

Hundred and seventy-fifth session

(Paris, 26 September – 13 October 2006)*

175 EX/Decisions
PARIS, 13 November 2006

**DECISIONS ADOPTED
BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AT ITS 175th SESSION**

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Including the meetings of the subsidiary bodies before the plenary meetings.

**DRAFT MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY FOR 2008-2013 (34 C/4)
AND DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2008-2009 (34 C/5)**

- 21 Preliminary proposals by the Director-General concerning the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4) and the Draft Programme and Budget for 2008-2009 (34 C/5) (175 EX/22 Part I (A) and Corr., (B) and (C) and Part II (A) and Corr. and (B) and Corr. (French only); 175 EX/INF.9 and Add.; 175 EX/INF.18 Rev.; 175 EX/INF.19; 175 EX/INF.20; 175 EX/INF.21; 175 EX/INF.22)**

The Executive Board,

1. Having examined the Director-General's preliminary proposals concerning the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4) and the Draft Programme and Budget for 2008-2009 (34 C/5) (175 EX/22, Part II (A) and Corr. and II (B)), the reports of the regional consultations of National Commissions on the subject (175 EX/22 Part I (A) and Corr., (B) and C)) and the summary of written views and comments by Member States, United Nations organizations, international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as the discussion paper prepared by the Director-General on the future role of UNESCO (175 EX/INF.9 Add.) in response to 33 C/Resolution 64,
2. Welcoming the initiative by the President of the General Conference to consult the Permanent Delegates to UNESCO on the preparation of documents 34 C/4 and 34 C/5 and his report thereon, as contained in document 174 EX/INF.21,
3. Taking into account the debates that were held at the present session, in particular the observations and suggestions made in plenary by the Members of the Executive Board on agenda item 21, the Director-General's introduction and his reply to these debates, and the deliberations thereon by the Programme and External Relations Commission and the Finance and Administrative Commission,
4. Takes note with satisfaction of the broad-based and participatory multi-stakeholder consultation process undertaken by the Director-General with Member States, National Commissions, intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations and the results thereof, and welcomes in particular the holding of cluster consultations, which will enable UNESCO to respond better to national development needs and priorities as envisaged in the 2005 World Summit Outcome document;
5. Takes note of the summary of the thematic debate held by the Executive Board on 4 October 2006, which is annexed to this decision;
6. Recognizing that the work of the Committee for the Overall Review of Major Programmes II and III, established pursuant to 33 C/Resolution 2, is in progress, and that its agreed conclusions and recommendations are to be integrated into documents 34 C/4 and 34 C/5 to be considered at the 176th session of the Executive Board,

7. Aware of the ongoing reform efforts pursuant to the 2005 United Nations World Summit Outcome document, which may have implications for UNESCO which would need to be considered by the Executive Board and the General Conference when finalizing documents 34 C/4 and 34 C/5,

UNESCO's mandate and mission in a changing world

8. Inspired by the abiding relevance of UNESCO's Constitution as reflected in 33 C/Resolution 64 and the Director-General's discussion paper contained in document 175 EX/INF.9 Add.,
9. Strongly reaffirms that constructing the defences of peace in the minds of men, as stipulated by the Constitution, remains a sacred task for UNESCO;
10. Recognizing the need to ensure that the Organization responds to emerging challenges and changes, most notably regarding development and poverty eradication, and to those accompanying the complex processes of globalization and resulting from a growing interaction and interdependence among nations and the peoples of the world,
11. Insists that UNESCO develop and deepen mutual understanding, reconciliation and dialogue;
12. Invites UNESCO to be unstinting in all its activities seeking to bring about a culture of peace;
13. Emphasizes that education, the natural sciences, the social and human sciences, culture, and communication and information have a critical role to play in national development, and hence that UNESCO must exercise its leadership role by assisting countries in developing their policies, standards and monitoring arrangements in these areas, and to encourage countries to pursue them through international cooperation;
14. Conscious of the responsibilities incumbent upon UNESCO as the global lead agency for the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012), the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), and the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010),
15. Recognizes the centrality of education for all (EFA) for all of UNESCO's efforts, and for countries' development, the fight against poverty, and the development of science, and emphasizes the special global role played by UNESCO in assisting countries to attain the six EFA goals by 2015;
16. Further recognizes that education and science must be anchored in culture, hence the need for multicultural education to help advance peaceful development;
17. Considers that UNESCO has a special role to play in the United Nations system as a global leader in providing a platform for access to and the use and sharing of knowledge, including scientific knowledge, thus assisting countries in building knowledge societies;
18. Recognizes that in line with the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome document, the United Nations system, and with it UNESCO, need to strengthen their field orientation and engage in integrated action at national levels, and that UNESCO must be unwavering in pursuing the Millennium

