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Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Executive Board
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Item 25 of the agenda

**DRAFT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN UNESCO AND
KING ABDULLAH BIN ABDULAZIZ INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR
INTERRELIGIOUS AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE (KAICIID)**

SUMMARY

The Director-General hereby submits to the Executive Board, for approval, a draft Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID).

Action expected of the Executive Board: proposed decision in paragraph 5.

INTRODUCTION

1. The King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) is an intergovernmental organization that was established on 26 November 2012 in Vienna, Austria, with a goal to empower and encourage dialogue among different religions and cultures around the world. The Founding States of this Centre, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Austria and the Kingdom of Spain, constitute the "[Council of Parties](#)" and oversee the work of the Centre. The Holy See is admitted as a Founding Observer. The Centre has a [Board of Directors](#), including high-level representatives of the major world religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism) and cultures. The Centre is headed by a Secretary-General.
2. Past collaboration between UNESCO and the KAICIID had been limited to international conferences organized by KAICIID, such as the international forum on "The Image of the Other", held in May and November 2013. KAICIID's Board of Directors paid a visit to UNESCO on 22 January 2014 which is worth mentioning. This provided an opportunity for exchange of information and discussion with Member States, but also with the Director-General and the Secretariat, to explore concrete paths for possible future joint actions.
3. A Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and KAICIID was drafted to create new synergies at the international and regional levels for enhanced action in favour of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence, especially among youth. Enhancing the importance of dialogue in formal and non-formal education, promoting respect for human rights and commonly shared values through the development of educational and scientific contents, supporting institutional cooperation through encounters and initiatives with a special focus on youth conversations and employing the media as a key tool for fostering dialogue and mutual understanding are among the main areas of joint action identified.
4. This partnership will also serve the goals and objectives of resolution A/RES/67/104 on the "promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace", under which the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the period 2013-2022 as International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures, and invited UNESCO to be the lead agency in the United Nations system.

Proposed decision

5. In the light of the information provided above and in consideration of the draft MoU in annex, the Executive Board may wish to consider a decision along the following lines:

The Executive Board,

1. Welcomes the information meeting between the Board of Directors of KAICIID and UNESCO Permanent Delegates that was held at UNESCO Headquarters on 22 January 2014, at the initiative of the Director-General and H.E. Mr Ziad Aldrees, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to UNESCO;
2. Having examined document 194 EX/25 and in particular the draft Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID),
3. Expresses its satisfaction with the areas of cooperation proposed and the contribution this may have for the promotion of intercultural dialogue, within the framework of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022) and beyond;
4. Authorizes the Director-General to sign the attached Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UNESCO and KAICIID and invites the Director-General to submit to the Executive Board six months prior to the expiration of the MoU a review of the results achieved with a view to deciding about its further extension.

ANNEX

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

(alternate)

**THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)**

AND

**THE KING ABDULLAH BIN ABDULAZIZ INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR INTERRELIGIOUS
AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE (KAICIID)**

**ON THE COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF INTERRELIGIOUS
AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE**

Place / Date

**Memorandum of Understanding between the United Nations
Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz
International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue**

(alternate)

The United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

AND

The King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz
International Centre for Interreligious and
Intercultural Dialogue

7 Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP
French Republic

Schottenring 21
A-1010
Vienna, Austria

hereinafter referred to as “UNESCO”

hereinafter referred to as the “KAICIID”

Represented by its
Director-General

Represented by the Secretary-General

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue hereinafter jointly referred to as “the Parties”.

INTRODUCTION

The Director-General of UNESCO and the Secretary-General of KAICIID, convinced that the current global challenges require attention and action to ensure peaceful coexistence, harmony and interaction among peoples of different cultural and religious backgrounds and identities, through the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, hereby decide to enter into the present Memorandum of Understanding (hereafter “MoU”).

