1. Promoting and protecting UNESCO’s universal values

Mutual understanding

1. How does UNESCO plan to contribute to the maintenance of world peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations within its fields of competence, in an international context where conflicts are decreasingly based on interstate disputes and increasingly rooted on internal strife arising from ethnic, religious and cultural differences? (Mexico)

2. How can we use the 70th anniversary of UNESCO as an opportunity to rejuvenate it as an intellectual and innovative Organization? (Oman)

3. The definition of universal values varies in different parts of the world. UNESCO’s Constitution, signed in London on 16 November 1945, marking its 70th anniversary this year, describes the Organization’s universal values, including peace, human dignity, freedom, equality, respect for human beings, equal access to education and knowledge of each other’s customs. UNESCO, which was created to ensure all these values, makes no distinction of race and defends peace founded upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of humankind. In view of the dramatic events that have taken place recently in France and their consequences in other parts of the world, can we assert that the goals set by UNESCO’s founders have really been achieved? (Gabon)

4. Stéphane Hessel, before passing, wrote the tract “Time for Outrage!” What would his reaction have been in response to the recent events? (Gabon)

5. Do the mechanisms set up by Member States in the context of international exchange and cooperation fulfil their role? (Gabon)

6. The first step would be to assess the results and impact of UNESCO’s activities in the field of the culture of peace, as well as the awareness and accountability of Member States, and to reflect on the Organization’s ability to promote its role in fostering these universal values and their effective integration into the national policies of Member States. Considering the rise in fundamentalism, racism, xenophobia and terrorism, it would involve reflecting on the possible dangers that threaten the culture of peace, the concept of which should be revisited and extended to the understanding of these real threats. (Morocco)
7. Recent events in the news have shown the need to start such a debate and formulate an approach with the main objective being not only individual expression but also how to approach "living together", respecting each other’s differences, no matter what they may be. Is it not UNESCO’s responsibility to respond constructively to this debate? (Morocco)

8. The world is facing increasingly critical global challenges and risks. As an institution that has chosen the dual fundamental programme objectives of peace and sustainable development, and in the current context of an increasing number of hotbeds of unrest owing to acts of religious extremism and cultural antagonism, there are grounds for asking where the spiritual conscience of humanity is heading and what resources our Organization has for the mobilization of intellectual values capable of influencing minds to foster the emergence of a more positive global ethic. We would like to use as a reference the concept of a new humanism, which the Director-General holds dear and which should be developed and adopted to play a key role in achieving UNESCO's founding mission. (Angola)

9. What are the respective roles of the Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST) and the International Coalition of Cities against Racism (ICCAR) in this regard, and what links will be established between the MOST Programme and the activities/research carried out by the cities against racism? (Canada)

Gender equality

10. Women constitute more than half of the population in the Arab region, and despite the considerable efforts that have been made in the region, obstacles to gender equality persist, particularly in marginalized areas. How can UNESCO foster leadership among women for them to be independent and autonomous agents of change? (Oman)

11. Without minimizing the commendable efforts of the Secretariat in matters of gender equality promotion, it is nonetheless clear that this UNESCO priority has lacked visibility in recent years. We would therefore like to ask the Director-General what action she plans to take to address this lack of visibility and the need to strengthen the capacity of the Division for Gender Equality. (Morocco)

Priority Africa

12. Taking into account the fundamental principles of sustainable development and considering essentially the emerging issues and realities on the ground, across Africa, and more particularly in terms of poverty reduction and the creation of stable jobs for a large majority of women and young people, how could UNESCO coordinate efforts with the African Union to assist Member States in the formulation and implementation of policies aiming to strengthen entrepreneurial and business capacities in the informal sector, including the improvement of productivity, in a sustainable manner? (Angola)

Freedom of expression and press freedom

13. Freedom of expression and opinion is one of the cornerstones of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. For this reason, it is central to the mandate of our Organization. Nevertheless, 2014 and early 2015 have been a sombre period for journalists and media worldwide. As UNESCO is responsible for leading the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, could the Director-General provide us with information concerning the overall status of implementation of the Plan of Action? What progress has been made to protect journalists and ensure a free, pluralistic and independent press? (Yemen)
14. In the light of the recent events, some activities in UNESCO’s mandate have gained a new momentum. Austria welcomed the immediate reaction of the Director-General by organizing a day of reflection and debate on “Journalism after Charlie”, freedom of expression and intercultural dialogue. The issue of radicalization, as we have painfully learnt, is of utmost importance and urgently needs to be addressed by all relevant actors, including UNESCO. We believe that more emphasis should be given to the work in the fields of citizenship and peace education, intercultural dialogue, social inclusion and the promotion of press freedom. Could you please share with us what events and initiatives UNESCO plans in these fields? (Austria)

