Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 1025 (1994)[1]

Future of international exhibitions

Parliamentary Assembly

1. A quarter of a century has elapsed from the start of the preparations for the Osaka Universal Exhibition of 1970 to the aftermath of that which took place in Seville in 1992 and international relations have not remained the same since the wave of ideological criticism in the sixties.

2. However, disbanding the guilds and the freedom of labour as elements of human rights have not everywhere lost their topicality and the perspective of a more united world with regard to cultural co-operation and a more equal distribution of wealth is not exactly a thing of the past either, even if national ideals and the search for local profit in the framework of economic and cultural relations could constitute impediments on the way towards global unity

3. Against this background, the Assembly considers that the history of the evolution of such phenomena as international exhibitions presents an edifying reflection of our civilisation.

4. Technical progress in the field of visual information now shows the world perfectly well during the years between exhibitions and therefore the element of meeting is more important than the element of showing in international exhibitions.

5. The Assembly is aware of the consensus among member countries of the International Bureau of Exhibitions on the continuation of international exhibitions and supports the efforts of the Bureau to unravel and make more transparent the complex structure of the present by updating and clarifying regulations and planning for these events (frequency, locations, types of exhibitions, choice of themes and the limitations of these themes).

6. An exhibition should continue to be a display which, whatever its title, has as its principal purpose the education of the public, as defined in Article 1 of the 1928 Convention regarding International Exhibitions. Furthermore its role of fostering cultural exchanges with a view to a better understanding between peoples and to the strengthening of peace in the world should be emphasised rather than the roles of direct contribution to the progress of science and technology and of fostering industrial and commercial exchanges.

7. In the current process of re-assessing the aims of international exhibitions our contemporary cultural ambitions should be critically checked against :

7.1. North-South relations (rich-poor);

7.2. the ecological situation (protection of natural resources, flora and fauna);

7.3. security on our earth and in space (peace and viability);

7.4. technology at the service of the people (employment and leisure).

8. The Assembly believes that the above provides realistic themes for international exhibitions along the lines similar to those suggested by the United Nations pavilion in Seville and welcomes the theme "Mankind, Nature, Technology" chosen for the next universal exhibition due to take place in Hanover in the year 2000.

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1. Assembly debate on 28 January 1994 (8th Sitting) (seeDoc. 6986, report of the of the Committee on Culture and Education, Rapporteur: Mr Tummers). Text adopted by the Assembly on 28 January 1994 (8th Sitting).