Sir/Madam,

Let me first extend my sincere thanks to those of you who participated in the traditional morning meeting of the National Commissions on 9 and 10 October last organized in the margins of the 205th session of the Executive Board. I was pleased to note that over 120 participants, representing 90 National Commissions/Permanent Delegations, attended this meeting. A brief report of the meeting, as well as the presentations made during the meeting are available under this link.

Allow me to take this opportunity to inform you that my term as Assistant Director-General for External Relations and Public Information a.i. comes to an end. I wish, through this letter, to express my sincere thanks for your invaluable continued support towards our Organization’s actions.

Mr Edouard Matoko, Assistant Director-General for the new Sector Priority Africa and External Relations (PAX), will be pleased to supervise from now on the Division for Member States and Partners (MSP), and you will certainly have an opportunity to meet with him during the weeks and months to come.

Hoping that I will meet you again in my capacity as Chief of Staff, Office of the Director-General, I wish you all the best in your endeavours. Let me now invite you to discover some important events which will take place at UNESCO in the coming weeks.

News on Strategic Transformation

As you may be aware, in September last, UNESCO’s Transformation Support Unit launched its newsletter on the Strategic Transformation. The newsletter aims to inform all stakeholders, notably Member States, National Commissions, and the staff of the Secretariat, about the progress of the Strategic Transformation process, as well as to provide them with a voice and space to be able to contribute to the process, and to keep them all mobilized.

You can find, under this link, the first issue of the Newsletter which is focused on how the Strategic Transformation is aligned with the current UN reform. The newsletter is also available in French. Further information can be found on the UNESCO Strategic Transformation Portal under this link.
The second number of the Newsletter will be issued in November with a focus on Communication, which is one of the four thematic areas of the Strategic Transformation Working groups.

UNESCO Education Sector Monthly Digest – October 2018

I am pleased to share with you UNESCO’s Education Monthly Digest of October, under this link, in which you can find out interesting news on various activities carried out, notably about the World Teachers’ Day 2018 which put the spotlight on the right to a qualified teacher, a theme chosen to mark the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Digest is also available in French and Spanish.

Contact: edknowledge@unesco.org

15 October-18 December 2018 – UNESCO’s #RightToEducation campaign

I am also pleased to inform you that UNESCO has launched a new digital campaign on the #RightToEducation, a right that is an absolute priority and at the core of our global mission to ensure equal access to quality education. This campaign marks the 70th celebration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Through a series of videos, animations, visuals, interviews and stories, the UNESCO campaign will unpack the legal significance of the right to education and the major challenges that are blocking its path. It will explain the work that UNESCO does around the world to ensure that countries are fulfilling their legal obligations and commitments.

The #RightToEducation campaign aims to bring global awareness of this crucial human right, which is still not a reality for millions, and empower young people and adults to bring about change in their communities.

The campaign page will be updated weekly with fresh content over the next two months.

I invite National Commissions to stay tuned for exclusive videos, stories, interviews, different language versions and more. You are also encouraged to promote the campaign in your respective countries and share it through your social media channels.

12 - 14 November 2018 – Internet Governance Forum 2018, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris

The thirteenth Annual Meeting of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) will be hosted by the Government of France. This year’s IGF is part of France’s “Paris Digital Week” alongside the Paris Peace Form and GovTech Summit from 11 to 14 November 2018.

The Internet Governance Forum serves to bring different stakeholder groups together as equals, in discussions on public policy issues relating to the Internet. While there is no negotiated outcome, the IGF informs and inspires those with policy-making power in both the public and private sectors. At the annual meeting delegates discuss, exchange information and share good practices with each other. The IGF facilitates a common understanding of how to maximize Internet opportunities and address risks and challenges that arise. The IGF has identified a number of issued at global and national levels over the years and shaped policy decisions related to ICTs.
In the framework of the IGF 2018 edition, held under the theme “Internet of Trust,” UNESCO will organize a number of workshops, open forums, and side-events open to registered participants. You may find out more details about these events organized in UNESCO under this link.

Contact: Ms Sasha Rubel (s.rubel@unesco.org)


The 2019 GEM 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. The Report also presents evidence on the implications of different types of migration and displacement for education systems, and the impact that education curricula, pedagogies and teacher education can have on addressing the challenges and opportunities posed by migration and displacement.

The Report's findings will be discussed at launch events around the world on 20 November 2018. Information on these and all other presentations taking place are being constantly updated online: http://en.unesco.org/gem-report/events.

The National Commissions for UNESCO were very active in supporting the launch of this Report in the past. We encourage your active participation this year 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: gemevents@unesco.org

3-5 December 2018 – Global Education 2030 Meeting, Brussels, Belgium

The 2018 Global Education Meeting will review progress towards the global education targets and commitments in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Global Meeting will bring the global community together to take stock of progress and identify strategic priority areas requiring political guidance and intervention for the effective achievement of the global Education 2030 Agenda.