15. In the aftermath of the killings that took place in Paris recently, UNESCO organized a one-day debate. During this day it was reaffirmed by you, Madam Director-General, that freedom of expression and the safety of journalists stand at the heart of the mandate and action of UNESCO. We encourage you to inform all Member States about the concrete steps that UNESCO will undertake as a follow-up of this day of debates. The Netherlands attaches great importance to freedom of expression, online and offline, and believes that UNESCO should become more visible as the coordinating United Nations agency for the promotion of this specific human right. One of the key existing structures for reaching towards this objective of UNESCO’s core mandate is the IPDC; consequently a sustainable and efficient execution of this programme is crucial. Madam Director-General, you also highlighted the vital importance of the United Nations Action Plan for the Safety of Journalists on this day. My government would welcome an analytical update on the status of the implementation of this plan. You can count on our support. (The Netherlands)

16. Recent acts of violent extremism in Paris and around the world have highlighted the relevance and importance of UNESCO’s mandate in promoting and protecting freedom of the press and freedom of expression as well as fostering dialogue between cultures and peoples. UNESCO showed prompt action and mobilized quickly after the attacks in Paris in standing up for these core values.

- Looking ahead, what will UNESCO do to sustain the momentum and take one step forward in reinforcing its work and leading role in the United Nations system on these issues? (Sweden)

- What needs to be done in order to strengthen the coordinating role of UNESCO in the implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity? (Sweden)

- How is the Director-General foreseeing the future management of the CI Sector now that the biennium is coming to an end? (Sweden)

17. For several years, the Organization has been discussing the ethical implications of new technologies, particularly with regard to the use of the Internet. The General Conference adopted 37 C/Resolution 52 on the matter; however, some new aspects of cyberspace and the Internet require us to look carefully at this important issue. Indeed, in the current context and given the growing role of the Internet in spreading extremist propaganda that leads to indoctrination and regimentation of youth around the world, not to mention the illicit sale of cultural property, the invasion of privacy and harassment of young students, what specific action could UNESCO take to continue its work in this field, to define, on the basis of democratic principles and the rule of law, ethical guidelines relating to Internet freedom, while taking into account the new realities? (Morocco)
18. UNESCO should, unambiguously, continue to position itself in favour of the freedom of expression and the protection of journalists. The Organization has a moral duty, however, to fight against all forms of incitement to hatred, violence and disrespect of others. (Morocco)

19. In response to the recent attack on Charlie Hebdo and in support of its mandate to promote freedom of expression and journalist safety, UNESCO had a strong, highly-visible presence, from both the Secretariat and Permanent Delegations, at the unity rally in Paris on January 11 and also organized the “Journalism after Charlie” colloquium on January 14. UNESCO has also taken a lead role in combating impunity for crimes against journalists, particularly in the inaugural commemoration of the International Day to End Impunity on November 2, 2014. How does UNESCO plan to build on these activities to reinforce its unique mandate to support the free flow of ideas and information/media freedom and its lead role on the United Nations Plan of Action for the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity? Specifically, how will UNESCO ensure consistent and sustained policy support on these themes at all levels within the Organization and on a wider basis within the United Nations system? (United States of America)

20. The United Kingdom highly values the work undertaken by UNESCO in the field of freedom of expression as do many other Member States. However the response rate by Member States to enquiries relating to the safety of journalists is disappointing. What steps can UNESCO take to improve this response rate? (United Kingdom)

21. The recent scourge of violence across the globe has painfully brought home the need for promoting and protecting the founding principles of UNESCO, especially that peace must be founded upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind. Therefore, promoting pluralism, freedom of expression and tolerance by UNESCO assumes extreme importance. In this context, the Director-General may please indicate her vision for reinvigorating anew the efforts towards intercultural dialogue and the advancement of “the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples”, while ensuring that freedom of expression is also preserved? (India)

