Sir/Madam,

While I am sure that many of you were present at the World Education Forum 2015 held from 19 to 22 May in Incheon, Republic of Korea, allow me to briefly update you on the main outcome the Forum, namely, the Incheon Declaration. It presents a transformative vision for education over the next 15 years and its adoption was welcomed by the global education community, including government ministers from more than 100 countries, non-governmental organizations and youth groups. It encourages countries to provide inclusive, equitable, quality education and life-long learning opportunities for all, underpinning the education targets in the Sustainable Development Goals that will be adopted at the United Nations in September.

The Incheon Declaration will be implemented through the Education 2030 Framework for Action, a roadmap for governments to be adopted by the end of the year. It will provide guidance on effective legal and policy frameworks for education, based on the principles of accountability, transparency and participatory governance. The Declaration and Framework will urge countries to set nationally appropriate spending targets and increase Official Development Assistance to low income countries.

I encourage you to visit the website for more detailed information on the World Education Forum at http://en.unesco.org/world-education-forum-2015/

UNESCO Anniversaries 2016-2017 - Updates

As you may recall, in conformity with the 195 EX/Decision 25, the proposals made by Member States concerning the celebration of anniversaries with which UNESCO could be associated in 2016-2017, were examined in line with the statutory procedure for the selection of anniversaries and were submitted to the Executive Board at its 196th session. The Executive Board then decided to recommend to the General Conference that it approves for inscription in the calendar of celebrations of anniversaries, the list of 44 proposals submitted for the next biennium [document 196EX/25+Add].

Please note that following the statutory procedure for the selection of such proposals, Member States can submit again, within two months from the 196th session of the Executive Board, and if appropriate, requests related to anniversaries which had been submitted by 15 January 2015 but which were not selected.
Furthermore, the new procedure foresees the possibility for Member States from unrepresented or under-represented regions to submit new requests during the appeal period. For the current exercise, all the regions, with the exception of the Europe and North America region, are under-represented. Therefore, Member States from the Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean regions can present new proposals. I have already addressed a letter to the National Commissions of these regions, inviting them to present anniversaries for 2016-2017 (reference: ADG/ERI/7/15/044 of 28 April 2015).

I invite therefore those of you concerned and interested to submit appeals, as well as any new proposals, to the Secretariat by 23 June 2015 at the latest, for re-examination. Revised proposals will then be submitted to the Executive Board at its 197th session if they meet the required criteria.

Contact: Ms Monica Crutescu (mo.crutescu@unesco.org)

UNESCO’s 70th anniversary – Updates

In order to showcase UNESCO in Malaysia, and Malaysia in UNESCO, Hari UNESCO Malaysia is celebrated annually. The fifth Hari UNESCO Malaysia was held from 22 to 24 May 2015 and the theme for 2015 touched on the principles of “being together”. Togetherness encompasses the human aspect of socializing, communicating, interacting, reacting as well as empathizing and understanding one another.


Organized by the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee in close cooperation with the UNESCO Secretariat, in accordance with the Directives on UNESCO’s partnership with non-governmental organizations, the Forum is intended primarily for NGOs in official partnership with the Organization, but is open also to other organizations and/or individuals interested in the topics, as well as to representatives of Member States, subject to prior registration on the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee website (www.ong-unesco.org).

This Forum, whose topic falls within UNESCO Global Priority Gender Equality, will provide the opportunity for the audience to listen to many testimonies and watch short videos testifying to NGOs’ field actions in different countries and bearing evidence to the fact that women show inventiveness in the face of poverty, and generate concrete and innovative actions in the fight against different forms of poverty.

The provisional programme, practical information and working documents are available under this link. Do not hesitate to visit the website of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee (www.ong-unesco.org) to register for both events and get additional information.

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

7-10 July 2015 - Our Common Future Under Climate Change - International scientific conference – Paris

This four-day conference will be the largest forum for the scientific community to come together ahead of the 21st UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP21), which will be hosted by France in December 2015 (“Paris Climat 2015”). Building on the results of IPCC 5th Assessment Report (AR5), the Conference will address key issues concerning climate change in the broader context of global change. It will offer an opportunity to discuss solutions for both mitigation and adaptation issues. The Conference will also welcome side events organized by different stakeholders.
The conference is organized under the umbrella of the International Council for Science (ICSU), Future Earth, UNESCO and major French research institutions, with the support of the French Government. Five of the parallel sessions will be organized by UNESCO on the following topics: 1) Education for sustainable development; 2) The science/policy/society nexus; 3) Ocean & Climate; 4) Freshwater; and 5) Indigenous and traditional knowledge.

