



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Executive Board

Hundred and eighty-sixth session

186 EX/INFORMATION MEETING

REPORT OF THE INFORMATION MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

**Tuesday, 15 February 2011
(10.10 a.m.-1.05 p.m.)**

REPORT OF THE INFORMATION MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

(Tuesday, 15 February 2011, 10.10 a.m. – 1.05 p.m.)

In accordance with 155 EX/Decision 5.4, confirmed by the Executive Board at its 156th session, an information meeting between representatives of the Member States of the Executive Board and the Director-General was held at UNESCO Headquarters on 15 February 2011. Fifty-six Member States out of 58 were represented at the meeting, which all the Permanent Delegations to the Organization were invited to attend, as well as non-Board members and Permanent Observers. An account of the meeting follows.

1.1 **The Chair** *in extenso*:

Dear colleagues, dear friends, as this New Year gets under way, we are all aware, Member States and the Secretariat alike, of the need to be proactive and responsible in the run-up to the next General Conference. We already know that, apart from the usual and all-important activity report covering the last six months, the important issues on our agenda are follow-ons from the last session: the C/5 document for the next biennium 2012-2013, the Independent External Evaluation, and the reform of our field structure, not forgetting of course the matters to do with the Middle East. It is in this context that I am happy to open our first gathering of the year, the mid-winter fixture of the traditional information meeting.

1.2 Let me remind you that these inter-sessional events are designed to enable us to interact with the Director-General and her team to check on progress made – or indeed on obstacles encountered – in programming and implementing UNESCO's activities.

1.3 On the side of the Member States, the resolve to move forward earnestly with the follow-up to the Independent External Evaluation is reflected in the good progress being made in the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group. Many delegations are bustling with activity on this front, and I welcome the great interest shown in making some serious efforts at further reforming our Organization, including in the area of governance.

1.4 Dear colleagues, our spring session agenda is already full. Please count on my careful vigilance, in this regard, to protect and organize the time of the Board's session for these important debates, and please, let me in turn count on your cooperation to refrain from inscribing new additional agenda items covering other more secondary or isolated concerns that will distract us from our primary objectives. I shall return later to issues relating to the preparation of the next session once the question-and-answer part with the Director-General has concluded. Likewise, our preparations for the coming session should be instilled with the right sense of purpose regarding the way we reach our decisions, in which the attainment of consensus plays such a vital part on issues that are politically sensitive. I call on you all to prepare the session with this in the forefront of your minds, approaching the issues through effective and constructive consultations, and bearing in mind that the huge added value of consensus decisions is that they can then be fully and comprehensively owned and respected, and accordingly implemented.

1.5 Excellencies, you now have before you the revised consolidated list of questions, as well as an addendum containing questions received after the distribution of the revised consolidated list, organized by sector and activity, and received from 18 Member States. I would like to thank you for your continued close cooperation in formulating your reflections to allow a productive exchange of opinions with the Director-General.

2.1 **The Director-General** *in extenso*:

Madam Chairperson of the Executive Board, Mr President of the General Conference, distinguished members and representatives of the Executive Board, Excellencies, dear friends, since the last session of the Executive Board the course of history has accelerated. The Tunisian

and Egyptian peoples have shown the strength of their democratic aspirations, and their attachment to freedom of information and respect for human dignity. They bear witness to the scale of the changes taking place in the domains in which we work.

2.2 These values and this appeal from the young are exactly in line with UNESCO's mandate. Education, culture, information and human rights are the visible levers of the stability and progress of societies. It is our duty to rise to meet these expectations. We stand ready to engage in the necessary consultations with the new authorities in these countries about what we can offer within our fields of competence.

2.3 This historic surge forward is also a source of new obligations for us. It requires us to move faster with our ongoing reforms, and to show results.

2.4 We have clearly started to do this, and I would like to give two recent examples. Last Friday, with the President of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), I signed a US \$12 million agreement to support new technologies in the field of higher education. That agreement is a symbol: countries that have traditionally been the recipients of aid are now turning to UNESCO as the best partner for implementing their development projects. What more striking proof could there be of our legitimacy and the relevance of what we do?

2.5 And that is only the beginning: with this project, we are generating the energy, on the ground, to bring new actors on board. The World Bank is already prepared to give additional financing to Mali for higher education projects. With this agreement, therefore, we are fully living up to our commitment to Africa and our goal of closer alignment with the main actors in the region, on a subject that is our very *raison d'être*: education.

2.6 A second example: on 5 November 2010 I brought together, in New York, the heads of the five lead agencies for the Education for All programme. That meeting was the first to be held at that level for some years. It was UNESCO that took the initiative, in the interests of better coordination between the actors and more effective action. A second meeting will take place during the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) summit in Geneva which, for the first time, will be devoted to education as a whole.

2.7 We have agreed with UNICEF, the World Bank, UNDP and the United Nations Population Fund, to meet every year and move forward together. And I hope to enlarge the circle still further, to decompartmentalize the way education is viewed: I have invited the new Executive Director of United Nations Women, Michelle Bachelet, to join us, and discussions are ongoing with the World Health Organization.

2.8 This general mobilization in favour of education for all is the direct result of the impetus provided by UNESCO. Our partners recognize this. I have held consultations with France, the host country of the G8 and the G20, so that these themes can be integrated into the deliberations at the highest level.

2.9 Education is a force for change. It is the key to sustainable development. The truth of this is obvious everywhere I go, and at my meetings in Davos and Dakar and on my other missions, I receive positive feedback about UNESCO's significance in this field.

2.10 The launch of the Education for All Global Monitoring Report will enable this work to gather pace. This year, the Report is devoted to the damaging consequences of conflict for educational systems. More attention needs to be paid to this crisis, and UNESCO will do everything it can to make that happen. We have decided to ensure this event has worldwide impact, and simultaneous launches are planned in New York, London, Beijing, Nairobi, Santiago, Dakar, Beirut, Abuja and Dhaka, followed by Ottawa, Paris, Tokyo, Oslo and Bonn.

2.11 The meeting of the High Level Group from 22 to 24 March in Jomtien, Thailand, will be another high water mark in our education strategy. It should mark a decisive step forward in setting up a solid framework for evaluating the quality of education.

2.12 These successes reinforce our advances in other fields, of which I have spoken many times: I am thinking, in particular, of the recognition of the links between culture, cultural diversity and development. The Alliance of Civilizations has also taken up the theme of cultural diversity as a factor for peace, and Jorge Sampaio will be taking part in the second meeting of the High Panel on Peace and Dialogue, with some 20 front-line international personalities. That meeting, on the theme of reconciliation, will be held on 11 March at United Nations Headquarters in New York. That event, to be held in the margins of the next Executive Board session, will also mark the close of the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures, and the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).

2.13 Our greater closeness to our partners and our higher visibility impose a duty on us to do more, and to do better. We can expect to be judged by our results. This year, 2011, is of cardinal importance from that standpoint, with the vote on the budget, the acceleration of the movement to reform, and the implementation of the recommendations of the Independent External Evaluation.

2.14 My determination to reform this House is total. The impetus for reform is intact. The entire senior management team is fully committed to this goal. This reform affects very many aspects of the structure, the programme, and the management of human resources and communication. We have set all these efforts in motion at once, and it is my firm intention to see them through. I have decided to bring together a panel of 10 seasoned experts in international change management to give advice, in March and again in May this year.

2.15 I have already made a number of alterations to the structure of the senior management team. I presented the main thrust of these changes at the last Executive Board session. They have breathed new life into the team. We have noticed this already, at the senior management team retreat, two days ago. This concept has strengthened the bonds between us; it created a real sense of cohesion and of working together. All the Assistant Directors-General will confirm that, and I encourage you to speak to them about it.

2.16 My resolution is total. Each sector is subject to rigorous scrutiny with a view to improving its efficiency. Radical changes were made to the Education Sector in December 2010, and others are to come, to ensure we play to our comparative strengths and reduce costs. We now have to spread this energy outwards to the whole House, as well as in the field. Everything is primed for that to happen.

