

On 14 and 15 December 2005, on the eve of the Sixtieth Anniversary of the adoption of UNESCO's Constitution, a group of scholars from a wide range of cultural and scholarly backgrounds assembled at UNESCO Headquarters.

There could be no more appropriate background against which to look at today's changing world than the founding principles of UNESCO's action. The concept of human dignity is perhaps the most overarching of all. Present in known cultural expressions past and present, it is increasingly at issue in the political discourses and demands that are made in our times of growing complexity, globalization, mass communications, population movements and emerging social configurations.

*Asked to consider the possibility of putting this notion into an international perspective, it was agreed to enhance the exchanges of experience and information on research and reflection between a few partner institutions: UNESCO (Pathways of Thought project), the European Science Foundation (ESF), the International Union of Academies (IUA) and the International Council of Philosophy and Humanistic Studies. This issue presents some outcomes of these very first reflections on the topic. The editors of *Diogenes* wish to express their gratitude to each partner for their commitment in fostering an international network of scholars working on human dignity, and hope that these papers may reveal useful for the ongoing debate.*

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