussion that deals with ways of strengthening the attractiveness of the European university.

Indeed, Europe's future – in the economic, political, social, cultural and spiritual domains – is inextricably linked to the flourishing of its universities. A common European destiny, one open to the rest of the world, cannot be forged unless universities play their role. The heritage and values of the European university underlie and inform the continent's destiny.

### **I. Synthesis of Major Themes**

The Bologna Follow-up Seminar at the Vatican recognized that the process of globalization is accompanied by increasing competition, interconnection and

interdependence among the continent's tertiary educational institutions. Europe cannot turn in on itself if it wishes to play a leading role in the world of higher education in the future. From the outset, European universities were "international" institutions to which students from various nations went to study and to which academics travelled great distances to pursue their scholarship. Today new challenges face the European university: the integration of the world economy, the competition of the open market, mass culture, the desire for lifelong education, pressures for increased enrollment and sophisticated technology – to name just a few. To ensure that European universities maintain their competitive advantage in tomorrow's world, many speakers pointed to their distinctive, if not unique, qualities. This led to discussion on the nature of the European university: its identity as an institution which embodies the continent's memory, houses its intellectual curiosity and shapes its future. Some participants expressed concern about the university's ability to find fresh and creative ways to hand on the core of this heritage, a patrimony which is a living tradition ever seeking new structures and forms for transmitting it to future generations.

### ***1. Europe's Cultural Heritage***

In its first session the Seminar looked to the past, to the formation of the European university in its particular historical and cultural context, in order to have a clear idea of its identity as an institution intimately related to the continent's culture. The cultural patrimony of Europe – rooted in traditions of faith, primarily Christianity and Judaism, and to a lesser extent Islam – especially as that heritage has been received and enriched in the university and continues to be fostered there, must be taken into account in constructing a European Higher Education Area which will interact positively and constructively with other parts of the world.

The European university, in the many forms it has assumed over the centuries, has directly or indirectly influenced the development of systems of higher education in nearly every part of the world. If it is to continue to live up to this vocation, the European university must be well rooted in its own identity, one bequeathed to it by its own history. Thus, in the course of this conference, the participants discussed the specific cultural patrimony of the European university as the foundation for securing its identity so that this institution can be increasingly attractive to students, professors and researchers from around the world and so that it can more readily foster international cooperation among institutions of higher learning.

In his welcoming address, Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski, Prefect of the Congregation of Catholic Education – the Holy See’s ministry of education – recalled that, from its origins, the European university has been characterized by its passion for truth, a passion which opens ever new horizons, upholds the discipline of reason, and seeks to integrate the various branches of knowledge into a higher wisdom. The mediaeval tradition of the *lectio*, *disputatio* and *summa* reflected the university’s confidence in pursuing every path of knowledge, a search rooted in tradition but always open to the future. Universities everywhere fostered creativity in their study and research, without breaking the unity of faith and reason, and encouraged striving for the unity of knowledge, while respecting the specific epistemology of the various disciplines.

Except for the Church, no institution has contributed more to the development of each nation’s culture than the university whose roots are anchored in early medieval Europe and whose initial legitimation entailed, among other factors, juridical recognition by the Holy See. Particularly significant in the origin of the European university is the role played by the Benedictine monks. Their motto *ora et labora* inspired the insight that learning and action belong together, indeed in the same person and institution, a principal one of which was the university.

Many speakers mentioned the birth of humanism in the European university, a humanism that recognized and promoted values integral to higher education: the inalienable dignity of the human person, the role of reason and science in fostering a more just world, respect for empirical knowledge, belief in progress and the conviction that the search for truth included the study of theoretical questions without any concern for immediate practical application. The European tradition of higher education provided the foundation of modern science and fostered a humanism in which the human person was at the centre of every formative process and the common good was the measure of every research endeavour.