2.17 The main principles of the reform of the field structure have been approved by the Executive Board. This is one of the most important reforms at UNESCO. The result will be an Organization that is more responsive, more closely attuned to the needs of States, and better able to fulfil them. The new structure gets rid of layers of administration. It makes sure energies are not dispersed. The new regional bureaux will be better equipped to support the teams on the ground, including in countries where we do not have an established office. I am certain that Member States will give this process their support. In the next two weeks we will be setting up consultations with the regional groups, to look together at ways of applying these common principles to each situation.

2.18 All our work on structure, presence on the ground and human resources is moving in the same direction. The new structure will, for instance, make it possible to redress the staffing balance, by deploying more Professionals in the field and speeding up geographical mobility. I am thinking in particular of our colleagues who have been working for long periods in hardship duty stations. Of the 15 office directors/heads concerned by this situation, only three directors remain to be redeployed. All administrative officers who had spent more than five years in the same field post have also been redeployed. At the next Board session, I shall present the new human resources

policy to you. It will give clear encouragement to careers in the field. I have also adopted a new ethics policy, which provides for a whistle-blowing system and staff protection.

2.19 The object of all these reforms is to grow the confidence and commitment of everyone at UNESCO.

2.20 Nothing will deflect us from our goal. This is radical change, and in many respects it is change that should have got under way much earlier.

2.21 This reform effort is transparent: the Internal Oversight Service (IOS) reports are open to all, and available online. The preliminary consultations we are holding to optimize our cooperation with the National Commissions are also open.

2.22 This effort is taking place at the same time as the follow-up to the recommendations of the Independent External Evaluation. We have already contributed to the various sessions of the ad hoc Working Group. Throughout this entire House, the process has begun of establishing the best way to implement the recommendations made, and we will be submitting our consolidated proposals to the Executive Board at its next session.

2.23 Madam Chairperson, Excellencies, the reform we have launched is guided by a single goal – to strengthen our impact on the ground in concrete ways that respond to your needs. This determination underpins everything we do.

2.24 You have asked questions about our activities and their results. Please allow me to start with our activities in Haiti. As you know, I appointed Ms Michaëlle Jean as UNESCO Special Envoy on 8 November 2010. She has started her task with energy, raising awareness and support for UNESCO activities. Ms Jean is in Haiti now representing UNESCO at a meeting of the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission, co-chaired by the Haitian Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive and President Bill Clinton – to ensure that education and culture have a central place and foster better coordination on the ground. I wish to thank the Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Haiti for her support to UNESCO, both here in Paris and on the ground.

2.25 When the International Coordination Committee for the Safeguarding of Haitian Cultural Heritage (CIC) held its first plenary session on 6 to 7 July 2010, four thematic working groups were created. Twelve projects have been put forward, calling for around US \$10 million – only about \$500,000 of which have been identified. This is why I have called for a donors' conference to be held on 19 April 2011.

2.26 As I mentioned, UNESCO is strengthening its leadership of international cooperation in education. Four years away from the deadline for reaching the Millennium Development Goals and the objectives of Education for All, we are guided by cold realism and determination. We have identified the gaps. We are pushing for investment in the right policies. And we are taking this message well beyond education circles.

2.27 Since the 9th High-Level Group meeting in Addis Ababa last year, we have sought to enhance the effectiveness of the meeting and the Education for All coordination infrastructure. A draft paper on enhancing effectiveness of EFA coordination has been prepared. I will make the final decision in the coming months, in consultation with other EFA convening agencies.

2.28 Technical and vocational training and education is a leitmotif of our work. The International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNEVOC) is engaged deeply with the preparation of the Third International Congress on this to be held in China in late 2011.

2.29 Guided by the same goal to increase effectiveness, we are committed to following-up on international conferences. Since the World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education held in Moscow last September, we have worked on a child development index that will encompass multiple measures of child well-being. The Belem Framework for Action – to

strengthen adult literacy and education – is being taken forward by regional workshops in North Africa, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean.

2.30 The global economic crisis demands we do more with our money and seek new sources of support. The importance of work on innovative financing lies here. We met recently with government officials from Spain and France to explore possibilities of becoming involved in innovative debt swaps for education. The UNESCO Advisory Panel of Experts on Debt Swaps is conducting studies to map current creditor and debtor country policies.

2.31 The concern with effectiveness guides our engagement with the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. We are conducting a global survey on the implementation of the Decade's goals. We are pushing on with the UNESCO Teacher Education Initiative for Education for Sustainable Development. Online courses are being prepared to build the capacity of teacher education institutions in Africa. We will report on the implementation of the Decade in document 186 EX/6.

2.32 I underline here the need for more South-South cooperation. The South-South Cooperation Fund in Education must scale up successful pilot projects and put forward new projects. Changes in the Fund's leadership have caused delays. The next meeting is scheduled this month to study proposals and also strategies to mobilize funds. These have not been successful to date – despite two letters that I signed. I appeal once again for your support.

2.33 You are aware, Excellencies, of the importance I attach to girls' and women's education. UNESCO's initiative on girls' education seeks to mobilize external non-traditional partners – we have success already with major private sector companies – and to increase the coherence of our work. I have the pleasure to announce this initiative will be launched in May

2.34 This does not overlap with the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, in which we are an active partner. The United Nations is concentrating on the second Millennium Development Goal of universal access to primary education. UNESCO's Initiative will focus on education sector-wide policy support, on non-formal education and on education of adult women. We have real leadership in these areas, and I intend to make the most of it.

2.35 As I stated earlier, I welcome the creation of United Nations Women and see great room for cooperation. My Office will attend the meeting of United Nations agencies convened on 16-18 February 2011, by Ms Bachelet, Executive Director of United Nations Women. We intend to cooperate at the global level on all issues pertaining to the promotion of gender equality. At the country level, we will collaborate on projects of common interest within the framework of "Delivering as One" and United Nations Country Teams. The option of developing a framework agreement with United Nations Women is being considered.

2.36 I am pleased to say that the new requirement in the C/5 for sectors to allocate specific budgets in favour of gender equality is producing positive results – with budget allocations between 10 to 20%, depending on the sector.

2.37 The same is true for our second overall priority – Africa. It is important that we align our action with the priorities defined by the African Union and its member states. This is why I am pleased the Commission of the African Union accepted my proposal to organize a joint conference in 2011 on science, technology and innovation in Africa.

2.38 We seek alignment with regional economic communities as well. In the margins of the 16th Summit of Heads of State of the African Union on 30 to 31 January 2011, the Assistant Director-General for Africa met with representatives of six of the eight regional economic communities recognized by the African Union. We will deepen these contacts through missions to these communities in 2011.

2.39 I would like to remind you here also that the Addis Ababa office has been transformed into a Liaison Office for the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa (Ivory Note DG/Note/10/46).

2.40 The African Virtual Campus (AVC) to foster integrated science, technology and innovation policies is moving forward. By 2012, we will develop a network of e-learning national centres across Africa – one per country. We are leading large-scale teacher training in the e-learning concept of distance learning in science and technology. The Natural Sciences Sector and the Africa Department have developed a plan of action for 2011-2013 to examine launching the project in Central Africa and to raise funds for its roll-out in West, East and Central Africa.

2.41 During my recent and first visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I signed an agreement with the Government to establish a research and documentation Centre on Women, Gender and Peace-Building for the Great Lakes Region. Located in Kinshasa, this UNESCO category 2 centre will address an issue of vital importance for human rights, social stability and development in this region.

2.42 We are forging on with the UNESCO Strategy on African Youth – despite a real lack of resources. We will launch, this year, an all-Africa campaign for the ratification of the African Youth Charter, jointly with the AU Commission. Through funding from the Veneto region, Italy, UNESCO is implementing a project on youth policies and violence prevention in four countries in the Great Lakes region.

2.43 UNESCO is working with the Greater Horn Horizon Forum and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development to examine the situation of youth in this region. A Conference of Youth Ministers of the Horn of Africa countries was organized in December 2010 in Djibouti to identify policy recommendations that Member States could implement at country level.

