The Assistant Director-General
for External Relations and Public Information

To Secretaries-General
of National Commissions
for UNESCO

31 August 2017

Ref. : ERI/MSP/2017/29

Sir/Madam,

After the customary summer break, we are preparing a number of important events and activities.

Regarding the 202nd session of the Executive Board, it will take place as you know from 4 to 18 October. The provisional agenda and timetable of the work of this session will be available online soon. Please note also that, the Committee on Non-Governmental Partners (NGP) will meet on Friday 6 October, in Room XI. Composed of its 23 Member States, 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. It will also consider the NGOs’ collective work coordinated by the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you on 6 October during the NGP Committee meeting so that we pursue the dialogue between Member States, NGOs and the Secretariat. Please refer to documents 202 EX/37, 202 EX/37.INF and 202 EX/37.INF.2 which will become available soon online. For more information, consult the dedicated section of our website on the Executive Board in general: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/executive-board/.

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

Just two weeks after the Executive Board, the 39th session of General Conference will take place at UNESCO Headquarters from 30 October to 14 November. Allow me to remind you, in this connection, that the 4th Inter-regional Meeting of the National Commissions will take place on Friday 27 October 2017 at UNESCO Headquarters on the sideline of the General Conference.

We will soon launch a consultation with you on the discussion topics for the meeting. A draft programme of the meeting to be prepared based on the result of the online consultation, as our established practice, will be sent to you in due course. We should be grateful if you would already confirm your participation to natcom@unesco.org. I look forward to seeing many of you on that occasion of dialogue between National Commissions and the Secretariat, including with Field Offices.
As usual, I am pleased to share with you this month’s Education Monthly Digest, under this link. The Digest is also available in French and Spanish.

Contact: edknowledge@unesco.org

18 - 20 September 2017 – 2nd World Open Educational Resources (OER) Congress, Ljubljana, Slovenia

UNESCO and the Government of Slovenia, in cooperation with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), and with support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, are organizing the 2nd World Open Educational Resources (OER) Congress.

The Congress will bring together Ministers of Education, decision-makers responsible for human resources development, senior policy makers, expert practitioners, researchers and other relevant stakeholders, with a view to examining the ways for meeting the challenges of mainstreaming OER practices into education systems worldwide, among others.

I encourage you to find out more about this Congress via its homepage: http://www.oercongress.org/.

Contact: Ms Annapaola Coppola (ap.coppola@unesco.org)

5 October 2017 – World Teachers’ Day

As you know, World Teachers’ Day is celebrated annually on 5 October since 1994 to commemorate the anniversary of the signing of the 1966 UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers. The theme of its 2017 edition is “Teaching in Freedom, Empowering Teachers”. It echoes the theme of 2015 that followed the adoption of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs) in September 2015 when teacher empowerment was reaffirmed as a top priority in all education and development strategies.

On World Teachers’ Day 2017, we will take the opportunity to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel with a special focus on institutional autonomy and academic freedom to encompass this year’s theme.

I encourage National Commissions to organize relevant activities, in collaboration with your key partners, on this occasion. Please feel free to send us information on any activity you intend to coordinate and we shall publish it on our website.

Contact: Ms Lydie Ruas (l.ruas@unesco.org)

24 October 2017 – Launch of the 2017/8 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report “Accountability in Education: Meeting our commitments”

On 24 October next, a series of launch events around the world will provide a platform to discuss findings of the 2017/8 GEM Report, second in the new series of GEM reports.

The Report continues its assessment of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goal on education (SDG4) and its 10 targets, as well as other related education targets in the SDG agenda. It also examines different
mechanisms that are currently used to hold governments, schools, teachers, parents, students, civil society, the international community, and the private sector accountable for inclusive, equitable and quality education. By analysing which policies make accountability more or less effective, and which external factors influence their success, the 2017/8 GEM Report concludes with concrete recommendations that will help build stronger and more impactful education systems.

To know more about the GEM Report and the events surrounding the launch, please consult http://en.unesco.org/gem-report.

National Commissions for UNESCO have been very active in supporting the launch of this Report in the past. We therefore encourage your active participation this year again to ensure that the launch events are a success, and that the Report's important messages are carried forward to international and national decision makers.

Contact: Mr Glen Hertelendy (gemevents@unesco.org)

25 - 26 October 2017 – 10th UNESCO Youth Forum, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France

The 10th edition of the Forum will take place under the theme “Rethinking youth engagement with UNESCO”. Now, more than ever, young women and men are leading change in their countries and communities all over the world. The Forum should thus be an opportunity to bring these change-makers to the global discussion table and inform UNESCO’s work.

It will therefore be designed as a consultation with young women and men to define avenues for sustainable and meaningful engagement as per the UNESCO Operational Strategy on Youth (2014-2021). As such, it will bring together a limited number of select young change-makers and youth working on the frontlines of the issues addressed by UNESCO’s mandate, who together with UNESCO staff will look at concrete ways in which the Organization can better engage with youth.

To identify those young women and men who are truly leading innovative change and are ready to engage with UNESCO in developing solutions, participants in the Forum are being selected by the UNESCO Secretariat along strict criteria, based on proposals that have been made by Member States, UN agencies, NGO partners and networks and UNESCO Field Offices.

The Forum output – to be presented to the 39th session of the UNESCO General Conference – will consist of ideas and modalities for cooperation between youth and UNESCO in implementing the Programme and Budget for 2018-2021 (39C/5).

You will find more information about this Youth Forum following this link.

Contact: Mr Alexander Schischlik (10thUNESCOYouthForum@unesco.org)

UNESCO Publications

- Published by UNESCO’s International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), the report *An attack on one is an attack on all* looks at the innovative, successful ways in which media companies, individual journalists and civil society organizations are coming together
to improve journalist safety and end impunity. The report recounts 22 good practices, including from civil society, and compiles stories of local people and organizations who are fighting to protect the safety of journalists at the local level. It is available in English only.

- As part of the series of publication on the Education 2030, *A Decade of Progress on Education for Sustainable Development: Reflection from the UNESCO Chairs Programme* provides a reference point, reflecting the past achievements of the UNESCO Chairs’ diverse areas of thematic focus during the worldwide UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development, and their outlook for the Global Action Programme (2015-2019) and beyond in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals. This publication is available in English only.

- Published by UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE), the publication *Training Tools for Curriculum Development: Developing and Implementing Curriculum Frameworks* provides information and guidance about the process of developing a curriculum framework. It focuses on how to address the key questions, issues and challenges throughout the curriculum development process. The IBE series of Training Tools for Curriculum Development is designed to support Member States with regard to strengthening leadership for education and curriculum reforms and development processes.

**Appointments of Presidents and Secretaries-General of National Commissions (July / August 2017)**

I am pleased to welcome to the National Commissions network the following new members:

In China, Mr Tian Xuejun has been appointed Chairperson, succeeding Mr Hao Ping.

In Côte d’Ivoire, Mr N’golo Aboudou Soro has been appointed Secretary-General, succeeding Mr Lou Mathieu Bamba.

In Guyana, Ms Patrice La Fleur has been appointed Secretary-General, succeeding the late Ms Inge Nathoo.

In Mali, Ms Diallo Kadja Maiga has been appointed Secretary-General, succeeding Mr Amadi Hamadi Diarra.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Eric Falt