At various points different speakers drew attention to dimensions of the cultural heritage of the European university which were less directly related to its specifically intellectual contributions. Student access to university (Europe, for the most part, lags far behind Japan and the United States in the number of university-age students enrolled in institutions of higher education) and lifelong learning fit into this category. Both of these are themselves grounded, however, in an anthropological vision, nurtured by humanism, which recognizes the dignity and rights of the person

and the social value of ensuring the development of each individual's potential.

## ***2. Academic Values of the Contemporary European University***

The Seminar's second principal area of discussion focussed on the European university as the origin and bearer of specific academic values in the world of higher education, a heritage to be preserved, fostered, and sometimes purified. These values, the most important of which were present from the university's foundation, form a bridge not only between institutions in Europe but also with those in the rest of the world. As several interventions emphasized, universities are places where common values are promoted through teaching and research. These values affect not only the academic community itself – such as scholarly integrity and common standards – but also society as a whole. The Seminar participants judged that greater attention must be given to these academic values as the Bologna Process moves into the final stages of implementing the European Higher Education Area.

Within the European university, institutional autonomy and academic freedom are the specific ways in which freedom of expression and association are guaranteed, while collegial governance is the Academy's specific expression of subsidiarity, interdisciplinarity is its ongoing challenge and respectful dialogue is its mode of conversation. The university's institutional autonomy entails the right to establish institutions of higher learning and for them to be free from undue State intrusion. Many participants noted that, despite the reluctance to discuss academic values or attempts to reduce them to merely procedural issues, the European university has a patrimony of values which both establishes its identity and enables it to make a significant contribution to higher education worldwide.

### ***2.1 Institutional Autonomy and Academic Freedom***

The institutional autonomy of the European university is an essential academic value to be vigorously reaffirmed. At the same time, however, this traditional autonomy might well profit from new ways of explaining it to the various stakeholders involved in higher education.

Proper to a university's institutional autonomy is the guarantee of academic freedom that it offers to the academic community. In the great European tradition, freedom of research and teaching are recognized and respected according to the principles and methods of each specific discipline, protecting the rights of individual professors by means of peer review and due process. Academic freedom guarantees that scholars may search for the truth wherever analysis and evidence lead them.



Moreover, it also ensures that professors may teach and publish the results of this research, provided that they keep in mind the need to safeguard the common good of the various communities of which the university forms an integral part. Academic freedom is not only freedom *from* undue constraint and interference of extrinsic authority, but also freedom *for* service to the wider society.

As part of its long-range strategy for furthering its competitive advantage, the European university should ensure that all teachers are accorded a lawful freedom of inquiry and of thought: that they are freed to express their minds humbly and courageously about those matters in which they enjoy competence.

In the past, totalitarian regimes of Left and Right often threatened both institutional autonomy and academic freedom. Sadly, at times the European university itself has complied with such bullying and pressure, thereby compromising its institutional autonomy and the academic freedom of the professoriate. As more than one intervention noted, threats to the university's institutional autonomy still exist. Today they usually come from non-political quarters, such as market forces, advanced technology or the widespread cultural presupposition that regards teachers and researchers as "producers" and students as "consumers" of information and knowledge.

## ***2.2 Collegiality***

Another important value integral to the university is one bequeathed to it from its origin in the guilds and corporations of medieval Europe. Within that hierarchical world, the corporative structures of the university were nonetheless guaranteed. In the second session the university was often referred to as a particular kind of *community*. It is collegial in its internal governance, which includes students as stakeholders, and it fosters respectful dialogue between students and teachers and among scholars themselves. Yet, much to the detriment of the university, this value of community is endangered today. A major threat comes from the enormous size of many European campuses, which make collegial governance and the fostering of a community of learning and scholarship very difficult. This growth is frequently abetted by State-planned demands for increased enrollment of university-age young men and women. Other challenges are presented by the inordinate proliferation of tertiary educational institutions in Europe – many of which are narrowly focussed on professional training alone – and by the imposition of models of decision making and governance taken from the world of business. These latter models stress efficiency and speed over the

participation and thoughtful reflection of stakeholders, a value prized by the European university from its beginning.

