



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

04/05/2012

Ref.: CL/3992

Subject: **Consultation of Member States and Associate Members, as well as of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), on the preparation of the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021 (37 C/4) and the Draft Programme and Budget for 2014-2017 (37 C/5)**

Sir/Madam,

At its 36th session, the General Conference adopted the third and final biennial Programme and Budget document (36 C/5) within the context of the Organization's current medium-term cycle (2008-2013), as outlined in document 34 C/4. The General Conference also debated, most especially during the Leaders' Forum (cf. 36 C/INF.19), the General Policy Debate (36 C/INF.20), the meetings of the main Commissions and the UNESCO Youth Forum (36 C/47), the Organization's strategic direction and future priorities, seeking to identify new challenges.

The global and emerging challenges the world community faces demand UNESCO's full contribution and engagement. They call for a sharper, more focused and agile Organization that is endowed with a level of resources, provided both through regular programme and extrabudgetary resources, which is commensurate to the tasks at hand. They call for a UNESCO in tune with the ambitions of its mission and mandate, with the ability to deliver expected results on a range of issues. Moreover, they call for a well-managed UNESCO, one that performs efficiently and effectively, giving pride of place to programme delivery. In a nutshell, they call for a modern, multilateral Organization.

Despite our current financial difficulties, we need to seize the opportunity to build a stronger UNESCO - an effective and focused global leader in many fields, able to respond to the needs of Member States. It is with this in mind that the General Conference adopted resolutions for follow up on the Independent External Evaluation of UNESCO, to act as a strategic framework for the reform of the Organization.

The General Conference also articulated specific expectations for the preparation of the next Medium-Term Strategy and for that of the Programme and Budget, both of which are bound to have a different framework. You will recall that the General Conference decided, by its 36 C/Resolution 105, that the Medium-Term Strategy (C/4) cycle be extended from six to eight years, starting with document 37 C/4. Likewise, the programme part of the Programme and Budget (C/5) was extended

from two to four years, while the appropriation cycle for the budget was maintained at two years. These changes will allow for a longer horizon for programme planning, implementation and results maturity, as well as for more effective monitoring. It also will allow us, through better alignment with the “quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR),” to build stronger synergies with all parts of the United Nations family, especially at the field level.

In the context of the follow-up to the Independent External Evaluation and the recommendations of the Executive Board’s *Ad Hoc* Working Group, the General Conference called for the Medium-Term Strategy to have a limited number of overarching objectives, with a view to sharpening its strategic focus and enhancing intersectorality. In the same vein, the General Conference emphasized the need for a greater focus of UNESCO’s programmes, including through the application of clear, precise criteria for introducing new, maintaining or discontinuing existing programmes in the C/5 document.

The General Conference also decided that the questionnaire on the Programme and Budget that is to be circulated to Member States, including to their National Commissions for UNESCO, as well as to intergovernmental organizations (IGO) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), should be revised so as to introduce a quantitative and qualitative approach that should facilitate decision-making by Member States and provide for more informed priority-setting. To this end, a new mechanism involving the allocation of a maximum number of points, beyond which a response is invalidated, has been applied to the quantitative questions in the two questionnaires annexed hereto (see paragraph 5 of introductions).

The two questionnaires relate to the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021, and to the Draft Programme and Budget for 2014-2017. I hope Member States, IGOs and NGOs will find their format and content useful in defining UNESCO’s strategic and leadership roles, its contributions to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, the key principles and functions on which its action should rest, and the priority objectives and tasks that should be assigned to it.

Allow me to draw your attention to the fact that, pursuant to Decision 5, adopted by the Executive Board at its 189th session, each Member State should submit a single reply on behalf of its government and its National Commission. Moreover, the questionnaire for document 37 C/4 contains a section dedicated to UNESCO’s cooperation with NGOs (section 10). Member States and NGOs are invited to complete this section. Intergovernmental and other international organizations, for their part, are invited to complete section 11.

It is preferable that the completion of the questionnaires be done online at the following internet addresses:

- [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/37\\_C4\\_questionnaire\\_ENG](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/37_C4_questionnaire_ENG) for the C/4
- [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/37\\_C5\\_questionnaire\\_ENG](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/37_C5_questionnaire_ENG) for the C/5

In the event that, for technical reasons, you are unable to respond online, you may wish to transmit your responses to the Secretariat using paper copies of the questionnaires (Mr Hans d'Orville, Assistant Director-General for Strategic Planning; UNESCO, 7 Place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France; tel.: 33.1.45.68.19.19; fax: +33.1.45.68.55.21; e-mail: g.awamat@unesco.org). All responses should be submitted by **31 May 2012** so that the responses can feed into the regional consultations, scheduled to begin next June.

As requested by the Executive Board, the responses to the questionnaire will be summarized and shared, in a consolidated manner, at the various regional consultation meetings, the timetable for which is contained in Annex I to this Circular Letter.

On the basis of the responses to the questionnaires, as well as on the provisions of 36 C/Resolution 112, I shall submit my preliminary proposals for the Draft Medium-Term Strategy (37 C/4) and the Draft Programme and Budget (37 C/5), together with a report on the regional consultations, to the Executive Board at its 190th session (October 2012). The guidelines that are provided by the Executive Board during that session will serve as a framework for the preparation of document 37 C/4 and document 37 C/5, both of which will be examined by the General Conference at its 37th session in 2013.

Accept, Sir/Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Irina Bokova  
Director-General

Enclosures: 2

cc: National Commissions for UNESCO  
Permanent Delegations to UNESCO  
Field offices of UNESCO



**ANNEX I**

**Provisional Timetable for  
Regional Consultations of Member States and National Commissions**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Africa	Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire	6-8 June
Asia and the Pacific	Thanh Hoa, Viet Nam	15-18 June
Europe and North America	Bratislava, Slovakia	9-13 September
Latin America and the Caribbean	Montevideo, Uruguay	14-16 September
Arab States	Muscat, Oman	Late September (exact date to be confirmed)