22. With regard to a series of attacks against journalists working in the conflict zones, could the Director-General provide a description of UNESCO’s activities in the field of the protection of journalists based on 29 C/Resolution 29 adopted by the General Conference in 1997? (Japan)
2. **UNESCO’s leadership in the field of sciences**

**General**

23. We are of the view that UNESCO has comparative advantage among other international organizations in such areas as promotion of biosphere preservation, bioethical international dialogue, coordination of ocean science programmes and promotion of water science cooperation, and that it should concentrate its resources in these areas. Is there any other area where UNESCO has a potential comparative advantage? (Japan)

24. Given the self-governing nature of the scientific societies, it is important for UNESCO to cooperate closely with them in order to exercise leadership in the field of science. In this regard, what is the Director-General’s strategy to make the most of the existing network with international scientific associations for the leadership of UNESCO in the field of sciences? (Japan)

25. How does UNESCO intend to link the work and mandate of its scientific programmes and committees (both in natural and social and human sciences) to the United Nations sustainable development objectives (SDGs) and their respective targets under UNESCO’s mandate? Are coordinated efforts put in place to ensure UNESCO’s contributions, including through a strengthened collaboration between the two science sectors? (Canada)

**Scientific Advisory Board (SAB)**

26. We note with satisfaction that the United Nations Secretary-General’s Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) will have its secretariat being hosted by UNESCO. How far has this been realized and has this direct cooperation between the Science Sector and the SAB resulted in some concrete SC programmes – IHP, IOC, MAB and MOST – being enhanced, financially speaking, through this level of cooperation? If not, will these programmes find meaningful inclusion in some aspects of the post-2015 development agenda? (Malaysia)

27. Progress in science has always been considered to be an important component for our sustainable societies. Indeed, our ongoing programmes – IHP, IOC, MAB and MOST – have been supported all along by our Member States so that their presence in the Member States will make a meaningful difference in their societies. Now that the United Nations Secretary-General’s Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) is being hosted in UNESCO, will there be some direct corresponding financial support from the United Nations itself for these credible UNESCO programmes? (Malaysia)

28. In 2013, the United Nations Secretary-General’s Scientific Advisory Committee was established to strengthen the interface between science, policy and society, particularly in areas relevant to sustainable development. The Committee met twice in 2014. How is the work of the Committee advancing? How has it contributed to the integration of scientific perspectives in the planning of the post-2015 international development agenda? What have been the Committee’s key recommendations and influences on UNESCO’s work in the field of sciences? (Canada)
International Oceanographic Commission (IOC)

29. The IOC was ranked as a high priority by UNESCO Member States during the ranking exercise of 2013. This implied that the IOC should have received 86% of the draft fully-funded $653 million 37 C/5. However, the IOC received an allocation of only 72% of the draft 37 C/5, entailing it to be only of medium priority. Both the Director-General and the BSP have acknowledged this as an unfortunate error, and we are glad that the Secretariat has explained that it is committed to rectifying it. Could the Director-General please give her evaluation on where this issue stands now, both for the ongoing and next biennium? (Norway)

30. In view of the imminent arrival of the new Executive Secretary of the IOC, can the Director-General reassure Member States that the functional autonomy of the IOC is being fully respected? (United Kingdom)

31. The United Kingdom notes with concern that the budget allocated to the IOC in the expenditure plans for the current biennium does not correspond to the high budgetary priority agreed for the IOC by the Executive Board at its 5th Special Session in 2013, at a cost to the IOC of approximately $1.7 million. Can the Director-General assure Member States that this situation will be rectified when she presents the budget allocation proposal to the forthcoming Executive Board for the next Programme and Budget (38 C/5)? (United Kingdom)

32. The United States is a strong supporter of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and, together with many other Member States, believes that the IOC’s work is very important to UNESCO. Unfortunately, the IOC did not receive at least 80% of its funding during the last budget cycle. You and the UNESCO Bureau of Strategic Planning have previously stated that you are committed to fixing this error moving forward. Can you please comment on what you and the Secretariat are doing to ensure this mistake is rectified? (United States of America)

33. It is heartening to note that oceans figure as a stand-alone goal in the Sustainable Development Goals as they stand right now. This provides an invaluable opportunity for UNESCO to lend its intellectual acumen and international experience and perspective through the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) – the only competent organization for marine science within the United Nations system. For IOC to deliver on that promise, UNESCO will need to ensure that IOC is granted functional autonomy that it had been guaranteed at its creation, which in turn depends on the requisite financial support. It is disquieting to see, however, that IOC finds itself in a situation today where the ability of IOC to position and preserve UNESCO’s leading role in marine sciences is being severely curtailed.

