



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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2 September 2015

Dear Partners,

After the summer break, which I hope you were able to enjoy, we have reached September, which marks the start of a busy autumn with important events for the Organization and for our partnership. I have detailed a few of them below.

I also wish to express great satisfaction for the successful organization of the fifth Forum of NGOs in official partnership held in Beijing (Peoples' Republic of China) last July thanks to the support of the China National Commission for UNESCO. It was once again the result of a genuine tripartite effort: of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee, the Secretariat and a Member State. I note the good geographical diversity of participants to the Forum, who come from China but also from all regions of the world with more than 25 countries represented.

8 October 2015 – Committee on Non-Governmental Partners of the Executive Board (197th session), UNESCO Headquarters, Paris

As part of the 197th session of the Executive Board (7-21 October 2015), the Committee on Non-Governmental Partners (NGP) will meet on Thursday 8 October 2015, in Room XI.

This meeting of the 23 Member States of the NGP Committee, which all NGOs are invited to attend, will examine statutory issues concerning admissions of NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO, as well as the Organization's relationship with foundations.

On this occasion, the Committee will consider the NGOs' collective work coordinated by the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee, with particular regard to the organization of international NGO forums and the International Conference of NGOs (Paris, 15-17 December 2014).

Lastly, it will have the opportunity to take cognizance of the draft report that the Director-General will submit to the 38th session of the General Conference on NGOs' contribution to UNESCO's activities, together with an evaluation of the results.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you on 8 October during the meeting of the NGP Committee so that we pursue this dialogue between Member States, NGOs and the Secretariat.

Please refer to documents 197 EX/29, 195 EX/29.INF and 195 EX/29.INF.1 available online, and to consult the dedicated section of our website for more information on the Executive Board in general: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/executive-board/>.

Contact: Ms Sabina Colombo (ngo@unesco.org)

26-28 October 2015 – 9th UNESCO Youth Forum

This 9th edition of the Forum – under the theme “UNESCO Youth Forum – Young Global Citizens for a Sustainable Planet” – will bring together over 500 young women and men from all over the world to focus on issues related to sustainable development and global citizenship. It will therefore serve as a strategic opportunity to ensure that the voices of future generations remain front and centre of the new development agenda.

To ensure equitable participation in discussions, this year’s 3-day Forum will follow a foresight approach. This new approach will provide young participants with the opportunity to participate in small future-focused discussions beginning online prior to the Forum, which will then feed into the larger conference. In alignment with UNESCO’s Operational Strategy on Youth (2014-2021), the Forum will culminate in the creation of a set of recommended actions to be presented at the 38th session of the General Conference.

The Forum will also host the Juan Bosch Prize award ceremony on 26 October. Created in 2009 at the initiative of the Government of the Dominican Republic, the prize is awarded to a young researcher whose thesis has made a significant contribution to research in the area of Latin American social development policy.

Participants in the Forum have been selected from nominations proposed by civil society organizations and partners, as well as by Member States and individuals, thus ensuring broader representation. I do hope that your organization will be represented on this occasion.

You will find more information following [this link](#).

Contact: M. Alexander Schischlik (youth@unesco.org)

3-18 November 2015 – 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO, Paris, France

The 38th session of the General Conference is just around the corner. It will open on Tuesday, 3 November, at 10 a.m. and the **General Policy Debate** will start in the morning of Wednesday, 4 November.

As already mentioned, a **Youth Forum** will be held preceding the opening of the session, as well as a **history conference** entitled “**Making a Difference: Seventy Years of UNESCO Actions**” which will also take place on 28 and 29 October 2015. During five panel sessions over two days, historians from different cultural and geographical backgrounds will present and discuss case studies on the impact of UNESCO activities in the main areas of competence, from the inception of UNESCO until today.

This 38th session will also feature a new edition of the **Leaders' Forum**, from 16 to 18 November. The overall theme for the Leaders' Forum will be the celebration of UNESCO's 70th anniversary. Heads of State and Government of Member States and Associate Members will share their views and vision for UNESCO and its place in the multilateral arena today and in the future, as it celebrates 70 years of action – and as the international community transitions to the post-2015 development agenda.

As far as our partnership with NGOs is concerned, I wish to draw your attention to **Item 8.1** of the provisional agenda of the General Conference which presents the quadrennial report on the contribution made to UNESCO's activities by non-governmental organizations (document 38 C/34). This item will be examined by the APX Commission – Financial, administrative and general questions, programme support and external relations, which will meet from 4 to 9 November.

I am also pleased to confirm that, as it was the case two years ago, an **NGO-dedicated space**, jointly run by the Secretariat and the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee, will be located in the heart of the public areas of the General Conference, on the ground floor of Fontenoy building; it will be both an information point and a meeting place. We shall provide you with more information about it in due time.