2.44 This leads me to the wider question of UNESCO and youth. In celebrating the International Year of Youth, UNESCO has worked as co-chair of the United Nations Interagency Network on Youth Development since last February (jointly with the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs). Our goals have been to push for inter-agency synergy and to reposition UNESCO within the United Nations system. Throughout the International Year, we have mobilized partners to raise awareness of the importance of sport in youth development and community action and to catalyse new global commitments. In December 2010, UNESCO worked with the International Olympic Committee to organize the 7th World Conference on Sport, Education and Culture in Durban, South Africa.

2.45 In this respect, I wish to say a word about the 7th UNESCO Youth Forum of the 36th session of the UNESCO General Conference. You recently received information about ideas to make this event innovative and exciting. These involve the preparation, date and structure of the Forum – to allow for more visibility and greater input to the General Conference itself. I look forward to discussing these further with Member States.

2.46 UNESCO leads from the front in the field of culture. As noted earlier, we are making headway in linking the power of culture, cultural heritage and cultural diversity to the Millennium Development Goals. We saw this during the Millennium Development Goals Summit last September. The United Nations General Assembly Resolution, passed on 20 December 2010 (A/RES/65/166), defined culture as a source to achieve sustainable development. I wish to thank the Government of Peru for its leadership on this issue. These are important steps.

2.47 Our position is clear: culture is essential to achieve quality education, pluralism and sustainable development. It cuts across all Millennium Development Goals.

2.48 We are seeing progress also at country level on recognizing the importance of culture for development. The Thematic Window on “Culture and Development” of the UNDP-Spain MDG Fund is a strong example.

2.49 On 14 January, I chaired a high level meeting with the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as requested by the World Heritage Committee, to discuss the challenges facing World Heritage sites in this country. We signed an important agreement with the Prime Minister – the Kinshasa Declaration – whereby the Congolese Government has committed to implement the Strategic Action Plan proposed by the Congolese Wildlife Authority.

2.50 UNESCO is deeply engaged this year in preparing for the 40th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention. This is a major opportunity to reflect on achievements and to review challenges. As we approach 1,000 sites inscribed, it is time to consider how to improve conservation and capacity-building for the management of the inscribed properties. We must raise awareness of the Convention’s importance for preserving humanity’s heritage of outstanding universal value and for reaffirming its role for dialogue and peace.

2.51 It is vital that UNESCO and its governing bodies underscore unanimously that cultural heritage cannot be instrumentalized for purposes of division and conflict. This led me to call for the protection of the Preah Vihear Temple, inscribed on the World Heritage List. I can say that I have had very constructive exchanges with the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Kingdom of Thailand over the last few days.

2.52 In the same spirit, I call upon Member States to return to consensus on resolutions and decisions concerning the Middle East. UNESCO’s technical mandate can only be deployed if the Organization is united. I hope that the next session of the Executive Board will be a strong moment to resume consensus on these issues. It is my firm commitment as Director-General to work in this direction.

2.53 This is also why on 14 October 2010 I convened a meeting of experts to discuss ways to revitalize the UNESCO Action Plan for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem.

2.54 On 15 to 16 March, we will celebrate the 40th anniversary of another pioneering international legal instrument – the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. This is an excellent opportunity to review where we stand and consider measures to tackle new challenges – at a time when the illicit traffic of cultural objects ranks second among major international theft across the globe.

2.55 We are taking stock of the impact of initiatives undertaken during the International Year of the Rapprochement of Cultures. The analysis will be ready for the second meeting of the High Panel on Peace and Dialogue among Cultures in New York. A recent circular letter has been sent to Member States, requesting an update on activities undertaken during the International Year.

2.56 I am committed to demonstrating UNESCO’s leadership in building a culture of peace and non-violence – pursuant to 185 EX/Decision 17 (para. 146). I made this clear in my Ivory Note on the preparation of the 36 C/5. The Sectors are making great efforts to respond to Member States’ expectations. The next step will be to consolidate a draft action plan to be shared with Member States in an information meeting in March, as requested by the Executive Board, so as to finalize the text for the C/5. Efforts in this area will also build on renewed and strengthened cooperation with the Alliance of Civilizations.

2.57 Since we last met, we have made headway also on the programme “Rabindranath Tagore, Pablo Neruda and Aimé Césaire for a reconciled universal”. Activities are being envisaged in close partnership with the originators of the programme, in particular France and India. The resolution

adopted by the General Conference at its 35th session called for extrabudgetary resources to be raised. I count on your support.

2.58 Ladies and Gentlemen, UNESCO is forging ahead also in the Natural Sciences. In line with 185 EX/Decision 45, I have begun to provide technical assistance for the preparation of the Consortium of Science, Technology and Innovation for the South (COSTIS) Conference in Libya. However, I would like to call upon all the members of the G77+China and all other interested parties to work with us to raise the necessary funds so that we can jointly make a success of this important endeavour.

2.59 We will contribute significantly to the Earth Summit 2012 (Rio+20). I have set up an in-house steering committee to prepare our input for the summit. Last November, I attended the first meeting of the bureau of the committee. We will bring all our expertise to bear for the success of this summit – starting with the natural sciences, and including all other sectors. A third meeting of the steering committee will be held this Friday.

2.60 This leads me to our action on climate change. As you know, I established a thematic working group to articulate the Climate Change Initiative into concrete programmes. Regular and extrabudgetary sources are necessary to implement these programmes. To this end, UNESCO has applied to become an Accredited Multilateral Implementing Entity with the Adaptation Fund, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Equally, we are pursuing forward our application to become an Executing Agency of the Global Environment Fund (GEF).

2.61 We have maintained our leading role in United Nations Task Team on the Social Dimensions of Climate Change, co-chaired by the International Labour Organization and the World Health Organization. Our objectives are to examine the social and ethical dimensions of climate change adaptation and to develop practical tools for vulnerable Member States.

2.62 In accordance with 185 EX/Decision 13, we are exploring the implications of the results of the 16th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in terms of the possibility of elaborating a statement on the ethics of climate change.

2.63 We are moving forward also in the Social Sciences Sector. In late 2010, we presented ideas to the MOST Bureau and Scientific Advisory Committee to improve the relevance of the MOST programme. I hope the Member States will discuss these when they meet on 14-16 March for the full Intergovernmental Council.

2.64 We have made real progress to increase applications to the Fund for the Elimination of Doping in Sport. The amount of funding available for national and regional projects has doubled and applications can now be accepted from a National Commission or a designated government agency. We are now accepting applications in Spanish, which has also helped to increase their number. I am pleased the performance indicator for the 35 C/5 of 25 projects funded has been far exceeded.

2.65 We are committed to developing synergy between the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport (CIGEPE), the International Convention against Doping in Sport and the Education Sector. The CIGEPE is an excellent vehicle to promote good practice and quality programmes on sporting values and ethics generated under the Fund for the Elimination of Doping in Sport. Related to this, the Social and Human Sciences Sector is developing an anti-doping curriculum guide for teachers that will be disseminated through the Associated Schools Network and to Ministries of Education.

2.66 Madam Chairperson, Ladies and Gentlemen, we have been very active in the field of Communication and Information since we last met. The International Symposium on Freedom of Expression, sponsored by the Swedish National Commission and organized on 26 January 2011, confirmed UNESCO's leading role in promoting freedom of expression as a cornerstone of human

rights. This was followed on 27 January by a conference on Journalism Ethics and Self-Regulation in Europe: New Media, Old Dilemmas. Both events saw active discussion on the state of press freedom worldwide, the safety of media professionals as well as the changes of the media landscape in the digital age. The debates underlined the challenges we still face in these areas.

2.67 You will have received over the weekend an Information Note on UNESCO and the use of the Internet in its domains of competence. Informal consultations are scheduled to start on 1 March – to sharpen UNESCO's role in relation to the evolution of the Internet and new applications.

2.68 I am pleased that we will host the third meeting of the Broadband Commission for Digital Development in Paris on 6 June 2011. The theme will be "Visualizing a Future Built on Broadband". Discussions will focus on the use of broadband for education as well as plans for the Broadband Summit, set for 24 October 2011.