The participants also emphasised the strategic importance of academic values not only within the university but for society as a whole. Academic values are to be considered among a society's most precious cultural values. In particular, they affirmed, the search for truth, a necessary factor in any broad cultural context, cannot be laid aside in favour of teaching and applied research aimed only at short-term benefits.

### ***2.3 Interdisciplinarity and Synthesis of Knowledge***

In his introduction to the second session Mr. Jan Sadlak spoke about the vocation of the European university as an open forum – an agora – where scholars from all disciplines can actively meet and discuss their ideas with one another. While honouring the integrity and method of each academic discipline, interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary conversations based on a common search for truth enrich the university, enabling it to become a community of wisdom rather than a cacophony of competing individual voices. It is precisely as a community that the university best contributes to the common good.

One practical consequence of insisting on interdisciplinary dialogue is the space it creates within the university community for meeting the challenges posed by the increasing fragmentation of knowledge. In many instances, institutions produce a high level of compartmentalized information but demonstrate little capacity for synthesis which involved different disciplines. Indeed, the possibility exists that the university will become a complex group of academic areas that produce factual results which, in the end, are unrelated. Whenever this is the case, the university can offer an adequate professional formation for the immediate needs of the job market, but it will be unable to fulfill its traditional responsibility of providing for the rich and full human formation of its students and professors, handing on to them the patrimony of ideals and values that have shaped the continent.

According to several speakers, Europe's universities, in line with their origins and heritage, cannot abandon the challenging task of integrating knowledge from different disciplines. This is an ever more difficult undertaking, given contemporary scepticism about the possibility of such an endeavour, coupled with the explosion of information now made available to anyone connected to the internet. Nonetheless, the European university has the task of fostering a synthesis of knowledge, resisting its



fragmentation into merely quantifiable information serving narrow – and, frequently – economic interests.

As well as fostering this horizontal interdisciplinarity, which relates the various disciplines, the European university should also promote what is called vertical interdisciplinarity. Such verticality engages the academic community in a constant effort to determine the relative place and meaning of each of the various disciplines within the context of a vision of the human person and the world inspired by transcendent values. An organic vision of reality, a higher synthesis of knowledge, is what the participants of this Seminar vigorously proposed as a worthy purpose of the European university.

#### ***2.4 Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue***

Interventions and discussion pointed to yet another academic value which, if fostered in the European Higher Education Area, would serve to attract and retain high quality students, teachers and researchers: intercultural and interreligious dialogue. The Seminar participants were convinced that the increasing pluralism of European societies and the process of globalization have brought intercultural and interreligious dialogue to the fore as concerns of institutions of higher learning. Such topics cannot be taboo in the university. Indeed, it was asserted that the ability of Europe's universities to attract students and professors in the future will depend to no small extent on how well they foster such dialogue in their communities and in society at large. Dialogue is an intrinsic academic value, an essential factor of Europe's heritage, that the university aims, as John Henry Newman wrote, "to effect the intercommunion of one and all?"<sup>1</sup>

It belongs now, as in the past, for the European university to develop culture through its research, to help pass on its local culture to each succeeding generation through its teaching, and to foster cultural activities in diverse ways. As a learning community, the university is open to all human experience and is always ready to dialogue with and learn from any culture. Given today's circumstances, the European university must become more attentive to those students and scholars who come from different cultural backgrounds. In this way it can promote a profitable dialogue within contemporary society and receive those from other cultures who wish to study and

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<sup>1</sup> John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1931), 457.

carry out research in the countries which adhere to the Bologna Process.

