



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Information
for All
Programme

Warsaw, January 26, 2009

From: Karol Jakubowicz, Chair, Intergovernmental Council, IFAP

To: Members of the IFAP Council, IFAP National Committees and IFAP Partners

Dear Colleagues and Partners,

I wish to address you on an issue of importance to the whole IFAP community which requires a clear explanation and an unequivocal resolution.

Some of you may have been contacted recently by an organization called ICOS UNESO IFAP (Russia), which also maintains a web site www.ifap.ru, presented as the official website of UNESCO's IFAP partners in Russia. As this is intentionally misleading and may breed confusion, I consider it necessary to inform you of the exact situation with regard to the promotion and implementation of the Information for All Programme in Russia.

As some of you may know, Russia was the first country to create a National IFAP Committee and to develop a model for its effective activity. The Russian IFAP Committee has managed to establish successful relations with the national authorities of the Russian Federation and with international governmental and non-governmental cultural, scientific and educational organizations. Over the past years, the Russian IFAP Committee has initiated and realized a large number of projects which were highly recognized in Russia and at the international level, and were particularly appreciated by UNESCO.

I have been informed, however, that in addition to the officially designated and recognized Russian National IFAP Committee, there is also a group known as the Interregional Civil Organization in Support of UNESCO Information for All Programme (ICOS UNESCO IFAP (Russia)). It presents itself as a representative of IFAP in Russia.

Please note that this is certainly not the case. Whatever activities this group undertakes, they are not coordinated with IFAP/UNESCO, or recognized by it as part of IFAP activities in Russia and/or abroad. The leaders of this group, Mr Alexei Demidov and Mr Evgeny Altovsky are not in

contact with me, the IFAP Bureau, or with the IFAP Secretariat at UNESCO and therefore have no legal grounds for presenting themselves as authorized IFAP national partners.

In their correspondence (available to you on request), the Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO and the Russian IFAP Committee have made it clear that they consider the activities of this organization as completely illegitimate, if presented as undertaken under the auspices of IFAP/UNESCO. From this point of view, the name of the organization and of their web site is particularly misleading. The fact that an unauthorized body passes itself off as an official partner of IFAP for and in Russia gives rise to very serious concern.

Allow me therefore to stress again that the only officially recognized partner of IFAP in Russia is the Russian IFAP Committee, chaired by Mr. Evgeny Kuzmin. We welcome the work of any legitimate group or organization which shares the goal of Information for All, but not when they deliberately mislead their partners and present themselves for what they are not. We should not encourage ICOS UNESCO IFAP (Russia) – or any similar bodies – by responding to their correspondence and invitations.

I will also request that the Secretariat of UNESCO, in cooperation with the competent national authorities of the Russian Federation, take appropriate measures in order to settle this issue.

Yours sincerely,



Karol Jakubowicz
Chair, Intergovernmental Council, IFAP

Copy: UNESCO Paris
The Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO