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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Committee on Conventions and Recommendations held one public working meeting on Friday 17 October 2014, chaired by Ms Marie Chatardová, representative of the Czech Republic. The Committee met on Monday, 27 October 2014 to adopt the present report. Pursuant to Rule 16.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board, the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations confirmed the election of Ms Besiana Kadare, representative of Albania, as Temporary Chair.

2. The Committee on Conventions and Recommendations examined the following items on the agenda of the Executive Board:

Item 15 Implementation of standard-setting instruments – General monitoring (195 EX/15)

3. Introducing the item, the Legal Adviser, representing the Director-General, drew attention to document 195 EX/15 containing a comprehensive report on the UNESCO conventions and recommendations that the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations was required to monitor and an analysis of specific measures adopted by the Secretariat in monitoring the implementation of standard-setting instruments and the difficulties encountered for each of the instruments.

4. At the request of the Chair of the Committee, in order to enhance the Committee's discussions on the item, the representatives of the programme sectors concerned made an oral presentation of their contributions contained in document 195 EX/15 on each of the standard-setting instruments under their responsibility.

5. The Director of the Division for Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems of the Education Sector emphasized that previous consultations had highlighted the challenges and obstacles encountered by Member States in the implementation of the standard-setting instruments, particularly with regard to the 1960 Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, the 1974 Recommendation concerning the Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the 1997 Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel. He also presented an analysis of specific measures adopted by the Secretariat to address those challenges during the period of investigation of the implementation of the nine instruments relating to the Education Sector.

6. Members of the Committee stressed the need to continue with the assessment of some standard-setting instruments, with a view to possibly updating them, but also to continue reflection on identifying measures to improve the ratification rate of conventions. Moreover, other members of the Committee also highlighted the importance of the standard-setting instruments in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the United Nations post-2015 development agenda.

7. While considering that the challenges faced by Member States at the last consultation on the 1960 Convention were essentially related to financial and technical aspects, one member of the Committee asked the Secretariat what support UNESCO could provide in that area, including cooperation with the World Bank. In the framework of UNESCO's results-based management, the member also considered the question of the impact and relevance of events such as World Teachers' Day. Noting the importance of the right to lifelong learning as an integral part of the right to education, another member of the Committee considered that greater prominence should be given to literacy in the context of the implementation of the 1976 Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education. Lastly, a Committee member questioned the measures taken by the Secretariat to promote non-formal education.

8. In response to comments and questions from Committee members, the representative of the Education Sector reiterated the need to involve all stakeholders and the measures taken by UNESCO in that regard to strengthen the participation of civil society. As to the right to education, he recalled the publication of a compendium of good practices by Member States in the implementation of the right to education and gave details of the pilot phase of the operational guidelines on the right to education. On the question of the ratification of the 1960 Convention, he said that in addition to the 11 States that had ratified the Convention since the last consultation, another 15 States were in the process of ratification. However, according to him, the fact that the Convention permitted no reservations was an obstacle to its ratification by some Member States. With regard to the challenges faced by Member States, most of them were related to social, cultural and economic factors, and the Secretariat cooperated with a wide range of stakeholders, including UNICEF and the World Bank. Moreover, the Secretariat was aware that standard-setting instruments should be adapted to the new complex challenges faced today, as reflected in the current revision of some standard-setting instruments. Literacy was undeniably an important issue for adult education and for the revision process of the 1976 Recommendation, which was also undertaken from the learners' perspective. World Teachers' Day, on the other hand, was not a UNESCO-specific initiative, but a joint celebration, namely with the International Labour Organization, to raise awareness of and support the work of partners, particularly on the quality of education. Lastly, when the report of the meeting of experts on a possible global standard-setting instrument on the recognition of higher education qualifications was finalized, copies of the report would be made available to any interested Committee members.

9. The representative of the Education Sector concluded his statement with a presentation of the new global database on the right to education, explaining in detail each of its features and functions. In that regard, the Committee members welcomed the initiative to widely promote the right to education through the use of new information and communication technologies.