You will receive soon the invitation to attend this 38th session of the General Conference. I hope that many NGO representatives will be among the thousands participants expected to attend. The Desk for Intergovernmental and Non-Governmental Organizations is at your disposal to provide you with all relevant information regarding the functioning of the General Conference and for any further questions you may have concerning your participation therein.

All documents of the General Conference - including the provisional agenda and the organization of the work of the session – as well as all other relevant information will be available on line at the following Internet address: <http://www.unesco.org/en/general-conference/>.

Contact: Ms S. Colombo (ngo@unesco.org)

22 September 2015 - International Day of Peace

On this occasion, and within the framework of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022), UNESCO organizes at Headquarters the screening of "Mariam" (2015), a film directed by Fayza Ambah, Saudi film-maker, that deals with issues related to cultural diversity and human rights, and difficulties encountered by young people trying to build a multiple identity during a crucial period of life.

This event will be followed by a discussion and a debate with leading researchers, philosophers and experts on cultural and human rights as well as young students from cinema schools, along with the film-maker and the producer.

The International Day of Peace reflects the aspiration of all peoples to live together, free and equal in dignity and rights. This day reminds the international community that the right to peace is of the utmost importance in view of the violence that is tearing the world apart. The theme of this year's commemoration is "Partnerships for Peace – Dignity for All" which aims to highlight the importance of all segments of society to work together to strive for peace.

I know that many of you are very much committed to the celebration of this International Day and do hope you will join UNESCO in celebrating it. For more information on the events organized at Headquarters, I invite you to visit [this link](#).

Contact: Ms Ann-Belinda Preis (ab.preis@unesco.org) and for the screening Ms Paulette Forest (p.forest@unesco.org)

5 October 2015 - World Teachers Day

“Empowering teachers, building sustainable societies” is the slogan for the 2015 celebration of this Day, which commemorates the anniversary of the signature of the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers on 5 October 1966. Just a few weeks after the adoption of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in New York, this celebration is a unique opportunity to recall the key role that teachers should play in the new education agenda. Teachers are an investment for the future of countries.

Celebration at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris will be marked by a Panel discussion on « Moving ahead towards 2030” where teachers will speak from their own experiences and will give an inspiring perspective of their profession, followed by a round table with a focused discussion on the theme “Strong foundation for learning begins with good ECE teachers”.

I encourage our NGO partners to organize related activities, in collaboration with key partners. 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 2015 celebrations, I invite you to visit our website under [this link](#).

Contact: Ms Florence Migeon (f.migeon@unesco.org)

4-7 November 2015 - World Science Forum

Organized by UNESCO, in cooperation with the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the International Council for Science (ICSU), the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) and the European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC), this 7th edition of the World Science Forum will be under the theme ‘The enabling power of science’, and will examine and highlight the many ways in which science improves quality of life for the benefit and advancement of society.

Organized every 2 years, the forum is one of the world’s major science events. It brings together over 600 scientists and provides linkages between scientists, industry and policy makers. A number of UNESCO side-events will also be organized on several topics, such as knowledge brokering, science and African development, as well as human genomics and middle income countries.

Do not hesitate to visit the website of the WSF 2015 (<http://www.sciforum.hu/>) to get additional information.

Contact: Mr Maciej Nalecz (m.nalecz@unesco.org)

UNESCO Publications

- The bestselling guide to all 1,007 UNESCO World Heritage sites - *The Words Heritage: The Definitive guide to all 1007 World Heritage Sites* – is available in English only under [this link](#). It was fully updated to incorporate the latest 26 sites added to the World Heritage List in June 2014. These included the 1000th site, Okavango Delta in Botswana, and Myanmar's first property, Pyu Ancient Cities. Other sites included are Historic Jeddah, the Gate to Makkah (Saudi Arabia), Grand Canal (China) and the Vineyard Landscape of Piedmont (Italy).
- The *Philosophy Manual: a South-South perspective*, produced with the support of Saudi Arabia, is an innovative and high quality tool for young people in secondary and higher education and in non-formal education. This manual not only allows the discovery of philosophical texts from Africa, the Arab region, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean, but also promotes their full understanding through a critical apparatus which enables easily adapted educational use. The Manual is available in English and French. You can find the English version under [this link](#).
- *From Words to Action* – a portfolio on intercultural competences based on human rights - proposes a basic tool for capacity building in support of exchange, communication and cooperation beyond cultural, religious and national borders, allowing the emergence of a global citizenship in a safer world for all. This multilingual publication (English, French, Arabic), available under [this link](#), is primarily designed to be an Open Access tool, a flagship project of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013- 2022) and its content will be enriched and developed in an e-learning format, throughout the Decade.

Yours sincerely,



Eric Falt