As per the prioritization exercise carried out by Member States, IOC was ranked as a high priority by UNESCO Member States during the ranking exercise of 2013. This implied that the IOC should have received 86% of the draft fully-funded $653 million 37 C/5. However, the IOC received an allocation of only 72% of the draft 37 C/5, entailing it to be only of medium priority. We would, therefore, like to know what steps are envisaged to guarantee that IOC enjoys the functional (and associated financial) autonomy that it requires to help UNESCO play a leading role in the oceans, and sciences? (India)
Science policy and science education

34. UNESCO science report of 2010 already noted that science and technology policies and strategies were beginning to emerge in the Arab region. Since the 2015 science report will be issued in November of this year, could you share with us some preliminary conclusions on the status of sciences in the Arab region and how it evolved since 2010? (Oman)

35. According to the UNESCO 2009 publication *Current challenges in Basic Science Education* “whilst science has come to have an important place in basic education in many parts of the world, sometimes it is almost non-existent in primary education. It is essential, therefore, to establish the place of science for all in elementary or primary education and thus meet the challenge of quality science education for all”. How is UNESCO involved, in terms of science curricula development, to tackle this issue, particularly in regions that have limited resources? And how can UNESCO further develop online tools and resources for science education? (Oman)

36. Over the years, UNESCO has played an invaluable leadership role in the sciences, gathering in the process many distinctions and widespread respect. In order to ensure that UNESCO builds on its accomplishments and preserves its preeminent role, it has to be deeply involved with the sustainable development agenda and the goals on sciences therein. (India)

37. We welcome our involvement in the awarding of the L’ORÉAL-UNESCO Prize “For Women in Science” to women researchers from all over the world, including Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). We nevertheless feel that, in the face of the current financial crisis, our Organization is giving up on the increasing number of women with the will to enter the field of science. Could UNESCO turn more often to private partners to voluntarily support more women to enter the field of science? (Gabon)

38. On the occasion of International Year of Crystallography, leading scientists, both men and women, were heard. Africa finds that in spite of considerable and commendable efforts, the gap continues to grow between scientists from the North and those from the South. Through tripartite agreements, could UNESCO do more to help fill this gap? (Gabon)

39. Education in science and new technologies should begin very early, yet this is unfortunately not the case in countries like Gabon, among others. Could UNESCO hold a forum, on a regular basis, to address this critical issue? In addition, this would restore UNESCO to its central place in the debate. (Gabon)

40. How could UNESCO improve the image of science subjects and attract students’ interest in primary schools? What action could be undertaken for gender equality in science? (Morocco)

41. Where does UNESCO stand on the issue of the “science policy interface”? i.e. what are its key planned contributions and deliverables in this field? (Canada)

42. Access to energy services in developing countries is essential for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, around 1.8 billion people – almost a quarter of the world’s population – do not have access to basic electrical services. In rural areas in some countries this can affect up to 85% of the population. In...
the United Nations Decade on Sustainable Energy for All (2014-2024), in which 2015 has been declared International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies, what initiatives have been taken by UNESCO so that a greater number of children in developing countries may benefit from a little more light to improve their learning conditions and access to information and communication technologies (ICTs)? (Togo)

43. What has been accomplished by the Organization to strengthen the dialogue between indigenous and scientific knowledge-holders so as to build inclusive, equitable and sustainable societies? (Togo)

COP21

44. What will be UNESCO’s leading contribution to addressing climate change in light of the ongoing multilateral negotiations and long-term objectives of the COP21 to be held in December in Paris, in particular on the need to modify consumption patterns through education and production patterns through the dissemination of science and scientific knowledge? (Mexico)

45. In December 2015, a world conference on climate change will be held in Paris. What activities are planned by UNESCO to participate in the preparation and holding of the conference? (Togo)
3. Budget and reform matters