2.69 Madam Chairperson of the Executive Board, Mr President of the General Conference, Excellencies, dear friends, a number of key challenges lie ahead for us this year.

2.70 The Programme and Budget for 2012-2013 must meet two essential objectives. On the one hand, it must fulfil the expectations of Member States. On the other, it must also enable UNESCO to see through the reforms it has embarked upon.

2.71 There can be no question of carrying on as before. This will be the last budget under our Medium-Term Strategy, and it must reflect our determination to change. Together, we must aim at best practices and send a strong signal to the other United Nations agencies as well as the rest of our partners. This determination does not depend on the Secretariat alone, but is the responsibility of each component part of UNESCO, acting within its own role and mandate.

2.72 The Secretariat and Member States must first identify, together, those programmes that deserve to continue, and those that do not. I have personally led the preparation process of the next C/5 document, and given extremely clear instructions to all the ADGs to eliminate overlapping activities. But we can take that process still further.

2.73 Then, we must equip ourselves with the means to carry out the reform. Document 36 C/5 has been drawn up based on a hypothesis of zero real growth. In order to give clear priority to programme activities, I have decided to impose a cap of zero nominal growth on administrative spending. This configuration represents a substantial effort in terms of economy and rationalization, which will inevitably have consequences for the Organization.

2.74 I am asking you to bear this effort in mind during the discussions in the Executive Board. I understand that many Member States are experiencing budgetary difficulties of their own. But, I owe it to you to be frank: if this zero real growth budget were not to be adopted, it would weaken the Organization for many years to come. It would, above all, be unable to press ahead with the reforms you are asking of it.

2.75 It is not enough to call for reform, we must have the means to carry it through to completion. There is no place for half-measures.

2.76 I would recall that UNESCO has already absorbed into its regular budget the whole of the €80 million spent on the renovation of the Fontenoy building. We were among the first agencies in the entire United Nations system to implement International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), when most of the others are hoping to do so between 2012 and 2014, and are asking their Member States for more money. I would recall that security costs, both at Headquarters and in the field, are financed from the regular budget and not from additional credits, as is the case elsewhere in the United Nations system. All those expenses are cutting into our programme, and that situation must not continue.

2.77 This reform is not about cost reduction. The point of the reform is to increase our effectiveness, and here, there is still much to be done on the ground, together with our Chairs and our other partners in civil society among others. It is at that level that the real scope for progress lies, and it is there that we must act. To conclude, I would add that 60% of the contribution of Member States to UNESCO's budget is now treated for accounting purposes, according to the OECD rules, as Development Assistance, against 25% a while ago. I am, therefore, asking all the groups to think hard about the UNESCO we want to see.

2.78 Ladies and Gentlemen, we live in an age of change. The world is changing rapidly: the Internet has revolutionized culture, education and the sciences. Change has cut a swathe through all UNESCO's fields of operation. It is turning upside down the way we think, the way we plan for the future and the way we define what it means to be human. The term "new humanism" is not too strong a word to describe our new condition, and define our responsibilities. UNESCO's place is in the forefront of this movement, and I will do everything possible to make sure it occupies that place. Now it is my turn to listen to what you have to say, and I thank you for your attention.

3. **The Chair** thanked the Director-General for her statement, and introduced the question-and-answer session, to allow Members to raise questions they had submitted in advance, which they felt had not been answered, or not fully answered, by the Director-General during her introductory statement. She asked Members to limit their interventions to three minutes.

4. **Mr Killion** (United States of America) expressed his gratitude to the Director-General for her strong and clear statement, and her total commitment to reform. His first question concerned the independence of the internal evaluation audit function at UNESCO: did the Internal Oversight Service (IOS) continue to report directly only to the Director-General, or had there been a move to allow IOS to report to UNESCO's Executive Board? The United States of America considered it very important that all United Nations organizations should operate transparently and with accountability measures in place. The second related to ethics: what were the details of the whistle-blower programme, designed as protection against retaliation for employees who came forward with information on unethical or illegal activities? Thirdly, had UNESCO implemented a financial disclosure programme to reduce the risks of conflict of interest arising from financial holdings or outside activities of UNESCO's staff members? More than half the organizations in the United Nations system had established such a programme, and the UNESCO Ethics Officer had been tasked with doing so.

5. **Mr Shafi** (Bangladesh) thanked the Director-General for her elaborate and lucid statement. He asked how Member States, particularly the developing countries, could ensure 100% enrolment at primary level, and what measures UNESCO would suggest to help them retain pupils in their schools for continuing quality education. On culture, he observed that UNESCO had been taking steps to publish selected works of Rabindranath Tagore, Pablo Neruda and Aimé Césaire. How would those writings be communicated to peoples of all the world's major languages, to promote understanding of those authors' ideas on education, humanity and peace? Finally, what was the status of the implementation of the EFA Programme in the target 20 countries after the special budget allocation by UNESCO, and were there any new policy measures to ensure EFA succeeded in those countries?

6. **Mr Andreasen** (Denmark) thanked the Director-General for her brilliant overview of UNESCO's recent activities. While she had spoken of protecting cultural heritage and the importance of supporting cultural diversity, he had heard nothing about the importance of cultural dialogue, especially in terms of culture and development. The culture of peace depended on cultural dialogue. He asked the Director-General to elaborate on her view of UNESCO's role in cultural dialogue. Secondly, he recalled that, at the previous meeting of the Executive Board, the Secretariat had been asked to report on the possible implications of changing to a four-year programme planning period, with budget adoption every second year and an eight-year strategic framework. What progress had been made and how did the Director-General view this proposed change?

7. **Ms Nibbeling-Wriessnig** (Germany) thanked the Director-General for her very precise and practical statement. She requested that the replies to the questions be circulated to everyone, as the questions themselves had been. Turning to the imminent opening of the UNESCO Liaison Office in Brussels, she asked the Director-General to explain how UNESCO's partnership with the European Union could be used in the service of North-South-South cooperation.

8. **Ms Flórez Prida** (Cuba) raised the subject of the International Symposium on Freedom of Expression, saying that her delegation was very worried by the increasing market orientation of the Organization. That Symposium, the participants in which had been chosen on an arbitrary basis according to the interests of the organizers, had completely overlooked the Member States and their National Commissions, regional organizations and national journalists in favour of the non-governmental organizations and representatives of the private sector. Far from contributing to the debate on social responsibility and ethics in the media, or the current inequalities in information in the world, it had muzzled and censored the countries of the South in a way that was unacceptable. In her view, UNESCO should not be promoting such politicized and imbalanced events, as the Organization was not a forum in which Member States should be put on trial, but one for reflection and dialogue based on mutual respect and non-interference in the domestic affairs of States, and for the promotion of values in its areas of competence that were conducive to building a culture of peace and non-violence. Cuba, together with a group of Member States of UNESCO, had sent a letter to the Director-General the previous week on the subject of that Symposium, and she looked forward to an early reply.

9.1 **Mr Bessikri** (Algeria) welcomed the energy and willingness with which UNESCO addressed new subjects. That said, he urged the Secretariat not to concentrate too much on its own restructuring at the expense of focusing on the real problems facing mankind, such as the illicit trafficking in State property, which called for increased efforts on the part of UNESCO.

9.2 With regard to the Participation Programme, he saw the need for better explanation of the process, more transparency and better communication among the Sectors. That Programme admittedly only represented token amounts, but the countries of the South needed the expertise it offered them.

10.1 **Mr Seghrouchni** (Morocco) wished to know how the Secretariat intended to speed up the achievement of the Education for All goals in the regions where they had not yet been met, with four years to go to the target date. He stressed the need to find appropriate ways of meeting the needs and expectations of certain countries, especially in terms of programmes and educational policy management.

10.2 The issue of women had assumed a heightened importance in recent years, as evidenced by the creation of United Nations Women. While he was confident that UNESCO would play an active part in the future projects of that new entity, he asked what strategy the Organization planned to adopt to act in synergy with it, and what added value could it bring.