In the climate of increased cultural and religious pluralism that increasingly marks Europe at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is clear that this dialogue will be a crucial element in establishing a sure basis for political and economic stability and warding off the dread spectre of wars of religion which, in the past, have stained the continent's history. The Seminar participants agreed that the European university, precisely as a community of scholars, cannot remain on the sidelines of intercultural dialogue and its sister, interreligious dialogue. A university's identity, whatever its particular inspiration, is strengthened when it fosters interreligious dialogue by introducing students to unfamiliar religious traditions and by encouraging research in this field. The way of dialogue is the way of the European university.

Respectful conversation and reasonable discourse enable the academic community to be enriched by the insights of others and challenged by their questions, as well as to deepen their own convictions. Within Europe's universities such dialogue involves respect, esteem, and hospitality toward those of other religions. Every university, which receives students of all faiths, should honour their identity, modes of expression and values.

### ***3. Role of the University in Constructing Europe***

The Seminar's third session, which took place at the Matteo Ricci Centre at the Pontifical Gregorian University, concentrated on the cultural legitimacy of the university and its role in constructing the new Europe. It moved discussion from the *identity* of the European university to that of its *mission* in building Europe. In "constructing" Europe, it was said, a blind eye cannot be turned to the rest of the world, leading the continent to recoil upon itself in splendid isolation. Rather, it was pointed out, Europe and its universities have developed a strong respect for unity in diversity and diversity in unity, for openness to the rest of the world, without compromising their own identity.

If European institutions of higher education continue to embody and foster their heritage, they will play a crucial role in building a Higher Education Area that will be fascinating and attractive to those from other regions. Indeed, universities can contribute to overcoming that sense of malaise in Europe about the continent's future – a malaise that is unappealing to those from abroad. If, however, European institutions of higher learning fail in this regard, they will no longer be beacons for students and scholars from the continent and around the world but a fossil unable to

recruit the best minds. Europe's spiritual and economic vitality depends on the ability of its universities to adapt to new situations, while at the same time retaining the values that have made them great and universally admired.

Participants noted that research and new discoveries must be used for the authentic good of individuals and of human society as a whole. Universities are immersed in culture – both integrating it into their own life as well as fostering its particular values. Their vocation is to be effective instruments of cultural progress. This means that, to remain creatively faithful and attractive in the future, the university's research activities should pay serious attention to contemporary problems in areas such as the dignity of human life, the protection of the environment, the search for peace and a political order that will better serve the human community, and the promotion of justice that will foster a more equitable sharing in the world's resources.

The Seminar dedicated some discussion to the pressing question of scientific research and ethical responsibility. Unfortunately, as Peter Scott recently remarked, and his observation was echoed in different ways by many Seminar participants, “ethical issues are in danger of becoming second-order issues in the modern university – or, to be more accurate, ethical issues have tended to be redefined as essentially procedural issues rather than as fundamental issues directly connected to the core mission of the university. This shift can easily be observed in the context of research. Research ethics are no longer debated in terms of the morality of military or commercial sponsorship of research programmes; . . . Instead research ethics concentrate on much narrower, often technical, issues such as exposing research malpractice and upholding the rigour of research methodologies (including the need to avoid exploitation of, or unnecessary intrusion into the lives of, research subjects)”.<sup>2</sup>

The Seminar participants, however, maintained that scientific research in the European university should always be carried out with a concern for the ethical and moral implications both of its methods and of its discoveries. In reaching this conclusion they affirmed, albeit implicitly, what Pope John Paul II said in his address to UNESCO in 1980: “It is essential that we be convinced of the priority of the ethical over the technical, of the primacy of the person over things, of the superiority of the

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<sup>2</sup> Peter Scott, “Ethics ‘in’ and ‘for’ Higher Education,” *Higher Education in Europe*, 29:4 (December 2004), 439-440).

spirit over matter. The cause of the human person will only be served if knowledge is joined to conscience. Men and women of science will truly aid humanity only if they preserve ‘the sense of the transcendence of the human person over the world and of God over the human person’”.<sup>3</sup>

The flourishing of the European university will depend on its ability to reclaim the ethical high ground in its research and programmes.

