Sir/Madam,

Let me begin this month’s newsletter with the 22\textsuperscript{nd} Conference of the Parties (COP22) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC), which took place in Marrakesh, Morocco from 7 to 18 November last. As you are aware, the Paris Climate Agreement reached by participants at the COP21, entered into force on 4 November 2016. The COP22 therefore focused on action, and helping countries to develop their National Adaptation Plans.

UNESCO’s observer presence at the COP22 was intended to provide information and technical resources about its work on climate change. The UNESCO pavilion in the civil society area of the COP venues provided an opportunity to engage with different stakeholders to collectively address climate change. By clicking on this link, you can find out more information on how UNESCO addresses this issue, through its uniquely multidisciplinary expertise and outreach in climate change education, science, culture and communication. Please also note that a new guidance document for policy makers, developed by UNESCO and UNFCCC, \textit{Action for Climate Empowerment: Guidelines for accelerating solutions through education, training and public awareness}, was launched at a high-level panel dedicated to education at the COP22.

31 December – revised deadline for your contribution towards the Progress report on the implementation of the Action Plan to be submitted to the 201\textsuperscript{st} Session of the Executive Board

Following my request of 9 November for your contribution for the above mentioned progress report, I would like to advance the deadline to receive your inputs from 15 January 2017 to 31 December 2016. Given the statutory character of this report, I would be very grateful if you could send us as many feedbacks as possible within the new deadline. Please find attached the form to be filled in to facilitate your work.

Contact: natcom@unesco.org
Give us your feedback on the UNESCO Science Report

The UNESCO Science Report: towards 2030 provides data on 189 countries and profiles 140 of them. A year after its release, the UNESCO Secretariat is surveying readers to assess the report’s utility and impact. What are your impressions of the report? How do you use it? Please let us know via this short reader satisfaction survey: http://goo.gl/forms/CYoyztX1GD, which we invite you to circulate to relevant bodies.

The report is available under this link, as are all related materials: the Executive Summary in nine languages, blog, individual chapters, statistical annex, posters, etc. The Arabic, French, Chinese, Russian and Spanish editions of the report are coming soon.

Contact: Ms Susan Schneegans (s.schneegans@unesco.org)

Unite4Heritage Campaign: customizable postcards and video launch

As you are aware, the #Unite4Heritage campaign is a global movement, powered by UNESCO, that aims to celebrate and safeguard cultural heritage and diversity around the world (www.unite4heritage.org). Launched in response to the unprecedented attacks on heritage, the campaign calls on everyone to celebrate the places, objects and cultural traditions that make the world such a rich and vibrant place. Governments, private companies, NGOs, cultural and (social) media partners of UNESCO are invited to rally behind this movement.

A way to get involved in the campaign is to send your season’s greetings on a Unite4Heritage postcard: a set of 5 postcards has been published to celebrate the diversity of heritage. To discover the visuals and learn how to customize the cards with your logo, please visit http://bit.ly/U4Hpostcards.

I am also proud to present the video “The Value of Heritage” that raises awareness about the importance of safeguarding heritage for future generations. This video, funded by the European Union and supported by the Flemish Government and the Government of Austria, was produced by the UNESCO Beirut Office within the framework of the Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Cultural Heritage project.

Contact: Ms Armelle Arrou (a.arrou@unesco.org)


UNESCO, the French and Omani National Commissions for UNESCO, with the support of MBI Al Jaber Foundation are jointly organizing “Mawaïd - Rendez-vous for Euro-Arab Dialogue” conference, which will take place at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, on 9 and 10 December 2016.

The conference aims to strengthen the Euro-Arab Dialogue Initiative (EADI), launched 15 years ago by the Arab and European National Commissions for UNESCO on the basis of the deeply rooted belief that peace can only emerge through dialogue and mutual understanding.
In line with the Vienna Declaration of May 2012, and within the framework of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022), the 2016 conference will consolidate and expand Euro-Arab cooperation by framing its inherent aspirations in the current international context.

I am sure that many of the Arab and European National Commissions will attend the conference and trust that your contribution will be essential for its success. Please contact the Secretariat with copy to both regional coordinators (david.fajolles@diplomatie.gouv.fr and malyaqoubi@moe.om) for more information.

Contact: eadi@unesco.org

12-14 December 2016 – International Conference of Non-Governmental organizations, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris

The Conference brings together all NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO every two years, and is a unique opportunity for NGOs to meet and discuss the state of cooperation with UNESCO.

The 2016 Conference will focus on the theme “the challenge of the digital revolution for NGOs” and will be organized around four subthemes: “The digital revolution and its impact on the diversity of cultural expressions”; “The challenge of access to digital information”; “Does e-learning address challenges of education systems worldwide?”; and, “Science and the digital revolution: which ethical implications?”. This year’s Conference will also provide a welcome opportunity to examine collective NGO action carried out in 2015 and 2016, and will adopt the main lines of collective cooperation for 2017-2018.

Given the recommendation of the Plan of action for the National Commissions’ close cooperation with civil society and NGOs based in their respective countries, your participation at the conference as observer is most welcomed.