This high-level gathering will be a milestone in the assessment of education policies, strategies and challenges in preparation for the 2019 High Level Political Forum (HLPF), which is focusing on “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”.

The meeting is convened by UNESCO, in consultation with the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee, and hosted by Belgium. The three-day event comprises a Senior Officials’ meeting with a Forum of parallel sessions organized by participating governments and partners on the afternoon of Day 1 and a Ministerial segment as of the afternoon of Day 2.

It will gather some 300 participants including UN agencies and affiliated organizations, multilateral and bilateral agencies, regional organizations, the teaching profession, civil society organizations, the private sector, foundations, as well as youth and student representatives among others.

You may find out more information under the website of the meeting.
Contact: globalmeeting@unesco.org
National Commissions’ Community Board – sharing initiatives

- The Capacity Building Workshop of National Commissions for UNESCO of Eastern Africa was organized from 1 to 3 November 2018 in Dar es Salaam, Republic of Tanzania. This Workshop is hosted by the National Commission of the United Republic of Tanzania for UNESCO, in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Eastern African Network of National Commissions, and financially supported by and co-organized with the German National Commission for UNESCO and the UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa. The objective of the meeting is to increase the impact, visibility and capacities of National Commissions, in particular through promoting further sub-regional networking and collaboration. The meeting focuses on: (1) good NatCom governance, (2) increase of NatCom impact and visibility, (3) following up to the discussions at the Interregional NatCom meeting in Diani, (4) cooperation of HQ/FO with NatComs.

- Organized and financed by the Government of Uruguay, a Regional Meeting of National Commissions for UNESCO will take place in Montevideo, Uruguay on 22 and 23 November 2018, in the framework of the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The agenda of this meeting will include the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the process of UNESCO’s Strategic Transformation, and update on the follow-up to the recommendations made during the fifth Interregional Meeting of National Commissions in Diani, Kenya. All the regional offices are mobilized, as well as the UNESCO Human Rights Chairs and the Category 2 center of Buenos Aires.

UNESCO Publications

- The brochure *Culture for the 2030 Agenda* was launched during the High Level Political Forum on the SDGs at New York at a High Level Breakfast event in July 2018. This brochure demonstrates the vast scope of culture’s contribution to sustainable development. It aims to shape a clearer understanding of the crucial role of culture in implementing the 2030 Agenda, share best practices and showcase examples of UNESCO’s activities. These examples include work on UNESCO’s international conventions and recommendations aimed at preserving heritage and promoting contemporary culture, the Creative Cities Network and our programme on museums. It is available in English, French and Spanish.

- Published by UNESCO in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the publication *Taking a whole of government approach to skills development* focuses primarily on the interaction between government ministries and agencies at national and subnational levels, examining how governments can work to coordinate technical and vocational education and development (TVET) and skills development across relevant policy domains. The publication makes recommendations on actions that governments could take to deliver better TVET and employment results, specifically by prioritizing resources for work on four high-impact building blocks which present the greatest challenge to governments. It also suggests nine criteria which governments can use to review the efficiency of their own TVET governance systems and the effectiveness of their coordination mechanisms.

- As the 10th edition of UNESCO’s Series on Internet Freedom, the report *Survey on Privacy in Media and Information Literacy with Youth Perspectives* responds to UNESCO’s efforts to stimulate global research into privacy in Media and Information Literacy (MIL). It aims to provide
conceptual, development and policy recommendations to foster privacy in MIL, while enabling the critical engagement of people, including young women and men, in an environment conducive to sustainable development and to freedom of expression online and offline. It seeks to provide clarity on the complex issue of how MIL and privacy intersect.

Appointments of Presidents and Secretaries-General of National Commissions (September / October 2018)

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

In Aruba, Mr Armando R. Lampe has been appointed President, succeeding Mr Luc Alofs.

In Chile, Ms Marcela Cubillos Sigall has been appointed President, succeeding Mr Gerardo Varela Alfonso.

In Madagascar, Mr Gatien Horace has been appointed President, succeeding Mr Paul Andrianiaina Rabary, and Mr Achille Aimé Razafindramosa has been appointed Secretary-General, succeeding Mr Fanjamboahangy Rasimiseta.

In Paraguay, Mr Javier Albino Alcaraz Cabral has been appointed Secretary-General, succeeding Mr Tomás Aníbal Zapattini.

In Viet Nam, Mr Mai Phan Dung has been appointed Secretary-General (since July 2018), succeeding Mr Pham Vinh Quang.

Yours sincerely,

Nicolas Kassianides