10.3 The Moroccan delegation wished to know the status of the Publication and Distribution Plan: a quality policy was needed in that area that respected linguistic balance, in order to ensure UNESCO's visibility and enable its Member States to benefit from its work.

11.1 **The Director-General**, replying to the first point raised by the representative of Algeria, said that the reform of the Secretariat, however important it might be, was not an end in itself but a tool to strengthen programme activities, drive up UNESCO's efficiency, relevance and visibility, bring it more closely into line with other United Nations agencies and win recognition for it in the international community. Restructuring was not an obstacle to action, as could be seen, for example, from the recent signing of an agreement with the West African Economic and Monetary Union for the launch of an ICT and capacity-building project that closely responded to needs, proving that UNESCO had the confidence of its Member States. She added that she would consult the Board in May on the restructuring of the Sectors, aimed at rationalizing the services and

reducing administrative costs. The “new look” Secretariat should be in place by the summer, but making changes to the field structure would take longer.

11.2 Turning to the questions of the United States of America, she stressed the importance of reassuring and mobilizing the staff as part of the evaluation process and the effort to increase transparency. She and her senior management team needed the support of the staff in order to succeed, and she was very grateful for the real engagement she had seen.

11.3 The Internal Oversight Service played a very important role, and works in full transparency. All its reports to date had been submitted to the Executive Board. They were online, where every Member State could consult them. Pursuant to a decision of the General Conference, a Standing Oversight Advisory Committee had recently been established comprised entirely of external experts, reporting both to herself and to the Board. She had just held a one-hour discussion with its members, who were working on a report to be presented to the Board – again, a transparent process. The IOS had carried out an evaluation of UNESCO’s eight pilot field projects in the Delivering as One initiative, and that, together with input from Board discussions and her meetings with the United Nations country teams, was of enormous value to her in the meetings of the United Nations Development Group and the Chief Executives Board.

11.4 The absence of a whistle-blowing system in UNESCO had been an issue prior to the establishment of the Ethics Office. The Director-General said that she had approved the new policy on 22 December 2010, and she hoped it provided enhanced protection against any kind of retaliation. The aim was to put a simplified procedure in place to provide staff members with a “one-stop shop”, enabling them to refer any allegations to the Ethics Office. As was well understood, that did not prevent staff members from contacting the Internal Oversight Service directly in cases of suspicion of fraud.

11.5 Work was ongoing on the financial disclosure programme: the Ethics Officer was finalizing a proposal to be submitted to the IOS and the Bureau of Financial Management in the spring for feedback. She hoped to be in a position to report to the Board on developments by the September session, and that the policy would be well established by the following year.

11.6 The Director-General confirmed that new measures had been taken to increase support to countries confronting the greatest difficulties. The need to continue streamlining UNESCO’s activities would be borne in mind in preparing the next C/5, and she urged Members to support the principle of concentrating on countries that were lagging behind in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

11.7 On the question raised by the representative of Cuba, the Director-General confirmed that she was preparing a response to the letter she had recently received. She was aware that there had been a very vivid debate at the symposium in January, revealing areas of disagreement. However, UNESCO had a mandate in the area of freedom of expression: the fact that free debates were held on the subject did not necessarily mean that all the parties would agree all the time. She had taken note of the concerns expressed and looked forward to continuing the debate. UNESCO was also very much engaged in the training of journalists, not only in terms of their rights but also in the ethics and responsibilities of their profession. Its activities concerning freedom of expression and freedom of the press are also to be viewed in the broader context of development, dialogue and peace.

11.8 The Director-General assured the Ambassador of Denmark that, while she had not specifically mentioned dialogue and culture, this was a constant theme in her commitment to UNESCO’s responsibility for promoting dialogue and cultural diversity, tolerance and reconciliation. She expressed gratitude to the Turkish Government and the Turkish Committee on the Alliance of Civilizations for the organization of the AOC Conference in Istanbul, a joint initiative by the Prime Ministers of Spain and Turkey. It had greatly enhanced the visibility of UNESCO’s work in the area of cultural diversity, promoting the culture of peace, the role of education, and other aspects of the

overall concept of the new humanism. Working together with the Alliance of Civilizations had encouraged increasing exchange and joint participation in programmes, and she expressed satisfaction and optimism about the Memorandum of Understanding in place. Not only was UNESCO the lead agency in the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures, but thanks to the very close involvement of all Member States and National Commissions as well as the different partners, it had been able to organize or support more than 1,000 innovative events and initiatives worldwide. A concise document was prepared on these achievements and one major event will be held at Headquarters where the conclusions will be presented to the Board.

11.9 She saw a lot of merit in the four-year programming cycle alignment, which she believed presented strategic advantages, including in terms of interaction with other agencies. The present biennial cycle had proved a handicap to UNESCO's involvement in the One United Nations initiative. The final decision as to the proper balance was one for Member States, however.

12.1 **Mr Tang** (Assistant Director-General for Education) addressed the two questions raised by Bangladesh concerning primary education and the 20 target countries. There were still 67 million out-of-school children at the primary level, and a long way to go to achieve 100% enrolment. UNESCO's main focus was on policy, helping Member States implement inclusive measures to improve their enrolment rate. For financing, UNESCO was working with partners, particularly the World Bank and UNICEF, and was now playing a much more active role in planning and monitoring under the Fast-track Initiative. UNESCO's current focus was on monitoring the quality of primary schooling and promoting a holistic approach, as early childhood care, training and secondary education all played a role in primary education retention levels.

12.2 The focus 20 target countries were a new feature in the 35 C/5. The emphasis was on four priority areas: planning, literacy, teachers and skills, and also policy intervention, using \$300,000 of regular budget for each country. UNESCO was closely monitoring the progress of those 20 countries, and a detailed report would be submitted to the next session of the Board in document 186 EX/6. The Director-General intended to add another 16 target countries in the 36 C/5.

12.3 Responding to Morocco's question, he reported that, since the Director-General had taken office, she had asked the Sector to make three innovations in Education for All. The first, at a global level, was to play a more visible leading role in pushing to keep education high on the international development agenda. The second, at country level, was to focus more on helping Member States monitor the quality of their education systems and promote the holistic approach, which was the only way to achieve Education for All. The third area involved strengthening partnerships with United Nations agencies, international organizations and civil society, as UNESCO alone could not drive Education for All.

12.4 Turning to gender, he confirmed that work had started on a new initiative to focus on girls' and women's education. To avoid duplication with the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) led by UNICEF, in which UNESCO was an active player, that initiative would focus on out-of-school girls and literacy for adult women. At the global level there would be advocacy, and at country level, more concrete intervention.

13.1 **Mr Falt** (Assistant Director-General for External Relations and Public Information) observed that the Participation Programme had managed to meet its objectives and that, in line with the priorities of Member States and the Director-General's wishes, Africa was the main region to benefit – in 2010-2011, 176 requests had been approved for the region, totalling \$3.8 million. He agreed, however, that the Programme suffered from structural deficiencies, particularly because all the requests from Member States (which could be counted in the hundreds) were received at the end of February, creating a considerable bottleneck. Coordination among UNESCO's Sectors was also ripe for review. In the past, the lack of information given to the States had meant that the procedure was not well understood. Mindful of these problems, the Secretariat had asked the staff concerned to redouble their efforts to inform the partners of the status of each request, and would

be submitting practical proposals to Member States in the near future with a view to improving the process.

13.2 Turning to Morocco's question on the Publication and Distribution Plan, he could state with confidence that the Secretariat had responded vigorously to the request by Member States to streamline it and to improve multilingualism at UNESCO. The creation of a Publications Board, discussed with the Member States as a means to provide the required in-house control, was now imminent. So far in 2010 and 2011, 190 titles had been published. The *UNESCO Science Report* and the *World Science Report* had appeared recently, with the *EFA Global Monitoring Report* expected shortly. Efforts were being made to ensure those reports generated the maximum impact worldwide. Unquestionably, too many UNESCO publications were produced in only one language, and he was committed to improving that situation, within available resources. Extrabudgetary assistance was of great help in bridging the "language gap". As an example, the support of Saudi Arabia had been a positive force in increasing the availability of Arabic publications. Another recent Arabic publication had been *Water and Peace for the People*, produced together with the Science Sector. The Brazil Office of UNESCO had recently, with the Brazilian Ministry of Education, published the *General History of Africa* in Portuguese, which had immediately become a significant bestseller, including on the web. Vigorous efforts had also been devoted to the *UNESCO Courier*, with almost simultaneous publication in several languages of the issues on Haiti and the Year of Chemistry.

