



**THE UNITED WORLD COLLEGES AND THE INTERNATIONAL
BACCALAUREATE IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

Education in a Post-Conflict Society

A Proposal for Action

The Premise and Point of Departure

International education has flourished in recent decades in stable countries and successful economies, where the impact of relationships across national borders has a strong and growing impact on families, schools and politics. International schools, strongly influenced by their sister schools in western economies, have also prospered in developing countries, often, it must be said, in relative isolation from local needs. Now, international educators face a new challenge – to bring their experience and their resources directly to those communities and societies that are recovering from the devastating consequences of recent conflict, warfare and social degradation.

The 51 sovereign states of 1945 have grown (or fragmented) into some 200 today. Many of them have suffered state failure. Only now however is the fundamental role of education in civic renewal becoming recognised. It is foolish to suggest that any single formula will meet all needs, but Bosnia and Herzegovina offers a critical template for the development of modern quality education, inspired by proven international ideals and practices, in post-conflict societies. The country's problems need little introduction: one half of the population displaced in the war years 1992-95, over one million seeking refuge abroad, more than two hundred thousand dead. What may require emphasis are Bosnia's historical record for inter-ethnic harmony and its deep-rooted respect for culture and education. The Dayton Agreement was unable to make provision for education. As a result, education, the crucial building block of a functional civil society, has remained deeply divided, with three curricula (the Serb, the Bosniak and the Croat), separate buildings in the same village, the young the continuing victims of nationalistic politics. It cannot be surprising that recent polls consistently demonstrate that over 70% of young people are seeking to leave the country.

Bosnia and Herzegovina thus remains a formidable challenge to the idealism and leadership of the international community. The future peace and security of Europe depends on the successful integration of Bosnia and its neighbouring countries. The authorities responsible for reconciliation and reconstruction have a right to call on the experience and resources of international education.

The Background

The United World Colleges (UWC)¹ were launched in the 1960s as an educational response to the tensions of the Cold War and have since prospered beyond the dreams of their founders.

¹ *There are currently ten United World Colleges: Wales, Singapore, Canada, Swaziland, the United States, Italy, Venezuela, Hong Kong, Norway and India. They are unique in bringing together scholarship students aged 16-19 from across the world for pre-university education, irrespective of their race, religion, politics and ability to pay. Selected entirely on personal merit, they live in residential communities for two years. They follow the rigorous academic programmes of the International Baccalaureate, allied with equally demanding programmes in community service, cultural activities and*

The UWC movement has been recognised and supported by leading international figures from the start, among them Nelson Mandela, Honorary President of UWC, and Kofi Annan, a public supporter of the Bosnia initiative.

UWC schools offer their students the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma. The IB is taught in over 1000 schools across the world. The Diploma gives access to the world's leading universities. The IB curriculum has had a profound influence on educational reform in numerous countries, including Slovenia and Hungary. It is a benchmark for academic excellence, enlightened educational practice, and effective cooperation between teachers and schools in all five continents.

A small team² began in 2001 to develop a joint UWC and International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) initiative in Bosnia that would tackle the problem of the nationalistically divided educational system in Bosnia and the lack of opportunities for able young people in the region. Their work built on the now twenty-two year contribution of the United World College of the Adriatic in Italy to international secondary education in Central and Eastern Europe. Extensive consultations have taken place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, leading to commitment and support by local and international leaders alike.³

IBO has welcomed the collaboration with UWC as an expert and pioneer in introducing the teaching of the IB to multicultural groups of students with different and often difficult backgrounds.

Essential Criteria for Successful Implementation in Bosnia

- The academic curriculum must be both attractive and acceptable to all national groups of BiH.
- The project must be demonstrably supportive of the on-going national educational reform.
- The inclusion of local teachers and existing schools is the only way to ensure sustainability.
- Influence (by example) and cost effectiveness are fundamental.
- International standards, leading to access to institutions and opportunities abroad for both teachers and pupils, will play an important role and will be influential with local families and local educators.
- The model of a high quality international school will attract pupils from the region. The strong regional emphasis will demonstrate the ability of able young people to study and work together and thereby create networks for the future leaders of South East Europe.
- The participation of teachers and students from other countries will demonstrate in a human, effective manner the confidence of other nationalities in the future of Bosnian society.

outdoor pursuits that prepare them for lives of active social responsibility and civic leadership. The first, Atlantic College, opened in Wales in 1962.

