Sir/Madam,

I wish to extend to you my most sincere and warmest wishes of health, happiness and peace in 2015. During this year, I will regularly update you in particular, on efforts elaborated by your peers to celebrate the 70th anniversary of our Organization. See below.

Following up on the implementation of the Action Plan, I am pleased to inform you that the publishing of our Annual Report for 2014 is foreseen very soon thanks to your active participation. Allow me to thank all the Commissions which submitted their inputs and photos.

I would also like to strongly urge you once again to submit your reports on the implementation of the Recommendations of the Tripartite Working Group (191 EX/33) as soon as possible. As you may recall, the Secretariat is asked to prepare and submit a progress report on this matter to the spring session of the Executive Board in April.

UNESCO’s 70th Anniversary (1945-2015)

The 70th anniversary of UNESCO will be an opportunity to place the Organization’s mission at the heart of the new global agenda to follow 2015. Recently the Director-General has stated that, “UNESCO’s mandate has never been so essential and that in this troubled world, new forms of ‘soft power’ to build peace should be crafted to counter the forces of fragmentation, to bolster social resilience, to safeguard humanity’s heritage of diversity and tolerance on the basis of human rights. 2015 is a turning point and the Organization’s 70th anniversary should set the stage for a new vision for sustainable human development, in harmony with the planet.”

With this in mind, may I encourage you to frequently consult the special anniversary website for continual updates and to share information of events organized by Member States (as already done by Costa Rica and Turkey) at: http://en.unesco.org/70years
2 February 2015 - Nominations for the Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science 2015


The purpose of the Prize is to reward the activities of individuals and groups in the field of ethics in science. The Prize encourages ethical reflection on questions raised by scientific and technological advances - a goal that coincides with UNESCO’s priorities. The Prize consists of a gold medal along with a certificate, the sum of US $10,000, and a one-week academic visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Established in 2003 by the Executive Board of UNESCO on the initiative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Prize owes its name to the renowned 11th-century physician and philosopher of Persian origin known in Europe as Avicenna (980-1038). A healer and a humanist, Avicenna developed an exemplary holistic approach that captures the essence of ethics in science and has thus come to serve as a source of inspiration for the promotion of this concern, which is of central importance to UNESCO.

You will find all information on the Prize and the submission of candidatures following this link.

Contact: Mrs Dafna Feinholz (avicenna.prize@unesco.org)

9-10 February 2015 - Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Education Conference – Kigali, Rwanda

The UNESCO Regional Offices for the Sahel (Dakar) and Eastern Africa (Nairobi), in partnership with the Government of Rwanda, UNICEF and other EFA partners, are organizing the Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Education Conference in Kigali, Rwanda.

2015 is the target date for the achievement of the six Education for All (EFA) goals and the MDGs. Ongoing consultations on the future education agenda will culminate in the 2015 World Education Forum (WEF), which will be organized by UNESCO and the Republic of Korea in May 2015.

In preparation for this Forum, UNESCO is organizing regional ministerial conferences with the aim to provide a platform for countries of the region to review and analyze the EFA experience in the region, develop a regional perspective on the emerging post-2015 education agenda and reflect on future priorities and strategies to achieve and prepare an African vision for the post-2015 education agenda.

Contact: Ms Akemi Yonemura, UNESCO Dakar Office (a.yonemura@unesco.org)
23 – 27 February 2015 - Mobile Learning Week (MLW) 2015

Co-organized by UNESCO and UN Women, MLW 2015 will explore how mobile technology can be leveraged to improve education and accelerate the learning of women and girls. The event will support discussion around four focus areas: equitable access, gender-sensitive content and pedagogy, literacy and skills development.

The principal aim of MLW 2015 is to ensure that newly affordable technologies -- from basic mobile handsets to the newest tablet computers -- open doors to educational opportunities and promote gender equality, both in education and beyond. The planned events during this week will feature inter alia a number of events in Paris: workshops (Monday, 23 February); symposium (Tuesday and Wednesday, 24-25 February), policy forum (Thursday, 26 February) and research seminar (Friday, 27 February).

MLW, now in its fourth year, attracts participants from around the world. UNESCO and UN Women look forward to welcoming you to Paris for this important event. You can register now!

I would be grateful if your Commission could further promote this important event.

Additional information is available at the websites:
http://en.unesco.org/events/mobile-learning-week2015#sthash.zI3w3UGD.dpuf

Contact: (mlw@unesco.org)

8 March 2013 – International Women's Day

Celebrated over 100 years ago and proclaimed by the United Nations in 1977, International Women’s Day (IWD) has grown into a global celebration of past struggles and accomplishments of women, and more importantly an opportunity to look ahead to the untapped potential and opportunities that await future generations of women.

On the occasion of this Day, UNESCO joins forces with international and regional partners to launch the annual “Women Make the News” (WMN) initiative, which aims at fixing attention on an issue relating to gender equality in and through the media, driving debate and encouraging action-oriented solutions until global objectives are met. Annually, UNESCO and its partners invite a diverse range of print and broadcast media, as well as NGOs working in the field of gender and media, to debate a particular theme, to share their stories and experiences, articles, interviews, and TV and radio programmes dedicated to the year’s theme.

Other events will be also organized at UNESCO Headquarters and in our Field Offices, including an International Conference on the theme “Beijing +20” on 4 March in Paris followed by a concert of women composers.

I encourage the National Commissions to organize and join in the events planned within the framework of this Day and during the WMN campaign and then to report to us on their respective experiences. Your events will be posted in the section dedicated to National Commissions in the web site of Member States: www.unesco.int.
For more information concerning the WMN Initiative, please consult http://en.unesco.org/events/women-make-news-2015#sthash.utBEUdBx.dpuf

Relevant information on the celebration of the Day will be available soon on UNESCO website.

Contacts: Mrs Gülser Corat (gender.equality@unesco.org) and Mr Alton Grizzle (a.grizzle@unesco.org) for the WMN Initiative.

UNESCO Publications


- The second Ebook, entitled *Gender Perspectives in Case Studies Across Continents: Volume II*, published by the Global Network of UNESCO Chairs on Gender, is available in English. This volume comprises case studies from nine countries that address challenging global priorities: gender gaps in education, women’s livelihoods and political voice, confronting domination, and activism across the decades. The authors are UNESCO Chair-holders, and Partners and affiliates of the UNESCO/UNITWIN Network on Gender, Culture and Development. You can access the document here.

Appointments of Presidents and Secretaries-General of National Commissions (December 2014)

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

In Australia, Mr Andrew Thackerah has been appointed Secretary-General, succeeding Mr Dario Morosini.

In Botswana, Mr Oteng Basimolodi Mokowe has been appointed Secretary-General, succeeding Ms Kgomotso Motlotle.

In Palau, Mr Andrew Tabelual has been appointed Secretary-General, succeeding Mr Emery Wenty.

In the Republic of Korea, Mr Hwang Woo-yea has been appointed Chairperson (since 8 August 2014), succeeding Mr Seo Nam-soo.

In Viet Nam, Mr Le Hoai Trung, has been appointed President, succeeding Mr Nguyen Thanh Son.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Eric Falt