14. **The Director-General** undertook, in response to the request by the Ambassador of Germany, to circulate the written replies to the written questions to all members, as this offered a good tool for the exchange of information. She also confirmed her commitment to South-South cooperation and North-South cooperation; fields in which many ideas and projects were emerging that were relevant to UNESCO.

15. **Mr Chang** (Republic of Korea) thanked the Director-General for her comprehensive report on the recent activities of UNESCO. He fully agreed that responsibilities must be shared among Member States, governing bodies and the Secretariat to complete the reform process. In his experience, people were usually resistant to change. He asked whether the Director-General had encountered any resistance to reform on the part of the staff, and what she expected of Member States and the Executive Board in the important matter of reform.

16. **Mr Tolmachev** (Kazakhstan) welcomed the Director-General's commitment to the rapprochement of cultures and the actions she had taken. He encouraged continued efforts to build a culture of peace and non-violence and strengthen the dialogue among civilizations. At a time when there was talk of the "failure of multiculturalism", he asked whether it was UNESCO's intention to join in that debate, and what would be the Organization's answers to such questions.

17. **The Chair** announced that the list of speakers (as read out by the Secretary) was closed, and confirmed that Members on the list who wished to address more than one question should do so in one single intervention.

18.1 **Ms Lacoëuilhe** (Saint Lucia) raised the question put by Uruguay about the restructuring of the Organization. Member States had received extensive information about the restructuring of the Sectors, both from the Director-General and from the ADGs, in their oral reports to the Board, meetings with electoral groups and information sessions. She welcomed the information, supported the restructuring and was very happy to see the dynamism with which the ADGs were working towards streamlining. However, information was not consultation, which was an official requirement under Article 59 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board. Given the difference between consulting before decisions were taken and after the restructuring was implemented, she asked when the Director-General intended to consult the Board formally, to allow it to give an official opinion about the restructurings.

18.2 Her second question, put in writing by Norway, concerned the evaluation of National Commissions carried out following the recommendation of the External Evaluators. Cooperation with the Secretariat in the ad hoc Working Group on the Independent External Evaluation had been excellent. The Secretariat had been consulted, given all the information required, shown the Group's draft recommendations and asked for comments. All the Secretariat's amendments had been taken on board. Member States might have expected the same treatment in return. But, she had been amazed to see that the evaluation on National Commissions had been rushed through without consulting Member States, while it was known that the recommendation was due to be discussed by the Working Group. It would have been preferable to plan the exercise together. National Commissions, after all, were national entities, whether autonomous, semi-autonomous or completely governmental, and, as such, of concern primarily to the Member States, as well as the Secretariat.

19. **Mr Kizabi** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) thanked the Director-General for having participated in the high-level meeting on his country's Natural World Heritage Sites, which his delegation hoped would be maintained on the World Heritage List. He was unable to tell which of UNESCO's programmes were specifically devoted to post-conflict situations, and asked the Director-General what measures she planned to take to give greater visibility to post-conflict situations in the 36 C/5.

20.1 **The Director-General** thanked the representative of the Republic of Korea for his support in committing Member States to change. Her answer to his question was yes and no: she saw more commitment than resistance on the part of the Secretariat, as the moment was ripe for change. She highly respected the engagement of the Secretariat, where she saw definite energy and very committed people. Member States were already contributing through the work of the ad hoc Working Group, which brought to surface many questions about change and reform and future strategy areas. Member States could also help by supporting her reforms in restructuring the Secretariat. In response to the question from St Lucia, she would, of course, consult the Executive Board pursuant to Rule 59 at its next session, on issues of restructuring.

20.2 Moving to the question on evaluation of cooperation with the National Committees (as opposed to evaluation of the National Committees themselves), she was surprised at the interpretation given to what she had thought should be a parallel process. In her view, the ad hoc Working Group should discuss the question with the benefit of input from both sides, including the Secretariat, which had a contribution to make to the debate by virtue of its particular role. It had never been intended to take Member States by surprise or place obstacles in their way, but rather for the Secretariat to accompany them in their reflection. The process had not, in her view, been rushed. That said, it was not desirable, either, to lose time by waiting one year until the General Conference before bringing the Secretariat on board. There was room for discussion in order to find the best course.

20.3 In response to the question from the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, she said that the 2011 EFA Global Monitoring Report focused on education in conflict and post-conflict situations. According to that Report, 28 million out-of-school children were living in such situations. Faced with the scope of the challenge, she had just recently charged the Deputy Director-General with responsibility for the post-conflict, post-disaster intersectoral platform, and given instructions to the Sectors to devote all the necessary attention to post-conflict situations when making their proposals for the C/5.

21. **Mr Grexa** (Slovakia), echoing the words of his German counterpart, stressed the importance of cooperation between UNESCO and the European Union. He suggested the know-how of the former and the funds of the latter be combined to remedy the alarming, and steadily deteriorating, situation with regard to the education of Roma children. He pointed out that half the children of Europe's largest minority failed even to complete their primary education, while in fact a relatively large amount of money had been devoted to educating them. In that regard he thanked the Education Sector for the spirit of openness it had shown on the matter.

22.1 **Ms Baltina** (Latvia) joined with her colleagues in congratulating the Director-General for her leadership and persistence in championing reforms in the Organization. She congratulated the Member States, too, for coming together and seeking common ground. The Independent External Evaluation process had, in her view, served as an ideal platform for that quest, which she hoped would continue. The question raised by Slovakia concerning the relationship between UNESCO and the European Commission was still unanswered, and she felt that the Executive Board was the right forum in which to resolve that important issue.

22.2 On the subject of the National Commissions and the Permanent Delegations, there were, in her view, only two parties to the relationship: UNESCO and the Member States. The Member States were made up of National Commissions and Permanent Delegations together, and those two components could not be separated.

22.3 Lastly, she asked how the Director-General saw the future development of the relationship with international financing institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in the ongoing financial crisis. UNESCO, in her view, had the relative advantage of being able to respond to the needs of its Member States by providing policy advice to accompany the funding from those sources, and by advocating the importance of culture and assistance for education planning.

23.1 **Ms Navarro-Tolentino** (Philippines) said that she appreciated and welcomed the information meetings: the process of dialogue had greatly strengthened under the Director-General's leadership. She thanked the Director-General for having answered most of the questions submitted in advance in writing. However, some questions had been left unanswered. First, 185 EX/Decision 29 had invited the Director-General to conduct consultations with the Member States of each region to ensure that any proposal for the strengthening of the field network responded to UNESCO's and the Member States' specific regional and subregional needs. Was the schedule for those consultations yet available?

23.2 She requested information on the timelines envisaged for the appointments of the new Directors of the World Heritage Centre and the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL); an update on the Capital Master Plan for the Miollis Building, which she regarded as urgent; and information on the present structure and organization of the Director-General's own Executive Office, to enable better coordination between that office and Member States. She thanked the Director-General for her positive response to the suggestion to circulate the written replies given to the questions raised by individual Member States during the information meeting.

24.1 **Mr Oberoi** (India) added his voice of appreciation to the Director-General for the manner in which she had framed the Organization's priorities; her responses to the questions fitted elegantly within it. As a matter of clarification, he hoped that Member States would be sent the written replies not just to questions asked or answered in the meeting itself, but to the earlier written questions.

24.2 He welcomed the statement of intent by several Member States to bring substance to the COSTIS initiative. Speaking from a sense of urgency that the summit and conference were not far off, he would welcome some further indications from the Secretariat or the Director-General on the steps they foresaw, including the resource mobilization and organization referred to earlier.