Budget

46. It is clear – as it was in the previous biennium (2012-2013) – that the US $507 million expenditure plan must still be a constant challenge in how to ensure that the staff at Headquarters and the field network are to implement approved programmes. In most cases, programmes are associated with staff inputs and when such inputs become over-stretched through retirement and/or redeployment, it becomes apparent that the delivery of the programmes could well be affected. Taking into account inflationary and other obligatory cost increases, will it be fair to assume that the Director-General will be able to assure the full delivery of the 2014-2015 programme and budget at the year-end? If not, is there a need to resuscitate the emergency programme of assistance in support of our Regular Programme activities? (Malaysia)

47. Concerning the new budget, can you share any initial information with us on how will your team approach the issue of the incompressible costs? This issue seems central as it should be discussed before we talk about prioritizing the work of the Organization under the new budget. (Austria)

48. What lessons did UNESCO learn from the financial crisis? (Oman)

49. With regard to the preparation of the next budget, it is our view that a precise list of incompressible or indispensable costs for all major programmes should be prepared on time. This is in particular important for the culture conventions and the IOC. We would appreciate if these figures could already be presented during the information meeting and be discussed under item 3. (Germany)

50. At the 195th session of the Executive Board there were in-depth discussions on the financial situation in general and the Director-General’s preliminary proposal on the budget level for the 38 C/5, the ZNG+ budget proposal in particular. It is clear that Member States are aware of the seriousness of the situation but while some might be ready to accept this compromise, others are still hesitating due to lack of information on what has been done to increase efficiency and reduce costs. Also many Member States suffer under severe financial restrictions and need therefore strong arguments to present for governments before being able to accept an increased budget ceiling for UNESCO. How are the Director-General and the Secretariat planning to help in providing governments with these arguments? (Sweden)

51. What are the foreseen medium-term financial implications (i.e. structural deficit) of the preparation of the next budget on the basis of a ZNG or a ZNG Plus, taking into account the obligations imposed on the Secretariat of absorbing, at the same time: (i) the re-costing of the budget base (Parts I-IV), (ii) the expected inflation, (iii) the rising staff costs, (iv) the additional savings requested by the Executive Board and, (v) the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda? (Mexico)

52. With regard to improving the format of the EX/4 document, we would like to know where we are with the C/5 content and programmatic priorities survey of Member States. (Angola)

53. At the last session of the Executive Board, the majority of Member States expressed a preference for the zero nominal growth plus (ZNG+) budget scenario. What steps have been taken to date by the Secretariat to make this wish a reality? (Togo)
Extrabudgetary

54. Several special accounts exist at UNESCO: some have been abolished and others remain, some of which are largely operational and others less so. Could the Director-General provide a list of the special accounts and their financial status? (Yemen)

55. Member States have encouraged the Secretariat to give a high priority to the work of mobilizing extrabudgetary funds. There has also been a strong emphasis on the need for result-based reporting of these funds, aligned with the work on improving the result-based reporting of UNESCO’s activities as a whole. Yet, it seems that UNESCO’s internal regulations/practices complicate the donors’ ever-growing request for result-based extrabudgetary agreements and reporting, particularly when it comes to the so-called “special accounts”. Similarly, the internal process for negotiating and signing extrabudgetary agreements seems to be quite challenging. Can the Director-General explain how the Secretariat’s work to mobilize extrabudgetary resources is stimulated, and elaborate on why in particular UNESCO’s financial reporting seems not to be flexible enough to respond to the donors result-based programme cooperation agreements, even though donors are paying overheads that should cover, inter alia, the cost of “customized” financial reporting? (Norway)

56. Member States and the Secretariat agree upon giving high priority to the work of mobilizing extrabudgetary funding. We also agree on the need for result-based reporting on these extrabudgetary funds. Unfortunately UNESCO’s internal routines complicate the work and the internal regulations and practices become an obstacle for such reporting, especially when it comes to the so called “special accounts”. The question is what can be done to facilitate the negotiations between donors and UNESCO and to increase the flexibility in responding to the donors’ legitimate demands on results reporting? (Sweden)

57. Could the Director-General provide the perspective of strengthening resources for UNESCO’s flagship projects including the World Heritage Convention? (Japan)

58. Both the Director-General and the Executive Board have been fully involved in finalizing the Action Plan which will no doubt make a major contribution to cementing intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace, as observed by the Executive Board at its 194th session. In encouraging Member States and all other partners in contributing effectively to the goals of the Decade, it is clear that resort to the use of extrabudgetary funds would be required for this purpose. To this end, we should appreciate having some information whether the search for the mobilization of extrabudgetary funds has been launched, and whether this is getting a positive response. (Malaysia)

