



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

The Assistant Director-General  
for External Relations and Public Information

To Non-Governmental Organizations,  
official partners of UNESCO

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30 June 2015

Dear Partners,

You were numerous to attend the fourth Forum of NGOs on the theme "*The Role of Women in Fighting Poverty*", which was held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris this week and which I was pleased to open. This mobilization demonstrates the interest and relevance of the topic discussed, and confirms the strong involvement of our NGO partners in the activities promoted jointly with the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee.

I do hope you will also be as many to attend the fifth Forum to be held in Beijing, China, from 27 to 29 July on the theme "***Rapprochement of Cultures: One Humanity beyond Diversity***". Because of the many topics that will be discussed - education, global citizenship, science, sustainable development, cultural diversity, heritage, intercultural dialogue, cyberspace and information technologies, youth, etc. - the Forum is of interest to all NGO partners of the Organization and we do count on your presence and active participation.

Do not hesitate to visit the website of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee ([www.ong-unesco.org/en/](http://www.ong-unesco.org/en/)) to register for this event and get additional information.

I therefore hope to see you in Beijing late July.

Moreover, I would like to inform you that 20 new sites have been added to the UNESCO's World Network of Biosphere Reserves (MAB, Man and the Biosphere), bringing their total number to 651 sites, including 15 transboundary sites, in 120 countries. Myanmar had its first biosphere reserve inscribed this year. Those of you interested in learning more about these new sites can connect to [this link](#).

### **23-28 August 2015 - World Water Week, Stockholm, Sweden**

Hosted and organized by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), the World Water Week in Stockholm is the leading annual global event for addressing the planet's water issues and related concerns of international development. Under the theme "Water for Development", leaders and experts from the world's scientific, business, government and civic communities will gather in Stockholm to exchange views, experiences and shape joint solutions to global water challenges.

Within this strategic framework, UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme (UNESCO-IHP) will organize several sessions on key pressing water-related challenges, including climate and disaster risks, global water resources in emergency situations, emerging pollutants in water and wastewater, gender indicators, etc.

Our specialized partners interested in knowing more about this week, will find all relevant information under [this link](#).

Contact: Mr Alexander Otte (a.otte@unesco.org) and Ms Natalia Uribe (n.uribepando@unesco.org)

### **8 September 2015 - International Literacy Day**

International Literacy Day celebrations are held at the global, regional and country levels around a selected theme to remind the international community about the centrality of literacy to lifelong learning and to the creation of sustainable and inclusive societies.

This year's theme is "Literacy and sustainable societies". The year 2015 presents a special opportunity for the international community to take stock of progress made towards the achievement of the internationally agreed goals, notably the six Education for All (EFA) goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and to shape the new agenda for education and sustainable development. The main idea behind this theme, therefore, is to explore critical links between literacy and the future sustainable development agenda which will be adopted during the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015.

A global event on "Literacy and sustainable societies" will be organized on the occasion of International Literacy Day at UNESCO Headquarters, in Paris, on 8 and 9 September 2015, to prepare the ground for intensified literacy efforts of countries and partners in the post-2015 era. On this occasion, an Award Ceremony of the 2015 edition of the UNESCO International Literacy Prizes will also take place on 8 September 2015.

Within this framework, I encourage our NGO partners to organize related activities, in collaboration with key partners, including UNESCO Field Offices. Please feel free to send us information on any activity you intend to coordinate and we shall publish it on our website.

For more information on the International Literacy Day, I invite you to visit a UNESCO webpage dedicated to ILD through the following link: [www.unesco.org/literacy](http://www.unesco.org/literacy).

Contact: Ms Mari Yasunaga (literacy@unesco.org)

**14 September 2015 – Conference “The Islamic Golden Age of Science for actual knowledge-based society - The Ibn Al-Haytham example”, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris**

Organized within the framework of the International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies, this conference will focus on scientific and intellectual accomplishments of the Islamic civilization in its Golden Age (VIII-XVth century) and the impact it had on the future of human civilizations across the world. Accomplishments include the study of optics, astronomy, physics, mathematics, life sciences, artistic disciplines and philosophy.

Renowned experts in their fields of competence will present fascinating insights into an era of ground-breaking discoveries and innovations by Arab and Muslim scientists, as well as by cultural experts.

The Ibn Al-Haytham Conference will be associated with an exhibition featuring the inventions, creations, light-related artworks and achievements of Ibn Al-Haytham and other scholars of the Islamic Golden Age.

For more information on the Conference, I invite you to visit the following [link](#).

Contact: Mr Jean Paul Ngome-Abiaga ([jj.ngome-abiaga@unesco.org](mailto:jj.ngome-abiaga@unesco.org))

**UNESCO Publications**

- Describing the emerging and unresolved issues related to the oceans and the marine environment, the just published book *Ocean Sustainability in the 21st Century* presents the developments made in marine science and policy since the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and implications for the sustainable management of ocean areas and resources. Topics covered include the impacts of human-induced climate change on the oceans, the marine genetic resources debate, the current legal framework for the oceans, and a comparative study of the legal issues associated with outer space. The book is available in English under [this link](#).
- Three new issues of the *World Heritage Magazine* are available in English and French: titled *Nature-Culture interlinkages*, issue N°75 seeks to review recent findings concerning the nature-culture interlinkages (it can be found following [this link](#)); issue N°76 is devoted to *World Heritage in Germany* (available under [this link](#)); and finally, a special issue on *Iraq's Heritage – a Treasure under Threat* can be found [here](#).

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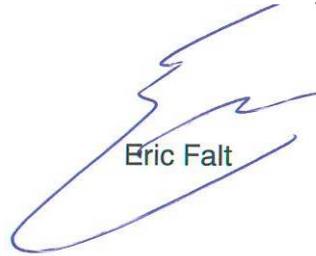
Finally, I am pleased to announce the admission of three organizations, partners of UNESCO, namely:

- the **[International Organization for Chemical Sciences in Development \(IOCD\)](#)**, an NGO based in Belgium, admitted to official partnership with UNESCO (consultative status);

- The **Arab Educational Information Network (Shamaa)**, an NGO based in Lebanon, admitted to official partnership with UNESCO (consultative status);
- The **National Endowment Fund “13 Centuries Bulgaria”**, a foundation based in Bulgaria, admitted to official relations with UNESCO under the Directives concerning UNESCO’s relations with foundations and similar institutions.

By clicking on their name, you will be redirected to their website for more information. I welcome them and am happy to extend even further our network of partners.

Yours sincerely,



Eric Falt