Whereas KAICIID, as an intergovernmental organization founded in 2011 by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Austria and the Kingdom of Spain, with the Holy See as Observer, aims to act as a facilitator of interreligious and intercultural dialogue and understanding, to enhance cooperation, respect for diversity, justice and peace at individual, institutional, national and international levels;

Whereas UNESCO, as a specialized agency of the United Nations entrusted with the mandate to build the defenses of peace in the minds of men and women, undertakes and stimulates at the international, regional, subregional and national levels and with multi-stakeholder involvement, a broad-based dialogue among cultures, including interfaith dialogue, aimed at responding to a range of global challenges, promoting cultural diversity and contributing to reconciliation and peace through interdisciplinary action drawing on its fields of competence, namely education, the sciences, culture and communication and information, particularly in the framework of the UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy (2014-2021) and on its Programme (2014-2017);

Whereas KAICIID and UNESCO consider that encouraging interreligious and intercultural dialogue and creating platforms conducive thereto are essential responsibilities appropriate to all levels of public authority, civil society, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and individual citizens;

Whereas KAICIID and UNESCO are determined to pursue joint efforts with a view to improving relations among peoples of different cultures and religions, so as to promote a life of peace, respect and dignity and to increase confidence, and to help resolve issues that may divide peoples;

Whereas KAICIID and UNESCO have laid the foundations for cooperation and complementary action since the establishment of KAICIID in 2011;

have reached the following understanding:

Article I – Overarching Objectives

By the present MoU, the Parties reaffirm their commitment to promoting, individually and jointly, dialogue among people of different religions and cultures, as well as related initiatives with a view to strengthening mutual understanding, tolerance, respect, peaceful coexistence, cooperation, development and a rapprochement of societies, ultimately contributing to a culture of peace respectful of the principles enshrined in the *United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and the *UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*, as particularly reiterated in the United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/67/104 on the *Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace*. In so doing, **the Parties accept to:**

1. when considered appropriate by both Parties, jointly organize advocacy and capacity-building initiatives for promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue, especially among youth, taking particular advantage of existing international frameworks for cooperation, such as the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022), including also the celebration of relevant International Days;
2. strengthen their cooperation, while emphasizing an approach into their joint endeavours that underlines the role of education and the media as essential vectors for dialogue among cultures, civilizations and religions, in a manner to leverage each Party's value-added efforts to promote societies prone to dialogue and respectful of diversity;
3. when considered appropriate by both Parties, initiate and implement joint action, in the field of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, dialogue and education, media literacy, namely through capacity-building and training about dialogue and cooperation, including network initiatives and the sharing of best practices, with a focus on the involvement of youth, young leaders, namely educational and religious leaders and professionals as main actors for the reconciliation and the revitalization of the social, cultural and intellectual fabric of societies.

Article II – Priority areas of Dialogue Initiatives

1. The importance of dialogue in formal and non-formal education

In order to achieve better interreligious and intercultural understanding, new approaches in formal and non-formal education settings need to be promoted, with a view to informing policies and reforms, as appropriate. In this regard, both Parties are committed to advancing dialogue methods and policies in formal and non-formal education, training and exchange, in particular:

- (i) contribute to engage an international reflexion on promoting dialogue-sensitive curricula at decision-making level and appropriate measures at the operational level among practitioners, namely by empowering policy-makers and the civil society to develop policies and actions in favour of inclusiveness with a special focus on youth engaged in the media profession;
- (ii) sensitize media and communication professionals as well as young journalists in the development of media contents respectful of human rights.

2. Promoting knowledge on intercultural and interreligious dialogue for peace

Dialogue is a process that requires mutual recognition of cultural and religious diversity. To facilitate this process, both Parties are committed to explore the best possible means to address cultural and religious prejudices. Pertinent actions in this domain may include, but are not limited to the following:

- (i) to identify possible synergies with a view to advancing research, training and programme development in higher education through both Parties' networks of universities, encouraging in particular inter-university cooperation using for example networks such as UNESCO Chairs Programme and KAICIID Fellows Programme, including the sharing of good practices through the Associated Schools Network;
- (ii) to develop joint initiatives with a view to strengthening peace and non-violence through formal and non-formal education, in order to achieve intercultural and interreligious skills and empathy, including online course development.

3. Supporting institutional cooperation through youth-targeted dialogue initiatives

Young women and men should be fully considered as partners and stakeholders in today's efforts to foster dialogue and mutual understanding. Their meaningful participation in larger processes and clear recognition of their expertise and initiatives are essential to the success of any endeavour in this area. Both Parties will endeavour to further involve younger generations in intercultural and interreligious dialogue, through pertinent actions that may include, among others:

- (i) intensifying interreligious and intercultural exchanges among youth, for example through UNESCO Youth Forum and UNESCO Associated Schools Network as well as other relevant professional associations and civil society organizations;
- (ii) facilitate, in so far as feasible, exchange among youth in support of dialogue and mutual understanding, namely through cultural and artistic activities, contests, conferences, online forums;
- (iii) undertake jointly global initiatives on interreligious and intercultural dialogue (e.g. through UNESCO Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme;
- (iv) integrate youth organizations in platforms for intercultural and interreligious dialogue.