I would like to invite you to visit the official conference website which should provide you with detailed information about this important meeting under this link.

16-19 July 2015 - Special Academic Session on the Safety of Journalists – Berlin, Germany

Organized on the occasion of the 10th Global Communication Association (GCA) Conference, this Special Session is the first in a series of dedicated workshops aiming to strengthen cooperation with academia in line with the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, and to establish an academic research agenda on journalists' safety. Different aspects of journalists' safety and issue of impunity will be discussed on this occasion.

As you are aware, UNESCO actively promotes the safety of journalists and those who produce journalism as the UN agency with a specific mandate to defend freedom of expression and press freedom. UNESCO has championed the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity which is the first concerted effort within the UN system to address these issues via a multi-stakeholder and holistic approach.

You may wish to disseminate to interested public in your country the information about this Special Session which is available under this link.

Contact: Mr Ming Kuok Lim (mk.lim@unesco.org)

12 August 2015 – International Youth Day

This Day will bring youth issues to the attention of the international community and celebrate the potential of youth as partners in today’s global society.

12 August was first designated International Youth Day by the UN General Assembly in 1999, and serves as an annual celebration of the role of young women and men as essential partners in change, and an opportunity to raise awareness of challenges and problems facing the world’s youth.

Thematic discussions and information campaigns will take place across the world, to engage both Member States and the general public to understand the needs of young people, to implement policies to help them overcome the challenges they face, and to encourage young people into the decision-making process. These objectives of the International Youth Day 2015 will also be addressed during the 9th UNESCO Youth Forum, taking place in the autumn of 2015. I will provide you with information on the Youth Forum in due course.

Within this framework, I encourage National Commissions to organize activities closely involving youth. Please feel free to send us information on any activity you intend to coordinate and we shall publish it on our website www.unesco.int.

For more information on the UNESCO Youth Programme, I invite you to visit the following link.

Contact: Mr Alexander Schischlik (youth@unesco.org)

National Commissions’ Community Board – Sharing Initiatives

The 18th meeting of the Arab National Commissions will be organized by ALESCO in Cairo, Egypt, from 8 to 10 June 2015, in which UNESCO will be represented as it places great importance on the mobilization and involvement of Arab National
Commissions within the Organization’s global priorities and in all of its fields of competence. The meeting will discuss among others, the reinforcement of cooperation among Arab National Commissions, ALESCO, UNESCO and organizations internationals and civil society.

UNESCO Publications

- The book *Agree to differ*, presents an overview of research and related activities which aim at the rapprochement of peoples and cultures. It bears testimony to the urgency of addressing contemporary challenges through intercultural and interreligious dialogue in order to deepen understanding and cooperation for peace. This landmark publication concerning the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022) was officially launched during the 3rd World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue held from 18 to 19 May 2015 in Baku, Azerbaijan. It is available in English under this [link](#). Co-published with Tudor Rose, it is also available in Open Access under the Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 IGO.

- The just published book *Rethinking Education: Towards a global common good?* proposes that we consider education and knowledge as global common goods, in order to reconcile the purpose and organization of education as a collective societal endeavor in a complex world. The book is intended as a call for dialogue and is inspired by a humanistic vision of education and development, based on respect for life and human dignity, equal rights, social justice, cultural diversity, international solidarity and shared responsibility for a sustainable future. Available in English and French, you can consult this publication under this [link](#).

- Published under the UNESCO series *Education on the Move*, the book *Unleashing the Potential. Transforming Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)* takes stock of contextual demands and recent policy trends in the field from around the world. An integrated analytical approach is proposed through which economic growth, social equity and sustainability perspectives can be strategically combined so as to address contemporary policy concerns such as youth unemployment, gender disparities and climate change. You may consult this publication in English only on the following website: [http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002330/233030e.pdf](http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002330/233030e.pdf)

Appointments of Presidents and Secretaries-General of National Commissions (April-May 2015):

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

In Israel, Mr Naftali Bennett has been appointed President.

In the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Mr KIM Chang Min has been appointed Secretary-General.

In Zambia, Mr Michael Kaingu has been appointed Chairperson and Mr Charles Ndakala has been appointed Secretary-General.

Yours sincerely,

Eric Falt