24.3 The question from Chile and Bangladesh on the programme "Rabindranath Tagore, Pablo Neruda and Aimé Césaire for a reconciled universal" was still unanswered, and he asked for clarification of its various elements. On the subject of the Publications Board, he hoped that the focus would not just be on multilingualism but on the vital issues of content, theme and, especially, quality. Quality, he urged, was an extremely important theme for the Board – indeed, for UNESCO as a whole. What could be done to bring it about, not just in individual Sectors but across the board?

25.1 **Ms Cummins** (Barbados) thanked the Director-General for her comprehensive responses to a number of the questions raised. She referred to the Director-General's statement to the effect that, of the 15 "hardship" posts in the field, only three directors remained who had been in post for five years, and asked what timeframe the Director-General envisaged for their reassignment.

25.2 Venezuela's question about the activities of the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture also remained to be answered. As Chairperson of the Finance and Administrative Commission, she noted that the issue had been raised at the Commission's previous session, but there had been insufficient time to conclude the discussion or formulate a specific recommendation or decision for the Board. Unfortunately, the matter needed resolution, as there could be no action or progress until a decision was taken. Did the Director-General intend to bring the matter to the Executive Board at the next session?

25.3 With respect to the United Nations International Year for People of African Descent, she had not heard, in the course of the meeting, what part UNESCO intended to play in that critically important initiative through its Member States and National Commissions, especially in terms of specific projects such as the Slave Route project.

26. **Ms Haddad** (Grenada) thanked the Director-General for her responses. She knew that Strategic Direction Five of the recommendations of the Independent External Evaluation underlined the importance of linking strategy for the private sector to the development of a partnership strategy, and that the ad hoc Working Group would discuss that issue. Members had also been informed by the Communication and Information Sector that it was developing several projects in cooperation with the private sector. She wished to know more about those forms of cooperation. Were they mainly guided by UNESCO's priorities as established by its Member States through the decisions of the General Conference, or were the priorities those of the private sector? What measures or mechanisms were in place to ensure that such cooperation met the Organization's objectives rather than being used for commercial purposes?

27.1 **The Director-General** addressed the questions on relations with European Union. The day after the Information Meeting, she was to visit Brussels to open UNESCO's Liaison Office there, in the presence of many commissioners, members, delegates and ambassadors. It was the fulfilment of a long-standing commitment on her part to developing closer relations between the European Union and UNESCO, which had previously been one of the few, if not the only, United Nations agency without a presence in Brussels. Turning to the substance of the relationship, she confirmed that a Memorandum of Understanding was close to completion: this would be different from the existing Framework Agreement between the European Union and the United Nations and its agencies, with the focus, instead, on the specific activities within UNESCO's mandate, making it a potentially strategic partnership in specific areas of development in the fields of education, the sciences, culture and communication. Signature of the agreement, however, would have to await completion of the ongoing reform process within the European Union associated with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. On the specific question of the Roma, the process of consultations with the interested parties had already begun. Seed money had been set aside in the next C/5 Budget, and she hoped that the European Union could also help finance some of the important projects envisaged.

27.2 She very much welcomed close cooperation between National Commissions and Permanent Delegations, and between both of them and the Secretariat. National Commissions, however, had a different status in different countries: some were closely linked to their government, while others were totally independent. She was cognizant of the fact that they could not all be treated alike.

27.3 As to UNESCO's relations with the financial institutions at a time of economic crisis, she had serious concerns not only about the flow of development aid from the international financial institutions but from the donor community in general. International aid for education stagnated for the first time since 2008, a matter addressed at the meeting of the Heads of the five convening

agencies for EFA, organized at the Director-General's initiative in November 2010. Appeals had been launched to counteract the trend. Therefore, UNESCO's particular contribution towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals was more important than ever: although not a funding agency per se, it performed vital work by accompanying governments in planning national education policies for the better use of the scarce resources both from their own budgets and international aid.

27.4 On the subject of regional consultations, the Director-General confirmed that a calendar for such consultations had been sent to the chairs of the regional groups. Subject to confirmation of the exact dates, the plan was to hold consultations with Group I on 7 March 2011, Group II on 2 March 2011, Group III on 28 February 2011, Group IV between 1 and 4 March 2011, Group V(a) on 25 February 2011 and Group V(b) on 22 February 2011.

27.5 Turning to the appointment of new directors, she reported that the recruitment procedure for the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) had been finalized, and the process of administrative checks and clearances was under way. She was due to meet the Chair of the Advisory Board for consultation in order to take a decision. For the World Heritage Centre, the recruitment panel had met on 31 January, she herself had met the pre-selected candidates, and the process was in its final stages. She hoped that the successful candidates would be able to take up appointment very soon. She confirmed that 15 directors in "hardship" field posts had already been reassigned, and the remaining three, Kabul, Khartoum and Ramallah, would be dealt with within the next three months. Her own office (ODG) was now fully functioning with all the permanent staff members in place. She had sent out a memorandum giving specific names and responsibilities, but would arrange for it to be sent to Member States.

28.1 **Ms Zammouri-Ribes** (Assistant Director-General for Administration) recalled that the Belmont Plan for renovation covered only 38% of UNESCO's sites. To supplement it, a Master Plan had been drawn up for the overall renovation of the Miollis/Bonvin sites and the conservation and upkeep of the areas already renovated. That plan, which factored in the legal, financial, environmental and ergonomic aspects of rationalizing those areas, would be the subject of an Information Note to be presented to the Headquarters Committee at its meeting on 25 February 2011.

28.2 The Secretariat was currently considering ways of financing that highly ambitious plan, the cost of which was estimated at €302 million exclusive of tax, and which would permit savings of €1.4 million to be made per biennium as well as a 30% energy saving. Among the solutions under consideration were not only the regular budget and extrabudgetary resources, but also partnerships with the private sector. A parallel study had been carried out of the options and methods chosen by other agencies both inside and outside the United Nations system. A report on the entire project was to be drawn up and submitted to the General Conference.

29.1 **Ms Ben Barka** (Assistant Director-General for Africa) announced, with regard to the United Nations International Year for People of African Descent, that UNESCO had been entrusted, by a resolution of the last United Nations General Assembly in New York to engage in the establishment of the Permanent Memorial on Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to be built in New York. Work was proceeding on negotiating terms of reference and financing for the project. The intention was that funding should come from extrabudgetary resources. UNESCO would contribute specific knowledge and expertise, including establishing the jury for the artistic design.

29.2 She was grateful that the question of private partnerships had been raised: UNESCO, as an organization, did not have as much experience in that field as other United Nations funds and programmes, which were more used to working with private donors. She was cognizant of, and committed to, the principle that such partnerships should be guided by UNESCO's priorities at every stage, and not the promotion of particular interests. However, certain of UNESCO's ongoing projects had evolved as a result of such cooperation, among them the work done over a number of years with Microsoft to strengthen ICT capabilities in teacher training, mainly in the Arab countries,

led by UNESCO's Cairo Office. In the first phase, it had provided a major boost to capacity-building, putting the right structures in place to increase digital literacy. UNESCO was now taking a lesser role, however, as it was not appropriate for it to remain involved in the business activity phase. Working with the private sector brought enormous opportunities, not only in terms of direct financing but of the overall modalities of cooperation. The Broadband Commission for Digital Development was, in her view, one of the best examples of such partnership, driven by top level political engagement and vision, and a practical and strategic work plan. Initiated by two United Nations agencies, the International Telecommunications Union and UNESCO, as a joint effort to promote interconnectivity and content, its members ranged from ministers to academics and private sector CEOs. The different dimensions of cooperation with the private sector and the synergy between the different priorities could be harnessed to make important contributions in the developing world.