## **II. Recommendations of Discussion Groups**

The participants in this Seminar were convinced that the commitment of the Bologna Process to strengthening the external dimension of European higher education depends in large measure on reaffirming the relationship between Europe’s cultural heritage and its universities and on fostering the university’s common academic values.

In the sections which follow the salient conclusions of the Seminar’s six discussion groups on the four different topics are presented, as they were submitted at the Seminar’s final meeting on 1 April 2006.

### ***1. Basic Values of Academic Freedom***

The observations and conclusions included the following points:

- Academic freedom is essential for the development of knowledge and the pursuit of the university’s goals. Academic freedom has, however, some limitations. The first comes from the fundamental or basic values fostered by the university. Academic freedom cannot in any way undermine these values. The second limit comes from the needs expressed by students. Teachers must serve these needs, but they cannot forget that the university is a place where different opinions can and should be expressed. Moreover, academic freedom means that within the university there is an unqualified orientation to truth and reason, which cannot yield to militant expressions. Indeed, it is reasonable discourse that gives the university its rightful role in society.
- Academic freedom should not be understood in a merely defensive way, as freedom *from*. Indeed, a positive understanding of academic freedom underpins the university, a freedom *for*. This latter freedom links academic freedom to responsibility: responsibility to the academic community as well as

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<sup>3</sup> John Paul II, Address at UNESCO (2 June 1980), 22: AAS 72 (1980), 750.

to society at large. True knowledge – fundamental knowledge as well as practising knowledge (professions) – has always been intertwined with human virtue.

- The mission of the university should be understood as one that is *sui generis*. It cannot and should not be subjected to external pressures of an ideological, political or economic nature. The European university's institutional autonomy, as elaborated in the *Magna Charta Universitatum* (1988), is still the most central value to be protected, developed and promoted.
- Genuine concern about academic freedom exists because of the power that can be exerted by interests external to the university community. The extent of such pressure is a matter of debate. Realism demands that the European university take account of the way in which universities are financed, with all that entails.
- Today the main threat to academic freedom and related values seems to be the “commodification” of higher education and the increasingly instrumental treatment or narrowing of the university's traditional academic mission. This threat is frequently linked to globalization – a process with both distinctively negative but also positive consequences.
- The way in which academic freedom is practised differs to some degree according to the place where the university is located. In this regard, a distinction must be made between academic freedom and institutional autonomy. This autonomy ought to be fostered by governments themselves and by members of the academic community who work at the national level and define the institution's orientation. However, the university should neither shut itself in an ivory tower nor be absorbed by the State. Institutional autonomy remains a challenge to teachers and students, since it is the framework within which every university carries out its responsibility for intellectual formation and research.
- The university's institutional autonomy is not an end in itself. It guarantees a self-critical approach to teaching and research but, at the same time, it also enables the university to contribute to the defence and development of human dignity and society's cultural heritage.
- Today, no less than in earlier times, universities should provide intellectual leadership and critical reflection of society. They should transcend routine

instrumental knowledge and reaffirm the importance of permanent questioning and human wisdom built on the solid foundation of previous generations. The extent of this contribution can be evaluated by others, and the university should accept this need to be accountable to stakeholders external to itself, provided that its academic freedom and institutional autonomy are not compromised.

- The time has arrived to make academic values more visible on the Bologna agenda. Until the meeting in Bergen, structural issues dominated the concerns of the Process, but now that the *Bologna tools* have been for the most part finalised, the focus can now shift to *Bologna values*. Without a clear understanding of the values that characterise the European university, it will be impossible to make the case for the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area.