4. Employing the media as a key tool for fostering dialogue and mutual understanding

The contribution of media and information and communication technologies ("ICTs") is essential to change the perception of different cultures and religions, providing thus a unique framework for promoting and fostering of mutual understanding and lasting peace around the world. Initiatives in this area may include pertinent collaboration in the following:

- (i) KAICIID's programme focus on four areas: how the media form the public's perceptions of the "Other"; how educators play a fundamental role in building a respectful and accurate understanding of the "Other"; supporting dialogue as a means to further peacebuilding; and developing institutions' capacity to undertake constructive interreligious and intercultural dialogue ;
- (ii) joint actions focusing on networking and capacity-building of media professionals engaged as vectors for intercultural dialogue;
- (iii) promotion of an Internet-based dialogue where diverse cultural and linguistic practices can be shared.

Article III – Intensifying cooperation among the Parties on high-profile events

1. Using the timely framework of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022), UNESCO and the KAICIID, individually and jointly, will engage in a mutually supportive and visible manner through specific initiatives.

Article IV – Conditions and Modalities

1. This MoU provides a framework for inter-institutional dialogue and cooperation between the Parties and will include, but not be limited to, the following working principles:
 - (i) development of informal, bilateral consultative meetings on a regular basis, as considered necessary, in order to review this MoU and review the activities carried out hereunder;
 - (ii) engagement in ongoing consultations and reciprocal sharing of information with regard to projects, initiatives and other activities pursued by the Parties under this MoU; and,

- (iii) exchange of experiences and best practices.
- 2. The Parties hereby appoint the Head of Partnership of KAICIID and the UNESCO Director responsible for Culture of Peace, Dialogue and Non-Violence as their focal points, responsible for coordinating the activities hereunder. Any changes concerning the focal point will be notified to the other Party with a minimum delay;
- 3. Modalities for this cooperation will be developed further by both Parties through more focused cooperation arrangements, and can include specific arrangements along the lines of each Party's internal policies and regulations, such as a framework for financial contractual relations between UNESCO and KAICIID. In the event that the Parties choose to sign separate, project-specific cooperation agreements, they will contain at least a summary and concept note of the project, building on a format as to be agreed;
- 4. In implementing project-specific cooperation, neither Party shall use the name and/or emblem of the other without prior written permission. In all circumstances, both Parties shall refrain from using the name and/or emblem of the other Party in a way that implies that they are part of the other Party or under its patronage or affiliation;
- 5. Each Party shall give due recognition to the other Party for contributions to the projects, initiatives and other activities completed under this MoU, namely in relevant reports, official speeches, outreach materials and other publications;
- 6. Each Party's commitment under the present MoU shall be subject to:
 - (a) the application of its respective rules and policies; and,
 - (b) the availability of the appropriate financial and other resources; and,
 - (c) governing bodies decisions;
- 7. Nothing herein constitutes an express or implied waiver of the privileges and immunities of the Parties, their personnel and their assets, in accordance with the relevant legal texts;
- 8. Any dispute that arises in connection with the application or interpretation of this Memorandum of Understanding or any supplementary arrangement shall be resolved by direct negotiation between the Focal Points. If the Focal Points are unable to reach a mutually satisfactory solution, they shall submit the matter to direct discussions between the Secretary-General of KAICIID and the Director-General of UNESCO.

Article V – Duration and Termination

- 1. The present MoU will take effect upon the signature by the Parties, and shall expire four years after the date of signature.
- 2. The present MoU may be modified, at any time upon the formal written request by one Party, and takes effect upon fifteen calendar days of the receipt of written confirmation from the other Party;
- 3. Either Party may cancel the present MoU by giving two (2) months' written notice to the other Party. Early cancellation of the present MoU will not affect the implementation and conclusion of any cooperation under way;
- 4. The present MoU may be extended following a review by the Parties' governing bodies of the results achieved six (6) months in advance of its expiration date;

5. All extensions must be formalized via addendum modification pursuant to paragraph 2. The results of the analysis conducted under paragraph 4, should be stated in the recitals of the modified version.

Signed in two original copies in English.

**United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural
Organization**

(alternate)

**King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz
International Centre for Interreligious
and Intercultural Dialogue**

Irina Bokova
Director-General

Faisal Bin Abdulrahman Bin Muaammar
Secretary-General

Date: _____

Date: _____