59. In document 37 C/5, some programmes depend only on extrabudgetary funds, requiring a greater commitment from partners. The Creative Cities Network met in September 2014 and the designation of 25 new cities was announced by the Director-General. What resources are available to the Creative Cities Network programme and what are the prospects in terms of extrabudgetary funding for this programme? (Canada)
Reform and staff

60. The General Conference has expressed its wish to improve the work of UNESCO’s three constitutional bodies: the General Conference, the Executive Board and the Secretariat. We note that the reform is still limited to the Secretariat. Is there a collective will for a comprehensive reform of the three bodies to enable them to address the current requirements and the financial situation of the Organization? (Yemen)

61. The Director-General informed the Member States that the reform was not over and said that measures concerning Executive Officers (EO) and Administrative Officers (AO) would be taken at the end of December 2014. What progress has been made in that connection and with regard to the reform as a whole? (Yemen)

62. The reform has affected almost all programme sectors and some units are now in a precarious situation. However, other services have not been affected, such as the Bureau of Strategic Planning (BSP), which should maintain only its initial purpose of strategic planning and leave programme implementation to the sectors concerned. Does the Director-General not wish to streamline the Organization by redeploying some BSP staff members to priority programmes with very limited human resources? (Yemen)

63. One of the consequences of the reform was the abolition of the Section of National Commissions and Related Networks (ERI/NCS/NAC). The Director-General has noted repeatedly and rightly the importance of the unique network of National Commissions for UNESCO, as well as that of the network of more than 5,000 UNESCO Clubs. Is there currently a unit qualified to coordinate:
   - the activities of the network of National Commissions;
   - the network of young volunteers in the UNESCO Clubs movement;
   - the national, regional and world federations of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations? (Yemen)

64. Following the abolition of the Section of National Commissions and Related Networks, the initiative of the National Commissions on Euro-Arab Dialogue “floated” from one unit to another and its implementation has been suspended for almost a year now, although extrabudgetary funds were allocated to it. Why has the implementation of an initiative labelled by UNESCO as a flagship project been suspended or delayed? (Yemen)

65. We thank the Director-General for all the reforms undertaken despite the Organization’s tight budget. The expertise in UNESCO’s fields of competence has been reduced and not all of its programmes will have been implemented. What impact will this have on the Organization’s credibility in the eyes of young people worldwide, who are increasing in number and who expect much from international organizations in general and UNESCO in particular? (Gabon)

66. At what point may we consider that the process for appointments to senior posts and the restructuring of the Secretariat is complete and how does the Director-General intend to deal with the difficulties encountered by UNESCO’s secretariats of the cultural conventions? (Algeria)
67. Based on experience, especially during the recent past and resulting directly from the financial crisis in the Organization, can the Director General identify clear areas where the financial difficulties of the Organization have led to staff insufficiencies? How does the Director-General intend to overcome this and thus avoid permanent distortion and damage to the Organization’s efficiency, effectiveness, overall stature and relevance? (Nigeria)

68. In July 2014, the Director-General announced the Secretariat has adopted an internal Action Plan to continue the reform process, focusing on three main areas: strengthening the monitoring and evaluation functions to enhance programme delivery, increasing accountability; and completing the reform of administrative offices. We would appreciate an update on the implementation of these reforms in the three areas. (United States of America)

69. What is UNESCO’s long-term strategy on human resources management if the Secretariat has to face a constrained staff base compared with previous biennia, higher staff costs at the present time and increasing future staff financial liabilities? (Mexico)

70. What is the current status of redeployment, including vacancy rates in the field posts? (Japan)

71. Could you give an actual overview on the ongoing implementation of the reform of the network of field offices? How far can we push in your view the efforts to further decentralize and regionalize the network (i.e. the establishment of regional offices)? (Germany)

72. The situation of field offices – whether national, cluster or regional – does not seem to meet the real needs of Member States nor the financial situation of the Organization. Is there a more realistic vision of UNESCO’s field action to meet current needs? (Yemen)

73. The Director-General has announced that efforts will be made to reduce the number of high-level staff missions to the field, particularly when the presence of a UNESCO field office is assured. What efforts have been made in this respect over the past six months? (Yemen)

