

Diversity: The Next Challenges
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Sir John Daniel – Chair, International Board

I greet the worldwide UWC community as I succeed Tim Toyne Sewell as chair of the International Board. He has left big shoes for me to fill. To paraphrase Gilbert and Sullivan, Tim was the very model of a modern Major General. In his time as chair he combined the authority of a sergeant major (in bringing order to large groups) with the subtle mind of a diplomat, the skill to lead by capturing consensus as it emerged, the affability to defuse tensions and profound enthusiasm for the UWC movement.

Diversity, the theme of this issue, inspired my own career. Forty years ago, working as an unpaid intern in the early days of the UK Open University changed my life. The OU's slogan, 'open as to people, open as to places, open as to methods and open as to ideas, has been the underpinning for my subsequent work in universities and international organisations.

'Open as to people' is a simple concept, yet each succeeding generation accuses previous ages of a deficient understanding of openness and diversity. Over the end-of-year holidays I enjoyed reading Alan Ryan's monumental *On Politics: A History of Political Thought from Herodotus to the Present*. He reminds us how assumptions change over the centuries. Aristotle took it for granted that neither women nor slaves should enjoy political equality, but he also considered that lotteries were the most democratic way of selecting people for political office.

Much of the 20th century was the story – by no means yet complete – of the broadening of the concept of equality to eliminate legal and political distinctions between people based on gender, race, language, sexual orientation, disability and other factors. Now, however, in the 21st century, discrimination based on inequality of income or wealth has come to the fore as a crucial challenge.

The UWC movement has done a good job in bringing together a diversity of races and nations in its schools and colleges. What are the next challenges we must face? Are we blind to family wealth and status in our selection of pupils? Is it fair to give full scholarships to the children of the wealthy? Most difficult of all, how do we answer the accusation that the net effect of the UWC movement is to enable rich countries to poach talent from poor ones?