

## **Webinar for Europe and Latin America and Caribbean regions on cooperation with Associations and Clubs for UNESCO**

**Friday, July 2, 2021, 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm (CET)**

On July 2, 2021, the Unit of National Commissions for UNESCO organised an online meeting for the Europe and Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) regions to discuss cooperation with Associations and Clubs for UNESCO. As part of webinar series initiated on April 6, 2021, on the same topic, this meeting was structured around the following five main parts:

**I. The Legal Framework**, *followed by a presentation of the experience of the Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO*

**II. The use of the UNESCO logo**, *followed by a presentation of the experience of the Italian Commission for UNESCO*

**III. Exchange of ideas to strengthen cooperation between National Commissions and their Associations and Clubs for UNESCO**, *followed by a presentation of the experience of the Jamaican National Commission for UNESCO*

**IV. Presentation of the “NGOs’ solidarity in response to the pandemic” project by Ms Marie-Claude Machon-Honoré, representative of the NGO in official relations with UNESCO - Business and Professional Women**

**V. Questions and open discussion**

### **Introduction**

The main objective of this meeting, introduced by Ms Assel Utegenova, Deputy Coordinator of the National Commissions Unit for UNESCO, was to strengthen the capacities of National Commissions to cooperate with their Associations and Clubs for UNESCO, through a dialogue inspired by the sharing of experiences presented by the **National Commissions of Russia, Italy and Jamaica**. The purpose of this sharing was to inspire National Commissions with new ideas for collaboration, projects and activities with and between Associations and Clubs at regional, sub-regional or interregional levels.

### **I. Legal Framework**

The legal framework provided by the Regulatory Framework was adopted by the General Conference in 2017 and amended in 2019.

In 2020, a special survey to assess the progress of the implementation of the Regulatory Framework in Member States recorded mostly positive experiences of the LAC and Europe regions in cooperating with Associations and Clubs, often facilitated by the federations created under the auspices of their respective National Commissions. The LAC region currently has 37 Clubs in 4 Member States, and the Europe region has 463 Clubs in 26 Member States.

The Legal Framework provides Member States with general guidelines for accreditation, supervision and evaluation of Associations and Clubs, while the procedures may vary from country to country depending on the legislation in place.

### **Presentation of the experience of the Commission of the Russian Federation:**

Ms Aysur Belekova, Counsellor of the Russian National Commission for UNESCO presented the experience of the Commission and its procedure for regularizing its Associations and Clubs for UNESCO in accordance with the new Regulatory Framework. In particular, she explained that in Russia, for the past ten years, some unscrupulous associations have been calling themselves "Clubs for UNESCO", taking advantage of this label. In order to denounce and counter these numerous abuses, some Russian Clubs for UNESCO have been suspended by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation. Against these fake Clubs whose objectives and priorities were not compatible with those of UNESCO, proceedings were initiated in court. Since 2017, Russia began to systematically regularize the movement of Associations and Clubs, the Commission resumed its activities with Clubs within the framework of the requirements of UNESCO and Russian legislation.

The Commission of the Russian Federation has direct control over the activities of Clubs, this is an essential condition. Today and thanks to numerous actions, the situation is positive: Associations and Clubs play an important role in promoting UNESCO values in the Russian Federation. In order to suppress the illegal activities of fake clubs, a Committee for Accreditation of Clubs for UNESCO was created for those Associations and Clubs that wish to obtain the status of "Association and Clubs for UNESCO". This Committee has made it possible to revive the activity of Associations and Clubs in Russia and to give them a valid legal status. Collaboration with competent authorities such as the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation and the Association of Jurists of the Russian Federation is currently adapting the Regulatory Framework to Russian legislation through the drafting of a legal document and will establish the relationship with the Commission. Today, Associations and Clubs are not legal entities but associations of citizens in the form of public organizations.

## **II. Use of the UNESCO logo**

The use of the UNESCO logo is subject to strict regulations detailed in the Regulatory Framework. For Associations and Clubs, this use is under the responsibility of the National Commission, which means that it is the entity that ensures the proper use of the UNESCO acronym and logo. According to the Regulatory Framework, Associations and Clubs and National Federations are invited to use the UNESCO logo only after obtaining authorization from the National Commission, and only in the form specified in the Regulatory Framework (para. 5.1 and para. 6.4). Thus:

- Associations and Clubs may not use the acronym "UNESCO" in their title;
- Associations and Clubs and National Federations may not use the acronym "UNESCO" in their website and e-mail address.