29.3 UNESCO's involvement in promoting cultural diversity and cultural dialogue dated from long before the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures. She renewed her thanks to Kazakhstan for tabling the proposal of the International Year, under UNESCO's leadership which had provided an opportunity for so many different activities in Member States around the world. She still did not believe that there was a clash of civilizations, but at the same time, there were many challenges to be faced and no society nowadays was spared. The culture of peace had long underlain UNESCO's work. Its contribution to the dialogue, including the Declaration on Cultural Diversity, adopted in 2001, the *UNESCO World Report: Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue*, and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, with its related achievements, had been incredibly important to further enhance intercultural dialogue as well as the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

30.1 **Mr Bandarin** (Assistant Director-General for Culture) gave an update on the programme "Rabindranath Tagore, Pablo Neruda and Aimé Césaire for a reconciled universal", launched and approved by the 35th session of the General Conference. Its objectives were to facilitate translation and publication of the works of those authors, and also to disseminate and create a better understanding of their message. The programme was structured over four years. 2011 (the 150th anniversary of the birth of Tagore) would be dedicated to Tagore, 2012 to Neruda and 2013 (the 100th anniversary of the birth of Césaire), to Césaire, followed by a global assessment of the programme to be presented to the Board in 2014. Preparations were advanced, involving all sectors of UNESCO. The programme's website was finalized, and a logo had been designed. Contact had been established with all the relevant partners, the foundations responsible for the authors' works, and the Associated Schools Networks. The project would be launched at the end of April, around the time of the unveiling of the commemorative plaque for Aimé Césaire at the Panthéon. Contrary to the Executive Board decision, the programme was financed, exceptionally, by \$150,000 from the regular programme, but according to the most recent estimate at least one million dollars would be required to make it effective. Extrabudgetary contributions were sought, and it was planned to establish a 10-person patronage committee.

30.2 On the subject of the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture, while there was no Board decision on the process, the Board had, essentially, asked the Secretariat to conduct consultations following the recommendations of the external evaluation and formulate a proposal on the future of the Fund to put to the Board at its next session. The Director-General had charged him with undertaking that consultation, both with donor countries of the Fund and the regional groups.

31. **The Chair** announced that two non-Board Members had asked to take the floor. She reminded them that the time for each intervention was two minutes.

32.1 **Mr Sita N'sadisi José** (Ambassador and Permanent Delegate, Angola) thanked the Director-General on behalf of his Delegation for the reforms she had undertaken, but urged at the

same time that they should not be allowed to overshadow the programme activities. He welcomed her efforts to raise extrabudgetary resources.

32.2 Turning to the recent International Symposium on Freedom of Expression, he, like the Cuban delegation, found it unfortunate that its debates had been so politicized, and that neither the journalists' professional bodies nor the Ministries responsible for social communication had been invited to take part. He deplored the fact that some of the speakers had deliberately sought to cast slurs on the image of developing countries, for example by painting a very negative picture of Africa, while Reporters Without Borders had itself acknowledged that the situation on that continent was improving.

33. **Mr Vedeler** (Deputy Permanent Delegate, Norway) commended the Chair and the Director-General for their commitment to the reform process and to following up on the Independent External Evaluation. He fully agreed with the Director-General on the importance of both speed and dialogue in ensuring tangible and sustainable results. He felt, however, that the National Commissions were a sensitive issue within UNESCO. They varied greatly in how they were organized, how they worked and how they cooperated with UNESCO. The evaluation of the relationship between the Secretariat and the National Commissions should have been a trust-building process between the Member States as well as the Secretariat, but in practice the timing had not been handled well. When the ad hoc Working Group had decided to discuss the National Commissions, only the National Commissions had been asked to comment on the terms of reference and given a two-week timeframe. Member States had not been asked, though some of the sub-questions, in his view, fell within the ambit of the responsibilities of the Member States in terms of how they organized their respective National Commissions.

34.1 **The Director-General** reiterated her belief that the Organization should not deviate from its efforts to reform. On the question concerning the Symposium on Freedom of Expression, she assured the Ambassador of Angola that she had taken good note of his concerns. She pointed out that the event had been organized together with the National Commissions. It had started as an initiative of the Member States – one of many similar activities arranged with different National Commissions.

34.2 As to the National Commissions themselves, she took note of the observations of the representative of Norway. Two weeks had perhaps not been sufficient time for comments. However, there had been no intention to impair the trust-building process. When UNESCO was asked, as an organization, to look at relations with the National Commissions, the Secretariat had a contribution to make in the common search for the right answers.

35. **Ms Kalonji** (Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences) recalled the decision taken at the previous Executive Board meeting that UNESCO would provide technical assistance in moving forward with COSTIS, a G77 initiative she viewed as extremely important. To date, one part-time director, one part-time P-4 and one full-time P-2 staff member had been assigned to work on COSTIS. They had created a draft plan of action for the General Conference of COSTIS that had been passed on to the G77 focal point for COSTIS at UNESCO, and a response was awaited. Given the urgency, the most important next step was to form a small working group among the G77 Member States at UNESCO and begin to work very closely together with them.

36.1 **The Chair** *in extenso*:

Dear Colleagues, now, that the question-and-answer session with the Director-General has been completed, I wanted to spend a few minutes to brief you on preparations for the coming Board session. As you know, I sent out my letter of consultations to you on 1 February along with the draft provisional agenda and timetable.

36.2 The agenda has been constructed, as always, based on past decisions of the Governing Bodies, to which have been added a limited number of new items proposed by the Director-General. I refer you in this latter regard, in addition to a long list of category 2 centres under Item

14, to item 10 concerning the thematic reorientation of MOST-Phase 2; items 20 and 21, which propose that the Board examine the desirability of standard-setting instruments in the two culture-related areas of heritage conservation and sustainable tourism, and of landscapes; as well as item 33, which proposes an update of our Memorandum of Cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

36.3 We have continued the effort to keep the agenda within reasonable proportions by subsuming many matters under the Reporting Items section, reserving the full, separate agenda for those matters that are either important constitutional responsibilities or require substantive policy debate and decision. The relatively low number of 35 items on the agenda reflects this – it is still about half the number of items we had become used to seeing. I appreciate the support you have expressed to me for these efforts. We have also continued to follow the ordering of thematic areas in the agenda in accordance with the wishes you expressed in the lead-up to the last session. I think you agree that this was a useful way of organizing our business. Let me take this opportunity to say again that the purpose of introducing the Reporting Items section is to underline that the information and reports provided by the Director-General in those documents do not necessarily require discussion or follow-up decisions, but without depriving any Member of the right to ask for a discussion if it deems this necessary. The primary purpose of this approach is to ensure that we reserve our precious time for the big issues, and I do hope you will continue to follow this approach, which I believe helped us at the last session to ensure good time management.

36.4 In terms of timetable, moreover, you will agree with me that, despite the important items we will be handling, the agenda is manageable, and therefore I do not intend to make use of the extra day we had set aside for a possible extension of the session if our agenda was too heavy. In this regard, I am proposing that our plenary debate again focus on what I see as the main issues for the session as I outlined in my opening remarks this morning: C/5, field reform and IEE follow-up, in addition to the activity report.

36.5 In terms of documentation, I must tell you that we are finding the objective of reducing documentation very complex. This is because the Director-General is struggling to reconcile the need for conciseness with the constant demands made by us, the Member States, for more information. I am continuing to examine this matter with the Secretary to see if further improvements cannot be made.

36.6 Finally, as I announced previously, I would like to tell you that I have received proposals from the Secretariat responding to my wish to introduce, gradually, arrangements substantially to reduce the consumption of paper at our meetings, for those who wish to volunteer, and at no extra cost. The Secretary will be writing to you very shortly with the details of this proposal, asking whether your delegations wish to participate in this experiment. The Secretariat of the Governing Bodies has achieved savings from the last two sessions which will be used to purchase a stock of laptop computers that can be made available on loan to delegations that volunteer. I ask you all to do what you can to be part of this important effort to “green UNESCO”, whether in the plenary sessions or in our two plenary Commissions. I have discussed the matter with the Vice-Chairs, who agree that this is an important experiment and that we will learn from our experiences and adjust as and when necessary in the light of lessons learned. Thank you, and now, please do not hesitate to ask any questions that may arise in the light of these comments. I see none. Therefore, now I close the meeting. Thank you all and goodbye.

The meeting closed at 1.05 p.m.