



**The Assistant Director-General
for External Relations and Public Information**

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

**To Non-Governmental Organizations,
Official partners of UNESCO**

Ref. : ERI/MSP/INO/17/1

5 January 2017

Dear Partners,

At the beginning of this New Year, let me first express my best wishes in all of your endeavors.

Before updating you on forthcoming events, allow me to come back to a milestone event in the relationship between NGOs and UNESCO, which ended the year 2016 – the **2016 International Conference of NGOs**, held from 12 to 14 December last at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

The 2016 Conference brought together around 250 participants representing 120 NGO partners, many observers, and an unprecedented number of representatives of Member States, with the special participation of the Chairperson of the Committee on Non-Governmental Partners (NGP) of the UNESCO Executive Board, Ambassador Darko Tanaskovic, who attended the opening ceremony and was present throughout the Conference.

With its hashtag #ICNGO2016, our International Conference was followed online for the very first time, with more than 220 individual tweets from NGOs, 1,500 retweets and likes on Twitter, and a strong presence on Facebook and Instagram, attracting a higher visibility, even outside our walls.

The panelists' interventions on the digital revolution and the interaction with the audience, as well as the conclusions and recommendations adopted at the outcome of the Conference, lay the foundations for our shared actions for the next two years, nourished by this momentum.

NGOs also conducted the election of the new NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee. As you may be aware, Mr Philippe Beaussant of the International Council of Organizations for Folklore Festivals and Folk Arts (CIOFF) was elected Chairperson of the Conference for a two-year term. The new composition of the Liaison Committee (see enclosed) includes organizations from Africa, Asia, Arab States and Latin America in accordance with the provisions of the Directives, thus confirming our commitment to expanding and strengthening our partnership with NGOs worldwide.

I wish to reiterate to Mr Beaussant, and to the entire new Committee team, the support of the Secretariat, and especially of my Sector, in the fulfilment of its future tasks. We already had the opportunity to meet immediately after the Conference to discuss future activities.

If you are interested in learning more about the conference, the results of the election and the texts approved, please refer to the relevant web release [under this link](#) and to the website of the [NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee](#). You can also contact the Secretariat at: ngo@unesco.org.

02 February 2017 – World Radio Day

The theme of this year's celebration is "Radio is You", which is about radio stations "listening to their listeners". I encourage our NGOs to join forces with local community radio stations on this occasion: you are in a privileged position to assist local community radios in exploring relevant issues for their communities.

Here are just some ideas for your participation in the celebration of the World Radio Day:

- Open Day – partnering with a radio station and inviting them to do a special broadcast. Encourage your community to inform the radio station of their local issues.
- Radio Fair – last year, the city of Bhubaneswar in India organized a fair that brought together different radio stations, UNESCO partners and local non-governmental organizations.
- Radio Forum - with your NGO members, government officials, UNESCO or private sector representatives, hold a forum with a local radio station partner on relevant issues affecting the local community. Record it and broadcast on World Radio Day, thus encouraging voices of the local community to be heard on the air.
- If you are planning an event, don't forget to use social media! You can tweet using the hashtag #worldradioday or check the [Facebook page](#).

The World Radio Day website will go live in a few days, and I already invite you to register on www.worldradioday.org to keep up-to-date with the latest news. Visit the website then to fully explore the site and suggestions of how to participate in the Day. You will also be able to register your events on the worldwide map in order to obtain a UNESCO certificate of participation.

Contact: Ms Alison Meston (a.meston@unesco.org)

15-16 February 2017 - Knowledge Forum on Water Security and Climate Change, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France

Organized by the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme (IHP), the Forum will connect young scientists with senior scientists and water practitioners to facilitate collaboration, learning and knowledge-sharing, primarily through events, workshops and communication and information technologies (ICTs).

The Forum will focus on facilitating access to recent information on regional, national or international projects, as well as enhancing South-South cooperation. It will comprise several lectures, a young' scientists' poster exhibition, and opportunities to enhance partnerships on water security and climate change.

If you are interested by this stimulating Forum, do not hesitate to register before 30 January 2017 on the [dedicated website](#).

Contact: Ms Barbara Avila (b.avila@unesco.org)

21 February 2017 – International Mother Language Day

The theme of Mother Language Day (IMLD) 2017 is “Towards Sustainable Futures through Multilingual Education”. Mother languages in a multilingual approach are essential components of quality education, which is itself the foundation for empowering women and men and their societies. The opening ceremony of the celebration will be held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, while other promotional activities will be undertaken at country level.

