

Memory and Future Club

Sustaining multilateralism :

Urging the United States of America to re-engage with UNESCO

A video Interview with Dr Judith Eaton, President Emeritus of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation

Paris/Washington 23 January 2021

The results of the US elections in November generated new hopes for the return of the US to multilateral organizations, including UNESCO.

At the time of this interview, just a few days after the inauguration of the Biden-Harris administration, the return of the US to the Paris Climate Agreement and the WHO had already been announced. In addition, the EU has launched a new EU Transatlantic Agenda. Numerous US based organizations are urging the new administration to rejoin UNESCO.

In November 2020, following the US presidential election, the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) issued a statement approved by its Board of Directors urging the incoming Biden/Harris administration " to rejoin UNESCO and to re-engage in all areas of the Organization's expertise, including cultural heritage, education, lifelong learning, information/communication and science " .

This inspired the Memory and Future Club of AFUS to conduct a series of interviews with US academics and experts. The first video interview was conducted with Aaron Benavot, Professor of global education policy at the University at Albany-SUNY by Alexandra Draxler, former Director at UNESCO.

This is an interview with Dr Judith Eaton, President Emeritus of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) led by Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić, former Head of Higher Education in UNESCO.

Dr. Judith S. Eaton is President emeritus of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), a Washington-based association of degree-granting colleges and universities that provides national coordination of U.S. accreditation.

Prior to her twenty-three years as CHEA President, she served as chancellor of a state system, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, president of two community colleges, president of the Council for Aid to Education, Vice-President of the American Council on Education and held a number of academic and administrative positions as well as serving as a full-time and part-time faculty member in both a university and a community college.

Eaton has worked internationally in a range of countries, focusing on a variety of quality assurance issues and challenges. She has published a broad array of policy briefs and articles on quality assurance and higher education, as well as a number of monographs and, earlier, several books.

Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić is an international expert for higher education. Following her service as

Secretary-General of the Association of Universities of Yugoslavia, she began her 21-year career in UNESCO which she ended as head of Higher Education.

She was responsible for international collaborative projects such as the Lisbon Recognition Convention, the Guidelines on Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education, the Global Initiative for Quality Assurance Capacity-Building for Developing Countries, and served as Executive Secretary to the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education.

As independent expert, she was Senior Advisor to the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, USA, Member of the International Advisory Board of the Shanghai Academic Rankings and Education Master at the DeTao Masters Academy, Shanghai. She authored numerous articles and policy documents and received a number of international awards for her work.