Development Goals (MDGs) and other internationally agreed development goals, and underlines that the Organization, through action in all its fields of competence, must make a contribution to the universal fight against poverty, to halving the number of people living in poverty by 2015, as stipulated by MDG 1, and to the promotion of sustainable development;

19. Convinced that emerging challenges and a changing global environment require UNESCO to review periodically its priorities, strategies, approaches and programmes, underlines UNESCO's commitment to continuing the present reform process;
20. Recommends therefore as a mission statement for UNESCO: "As a specialized agency of the United Nations, UNESCO contributes to the construction of peace, human development and intercultural dialogue in an era of globalization through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information";
21. Confirms the five functions of UNESCO, as set out in the Medium-Term Strategy for 2002-2007 (31 C/4) and requests the Director-General to render assistance for institutional capacity-building of Member States in UNESCO's domains;

Priority Africa

22. Strongly underlining the need to continue attaching priority in all of UNESCO's domains to the needs of Africa as a whole, which shall be visibly reflected in document 34 C/4 in the domains of education, natural science, the social and human sciences, culture, and communication and information,
23. Calls upon UNESCO to respond effectively to the national development needs and the exigencies of regional integration articulated by African countries, the African Union, including through its New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) programme, and subregional organizations;
24. Welcomes the strengthened emphasis laid by the African Union at its Khartoum summit on the intrinsic linkage between culture and education in Africa's quest for development, and in particular on the need to protect its cultural heritage – in both its tangible and intangible forms – notably by developing capacity-building for the preservation of African heritage in danger through the African World Heritage Fund and by fostering the preservation and dissemination of African languages;
25. Stresses that UNESCO should prioritize its efforts to provide assistance to African governments for the coordinated management of the continent's freshwater resources, which are key to sustainable development and the avoidance of humanitarian crises;
26. Requests the Director-General to develop, in consultation with the African Union, proposals to tackle the emerging challenge of contemporary African migration;
27. Recognizes that UNESCO must continue to assist Africa in post-conflict and disaster situations, helping to avoid the recurrence of conflicts, and to ensure recovery and reconstruction;
28. Agrees to foster closer ties between Africa and the countries of the diaspora and to continue to support the Conference of Intellectuals from Africa and the Diaspora (CIAD) process, in line with the recommendations by CIAD II;

29. Underlines that the emphasis on Priority Africa needs to be translated into real commitments in the suggested biennial sectoral programme priorities of document 34 C/5 and subsequent C/5 documents, and requests the Director-General to ensure that adequate resources are allocated for the effective discharge of the Secretariat's responsibility regarding Priority Africa;

Gender equality

30. Strongly underlines the paramount need of promoting gender equality through action in all of UNESCO's domains, in line with the provisions of the 2005 World Summit Outcome document, and requests the Director-General to continue capacity-strengthening for gender mainstreaming, as well as to pursue the objective of gender equality within the Secretariat;

Priority groups

31. Requests the Director-General to concentrate UNESCO's activities and action, especially at the regional and country levels, on groups which are most in need;

Youth

32. Urges the Director-General to take, in all of UNESCO's spheres, targeted and sustained action in favour of youth, in particular addressing youth violence and other issues affecting the welfare of youth around the world;

Least developed countries

33. Urges UNESCO also to target its activities and action at least developed countries, in line with the September 2006 High-Level Meeting on review of the Brussels Programme of Action;

Small island developing States (SIDS)

34. Requests the Director-General to provide, throughout the medium-term period, support to Small island developing States (SIDS) in line with the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy, as specified in 33 C/Resolution 3;

Disadvantaged and excluded groups

35. Emphasizes the importance of supporting, through UNESCO's programmes, disadvantaged and excluded groups, as well as the most vulnerable segments of society, including responding to the needs of indigenous populations;

Programming framework for the Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4)

36. Underlines the paramount need for UNESCO as a specialized agency to contribute to a strengthened coherence of the entire United Nations system in global, normative and operational activities, especially at the country, subregional and regional levels;
37. Recalls the programming framework for document 34 C/4 set out by the General Conference in 33 C/Resolution 1, takes note of the streamlined framework proposed by the Director-General in document 175 EX/22 Part II (A) and Corr., aimed at a reduction of programming levels, and encourages further efforts at streamlining;