



**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/NCS/NGO/2013/165

20 December 2013

Dear Partners,

The 37<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference ended on 20 November and today I would like to go over some of its significant events.

**37<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference**

More than 3,000 representatives from 195 Member States and nine Associate Members of UNESCO participated in the 37<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference. As for non-governmental organizations and foundations in official partnership with UNESCO, there were nearly 300 representatives from one hundred NGOs who attended this event, which represents an increase of 20% compared to the previous session of the General Conference in 2011.

The space dedicated to NGOs was a great success. Every day, around 40 NGOs participated in meetings held daily on the work of the Conference and on issues as important as cooperation with National Commissions or the Participation Programme. Thirty NGOs ran a stand and had the opportunity to present their activities. This space was really an important showcase that helped raise awareness of our partnership to participants in the General Conference, but it was also a privileged place for exchanges and interaction between NGOs, which were able to understand the work of other NGOs, learn from each other and, in some cases, to consider new synergies. This experience should definitely be renewed in two year time at the next General Conference.

This year's session of the General Conference took place in the context of major reform aimed at revitalizing UNESCO, making it more relevant, efficient and resilient. The General Conference endorsed the reform programme set by Director-General Irina Bokova, and re-elected her for a second four-year term of office, with a clear mandate to continue the changes initiated under her leadership.

The General Conference has set the direction for UNESCO's work over the next eight years. The new Medium-Term Strategy (2014-2021) ([document 37 C/4](#)), adopted by the Conference, positions UNESCO to play a leadership role in defining the development objectives that will replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the areas of education, science, culture and communication.

Africa and gender equality will continue as the Organization's global priorities over the next eight years. Peace and sustainable development continue as the overarching objectives that will guide all of the Organization's activities. Addressing Youth problems will also stay at the top of UNESCO's agenda.

In terms of our partnership with NGOs, I wish to emphasize that the General Conference welcomed the new mobilization of NGOs under their collective action and encouraged the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee to continue its efforts in the direction of refocusing its action on the Organization's priorities. It also invited the Director-General to continue its policy to promote greater geographical diversity, in cooperation with National Commissions for UNESCO and pursuant to the comprehensive partnership strategy recently approved by the Executive Board. I take this opportunity to invite you to read or (re)read this comprehensive partnership strategy, in particular the part concerning NGOs that you find in [this document](#).

### **Executive Board of UNESCO**

As customary, the Executive Board, in its new composition further to the elections that took place during the General Conference, met on Friday 22 November, and elected its Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and also the composition of its subsidiary bodies. You will find more information [under this link](#).

I am pleased to inform you that Mr Mohamed Sameh Amr, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of the Arab Republic of Egypt, was elected to the Chair of the Executive Board for a two-year mandate. As you know, Egypt was elected to Chair the Committee on Non-Governmental Partners (NGP) for the 2011-2013 biennium. Ambassador Amr was the Chairperson of the Committee on Non-Governmental Partners (NGP) during the 191<sup>st</sup> session of the Executive Board last October and closely followed the work of this Committee throughout.

[Under this link](#), you will find the composition of the NGP Committee for the 2014-2015 biennium. Its new Chairperson is Mr Narayan Gopal Malego, Secretary General of the Nepal National Commission for UNESCO.

Within the framework of the revision of its methods of work, the Executive Board also decided that, during the new biennium, the Committee on Non-Governmental Partners will meet once a year as appropriate.

The next session of the Executive Board is expected to be held from 2 to 15 April 2014. The Bureau of the Executive Board still needs to set the dates of its subsidiary bodies. As soon as a decision is taken on the holding of the Committee on Non-Governmental Partners in the spring session or the fall session of the Executive Board, I shall let you know.

### **29 January 2013 –Launch of the 2013 *Education for All Global Monitoring Report – Teaching and Learning for Development*, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

The Report shows why teaching and learning are pivotal for development in a rapidly changing world. It explains how investing wisely in teachers, and other reforms aimed at strengthening equitable learning, transform the long-term prospects of people and societies.

As in previous years, national launches of the report will take place in several UNESCO Member States, thanks to the collaboration between the team in charge of the Report, Field Offices and National Commissions.

These launches will bring together government leaders, academics, representatives of civil society, NGOs and, given the subject of this year, teachers. As part of a general presentation of the Report and through presentations and discussions, these events are designed to encourage participants to think together about issues specific to teaching and learning and about the importance of quality of education for the development of the country.