² *Antonin Besse, Vice-President of UWC, Pilvi Torsti, graduate of the UWC of the Adriatic and academic expert in contemporary history and education in Bosnia, and David Sutcliffe, former Head of the UWC's of the Atlantic in Britain and the Adriatic in Italy.*

³ *All relevant local ministers on the state, entity and canton levels as well as the international community at large including the previous and current High Representatives, Wolfgang Petritsch and Lord Paddy Ashdown have expressed their interest and support for the project.*

The Proposal

Working closely with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Cantons of Mostar and Sarajevo, and the leading gymnasium in Banja Luka, the UWC and the IBO have developed the following joint initiative:

- To create an IB stream in the Mostar Gymnasium⁴ for local students from all national communities.
- To enrol with the local students scholarship students from Central and South East Europe, the Middle East, Western Europe and North America, selected by committees of the United World Colleges, to act as an encouragement and catalyst for the wider school community and to create a centre of excellence for students of South East Europe.
- To support the Druga Gymnazium in Sarajevo, already teaching the IB Diploma to a small number of pupils, to develop its resources and to increase the numbers of IB students (currently 16-18 in each generation).
- To introduce the IB Diploma programmes into the leading Gymnazium in the Serb town Banja Luka.⁵
- To support all these endeavours through the appointment of international teachers experienced in both the IB and the UWC, and the recruitment of former UWC/IB students to act as leaders and *animateurs*, above all in programmes of community service and outdoor and cultural activities.
- To assist in the creation of regular working links between these three schools with the long term aim of working towards common elements in national curricula in all three national communities.
- To run seminars, conferences and workshops for local teachers to enable them to meet teachers from other countries and to make common cause with European colleagues over educational tasks and methods.
- To participate in the dialogue of post crisis education and curricular development in Bosnia and Herzegovina and beyond.

The realisation of this project will create the unique situation of an identical curriculum being taught in the three most important cities in Bosnia, which are also the centres of the three national communities. The pioneering and emblematic role of the Mostar Gymnazium, with all three national communities in the same school for the first time after the war, will be especially significant.

The Budgetary provisions

Start-up Activities

- š UWC-IB run Teacher Training, Preparatory Courses and Activities for Students in Mostar, Sarajevo and Banja Luka, Conference and Workshops on International Post Crisis Education, Programme Preparations for Mostar, Sarajevo and Banja Luka **€210.000⁶**

⁴ The town's old Gymnazium was established in 1878. In 1991 it had more than 1100 pupils, and was one of the finest schools in former Yugoslavia. In the war, it was destroyed, along with the famous bridge, less than five minutes' walk away. The year 2004 witnessed the ceremonial re-opening of the bridge and the reunification of the city administration, imposed by the High Representative, Lord Ashdown. The Gymnazium is now working to regain its former reputation. In the 2004-2005 school year both Croat and Bosniak pupils started attending the half-reconstructed school, but in separate classrooms and following separate curricula.

⁵ The Headmistress, who has experience of the UWC and IB through former pupils who have attended the UWC Colleges in Italy and Norway, is enthusiastically if unrealistically determined to make a start as early as September 2005.

Three Years of Implementation in Mostar, Sarajevo and Banja Luka

- § Mostar: International staff, UWC scholarships, IB fees and other costs, €550.000/year.⁷
- § Sarajevo: Library and science facilities, international staff, IB fees and other activities, €300.000/year.⁸
- § Banja Luka: Library and science facilities, international staff, IB fees and other activities, €300.000/year.

Total for three years **€3,450.000**

Overall Total	€3,660.000
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The Timing

The current timetable suggests start-up activities in the academic year 2005-2006 with the full scheme implemented from September 2006 onwards. There can be much flexibility in implementation. For example, starts could be made in the three locations in successive years rather than simultaneously. The timing of the fundraising can determine the timing of the different projects without damaging the general enterprise. Three years has been suggested as the initial period of implementation in order to provide a firm context for fundraising. Subsequent responsibilities will devolve increasingly on the local authorities, although both the UWC and the IBO will maintain their commitment and their participation.

Implementation

The local UWC National Committee, registered as an NGO and formed of prominent Bosnian citizens, has worked in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1996, sending scholarship students to the existing United World Colleges. The UWC International Board and Office are represented by a second NGO, set up specifically to govern this initiative. These two bodies, together with the extensive network of supporters within the country's political structures, are eager to start work without delay on the implementation of the proposal, in cooperation with the international project management.

Dr Christian H Hodeige
Chair, United World Colleges
International Board of Directors

Dr Monique Seefried
President, International Baccalaureate
Organisation Council of Foundation

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⁶ *The Project Management (one international full-time position) is already secured.*

⁷ *The Cantonal Ministry of Education has been interested in contributing towards the costs of local teachers.*

⁸ *The Cantonal authorities responsible for the school are enthusiastic at the prospect to the extent that the Minister of Education has offered office space and part time administrative assistance to promote the scheme.*