10. The Deputy Director of the Culture Sector's Division for Heritage subsequently recalled that the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape was a useful tool for urban conservation, particularly for urban areas on the World Heritage List. The World Heritage Committee also encouraged the States Parties to the 1972 Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage to integrate the concept of the historic urban landscape in their nominations and in the formulation of management plans for sites nominated for inclusion in the World Heritage List. In September 2013, the World Heritage Centre, in collaboration with the National Historic and Artistic Heritage Institute of Brazil and the Regional Heritage Management Training Centre "Lucio Costa Centre" (category 2 centre), held an international expert meeting to discuss ways to include the methodological approach relating to the Recommendation in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention. In December 2013, the World Heritage Centre held a meeting to discuss the implementation of the Recommendation. The meeting, attended by 36 experts, led to the adoption of a plan of action calling for the establishment of partnerships with other institutions and organizations to promote the Recommendation worldwide. Three priority regions were identified for the implementation of the Recommendation in the coming years: Africa, the Arab States and Latin America and the Caribbean. Member States, particularly those of the three priority regions, were invited to support the efforts of the World Heritage Centre to promote the implementation of the Recommendation,

including hosting technical meetings, workshops and conferences on the scope and application of the instrument.

11. The Chief of the Culture Sector's Cultural Diversity Section said that the next summary report on the implementation of the 1980 Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist would be examined by the Executive Board at its 197th session in the autumn of 2015 and then transmitted to the General Conference at its 38th session. To that end, the Secretariat had developed a global survey to gather information from Member States and civil society organizations to serve as a basis for its monitoring report. The survey had been designed to address the cross-cutting issues of the Recommendation in the context of current debates at global and national levels and to determine the impact of the policy of the Recommendation. Replies to the survey must be submitted to UNESCO before 15 January 2015. The main challenge for the Secretariat in monitoring the implementation of the Recommendation was the lack of resources allocated to that activity in document 37 C/5. In order to overcome the lack of resources, the Secretariat had developed synergies to monitor the 1980 Recommendation in conjunction with the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions for matters relating to the status of the artist.

12. The Director of the Division of Ethics, Youth and Sport of the Social and Human Sciences Sector said that the monitoring of the 1974 Recommendation on the Status of Scientific Researchers currently presented two major weaknesses: first, the low rate of reporting by Member States and second, a lack of a set of specific questions addressed to Member States enabling them to prepare their report on the implementation of the Recommendation. The General Conference had decided at its 37th session that consultations for the revision of the Recommendation would be conducted by 2017. To that end, the first consultations would take place in 2014-2015, involving several scientific organizations, including national science academies and national research councils. In reply to a question, the representative of the Sector concerned said that the revision of the Recommendation was an opportune time to improve the monitoring of the Recommendation.

13. With regard to the Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace, the representative of the Communication and Information Sector recalled that an expert meeting on access to multilingual cyberspace would be held on 28 and 29 October 2014, organized in cooperation with the Russian Federation and the Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme. The meeting would discuss the outcome of the Third International Conference on Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Cyberspace and the development of a plan of action for the use of linguistic diversity as a monitoring tool for cyberspace. Moreover, the UNESCO-European Registry of Internet Domain Names (EURid) Report on International Domain Names Deployment had been launched at the Ninth Annual Internet Governance Forum in September 2014 in Istanbul, Turkey. Furthermore, a validation meeting of the Internet Governance Forum Glossary was scheduled for early 2015.

14. In reply to a question from a Committee member on the relationship between the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and the 2003 Recommendation, the representative of the Communication and Information Sector said that the 2003 Recommendation had been adopted in the same year as the first phase of WSIS. As that Recommendation was a unique standard-setting instrument within the United Nations system, UNESCO therefore played a major role in facilitating implementation of the WSIS action lines concerning access to information and cultural and linguistic diversity. Those action lines were directly linked to promoting universal access to information and multilingualism in cyberspace. Thus, since 2003, a number of activities had been implemented in the context of WSIS.

15. The members of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations expressed satisfaction with the constructive debate that had taken place and with the more relevant content of the new document submitted by the Secretariat. While taking note of the timetable of the Committee on monitoring for the 2014-2017 period, they also requested the Secretariat to present

to the Executive Board at its 197th session a strategy to improve visibility, ratification, implementation, monitoring and cooperation in the context of standard-setting instruments in the field of education, taking into account, if necessary, the conclusions of the working group in the working methods of the CR Committee.