74. Social inclusion and intercultural dialogue are two priorities of document 37 C/5. How will the reform of the Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS) help UNESCO to better achieve the established objectives? (Canada)
4. Miscellaneous

Post-2015 Agenda

75. The negotiations for the Post 2015 Agenda enter into the final and decisive phase. The United Nations General Assembly has described the report of the OWG on the SDGs as the “main basis for negotiations”. In which areas and chapters of the report do you still see from a UNESCO perspective the need for adjustments and corrections? (Germany)

76. At its 195th session, the Preparatory Group of the Executive Board noted *inter alia* the need to include rigorously the three priorities of UNESCO within the post-2015 development agenda. These priorities were information and communication technologies (ICTs), science and science policy, and culture. With the conclusion of the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development held in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, will there not be sufficient material to strengthen UNESCO’s efforts in education as well for inclusion in discussions at the World Education Forum to be held in the Republic of Korea and at the United Nations General Assembly? In this regard, a brief report on the progress being achieved to date in the preparations for UNESCO’s contributions to the post-2015 development agenda is, I believe, to be quite appropriate. (Malaysia)

77. Recent events in the host country would seem to support the view that the Action Plan for the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures needs to find a firm entry point in the ongoing discussions at the United Nations as issues of faiths, secularism, tolerance and respect for civil liberties take on a new dynamics as ever before. The important role of culture as an enabler and driver of sustainable development has been acknowledged in most quarters but it seems to be sidelined insofar as inclusion in the post-2015 development agenda is concerned. Therefore, how far has agreement been reached by both UNESCO and the United Nations on the inclusion of culture in the post-2015 development agenda? (Malaysia)

78. Several countries, particularly least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS) have encountered difficulties in achieving the education for all (EFA) goals. This will pose challenges for the implementation of the international education agenda beyond 2015. What support has the Organization given to address this situation and thus enable these countries to achieve the EFA goals and those of the agenda for education beyond 2015? (Yemen)

79. At its 194th session, the Executive Board invited the Director-General to prepare a global plan promoting South-South and North-South cooperation in the field of education. What progress has been made to strengthen this cooperation? (Yemen)

80. The imminent commencement of the direct activities of the United Nations Post-2015 Development Plan brings with it responsibilities that will make undoubted demands on UNESCO, especially on its newly-established outreach structures in all regions of the world. Can the Director-General give us a clear and comprehensive overview of the status of the decentralization process, with clear indications of expected datelines for completion for all the regions? (Nigeria)

81. Several regional preparatory conferences have taken place on education post-2015 and in preparation for the World Education Forum to be held in Korea in May 2015. Can the Director-General update us on the trends and emerging issues from these conferences, especially, as it relates to the Draft Framework for Action? (Nigeria)
82. What place is reserved for technical and vocational education and training (TVET), which is important to Chad, in the post-2015 development agenda? (Chad)

83. 2015 will be a decisive year for the Education Sector. The World Education Forum in Incheon in May and the adoption of universal sustainable development goals at the General Assembly in New York in September will lay the foundations for the work within the Education Sector in UNESCO for the next decennia. Thus, it is important that this work is given the highest possible priority within UNESCO. What are the lessons learned from being a “lead coordinator” since 2000 and how will UNESCO take this forward ensuring necessary capacity to do the work? (Norway)

84. What is the Director-General’s perspective of developing the post-2015 education agenda, following the Synthesis Report on the Post-2015 Agenda by the Secretary-General of the United Nations? (Japan)

85. Does the Director-General consider that the results recorded so far or anticipated in the context of the post-2015 development agenda, including in the field of science, are well-suited to the Organization’s mandate, and how can it achieve the objectives in the context of UNESCO’s budgetary and financial difficulties? (Algeria)

86. To what extent will the sustainable development goals (SDG), which will be adopted in September 2015, influence document 38 C/5? Will it be necessary to review specific expected results, define new performance indicators or distribute resources differently? (Canada)

Cooperation with the United Nations system

87. The Executive Board has always found it necessary to alert the Secretariat on the need to avoid overlapping of responsibilities that may properly belong to other bodies of the United Nations system. At the level of the meeting of heads of agencies of the United Nations, is there a system or mechanism devoted to dealing with the question of overlapping between responsibilities of the different organizations of the system? If yes, can the Director-General tell us how it works and to what extent it has been successful in resolving such problems? If not, how can such a mechanism be established at the level of meetings of the heads of agencies? (Nigeria)

