



UNESCO Chair on Comparative Studies
of Spiritual Traditions, their Specific Cultures
and Interreligious Dialogue

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organisation

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры



Кафедра ЮНЕСКО по компаративным исследованиям
духовных традиций, специфики их культур
и межрелигиозного диалога



**UNESCO Chair in Comparative Studies of Spiritual Traditions,
their Specific Cultures and Interreligious Dialogue,**
basing upon the St. Petersburg branch of the Russian Institute for Cultural Research,
and Institute of Humanitarian Education in St.Petersburg, Russia,
announce that they have successfully conducted a meeting dedicated to the 10th anniversary
of the establishment of the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development,
implemented by the decision of the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization.

The meeting took place on **May 21st, 2012**, from 10:30 a.m. till 1 p.m., basing on the facilities of Institute of Humanitarian Education (Liflandskaya street, 4), which is one of the most respected non-governmental educational institutions, acting in the city of St. Petersburg, Russia. The meeting gathered a number of leading representatives of both scientific research, and educational institutions of the city of St.Petersburg.

The program of the meeting included primarily a scientific conference, centered upon the following focal topics:

1. Cultural diversity and the dialogue between civilizations, cultures, and religions in the framework of the cultural strategy of UNESCO;
2. Cultural diversity as a focal component of present-day cultural policies: theory and practice;
3. Cultural diversity in the framework of a contemporary urban agglomeration (basing upon the example of St.Petersburg);
4. Cultural diversity in educational practice of state and of nongovernmental high schools: common and specific aspects.

A number of prominent scientists, specialists in cultural studies, history, and literature, took part in the conference, including professors V. M. Dianova, S. K. Lebedev, L. M. Mosolova, I. L. Nabok, I. B. Rubert, S. B. Smirnov, T. M. Smirnova, D. L. Spivak, to name but a few. According to the common opinion of all the participants of the meeting, tradition of observing the World Day for Cultural Di-

versity for Dialogue and Development is to be honored and developed further, as well as the concept of cultural diversity, pivotal for the strategy of UNESCO in general.

The program of the meeting included a videoconference dedicated to the topic 'Cultural Diversity and Dialogue between Civilizations, Cultures, and Religions'. Its Moscow part took place basing upon the premises of the Russian Institute for Cultural Research. It included plenary reports of such prominent Russian specialists in cultural studies, as O. N. Astafieva, N. A. Kochelyaeva, and A. G. Vasilyev.

The program of the meeting included presentation of the following two strategic research and publication projects, elaborated in the framework of the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Studies of Spiritual Traditions, their Specific Cultures and Interreligious Dialogue:

1. International collective monograph 'World Religions in the Context of the Contemporary Culture: New Perspectives of Dialogue and Mutual Understanding. Christianity and Islam in the Context of Contemporary Culture: New Prospects of Dialogue and Mutual Understanding in the Russian Federation and Eastern Europe, in Central Asia and the Caucasus' / Eds. D. Spivak, S. Shankman. — St.Petersburg: St. Petersburg Branch of the Russian Institute for Cultural Research / Russian Baltic Information Center "Blitz", 2011. — 208 p. This book was prepared

and published in two languages (English and Russian), in cooperation and with the financial support of the UNESCO Moscow Office and the UNESCO Office in Almaty, in the framework of the UNESCO/UNITWIN Network on Interreligious Dialogue for Intercultural Understanding.

2. International scientific forum 'Culture of the Mongolian-speaking People in the Globalized World', which would be conducted on October 25–26, 2012, at the city of Elista, Kalmyk Republic, Russian Federation.

The first of the aforementioned projects was directed at the research of problems and prospects of interfaith dialogue between Christianity and Islam in the contemporary globalized world; the second one would include actual prospects of dialogue with Buddhism, especially of the Mongolian-speaking people in its manifold forms and directions.

Both presentations were conducted by the V. M. Dianova, professor of the St. Petersburg UNESCO Chair in Comparative Studies

of Spiritual Traditions, their Specific Cultures and Interreligious Dialogue. The former one comprised an address of K. A. Kormanskaya, Director of the Russian Baltic Information Center "Blitz".

The Day was concluded by a concert, provided by young artists of St. Petersburg, with the support of the St. Petersburg N. A. Rimsky-Corsakov State Conservatoire (Academy). Along with classical and contemporary European music, it included a traditional Indian raga, reminding of the multicultural character of the present-day world.

Organization of the meeting was coordinated by A. V. Venkova, V. B. Vysotsky, and M. A. Stepanov. Organization of the web conference was coordinated on the Moscow side by N. N. Kryukova.

For more detailed information, concerning the program of the meeting, as well as the manifold activities of the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Studies of Spiritual Traditions, their Specific Cultures and Interreligious Dialogue, basing upon the St. Petersburg branch of the Russian Institute for Cultural Research, see its web site <http://unesco.spbriic.org>.