

**CONTRIBUTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF AUSJAL ON HOW TO
PROCEED WITH EXCHANGE, COOPERATION OR PARTNERSHIP
BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES ASSOCIATED WITH AJCU AND AUSJAL.**

Each University develops its activities and tries to realize its expectations around the theme of exchange, on the regional, national, continental and international levels. Diverse meetings of university representatives show the prior necessity of getting to know what each one does, needs and desires to offer in each University Institution, in order to begin and promote that much desired coming together. The publishing of successes, of difficulties, of solutions that overcome problems greatly contributes. Institutions are complex and autonomous. Because of this, they risk remaining parallel when they sign general declarations of their intent to collaborate amongst themselves. There are documents which simply are filed, without blooming into shared life, operationally, for the service of the common and agreed upon goals. The advisable way to proceed is that of a meeting of like entities: person to person, professor or researcher with another professor or researcher, Department head or Dean of a Center with other similar persons. This mutual interest and knowledge has permitted cooperation, with secure bases, which produces continuity and progress.

An example of this is the accord between the University of Deusto with AUSJAL, whose goal is to prepare Human Capital for Latin America in the 90's. It encompasses a vast Doctoral program, meeting the real needs of the associates to prepare undergraduates and researchers, strengthening and giving new focus and specificity to the courses of the host institution. It is now in its second year, with results and satisfaction, both for Deusto and its Latin American partners.

The Presidents of AUSJAL meet in assembly every two years. Those who have continually participated in these meetings include the President of AJCU, Rev. Paul Tipton, S.J., Rev. James Carter, S.J., and Rev. Vincent Duminuco, S.J. from the Educational Secretariate in Rome. We have planned the next meeting for May, at UNISINOS in São Leopoldo, in the south of Brazil. These meetings aim to evaluate, program and seek a common mentality of cooperation and participation.

AUSJAL was constituted in 1985 and ratified in 1987. Its Statutes were authenticated in 1990. In this space of time, it has sponsored meetings of like entities in Law, Economics and Administration, in Ethics and Economics, and in Pastoral Ministries (there will be a meeting of Chaplaincy personnel in May, at UNISINOS). One fruit of this mutual work of these universities and of the last several Assemblies and meetings was the approval of a document, published recently in Spanish and, next week, to be published in Portuguese: **THE CHALLENGES OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE EDUCATIONAL PROPOSALS OF AUSJAL**. The document integrates *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* and Santo Domingo, the last Assembly of CELAM. It is a collective work in which the universities reflect on their identity and

their mission in this age and on our Continent. It can offer to the Professors, Administrators and Students of these institutions elements for a reflection and a consciousness of the objectives of our activity, of the characteristics of our education, following the Ignatian spirit. The recent General Congregation elaborated documents on the Intellectual Apostolate, on Culture, on the Universities. All of this is new in the official Documents of the Society of Jesus. And we can say that AUSJAL was out in front, contributing, with a Latin American point of view, so that the Society of Jesus could own, with more clear-headedness and determination, the university apostolate.

AUSJAL's document, as you all can verify, has a great richness, whether in its analysis of reality and of the challenges of our Latin American countries (1st Part), or in the definition of the specific contribution of the Jesuit Universities (2nd Part) and in the objective priorities and lines of action (3rd Part). There are a number of topics for reflection and discussion in the university body. AUSJAL had in mind to offer to the Institutions of Higher Education, its members, an instrument for raising consciousness and an incentive to discussion and serious study of our characteristics and objectives as Works of the Society of Jesus, present in the world of Culture.

In the words of the Most Reverend Father General, Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., he affirms: "The very structure of the document reflects very well our way of proceeding as suggested by the last General Congregations. In the first place, it captures the reality of the Latin American society with all of the challenges it hurls at us. Next, it goes forward with a deep reflection which makes us see what it means to be a Jesuit institution in the face of this reality. Finally, it proposes concrete points of action in order to confront these challenges from the profound reality of a University which is Jesuit and, because of this, fully catholic ... Besides this, you can't forget that the document is itself offered as an instrument of permanent evaluation of the university's ideals and practices, and not only negatively - "What are we doing wrong?" - but especially more positively - "How can we do it even better?". " (February 19, 1995)

In its third part, the document presents "OBJECTIVES, PRIORITIES AND LINES OF ACTION".