If this is the case, it must be changed under the Regulatory Framework and National Commissions are requested to promptly identify these discrepancies, to adapt them to the Regulatory Framework and to provide the Secretariat with an updated list of their Clubs.

## **Presentation of the experience of the Italian National Commission for UNESCO concerning the use of the UNESCO logo:**

Mr Enrico Vicenti, Secretary-General of the Italian National Commission for UNESCO presented the following figures: 123 Clubs for UNESCO exist in Italy, 4 Centers and a Federation that unites 105 of these entities. In 2017, the Italian National Commission began a process of reorganization. It translated and disseminated the new Regulatory Framework and organized a meeting with the Federation and Clubs in June 2018. This meeting adopted the following key points:

- the acceptance of the supervision by the Italian National Commission ;
- the role of accreditation;
- the adoption of the new UNESCO logo as indicated in the Regulatory Framework;
- the framework for the correct use of the acronym's name.

Mr Vicenti reported that the acceptance of these points had not been easy, but the main instruments for the National Commission are dialogue, moral persuasion and withdrawal of accreditation as a last resort. In his opinion, the Secretariat should put in place additional measures to the National Commissions in order to explain to the Clubs the importance of respecting the directions of the General Conference which is the body that adopted the Regulatory Framework. Mr Vicenti stated that as a UNESCO family, it is normal and essential to respect the rules of the General Conference and the governing bodies, in order to cooperate in the best conditions for the achievement of the objectives and principles of the Organization.

## **III. Exchange of ideas for regional and interregional cooperation between National Commissions and Associations and Clubs**

### **Examples of regional and interregional activities highlighted by National Commissions in the 2020 survey:**

- World Congress of UNESCO Clubs and Associations (1994);
- Constitutive Assembly of the European Federation (Romania, 2001).

### **Examples of good practices of the year 2021 to be found on the [Platform](#):**

- Youth Forum Parma 2021 (Italy, Parma, March 2021);
- Clubs Youth Forum on environmental issues and social (France, June 2021);
- IV Asia-Europe Forum on Education (EFUCA/AFUCA, October 2021).

### **Examples of international projects with the Clubs:**

- International Forum of Creativity and Heritage along the Silk Roads (China, 2017, 2018, 2019)
- International Festival "Planet of Art" (Kazakhstan, annual since 2018)

In 2022, the movement of Associations and Clubs for UNESCO will celebrate its 75th anniversary and proposals for celebrations from National Commissions and their Associations and Clubs are welcome.

## **Presentation of the experience of Mr Everton Hannam, Secretary General of the Jamaica National Commission on the activities of Clubs for UNESCO in the LAC region.**

In collaboration with the National Commission, Jamaica's Associations and Clubs have participated in:

- programs with universities, youth, schoolchildren, and high school students, who are the primary participants in the Clubs movement;
- visit to Kazakhstan;
- international seminar;
- online programs with the US Clubs for UNESCO;
- International Youth Leadership Conference: a platform for youth to exchange ideas;
- celebration of UNESCO's International Days;
- local activities.

For future collaborations, the National Commission had to modify its engagement modalities as the new health situation demanded. Clubs' activities are mainly guided by:

- new C4/C5 documents;
- agenda for Priority Africa;
- capacity building;
- establishment of a regional assistance and partnership system, but also for South-South cooperation, an important element of the Medium-Term Strategy;
- climate change and resilience to climate change;
- cultural diversity.

The Jamaican Commission is fully prepared to participate in interregional collaborations.

[\(See PPT presentation\)](#)

#### **IV. Ms Marie-Claude Machon-Honoré, representative of NGO “Business and Professional Women”, presented the project “NGOs’ solidarity in response to the pandemic”.**

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the NGO partners have decided to carry out joint actions to help the populations in the field, based on UNESCO's priorities and respecting UNESCO's values.

The NGO partners of this project are:

- Association Montessori International
- Business and Professional Women International
- International Catholic Center for Cooperation with UNESCO
- International Fellowship of Reconciliation
- Make Mothers Matter
- International Movement ATD Fourth World
- World Organization for Preschool Education
- South Asia Foundation

These NGOs are complementary as they work in an intersectoral manner: education is linked to health, which is itself linked to science.

The objectives were to make known the realities on the ground and the evolutions in real time, to be a force of proposal for the future post-Covid priorities of UNESCO.

The results can be seen in the form of a solidarity between UNESCO's NGO partners and local NGOs and an increased visibility.

The NGO partners call for solidarity with the Associations and Clubs for UNESCO to rebuild a world of solidarity and think about the post-Covid period.