88. Member States often need the collaboration of many international agencies for the revitalisation of an economic sector or branch. For example, in improving the effective application of science and technology for sustainable development, developing countries require inputs from UNESCO and other agencies (such as UNCTAD, UNIDO, FAO, and WIPO). This was a key rationale for the initiation of the “One UN” programme in selected pilot countries. What lessons were learnt from the pilot implementation and what actions have been taken to facilitate inter-agency cooperation at the national level? What measures are being taken within UNESCO for the promotion of intersectoral operational programmes? (Nigeria)

89. Nigeria commends the Director-General and the Secretariat for various actions taken by the Organization in the face of the Ebola virus disease, especially in West Africa. We warmly welcomed the interactive meetings with experts and the strategy paper on UNESCO’s response to Ebola. (Nigeria)

90. Could the Director-General inform us on key achievements and challenges encountered by UNESCO on the subject? What has been the experience in terms of collaboration with other United Nations agencies and partners in the field? (Nigeria)
Programme priorities

91. Following the prioritization exercise undertaken at the 5th Special Session of the Executive Board in 2013, what advice would the Director-General find useful to receive from Member States on prioritizing activities of non-programme sectors. (United Kingdom)

Culture (CLT)

92. UNESCO has established a work plan and opened a special account for the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures. Is the Director-General in a position to provide us with an update of the implementation of this plan and the financial status of the fund? (Yemen)

93. UNESCO currently has a considerable number of international conventions in the field of culture, which constitute a significant legislative arsenal. To what extent could the coordination of these conventions be harmonized while ensuring the viability of each convention? (Yemen)

94. Bearing in mind the tragically difficult situation on the ground as well as all relevant Executive Board decisions, could the Director-General elaborate on what concrete measures UNESCO is currently capable of taking to protect the values and interests that fall under its remit in Iraq and Syria? Specifically, what steps have been taken so far to implement 195 EX/Decision 31? (Czech Republic)

Communication and Information (CI)

95. We very much appreciate the work done by UNESCO, and the CI Sector in particular, in seeking cooperation and synergies with other relevant intergovernmental agencies in the field of Internet as well as in preparation of the Internet-related issues study. As for the current processes within UNESCO, what will be the relation between the outcome document of the upcoming UNESCO conference "CONNECTing the DOTS: Options for Future Action" and a document on the draft study to be presented to the 196th session of the Executive Board in spring? When will a draft of such an outcome document be made available to permanent delegations? (Czech Republic)

Education (ED)

96. At its 194th session, the Executive Board in examining document 194 EX/5 Part 1 (B) “Sharing of good practices in education” requested inter alia the Director-General to formulate a strategy whereby the exchange of good practices in education could be encouraged for South-South and North-South-South cooperation. We are aware of the fact that the Secretariat is to report at the forthcoming session of the Executive Board a specific progress report on this issue but we should like to be apprized at this stage whether the UNESCO category I institutions – in particular the IBE and the IIEP – will also be fully involved in this excellent initiative as well? We believe our own educational institutions will benefit from the dissemination and exchange of information on good practices in education. (Malaysia)

97. The Director-General has confirmed in many of her speeches the importance of cooperation with parliamentarians. The Executive Board, at its last session, invited the Secretariat to strengthen its partnership with parliamentarians. Could the Director-General inform us about the measures taken in this regard? Are the four regional parliamentary fora for education, the network of parliamentary focal points for UNESCO
and the cooperation agreements with parliamentary institutions still operational? (Yemen)

**Headquarters Building**

98. Member States were informed at the 195th session of the Executive Board (document 195 EX/22) about resumption of discussions with UNEP, which was analysing its plans to move into UNESCO premises in view of new rental scales. What progress has been made in these discussions since the last Executive Board meeting? (Czech Republic)

99. The UNESCO Headquarters buildings are deteriorating significantly, in particular the entrance to the Miollis building. The Executive Board invited the Director-General to contact Member States, particularly donor countries, to finance reparation work. What measures have been taken? In order that we might thank them, which Member States have contributed? (Yemen)

100. The Executive Board has expressed its satisfaction with regard to the audit report and invited the Director-General to strengthen UNESCO’s cooperation with the External Auditor. What measures have been taken in that regard and what progress has been achieved in the implementation of the audit recommendations? (Yemen)