One of the main objectives of this Day is to support the Sustainable Development Goal 4.6, aiming to ensure that “all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both women and men, achieve literacy and numeracy”. The theme is also in line with with “Education for People and the Planet: Creating Sustainable Futures for All”, theme of the 2016 UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM).

Given the importance of mother and local languages as channels for safeguarding and sharing indigenous cultures and knowledge, which are vast reservoirs of wisdom, I encourage you to organize events to celebrate this important Day. For more details on this Day, I invite you to consult the [devoted link](#).

Contact: Ms Noro Andriamiseza Ingarao (n.andriamiseza@unesco.org)

28 February - 3 March 2017 – African Regional Conference on Humanities, Bamako, Mali

Hosted by the Government of Mali and organized in preparation of the World Humanities Conference (Liège, Belgium, 6-12 August 2017), this African Conference on the theme “Languages, Cultures, History and Territories” Like the World Humanities Conference aims at studying how the Humanities contribute or may contribute at national, regional and international levels to measure, understand and better manage the cultural transformations that are expressed in economic, social and environmental dimensions related to the progressive globalization of exchanges.

To better contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the World Humanities Conference, the African Conference will reflect on issues, such as “languages, cultures and education”, “history, territories, migration and conflicts” and “democracy, institutional crises and religious radicalism” - with a particular focus on the factors that are opposed to the influence of humanities in Africa.

In view of the importance of the issues discussed, the diversity of responses that they can involve in different countries, disciplines and intellectual orientations, the Bamako African Conference has the vocation to constitute a landmark of a wider African discussion and consultation process.

I am sure that the Conference will be interesting for many of our NGOs from Africa or working in Africa. I therefore encourage you to inform your branches or representatives in the region that could be able to participate. For more information on the World Humanities Conference, please visit this [devoted link](#).

Contact: Ms Marema Touré Thiam (m.toure-thiam@unesco.org)

2017 Annual badges

As you may be aware, representatives of NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO, whose duties require frequent visits to UNESCO, may have annual badges to facilitate their access to our premises.

In this regard, I wish to remind you that:

- each NGO may request annual badges for its representatives, up to **three badges per NGO** (except for NGOs whose Headquarters are located in UNESCO House);
- requests for badges shall be sent in written form by the leadership team of the NGO to the Desk for Intergovernmental and Non-Governmental Organizations (ERI/MSP/INO) (UNESCO, 7 Place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07SP, France, email: ngo@unesco.org);
- the concerned representatives will obtain their badges at the relevant on-site service (R.015 Fontenoy) upon presentation of an identity document, a copy of which will be kept on record by UNESCO Security Services.

Feel free to contact the Secretariat at the abovementioned address in case you may need further clarifications.

UNESCO Publications

- Launched in December at UNESCO Headquarters during a high-level panel on “Targeting Heritage: in search of new paradigms – save heritage through dialogue”, the new *Military Manual on Protection of Cultural Property* is intended to be used by all governments to enhance the capacity of their military to address the new challenges of protecting cultural property in times of conflict. This publication is the first-of-its kind training tool published by UNESCO with the support of the International Institute of Humanitarian Law (Sanremo, Italy) and funded by the Republic of Azerbaijan. The Manual is available in English only under [this link](#).
- UNESCO, in collaboration with UN Women, published the *Global Guidance on Addressing School-related Gender-based Violence*, providing key information to governments, policy-makers, teachers, practitioners and civil society who wish to take concrete action against school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV). The publication introduces approaches, methodologies, tools and resources that have shown positive results in preventing and responding to SRGBV, and it is available in English only under [this link](#).

- *Human rights and encryption* is the eighth title in the UNESCO series on Internet Freedom, aiming to explore the changing legal and policy issues of Internet. Launched at the 11th Internet Governance Forum (Guadalajara, Mexico, 6-9 December 2016), the study addresses the relevance of encryption to human rights in the media and communications field and offers policy recommendations for state practice and other stakeholders. Available in English only, you can find this publication under [this link](#).

Finally, I am pleased to announce the admission of the **Saudi Heritage Preservation Society (SHPS)**, an NGO based in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to official partnership with UNESCO (consultative status). By clicking on its name, you will be redirected to its website for more information. I welcome SHPS and I am happy to extend even further our network of partners.

Yours sincerely,



Eric Falt