## ***2. Foundations for Interdisciplinary Dialogue***

- The observations and conclusions of the second discussion group included the following points.
- Interdisciplinary studies and dialogue need to be encouraged as a means of fostering communication among academic disciplines that are in danger of fragmentation and isolation. Such studies can offer students and faculty precious opportunities to broaden their horizons and supplement their limited and/or specialised knowledge.
- Interdisciplinary work has a crucial role to play in raising and investigating larger questions of meaning, values and ethical responsibility in society. Perhaps the most important contribution of interdisciplinary studies, from a social perspective, is how it fosters ethical analysis and the responsible use of knowledge.
- Interdisciplinary studies are valued by employers who hope for and expect employees to have a broad and basic knowledge, as well as that in a more specific area of competence. Moreover, some very specialised training is better left to companies to provide. The university cannot and should not try to prepare its graduates for the competencies demanded by every future job. On the other hand, only universities can give the broadly humanistic formation so integral to the European cultural legacy.
- Interdisciplinary studies could be fostered by the reintroduction of the “liberal arts” and “core” humanistic programmes as part of every university curriculum. In this way the integration of knowledge would be promoted. A broader



curriculum is especially necessary in view of the generally lower level of cultural and historical awareness on the part of incoming students, compared to those of thirty or forty years ago.

- The call for a renewed emphasis on humanistic and ethical studies confronts what appears to be a limitation of the Bologna Process; namely, that its emphasis to date has been on professional competence and competitiveness, on training students effectively in their narrow fields. It is necessary to broaden this perspective so that interdisciplinary studies, the liberal arts, and a mere reflective, “philosophical” approach to learning can take their rightful place. The participants in the group discussion were convinced of the need to persuade both politicians and academic leaders, as well as students themselves, of the value of interdisciplinary learning so that all graduates have some familiarity with the ethical, philosophical and religious questions that touch upon their specific area of study and society’s future welfare.
- The promotion of interdisciplinary research and dialogue is key to the mission of today’s European university and necessary to its continued appeal. This interdisciplinary approach is demanded for three reasons: anthropologically, by the unity and integrity of human being; socially, by the interdependence of the various components of society; and ethically, by the need to foster values of responsibility, solidarity and critical thinking.

### ***3. Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue***

The conclusions of the two discussion groups included the following observations.

- While taking into account the differences between the two types of dialogue, certain threats that affect them can be identified:
  - (i) the growth of professional and economic competitiveness among students themselves and the fact that such motivations often prevail over all other considerations; unemployment which constitutes a barrier between cultures; the privatisation of educational systems which increasingly affects the quality of teaching and its “free” transmission of cultural and religious values;
  - (ii) the widespread ignorance of other cultures and religious is often coupled with a superiority complex and nationalistic attitude within European institutions;
  - (iii) the widespread social acceptance of the logic subsequent to 9/11 and the growth of confrontational ideas concerning the relationship of the two principal civilizations; the confusion between religion and capitalism on the one hand,

- and religion and fanatical terrorism on the other;
- (iv) the great majority of young people are victims of a kind of spiritual schizophrenia when faced with the low intellectual level of school text books which treat religion and the experienced richness of their own cultural heritage;
- (v) on a practical level, the lack of scholarships and the administrative difficulties often entailed in recognizing studies and diplomas acquired elsewhere inhibit the possibility of religious and cultural dialogue.
- Through its academic activities, the university can contribute to dialogue between cultures and religions in the following ways:
    - (i) sponsoring conferences and colloquia among professors;
    - (ii) introducing into the curriculum programmes which provide a systematic introduction to different religious traditions and to theoretical models of cooperation between religions;
    - (iii) fostering, as properly educational objectives, values such as solidarity and peace;
    - (iv) providing curricular opportunities for students to understand cultural and religious differences which go beyond the use of speculative reason to include, for example, the aesthetic.
  - The university can help in the discernment of values present in different cultures and religions by:
    - (i) drawing up a common charter of values which ought to animate the university as such;
    - (ii) studying the foundations of cultural and religious traditions so as to open ways for other, complementary expressions;
    - (iii) identifying positively the universal values present in different cultures.