[\(See PPT presentation\)](#)

## **V. Questions and open discussion**

**Ms Anna Ormeche, Program Specialist at the Portuguese National Commission** explained the accreditation procedure of the Portuguese National Commission: they accredit a Club that has proven itself for one year, then re-accredits it a second time for the following year if its activity report is complete and in accordance with the Regulatory Framework, and at the end of these two years, automatic accreditation takes place every two years. This process requires Clubs to be active from the beginning of their existence.

Ms Ormeche wanted to ask Mr Vicenti how the Centers reacted to the change in their name to "Club". Mr Vicenti explained that it had not been easy, but that it had been necessary to have a dialogue and to break down preconceived ideas, as the Clubs are just as respectable as the former Centers.

**Ms Madlen Serban, Secretary-General of the Romanian National Commission**, mentioned that the Legal Framework does not allow for accreditation to be granted in Romania. The Romanian National Commission can only give its acceptance. As a young democracy, Romania is particularly interested in encouraging civil society and would like to have the support of the Secretariat to find common ground in case of reluctance on the part of Associations and clubs regarding legal issues.

**Ms Anastasia Leonoff, project manager for the Club for UNESCO at the French National Commission (CNFU)** presented the procedure used by the CNFU to accredit Associations and Clubs for UNESCO: an accreditation system has been in place since 2017 thanks to a Committee that meets every year, made up of UNESCO stakeholders, the French delegation of UNESCO, the French Federation of Clubs for UNESCO, the relevant ministries, the World Institute of Youth Arts and the "Ligue de l'enseignement". Several criteria are evaluated, among them: the entity must be an association under French law that already has a life; it must promote UNESCO's values and ideals; the obligation of the permanence of an employee; the accreditation lasts for three years and at the end of these three years, the activities are re-examined. The CNFU contacts the Associations when they are not accredited to withdraw the name or logo of UNESCO.

Despite the pandemic, the CNFU has had Clubs for UNESCO that have been particularly active in setting up international activities. This is the case, for example, of the Club for UNESCO ERIAMed which, under the high patronage of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture of Benin, co-organized with two local NGOs the first "Citizen Fashion Day" in Cotonou on June 5, 2021. The aim of this day was to strengthen the links between men and women and the earth and to make consumption patterns evolve in a more sustainable dimension. In the future, the French Commission wishes to develop its partnerships with French-speaking countries. Indeed, for the fiftieth anniversary of the Francophonie, which will be celebrated during the inauguration of the Cité internationale de la langue française in Villers-Cotterêts, the CNFU wishes to encourage

Francophone collaborations in the projects of the French Clubs, and even the organization of events with Francophone National Commissions.

**Mr Esteban Guidici**, from the Office of Legal Affairs and Legal Standards at UNESCO reiterated his willingness to assist National Commissions on a case-by-case basis since each one is unique.

**Mr Vicenti** asked if it was sure that changes to the Regulatory Framework would not take place at the next General Conference.

**Ms Utegenova** replied that changes were not on the agenda for the next General Conference.

**Ms Annalisa Beltrami**, Deputy Secretary-General of the Swiss National Commission, agreed with Mr Vicenti on the idea of using the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations to address the Associations and Clubs worldwide.

**Ms Utegenova** explained that the next Conference of Federations is scheduled for early 2022 with an update of the Constitution and the election of the President. The Secretariat is working with the Korean Interim Presidency to prepare for this event.

**Ms Serban** also recalled that the European Federation is organizing in cooperation with the Asia-Pacific Federation an event on sustainable development in Kazakhstan next fall.

**Ms Ormeche** wished to announce that the Portuguese Federation is currently preparing the constitution of an Ibero-American network of active citizenship for UNESCO values.

**Ms Utegenova** recalled that consultations with National Commissions may be held in conjunction with the 10th World Congress of the World Federation where all stakeholders could meet to discuss the future of the Clubs movement.

## **Conclusion**

In his closing remarks, Mr Dov Lynch, Chief of the Section for Relations with Member States, thanked the speakers and recalled the importance of the dialogue between National Commissions and Associations and Clubs for UNESCO. The process of adapting to the Regulatory Framework is sometimes time consuming but it aims to strengthen the network at all levels. This year UNESCO is celebrating its 75th anniversary and it is an opportunity to remember that solidarity must be built within societies, the idea is to work within societies to strengthen dialogue and cohesion. Clubs that are the banner of UNESCO play a very important role. The Secretariat is grateful for the seriousness and rigor with which National Commissions and the Club movement are tackling this task and remains at their disposal should the need arise.