1) Give absolute priority to the integral formation of the students through educational processes in which the learning of values and of religious and social options of Christian inspiration are promoted and applied to a world marked by poverty and by a growing secular humanism.

2) To put in a primary place the continuing formation of faculty, investigators and administrators and their participation in the ideals of the University, including Ignatian pedagogy and spirituality.

3) Guarantee that, in the teaching and research processes , and in the principal decisions of university orientation, the human person has the central place.

4) Offer opportunities to create an environment where the components of the university community can grow in their religious experience arriving at an adequate synthesis of faith and science, Christian life and social and professional practice.

5) Develop a high scientific quality and a sharp sense of the application of studies so that they obtain the greatest social productivity in the creation of those goods and services that are needed to better the quality of life in our societies. We do this so that the increase in the scientific and technological capacity is animated by a humanism which brings it to an effective solution of the great ills that afflict our societies, particularly the poorest majorities. May the public sense, the responsibility, the democratic spirit, and the increase in the organizational capacity of our societies, be the seal of the ethical approach of our universities

6) To work systematically in AUSJAI , and in each one of the member universities, so that the sense of the very universality of being catholic and the international character of the Society of Jesus be promoted and translated into an open spirit and an effective international exchange between our universities in the american world and in other continents. To work in strict relationship with the other universities of the Society of Jesus around the world and their associations."

This cooperation is based on the fact that we are universities situated in different regions and different countries, who want to find a greater effectiveness and to offer better service to our societies, seeking to improve them.

AUSJAL wants to promote:

- greater understanding between us and other Jesuit universities of AJCU, in Africa, Asia and Europe;
- a much deeper understanding of our identity brought up-to-date in this post-modern world, looking toward the year 2000 and, consequently, to our mission and vocation in the international tradition of the Society of Jesus at the service of the Church and contemporary Culture.
- the integration of the option and sensitivity for the marginalized poor - at whose service we find our universities - and the opening of viable roads for the future, through top-notch research. Conciliate Bread and Internet, Low-Income Housing and Fiber Optic Networks, Taking in gratuitously and High Technology.
- concretize, in curricula and academic practices, the service of faith and the promotion of justice - the base for a Civilization of Hope and Love dreamed by

all, without neglecting excellence in quality, so bravely sought after in each Institution.

Its universities want to increase the exchange programs in order to consolidate steps already taken, to correct directions or mistakes, to increase the velocity of success, to form faculty, researchers and students who are open to a new mentality of planetary citizenship and, at the same time, guarantee the inculturation and fidelity to service of human and social development in the respective region. They are situated in countries with different stages of consolidation of citizenship, of human rights, of ecological, social, political and economic equilibrium, of offer and demand and production of goods, of employment and unemployment levels, of distribution of wealth and institutional balance among the constituted powers. At the same time, Latin America is the bearer of immense human and cultural riches.

Common necessities:

1. Urgently prepare Masters and Doctoral programs, human capital for university needs and directives for their countries;
2. Exchange teaching programs (content, didactic strategies, radio, television, long-distance models, etc.), of academic, administrative and financial control;
3. Discuss strategic planning, in order to strengthen our university and democratic Institutions;
4. Support one another in the beautiful and challenging mission received in the Society of Jesus, in the Church and in the Culture;
5. Exchange programs for the preparation of the lay protagonists of the University, the Church and of the Charism of the Society of Jesus, integrating apparent opposites with which contemporary men and women are suddenly confronted; happiness and seriousness, demands and solidarity, effectiveness and gratuitiveness, faith and justice, risk and security, science and denominational character, autonomy and fidelity, love and seriousness.

Theodoro Peters, S.J.
President of AUSJAL
Mexico, Federal District, April 26, 1995