It is crucial that the university encourage dialogue at all levels. Nor can it ignore that religion is an integrating and integral element in culture and it belongs to the academic community as a proper object of study.
  - The challenge for the European university is to integrate individuals and groups coming from non-European countries and/or from different religious traditions. The university must create suitable structures of welcome which will enable students to be truly immersed in their new environment. Special attention must be given to the “person” of the foreign student who must be accorded the possibility of mixing with the host culture. At the same time they

must also have the opportunity of sharing their own cultural and religious traditions with those in the receiving country – a sharing which allows mutual enrichment to take place.

- In order to promote dialogue between cultures and religions, the European university should promote student mobility, including that of theology students, and it should set up clear quantitative and qualitative goals in this regard.
- Fostering intercultural and interreligious dialogue depends on learning well the language, culture and history of the host country; further efforts by the European university are required in this area.

#### ***4. Scientific Research and Ethical Responsibility***

The observations of group four included the following points.

- The scientific method is based on analysis, synthesis and the ability to duplicate what has been analysed. Since such reproduction is not always possible, scientists must accept the principle of probability. Consequently, they have no right to be dogmatic in their assertions.
- Despite this element of probability, scientists have the obligation to carry out further research. They must do so in an ethical way; but, to do that, they need freedom to conduct their research. At the same time, suitable controls should be in place to guide ethically their applied research.
- The European university should stand for certain values, since moral relativism can become a dictatorship which makes dialogue impossible. Society has the right to provide ethical guidelines for scientific research. Indeed, it is these very values that make the European university attractive to scholars and students.
- In the area of research, ethical guidelines are not to be identified with legal prescriptions. Rather, they are founded on the inviolable dignity and ultimate truth of the human person. The contribution of religion to an ethics based on reason should not be understood as an undue imposition but as a service to the dignity of the human person.
- In the European university, authorities should create appropriate ethical committees that oversee scientific research and include the teaching of ethics in the curriculum.

## General Conclusions

Persuaded as they were that the external dimension of the Bologna Process must take seriously its responsibility to make the European university attractive to the nations of the continent as well as the rest of the world, the Seminar participants suggested that intelligent marketing strategies be adopted to ensure that this take place.

This Seminar, therefore, proposed that, in creating the European Higher Education Area as a driving force in making Europe strong, stable and sustainable and preparing it to take a leading role in the *world* of higher education, the Ministers at the 2007 London meeting affirm:

- (1) the indispensable and irreplaceable role played by the European university – despite the increasing presence of other delivery systems of education – in contributing to the integration of Europe and the formation of a wisdom society;
- (2) their commitment to the cultural heritage of Europe as a living and expanding tradition which the university receives, enriches and transmits to succeeding generations; moreover, this tradition is rich in humanistic values that support the scientific and technological demands of advanced democratic societies;
- (3) the need to foster increased accessibility in order to increase capacity, without sacrificing excellence, especially in research, an excellence proper not to just a few elite institutions but distributed in numerous centres of excellence in different areas of study and research;
- (4) the core values of institutional autonomy, academic freedom, collegiality/community and cooperation/exchange among institutions as necessary components of the European university's competitive advantage in the global marketplace and thus instruments at the service of society;
- (5) the positive value of unity in diversity and diversity in unity as a way to foster interaction, interdisciplinary studies and dialogue among different cultural and religious traditions;
- (6) the conviction that religious faith marks the various national cultures of Europe in their literature, architecture, approach to human rights and other crucial matters, and that questions of meaning and ethical responsibility should be recognized within the university's programmes and research projects.

The Chair added a final personal recommendation which met (laughingly) with the Seminar's approval: that, given the frequency of citations by various speakers to John Henry Newman, every Minister and staff member entrusted with developing and implementing the strategies for creating the European Higher Education Area be required to purchase and read *The Idea of a University*!

If the affirmations of the Seminar are implemented, the EHEA will be in the position to attract the best scholars and students from this continent and around the world.

+J. Michael Miller, CSB  
Secretary  
Congregation for Catholic Education