16. At the end of the discussions, the members of the Committee decided to recommend the following draft decision to the Executive Board:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 15 C/Resolution 12.2, 23 C/Resolution 29.1, 165 EX/Decision 6.2, 32 C/Resolution 77, 170 EX/Decision 6.2, 171 EX/Decision 27, 174 EX/Decision 21, 175 EX/Decision 28, 176 EX/Decision 33, 177 EX/Decision 35 (I) and (II), 34 C/Resolution 87, 180 EX/Decision 31, 181 EX/Decision 27, 182 EX/Decision 31, 184 EX/Decision 20, 185 EX/Decision 23 (I), 186 EX/Decision 19 (I), 187 EX/Decision 20 (I), 189 EX/Decision 13 (I), 190 EX/Decision 24 (I), 191 EX/Decision 20 (I), 192 EX/Decision 20 (I) and 194 EX/21 relating to the first aspect of the terms of reference of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations (CR), which concerns the implementation of standard-setting instruments,
2. Having examined document 195 EX/15 and the report of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations thereon (195 EX/37),
3. Urges Member States once again to fulfil their legal obligations under Article VIII of the Constitution of UNESCO regarding periodic reports on the action taken on conventions and recommendations;
4. Takes note of the timetable contained in the Annex to document 195 EX/15, on the understanding that this timetable may be subject to further adjustments;
5. Requests the Director-General to ensure the implementation of the legal framework for the enforcement of standard-setting instruments, adopted at its 177th session, by the programme sectors and the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS), which have responsibility for the conventions and recommendations monitored by the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations;
6. Also requests the Director-General to submit to it at its 197th session, a proposal for a strategy to improve visibility, ratification, implementation, monitoring and cooperation in the context of standard-setting instruments in the field of education, taking into account, if necessary, the conclusions of the working group on the working methods of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations;
7. Decides to continue consideration of the matter at its 196th session.

Item 16 Report of the working group on the methods of work of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations (195 EX/16)

17. In her capacity of Chair of the working group on the methods of work of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations established pursuant to 192 EX/Decision 19 and 194 EX/Decision 20, the Chair of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations presented orally to the members of the Committee information on the outcome of the working group's meeting, held on Tuesday, 14 October 2014, on the eve of the meeting of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations.

18. In that connection, the Chair of the working group noted that during the meeting, the members of the working group had all agreed that the discussions should focus, as reflected in

document 194 EX/33, on four main themes: (i) rebalancing the two complementary aspects of the Committee's terms of reference; (ii) the logic of the system of communications; (iii) techniques and working methods; and (iv) the conditions for submitting communications.

19. She underscored that consensus was possible within the working group on issues that needed to be examined in more detail and proposed to the members of the working group to focus their efforts on those important issues where there was a strong likelihood of achieving consensus. The issues concerned highlighted the importance of the two complementary aspects of the Committee's terms of reference and the need to rebalance those aspects by improving both of them. The issues identified were:

- with regard to the first aspect – the examination of reports from Member States on the implementation of UNESCO's standard-setting instruments – a consensus had emerged among the members of the working group on the need to rebalance the first aspect concerning the monitoring of standard-setting instruments. However, in order to further develop its discussion, the working group requested the Secretariat to make written proposals to suggest ways of improving the work of the first aspect of the Committee's terms of reference, while taking into account the need to revitalize, energize and update the process of the ratification of the standard-setting instruments and also of the reports of Member States on the implementation of such instruments.
- the second aspect – the examination of communications concerning the exercise of human rights in UNESCO's fields of competence – required further discussion by the members of the working group. However, consensus did seem possible on some matters, such as:
 - seeking ways to achieve universal communications, namely a geographical distribution of such communications by increasing the visibility of the 104 procedure among the general public and non-governmental organizations;
 - ensuring that the communications fell within the fields of competence of the Organization; and
 - improving specific working conditions, including the management of speaking time allotted to the various speakers, possibly consolidating several communications for examination, conducting an annual examination of certain cases or even receiving a prior written reply from the States concerned and potentially other matters, yet to be defined.

20. Continuing her presentation, the Chair of the working group noted that for other issues, differences of opinion between the members of the working group were considerable and a consensus on them seemed difficult, though not impossible. They included the following issues: (i) the division of the two aspects of the Committee's terms of reference into two separate sessions and (ii) the participation of a State Member in the adoption of decisions relating to communications concerning it.

21. Therefore, she stressed that given the current state of play, the working group had not been able to complete its terms of reference or submit its final report to the Committee and to the Executive Board at its current session. It would therefore continue its work at the 196th session of the Executive Board in the spring of 2015.

22. In conclusion, the Chair of the working group commended the spirit of compromise and mutual understanding that had prevailed throughout the meeting held on Tuesday 14 October 2014.

23. After having examined the item, the Committee recommended that the Executive Board adopt the following draft decision:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 192 EX/Decision 19, 193 EX/Decision 7 (II) and 194 EX/Decision 20,
2. Having examined document 195 EX/16 and the report of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations (CR) thereon (195 EX/37),
3. Decides to take note of the report of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations, it being understood that the working group set up pursuant to 192 EX/Decision 19 will meet again on the eve of the meeting of the Committee on Conventions at the 196th session of the Executive Board.