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

12-15 December 2016 - Tenth ordinary session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France

Composed of 24 State Parties, the Committee meets annually in ordinary session. This session will include a number of debates, among which will be : the Secretariat’s report on its capacity-building and knowledge management activities; the Convention’s contribution to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the engagement of civil society in the implementation of the Convention; the preliminary draft Operational Guidelines on the implementation of the Convention in a digital environment, and the implementation of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD) and approval of new projects.

I know that many of you are actively involved in the implementation of the 2005 Convention. I wish you fruitful discussions and achievements at the forthcoming Committee’s session. More information on the Committee meeting can be found under this link.

Contact: Ms Laurence Mayer-Robitaille (l.mayer-robitaille@unesco.org)
31 December 2016 – Call for nominations for the UNESCO-Equatorial Guinea International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences

The call for nominations for the 2016/2017 edition of the UNESCO-Equatorial Guinea International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences is now open. The purpose of this Prize is to reward the projects and activities of an individual, individuals, institutions, other entities or non-governmental organizations for scientific research in the life sciences leading to improving the quality of human life. Candidates shall have made significant research contribution to the life sciences to enhance the quality of human life.

The award winners receive a monetary award of US $300,000 (Three hundred thousand United States dollars), which may be equally divided among a maximum of three laureates, together with a diploma and a medal. Nomination for the Prize should be submitted, no later than 31 December 2016, by filling out the nomination form in either English or French only, by post (the original form) and by e-mail (advanced copy). Nominations must be proposed by Members States in consultation with their National Commissions, and non-governmental organizations in official partnership with UNESCO.

Please consult the related web-site containing detailed information about this Prize, Guidelines for submission and Nomination form.

Contact: lifesciencesprize@unesco.org

27 January 2016 - International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust

27 January marks the liberation of the concentration and extermination camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Every year around this date, UNESCO commemorates the genocide perpetrated against the Jewish people and other Nazi crimes, and reaffirms its commitment to promote education about the history of the Holocaust, and to fight against racism and antisemitism.

The 2017 Commemoration is placed under the theme “Educating for a Better Future: The Role of Historic Sites and Museums in Holocaust Education”. It will examine the current situation of historic sites of massacre and persecution and discuss challenges faced by memorials and museums, not only as bearing witness to the crimes, a role which will soon no longer be assumed by survivors, but also as central educational institutions. These issues will be explored during a round-table with directors of major Holocaust museums.

UNESCO will also host an unprecedented exhibition prepared by the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, which will be presented for the first time to the public and inaugurated by the Museum’s Director, Mr Piotr Cywinski. The exhibition will display personal items belonging to victims, excavated from the site of the crematoria in 1967, lost during years, and recently rediscovered by the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum.

The Official Ceremony at UNESCO Headquarters will notably feature a concert by world renowned musicians Ms Martha Argerich (piano) and Mr Ivry Gitlis (violin), UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador.

The events are organized in partnership with the Shoah Memorial, Museum, Centre for Contemporary Jewish Documentation (France) and the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum (Poland). For more information on this International Day and UNESCO’s action to support education about the history of the Holocaust and other genocides, please visit: http://www.unesco.org/new/holocaust-remembrance.

Contact: Mr Karel Fracapane (k.fracapane@unesco.org)
UNESCO Publications

- UNESCO’s collection on “Different Aspects of Islamic Culture” is finally complete with the publication of Volume I on *The Foundations of Islam* and Volume VI on *Islam in the World Today*. Launched in 1977 in the spirit of UNESCO’s General and Regional Histories and completed this year, the collection, overseen by an international scientific committee, is the fruit of 40 years of debate among researchers and experts from varied backgrounds, both Muslims and non-Muslims. It offers readers a large amount of knowledge on Islam and its contribution to the world from a pluralistic and global perspective. The English version of the two volumes as well as the entire collection can be ordered [here](#). French and Arabic versions will be published on a later date.

- Published by UNESCO, the Marianna V. Vardinoyannis Foundation and the European Coalition of Cities against Racism (ECCAR), the study *Cities Welcoming Refugees and Migrants: Enhancing effective urban governance in an age of migration* aims to better equip municipal authorities to address knowledge and capacity gaps in their responses to challenges generated by the reception of refugees and migrants. It provides a mapping of the situation with emphasis on Europe, and is available, in English only, [under this link](#).

- The publication *PLANET: Education for environmental sustainability and green growth* taken from the full 2016 GEM Report, formed the key note presentation during the high-level panel debate at the COP 22. This new publication shows how education has a key role to play in addressing environmental challenges. Education can be used to mitigate specific environmental issues and respond to their impact, but also to address the behaviour that causes them. This publication is available on line under [this link](#).

Appointments of Presidents and Secretaries-General of National Commissions (October/November 2016)

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

In Cuba, Mr Oscar León González has been appointed President, succeeding Mr Juan Antonio Fernández.

In Kuwait, Ms Nadia Al-Wazzan has been appointed acting Secretary-General, succeeding Mr Ahmad Alenezi.

In the United Arab Emirates, Mrs Amal Al Koos has been appointed Secretary-General.

Yours sincerely,

Yours sincerely,

Eric Falt