I know I can count on your support to make this launch of this report a successful event thus contributing to its promotion.

It will be available at the end of January at the following address:  
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/2013/>

Contact: Ms Katharine Redman ([k.redman@unesco.org](mailto:k.redman@unesco.org))

### **13 February 2014 - World Radio Day**

On 13 February, international broadcasters will broadcast live from UNESCO Headquarters. Through National Commissions, Field Offices and other organizations, UNESCO will coordinate World Radio Day events globally. UNESCO will also provide copyright free articles, audio and video messages from opinion leaders, Celebrities, and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassadors related to radio for use by broadcasters on World Radio Day.

13 February is a day to celebrate radio as a medium; to improve international cooperation between broadcasters; and to encourage major networks and community radio alike to promote access to information, freedom of expression and gender equality over the airwaves.

This year, together with UNESCO, on the occasion of this day, let's celebrate women in radio and those who support them.

UNESCO invites all countries to celebrate World Radio Day by planning activities in partnership with regional, national and international broadcasters, non-governmental organizations, the media and the public. Tell us about your experiences in this area and the activities that your NGO intends to promote as part of this day.

As you will see from [our website](#), NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO are already planning to be associated with that day. I hope that other NGOs in the field of communication will join us to make this day a success.

Contact: Ms Mirta Lourenço ([m.lourenco@unesco.org](mailto:m.lourenco@unesco.org))

**24-28 February 2014 – 7<sup>th</sup> Global Conference International research programme for analyzing hydrological data (FRIEND-Water2014), Hanoi, Vietnam**

This Conference is organized by UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme (IHP) in cooperation with eminent institutes and UNESCO Offices in Jakarta and in Hanoi, under the theme "Hydrology in a Changing World: Environmental and Human Dimensions". The Conference will also discuss topics such as changes in ecological flows and coastal ecohydrology as well as water resources and prospective scenarios.

The FRIEND programme (Flow Regimes from International Experimental and Network Data) is an international research programme that helps setting up regional networks for analyzing hydrological data.

I very much hope some of you, representatives of NGOs whose areas of expertise are related to freshwater, will attend this conference.

You will find more information on the UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme [under this link](#) and on the FRIEND programme [under this one](#):  
Contact: Mr Siegfried Demuth (s.demuth@unesco.org)

**UNESCO Publications**

- The *Dictionnaire universel des Créatrices* was launched at UNESCO Headquarters on 22 November. This dictionary is the result of several years of painstaking work conducted by a team of over 1,600 authors, and contains articles on 12,000 creative women worldwide, in all spheres of activity. It is available in French in bookstores.
- The publication *Underground sociabilities: identity, culture and resistance in Rio de Janeiro's favelas* is carried out by the London School of Economics in partnership with the UNESCO Office in Brazil. This book studies the ways of sociability that remain invisible and underground within conventional societies. It is available in English and Portuguese [under this link](#).
- The publication *Strengthening the Governance of Culture to Unlock Development Opportunities – Results of the UNESCO/UE Expert Facility Project* is published in Open Access. It provides evidence of the positive effects of participatory engagement of the culture sector, and how governments can work together to unlock the potential of cultural industries for employment, social inclusion and poverty reduction, through a better coordination of political and professional cultural stakeholders. You can download it [under this link](#).

## 2014 Annual badges

I would like to remind you that representatives of NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO, whose duties require frequent visits to UNESCO, can have annual badges to facilitate their access to our premises. Thus, the leadership team of an NGO in official partnership with UNESCO may ask for annual badges for its representatives, up to five badges per NGO (except for NGOs whose headquarters are located in UNESCO House). Feel free to send your requests for badges to the Section for NGOs (UNESCO, 7 Place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07SP, France, fax: +33 1 45 68 56 43, email: ngo@unesco.org).

\* \* \*

Within the framework of the *Directives concerning UNESCO's relations with foundations and similar institutions*, I am pleased to inform you that the Director-General renewed official relations, for a further period of six years (until 2018), with the following foundations whose term had expired:

- World Anti-Doping Agency;
- South Asia Foundation;
- Goi Peace Foundation;
- Global Foundation for Democracy and Development.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Eric Falt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Eric Falt